# COLLABORATIVE AND ADAPTIVE STRATEGIES IN IMPLEMENTING THE INDEPENDENT LEARNING CURRICULUM IN SOCIAL STUDIES SUBJECTS AT THE TSANAWIYAH MADRASAH LEVEL

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**ABSTRACT**

This study is motivated by the suboptimal implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in Social Studies (IPS) subjects in madrasahs, as indicated by teachers' limited understanding, insufficient relevant training, and constraints related to facilities and digital literacy. The study aims to analyze the management of the Merdeka Curriculum implementation in Social Studies at MTsN 1 Bireuen and MTsN 2 Bireuen, covering aspects of planning, organizing, instructional implementation, supervision, as well as supporting and inhibiting factors. This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach, with data collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The research informants include madrasah leaders, curriculum administrators, Social Studies teachers, madrasah supervisors, and representatives of the Ministry of Religious Affairs at the district level. The findings indicate that the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum has been relatively effective through collaborative planning, the application of contextual learning, and the strengthening of academic supervision. Nevertheless, several challenges remain, including disparities in teachers' competencies, limited information and communication technology facilities, high administrative workloads, and low levels of digital literacy. The policy implications of this study highlight the need to simplify supervisory administration, allocate proportional budgets for teacher capacity development, and strengthen the Subject Teachers' Forum (MGMP) as a platform for developing local learning modules based on Bireuen's local wisdom. Meanwhile, the practical implications emphasize the importance of fostering a collaborative culture within madrasahs, optimizing local resources as contextual learning media, and applying varied task and assessment methods to accommodate the diverse abilities of students.

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## INTRODUCTION

The development of information technology has brought significant changes in the implementation of education, so that the education system can no longer be static, but must be adaptive, creative, and responsive to the demands of the times to remain of high quality (Basri, 2023). In the Indonesian context, education has a strategic role

in forming an intelligent and civilized society, as mandated in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, which emphasizes the development of students' potential as a whole, including aspects of faith, knowledge, skills, and character.

The curriculum is a central component in the education system because it is the main guideline in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of learning. An effective curriculum is expected to be able to equip students to be ready to face future global changes and challenges (Arifin & Achadi M., 2023). Therefore, the development and improvement of the curriculum in a sustainable manner is an urgent need to produce an adaptive, creative, and competitive generation.

Since the beginning of independence, Indonesia has undergone various curriculum changes, ranging from the 1947 Learning Rentjana Curriculum to the Independent Curriculum which began to be implemented in 2022. The change in curriculum reflects the government's efforts to adapt the education system to social dynamics and the development of the times (Nasution, 2023). However, these updates have not fully resulted in optimal achievements. This is reflected in the results of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2022 which places Indonesia at 69th out of 80 countries (OECD, 2024). This condition indicates that Indonesian education is still facing major challenges, one of which is caused by unstable education policies due to frequent curriculum changes (Putra et al., 2023).

The Merdeka Curriculum is present as an alternative to renewal that emphasizes learning flexibility, character strengthening, and the placement of students as the center of the learning process. This curriculum is directed to create a Pancasila Student Profile as lifelong learners who are faithful, globally diverse, independent, cooperative, critically reasoning, and creative (Juliani & Bastian, 2021; Albab et al., 2023). The flexibility of the Independent Curriculum provides flexibility for educational units to adapt learning to the needs of students and environmental conditions, in line with the concept of differentiated learning (Aprima & Sari, 2022; Wuwur, 2023).

However, the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in the madrasah environment still faces various obstacles, such as limited teachers' understanding of curriculum concepts and principles, lack of in-depth and contextual training, limited learning facilities and infrastructure, and low support and understanding of stakeholders, especially parents and the community (Aryati et al., 2024). These problems are also found in the subject of Social Sciences (Social Studies), which requires the integration of critical thinking competencies, material contextualization, and the use of technology in learning (Nasution, 2023).

Previous studies have generally examined the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in general or limited to certain aspects, such as teacher readiness and learning tools (Almarisi, 2023; Apriliani et al., 2025; Fatimatuzzahrah et al., 2024). Meanwhile, research Khusna and Khoiriyah, (2024) only focuses on one madrasah and has not studied the implementation of the Independent Curriculum comprehensively based on management functions. Until now, there has been no research that comprehensively examines the four management functions of planning, organizing, implementing, and controlling in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in social studies subjects at the Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri (MTsN) level.

Based on these conditions, this study aims to comprehensively analyze the management of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in social studies subjects in MTsN 1 and MTsN 2 Bireuen, which includes the functions of planning, organizing, implementing, and controlling. In addition, this study aims to identify the supporting and inhibiting factors for the implementation of the Independent Curriculum and formulate a strategy for optimizing its implementation in accordance with the characteristics and local needs of Bireuen Regency

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach to understand in depth how the management of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Social Sciences (IPS) subjects in Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri is managed. This approach was chosen because the research is carried out in a natural situation, with the researcher playing a direct role as the main instrument. Data are collected through various techniques (triangulation) and analyzed inductively, so the main emphasis lies in the interpretation of the phenomenon being studied (Scott, 2016). Meanwhile,

the descriptive approach was chosen because this study seeks to describe objectively, factually, and systematically the management of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in social studies subjects at the Madrasah Tsanawiyah level, as stated by Best (1982) in Hamid (2014).

This research was carried out for three months at MTsN 1 Bireuen and MTsN 2 Bireuen, Bireuen Regency. The location was chosen because the two madrasas are the first state madrassas in the Bireuen area to implement the Independent Curriculum and are under the auspices of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The research informants were determined purposively, with 2 Deputy Heads of Madrasah for Curriculum and 4 social studies teachers as key informants. The supporting informants include 2 Madrasah Heads, a Head of the Madrasah Education Section of the Ministry of Religion of Bireuen Regency, and a Madrasah Supervisor.

The data of this study is qualitative and sourced from primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through in-depth interviews and participatory observation, while secondary data was collected from various supporting documents, such as curriculum documents, teaching tools and modules, P5 and PPRA activity reports, and relevant academic literature. Data collection was carried out through observation techniques, direct interviews (*face to face interview*), and documentation, as commonly used in qualitative research (Moleong, 2011).  The interviews were conducted in depth and semi-structured to obtain accurate information related to the experience, understanding, and views of the informants regarding the application of the Independent Curriculum in social studies subjects in the madrassas studied. The validity of the data is maintained through the application of triangulation of sources and techniques, while data analysis uses the Miles and Huberman interactive model which includes the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion or verification that is carried out on an ongoing basis until valid and consistent findings are obtained (Miles & Huberman in Sugiyono (2016).
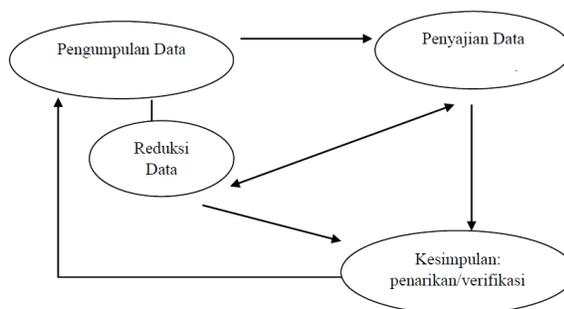


**Image 1**. Miles and Huberman Model Analysis

The analysis process in Figure 1 begins with data collection through various research techniques, such as interviews, observations, and documentation. The data obtained is then reduced by selecting, simplifying, and focusing the data on information that is relevant to the research objectives. After that, the reduced data is presented systematically in the form of narratives, tables, or charts so that they can be easily understood and analyzed further. The final stage is conclusion drawing and verification, which is the process of interpreting data to obtain meaningful research findings. The conclusions produced are not final, but continue to be tested and verified with existing data. The relationship between these stages is interactive and takes place in a cyclical manner, so that researchers can return to the previous stage if necessary until valid and accountable conclusions are obtained.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
### Results
### Collaborative and Contextual Social Studies Learning Planning

The results of the study show that social studies learning planning in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in MTsN 1 and MTsN 2 Bireuen is carried out collaboratively by involving various elements of madrasas.

The process of formulating learning objectives is not carried out individually, but through a coordination forum involving cross-level social studies teachers, deputy heads of madrasas for curriculum, and teacher professional development teams. The learning plan refers to the Learning Outcomes of the Independent Curriculum which is then contextualized with the values of the Pancasila Student Profile and the Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin Student Profile, and adjusted to the local characteristics of Bireuen Regency. As conveyed by the Deputy Head of Madrasah for Curriculum MTsN 1 Bireuen.

"The process of preparing social studies learning objectives is carried out collaboratively through monthly coordination meetings involving all social studies teachers from grade VII to grade IX... The main reference we use is the Learning Outcomes of the Independent Curriculum, then associated with the Pancasila Student Profile and the Rahmatan Lil'alamin Student Profile, and adjusted to the local needs and conditions of Bireuen Regency."

Social studies teachers also adapt to the teaching tools available on the Independent Teaching Platform (PMM). Although PMM is one of the main sources, teachers consider that the examples provided are not fully in accordance with the local context, so modifications are needed to make learning more meaningful for students.

"Usually we use the Independent Teaching Platform, old books, and discussions between teachers. But the example in PMM often does not match the conditions of this area, so we have to change... for example, coal export materials are changed to Gayo coffee exports so that children understand better." (Social Studies Teacher MTsN 1 Bireuen)

**Implementation of Contextual and Participatory Learning**

At the implementation stage, social studies learning is directed to a contextual and participatory approach. Teachers no longer rely on the dominant lecture method, but encourage active involvement of students through field observation activities and real-life experiences-based discussions. Learning is designed so that students can relate the concept of social studies to the social and economic realities in the surrounding environment. Social studies teachers emphasized that this approach is needed to increase students' interest and understanding of the subject matter.

"Now the children can no longer just sit and listen, but must be active. If it's just a lecture, they get bored quickly, so we invite them to go directly to the field." (Social Studies Teacher MTsN 1 Bireuen)

Environment-based learning activities, such as visits to traditional markets, are considered effective in helping students understand economic concepts in a concrete way.

"Children understand faster if they are invited to see it directly... I also once invited students to the Ganapura market, so that they could learn economics directly from buying and selling interactions." (Social Studies Teacher MTsN 1 Bireuen)

This is also felt by students, who admit that it is easier to understand the material when it is associated with daily life.

"If it is a social studies lesson, usually teachers like to tell stories first... about coffee in Aceh or people buying and selling in our village. So we immediately understood what he meant." (MTsN 1 Bireuen Students)

**Use of Flexible and Realistic Learning Media**

In the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, the use of learning media is adjusted to the condition of madrasah facilities and infrastructure. Teachers do not impose the use of sophisticated technology-based media, but rather prioritize the effectiveness of media in helping students' understanding. Simple and visual media are used selectively according to the character of the material taught.

"We just adjust to the conditions, the important thing is for the children to understand, it doesn't have to be sophisticated." (Social Studies Teacher MTsN 1 Bireuen)

For abstract materials, teachers use visual media such as maps and videos to make it easier for students to build conceptual understanding.

"If the material is abstract, I use videos or maps so that the children can imagine." (Social Studies Teacher MTsN 2 Bireuen)

**Authentic and Sustainable Assessment**

Social studies learning assessments in the Independent Curriculum are carried out authentically and continuously, emphasizing the learning process and student experience. Teachers provide space for students to do self-reflection through simple writing using their own language. Assessment is not only oriented towards cognitive achievement, but also includes aspects of attitudes and skills.

"My children just ask me to write, what did I learn today... The important thing is that they are honest about their experiences, not high values." (Social Studies Teacher MTsN 1 Bireuen)

Students also consider that this assessment system rewards their learning efforts as a whole.

"There's also a portfolio, so our efforts are rewarded... honesty, cooperation, and creativity are also assessed." (MTsN 1 Bireuen Students)

**Adaptive Control and Monitoring**

The control of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum is carried out through adaptive and humanist monitoring. The deputy head of the madrasah conducts direct classroom observation to understand the dynamics of learning, not to assess the performance of teachers administratively.

"Monitoring is carried out in a 'foot in the field' way... I entered the class not to assess, but to see the learning atmosphere and give input." (Wakakur MTsN 1 Bireuen)

At MTsN 2 Bireuen, control is carried out through the ATM (Observe, Imitate, and Modify) approach, which encourages teachers to adapt learning modules to suit the characteristics of students and local culture.

"The examples in our modules are asked to be replaced with local examples, such as the Seudati dance, the Meugang custom, or Islamic sharia values." (Wakakur MTsN 2 Bireuen)

**Challenges in the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum**

Despite demonstrating innovative practices, the implementation of the Independent Curriculum still faces a number of challenges. The main obstacle lies in the readiness of human resources, especially teachers who still tend to use old learning approaches.

"The hardest thing is actually not in the rules, but in the person... Many teachers still use the old way." (Madrasah Supervisor)

In addition, administrative orientation is also an obstacle, where the completeness of documents is often prioritized over the quality of implementation in the classroom.

"Sometimes what is pursued is the documents first, the important thing is complete, even though the content is not necessarily in class." (Head of Penmad of the Ministry of Religion Bireuen)

**Discussion**

**Implementation and Management of the Implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum in Social Studies Subjects at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri Bireuen Regency**

The implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum in social studies subjects at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri Bireuen Regency is part of a national education reform effort that emphasizes the flexibility of the learning process, strengthening competencies, and forming the character of students in accordance with the Pancasila Student Profile and the Rahmatan lil 'Alamin Student Profile. This curriculum gives madrassas and teachers the flexibility to design learning that is more contextual, centered on the needs of students, and in harmony with Islamic values and local cultural wisdom of Aceh. The results of the study show that the policy is seen as a strategic step to respond to the demands of changing times while increasing the relationship between social studies learning and the reality of students' lives (Rahmafitri et al., 2024). However, the effectiveness of its implementation is highly determined by the readiness of madrasah management in managing all stages of curriculum implementation in an integrated and sustainable manner.

Judging from the planning aspect, the management of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at MTsN Bireuen Regency is carried out jointly through coordination between the head of the madrasah, the deputy head of curriculum, and social studies teachers. The preparation of learning planning refers to Learning Outcomes (CP), Learning Objectives (TP), and Learning Objective Flow (ATP), while still adjusting to the characteristics of students

as well as local social and cultural conditions. This planning pattern is in line with the findings Jannah et al., (2022) and Fatimatuzzahrah et al., (2024) which emphasizes the importance of the involvement of various parties in the planning of the Independent Curriculum. However, the results of the study also show that there are a number of obstacles, such as limited planning time, still lack of training specifically on social studies, and uneven teachers' understanding of the philosophy of the Independent Curriculum, especially related to differentiated learning and project-based learning.

At the organizing stage, the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in madrassas is carried out through a relatively simple but still functional organizational structure, involving the head of the madrasah as the main coordinator, the deputy head of curriculum, the coordinator of social studies subjects, and teachers as the implementers of learning in the classroom. A work pattern that emphasizes collaborative coordination and flexible division of tasks is key in maintaining the smooth implementation of the curriculum. These findings are in line with opinion (Yunita et al., 2023) which confirms that a clear but adaptive organizational structure is able to support the effectiveness of curriculum management. However, limited resources, especially related to teachers' digital literacy skills and the availability of ICT facilities and infrastructure, are still obstacles that affect the optimization of social studies learning organization in some madrasas (Hasibuan et al., 2025).

In terms of implementation and control, social studies learning at MTsN Bireuen Regency has implemented contextual, participatory, and project-based learning by utilizing the surrounding environment as a learning resource. Teachers are given the flexibility to choose methods and media according to the conditions of the madrasah and the needs of students, in line with the flexibility offered by the Independent Curriculum (Suryaman, 2020). Control is carried out through academic supervision, monitoring, and continuous reflection oriented towards formative coaching and evaluation (Ramadan & Tabroni, 2020). In general, the implementation of the Independent Social Studies Curriculum at MTsN Bireuen Regency is quite effective, although it still requires strengthening in aspects of teacher assistance, supporting facilities, and a continuous evaluation system.

**Implementation of Independent Curriculum Learning for Social Studies Subjects**

The implementation of social studies learning in the Independent Curriculum at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri Bireuen Regency is directed at a contextual, participatory, and student-centered learning process. Social studies teachers have the flexibility to design learning strategies that are tailored to the conditions of students and the surrounding environment, without relying rigidly on textbooks. This learning is aimed at developing critical thinking skills, social sensitivity, and problem-solving skills found in people's lives. This is in line with the social studies learning objectives in the Independent Curriculum which emphasizes strengthening competencies and character formation according to the Pancasila Student Profile (Suryaman, 2020). With this approach, students become more actively involved in learning and are able to relate social studies materials to everyday experiences.

In its implementation, social studies learning at MTsN Bireuen Regency applies a lot of project-based learning models, group discussions, and the use of the environment as a learning resource. Teachers relate the material to local potential, such as traditional market activities, the dynamics of community social life, and regional history, so that learning becomes more meaningful and contextual. These findings are in line with opinion Ardiansyah et al., (2023) which states that learning based on local contexts can increase student engagement and understanding. However, the application of the learning model still varies, influenced by the readiness of teachers, the limitations of supporting facilities, and the differences in the characteristics of students in each madrasah.

Judging from the use of media and learning technology, the implementation of the Independent Social Studies Curriculum at MTsN Bireuen Regency shows a fairly flexible pattern. Teachers utilize various types of media, ranging from simple media to digital media, according to the availability of facilities in the madrasah. In madrasas that still have limited ICT facilities, teachers optimize the use of local wisdom and the surrounding environment as an alternative learning resource. These findings are in line with Hasibuan et al., (2025) which emphasizes that the success of the Independent Curriculum is not solely determined by technological sophistication, but by the creativity of teachers in managing available resources. However, the limitations of digital literacy for some teachers and students are still an obstacle in optimizing technology-based learning.

In the assessment aspect, social studies learning applies authentic and sustainable assessments by assessing the process as well as the learning outcomes of students. Teachers not only focus on cognitive achievement, but also pay attention to students' attitudes, activeness, and social skills during learning activities. Assessment is carried out through various means, such as observation, project assignments, presentations, and learning reflection. This approach is in line with the view that Ramadan & Tabroni, (2020) and Harianto (2023) which emphasizes the importance of formative evaluation to improve the quality of learning. In general, the implementation of social studies learning in the Independent Curriculum at MTsN Bireuen Regency can be said to be quite effective, although it still needs to be strengthened in teacher mentoring, provision of facilities, and consistency in the implementation of authentic assessments.

**Control and Evaluation of the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum for Social Studies Subjects**

The control and evaluation of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in social studies subjects at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri Bireuen Regency showed a difference in patterns between MTsN 1 and MTsN 2. At MTsN 1 Bireuen, monitoring activities are carried out directly and contextually through observation in the field with a more personalized approach. The Deputy Head of Curriculum emphasized direct involvement in the classroom to understand the learning conditions in real terms, without creating administrative pressure for teachers. The monitoring process is flexible, using simple instruments, and emphasizing more honesty and teacher needs. Meanwhile, MTsN 2 Bireuen implements scheduled and more systematic academic supervision, complemented by informal observation and reflection journals compiled by teachers. This pattern shows a shift from administrative supervision to collaborative academic supervision, in line with the principles of coaching and mentoring in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum (Yunita et al., 2023).

Feedback and evaluation of learning outcomes in both madrassas both lead to the application of authentic assessments, although they are carried out in different patterns. At MTsN 1 Bireuen, feedback is given directly and informally through personal dialogues and simple notes on the teacher's teaching device. The evaluation of learning outcomes focuses more on project-based portfolios, written reflections, and qualitative descriptions of the development of students' attitudes and skills, so that assessment is no longer dominated by numbers. This approach is in line with the concept of authentic assessment that emphasizes meaning, relevance, and the learning process of learners (Fernanda et al., 2025). Meanwhile, at MTsN 2 Bireuen, each classroom observation activity is followed by a post-observation reflection session, where the teacher first evaluates his learning practices before receiving feedback. The evaluation of learning outcomes is carried out in a more structured manner using rubrics that are delivered from the beginning and reported in the form of narrative descriptions on the report card, in accordance with the principles of continuous formative evaluation (Saputra et al., 2025).

The results of the evaluation in the two madrassas are used as a basis to improve the learning process, both through casual discussions and more structured evaluation forums. At MTsN 1 Bireuen, the culture of reflection is developed through weekly or monthly evaluative meetings that take place in a fluid and inspiring manner, without the application of a formal sanction or award system. In the forum, teachers shared good practices and student portfolios as a means of learning together. Meanwhile, MTsN 2 Bireuen implements a data-based improvement mechanism through a routine meeting of the Sustainable Professional Development Team (PKB) and a curriculum evaluation meeting at the end of the semester involving all madrasah stakeholders. This practice emphasizes the function of evaluation as an instrument to improve the quality of learning, not just administrative fulfillment, in line with the view that (Ardiansyah et al., 2023) which emphasizes the importance of collective reflection and professional collaboration in the successful implementation of the Independent Curriculum.

However, the control and evaluation of the Independent Curriculum in social studies subjects in Bireuen Regency is still faced with a number of challenges, both at the madrasah and policy levels. These obstacles include limited human resources, facilities and infrastructure, low digital literacy, high workload of teachers, and resistance to changes in learning paradigms. The madrasah supervisor emphasized that the implementation of the new curriculum requires fundamental pedagogical changes, not just the fulfillment of administrative aspects (Rumahuru et al., 2021). However, support in the form of participatory leadership of madrasah heads, enthusiasm of young teachers, the

existence of the PKB and MGMP Teams, and assistance from the Ministry of Religion are important capital for the sustainability of curriculum implementation. Therefore, the future control strategy needs to be focused on simplifying administration, strengthening the teacher learning community, continuous mentoring, and integrating social studies learning with the local socio-economic context so that the Independent Curriculum is truly realized in learning practices.

**Management Problems in the Implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum in Social Studies Subjects at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri Bireuen Regency**

The implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum in social studies subjects at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri (MTsN) Bireuen Regency is part of an effort to reform national education that emphasizes learning flexibility, character strengthening, and competency development of students in accordance with the Pancasila Student Profile (Arifiani & Umami, 2023). In the madrasah environment, the implementation of this curriculum has its own characteristics because it needs to combine Islamic values, local Acehnese cultural wisdom, and academic demands in a balanced manner. Thus, the management of its application does not only focus on administrative aspects, but also touches on the pedagogical, moral, and social realms that are interrelated.

The process of implementing the Independent Curriculum at MTsN Bireuen Regency began with planning carried out collaboratively between the head of the madrasah, the deputy head of curriculum, and social studies teachers. The planning is directed at the preparation of Learning Outcomes (CP), Learning Objectives (TP), and Learning Objectives Flow (ATP) by taking into account the characteristics of students as well as the local social and cultural context (Baidhawi et al., 2024). However, the results of the study show that there are still obstacles in teachers' understanding of the philosophy of the Independent Curriculum, especially related to differentiated learning and project-based learning. In addition, some teachers still rely on teaching tools from the Independent Teaching Platform without making contextual adjustments, so that the learning designed is not fully aligned with the needs and realities of students' lives.

In addition to pedagogical issues, the limitations of teachers' digital competence are still an important challenge in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum. Curriculum changes require teachers not only to play the role of facilitators, but also as active learners who are able to utilize technology in the learning process. However, the reality is that some teachers still have a low level of digital literacy (Fatmawati, 2021). Technical constraints, such as limited ICT devices, unstable internet access, and lack of continuous training, also hinder the optimization of the use of digital media and technology-based learning. As a result, the development of innovative characters as expected in the Independent Curriculum has not been fully realized.

From the perspective of students, the paradigm shift in learning has also not been fully running optimally. Some students are still used to the conventional teacher-centered learning pattern, so they have difficulty engaging in project-based learning, collaborative work, and independent learning (Lucardo & Parlina, 2024). The Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project is often perceived as an additional workload, not as a meaningful learning experience. In addition, differences in students' academic backgrounds and economic conditions also affect their level of involvement and participation in contextual learning.

Madrasah leadership and management play an important role in determining the success of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum. Madrasah heads who apply a participatory leadership style and are oriented towards improving the quality of learning are able to encourage teacher readiness through supervision activities, training, and joint reflection forums. On the other hand, the integration of religious values in social studies learning is a peculiarity of madrasas, although in practice it is still faced with the limitations of the pedagogic competence of some teachers. Therefore, strengthening the teacher learning community, implementing formative evaluations on an ongoing basis, and instilling ethical and spiritual approaches in the educator profession are important steps to ensure that the implementation of the Independent Curriculum takes place meaningfully and sustainably (Courtesy of 2022).

**Supporting and Inhibiting Factors for the Implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum in Social Studies Subjects**

The implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum in social studies subjects at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri Bireuen Regency is influenced by various supporting and inhibiting factors that are interrelated in the management process. The success of curriculum implementation does not only depend on the readiness of teachers, but is also determined by institutional support, government policies, and social and cultural conditions of madrasas. Nugroho (2025) emphasized that the success of the Independent Curriculum is highly determined by the readiness of the school management as a whole, which includes the competence of teachers, the leadership of the head of the madrasah, the availability of infrastructure, and the ability of all elements of the school to adapt to changes in the learning paradigm.

The main supporting factors in the implementation of the Independent Social Studies Curriculum in MTsN Bireuen Regency include government policy support, the leadership role of madrasah heads, and teacher competence and creativity. The Ministry of Religion's policy through the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum (IKM) training and technical assistance activities has been proven to help teachers in understanding the preparation of teaching tools and the implementation of contextual learning, as conveyed by the head of the madrasah in an interview and strengthened by the findings Hamdina & Fuadi (2024). In addition, the collaborative and participatory leadership style of madrasah heads encourages the growth of a reflective culture through teacher learning communities and coaching-oriented academic supervision, in line with the findings Efendi et al., (2023) regarding the effectiveness of collaborative leadership in strengthening the implementation of the Independent Curriculum.

From the aspect of learning practice, the pedagogic competence and creativity of social studies teachers are the main determinants of the success of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum. Social studies teachers at MTsN Bireuen Regency began to relate materials with local issues, such as the coastal economy, trade in agricultural products, and Aceh's socio-cultural values, into project-based learning, as revealed in the interview results. This approach makes learning more relevant while encouraging the development of students' critical thinking skills, in line with the findings Dewi et al., (2025) which emphasizes that the space for freedom to innovate for teachers is the main strength of the Independent Curriculum. In addition, the support of the madrasah environment through the Madrasah Learning Community (KMB) and the high enthusiasm of students for project-based learning also strengthen the implementation of the curriculum, as stated by Jani, (2023) and Napitupulu & Murniarti (2024).

On the other hand, the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in MTsN Bireuen Regency is still faced with a number of obstacles, especially limited facilities and infrastructure, low digital literacy of teachers, high administrative burden, and narrow allocation of learning time. The inadequate availability of ICT facilities and limited internet access are obstacles in optimizing digital-based learning, as also found by (Dewi et al., 2025). In addition, teachers' digital literacy skills are still low, especially for senior teachers, making it difficult to use online learning platforms, in line with the findings Megawati & Sofiroh (2025). In addition, the high administrative demands and limited learning time make the implementation of project-based learning not able to run optimally, as stated by Rizki & Achadi (2024)

Another obstacle that is no less complex is the difference in the level of readiness of teachers and students, as well as the low support of parents for the implementation of the Independent Curriculum. Both teachers and students are still in the stage of adjusting to differentiated and student-centered learning, as stated by (Febriana, 2024). In response to these conditions, madrassas in Bireuen Regency implemented various adaptive strategies, including through strengthening continuous training, utilizing local resources as contextual learning media, as well as strengthening reflective academic supervision and developing teacher learning communities. These efforts have been proven to help teachers overcome limited facilities while improving the quality of social studies learning to be more relevant to the local social and cultural context.

## CONCLUSION

The success of the management of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in social studies subjects at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri is highly dependent on collaboration between madrasah components, participatory leadership, and teachers' readiness to understand and implement the curriculum. Thus, improving teacher competence,

providing supporting facilities, and strengthening the evaluation system are important factors to ensure the sustainability of the implementation of an effective and contextual Independent Curriculum. Madrasah heads are expected to strengthen the management of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in a participatory and data-based manner as well as build a culture of teacher supervision, coaching and collaboration. Social studies teachers need to improve pedagogic competence and digital literacy through MGMP, training, and the Merdeka Teaching platform. Supervisors and Head of Penmad of the Ministry of Religion are advised to strengthen field assistance, simplify supervision administration, and encourage the development of good practices and local modules. Researchers are then encouraged to examine the comparison of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum between public and private madrasas.

Further research can examine the implementation of the Independent Curriculum comparatively between state and private madrasas in Bireuen Regency, focusing on differences in management approaches, readiness of human resources and infrastructure, as well as adaptation strategies to the policies of the Ministry of Religion. In addition, further research can also explore the impact of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum on learning outcomes and strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile longitudinally, so as to obtain a more complete picture of the effectiveness of the curriculum in the long term and its implications for the development of madrasah education policies.

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