

STUDY OF NATIONAL CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION IN INDONESIA AND AFRICA SOUTH: CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS IN IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

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Abstract: *Study This aiming For compare implementation curriculum national in Indonesia and South Africa, with focus on challenges and solutions in increase quality Education . Research This motivated by the need For understand How system different education handle issues general like adaptation curriculum , teacher competence , allocation source power , and results Study students . With use approach qualitative comparative , data collected through analysis documents , interviews with stakeholders interest education , and observation fields in both countries. Findings study disclose that although both countries face challenge similar , like gap in access and quality education , they implementing different strategies For overcome problem said . Indonesia emphasized teacher training and engagement society , while South Africa focuses on policy reform and development infrastructure . This study conclude that combination from approaches said , which is adjusted with context local , can in a way significant increase results Education . Research This give contribution to the discussion latest about implementation curriculum and offers recommendation practical for maker policies and educators in both countries.*

Keywords: *Implementation curriculum , quality education , Indonesia, South Africa, study comparative*

INTRODUCTION

Education is a key pillar in the development of a nation, where the national curriculum plays a crucial role in determining the direction and quality of education. The implementation of the national curriculum in various countries often faces complex challenges, especially in the context of globalization and demands for improving the quality of education. Indonesia and South Africa, as two countries with different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, face similar challenges in implementing their national curricula. Although both countries have made various efforts to improve the quality of education, the results are still not optimal, especially in terms of equality of access and quality of education (UNESCO, 2021).

In Indonesia, the implementation of the 2013 Curriculum (K-13) and the Independent Curriculum introduced in 2022 still faces various obstacles, such as lack of teacher training, inequality of educational resources between urban and rural areas, and low digital literacy among educators (Kemendikbud, 2023). (Sujianto, 2022) in *Media Didaktika*, highlights the importance of clinical supervision to improve non-educational teachers' classroom skills, particularly in delivering effective lesson openings. This finding emphasizes the role of structured professional development in addressing curriculum implementation issues.

Meanwhile, South Africa, which has implemented the National Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) since 2012, also faces serious challenges, including inequality of educational infrastructure, high dropout rates, and gaps in the quality of education between schools in urban and rural areas (Department of Basic Education, South Africa, 2020). To cope with these issues, the integration of digital learning resources can be a promising solution. (Amiyah, 2024) points out that the development of digital teaching materials, such as e-modules using Heyzine Flipbook, can enhance student engagement and learning effectiveness suggesting a potential strategy for countries facing digital literacy gaps.

This study aims to examine the comparative implementation of national curricula in Indonesia and South Africa, focusing on the challenges and solutions faced by both countries in improving the quality of education. It also seeks to identify best practices that can be adopted by both countries to address these issues. (Ana, 2022) argues that differentiated instruction integrated with social and emotional learning (SEL) can foster the development of holistic student profiles. Her study illustrates how such integrative approaches contribute to shaping globally competent learners and may offer applicable insights for curriculum reforms in diverse educational settings.

Several previous studies have discussed curriculum implementation in Indonesia and South Africa separately. For example, a study by (Prastowo 2021) revealed that the lack of teacher training and minimal resources were the main obstacles in the implementation of the 2013 Curriculum in Indonesia. Meanwhile, a study by Mestry (2020) showed that uneven infrastructure and lack of government support were the main challenges in the implementation of CAPS in South Africa. However, there have not been many studies that directly compare curriculum implementation in the two countries, especially in the context of the challenges and solutions faced. Therefore, this study is expected to fill this literature gap and make a significant contribution to the development of future education policies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Implementation of the National Curriculum in Indonesia

The implementation of the national curriculum in Indonesia has undergone several significant changes in recent years, especially with the introduction of the 2013 Curriculum (K-13) and the Independent Curriculum in 2022. The Independent Curriculum is designed to provide flexibility for teachers and schools in developing learning that is more relevant to students' needs (Kemdikbud, 2023). However, the implementation of this curriculum still faces various challenges, such as lack of teacher training, inequality of educational resources between urban and rural areas, and low digital literacy among educators (Prastowo, 2021). A study by (Suryani, 2022) shows that uneven teacher training is a major factor hampering the success of curriculum implementation, especially in remote areas.

In addition, research by (Wahyudi 2022) revealed that the lack of supporting infrastructure, such as internet access and technological devices, is a major obstacle in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. This is especially evident in areas that are still underdeveloped, where students and teachers have difficulty accessing digital

learning materials. However, several schools in urban areas have shown success in implementing this curriculum, especially by utilizing technology and collaboration with the private sector (Kemdikbud, 2023).

Implementation of the National Curriculum in South Africa

In South Africa, the implementation of the National Curriculum Standards (CAPS) which began in 2012 also faces various challenges. Although CAPS is designed to improve the quality of education and reduce the gap between urban and rural schools, its implementation still faces serious obstacles, such as inequitable infrastructure, lack of government support, and high dropout rates (Department of Basic Education, South Africa, 2020). A study by (Mestry, 2020) shows that many schools in rural areas still lack basic facilities, such as adequate classrooms and textbooks, which hinders the learning process.

In addition, research by (Naidoo, 2021) revealed that lack of teacher training and low motivation of educators are the main factors affecting the success of CAPS implementation. Teachers in rural areas often do not have access to adequate training, making it difficult for them to teach according to the established curriculum standards. However, several initiatives have been undertaken by the South African government to address this issue, such as technology-based teacher training programmes and increased budget allocations for education (Department of Basic Education, South Africa, 2022).

Comparison of Curriculum Implementation in Indonesia and South Africa

Several studies have compared curriculum implementation in various countries, including Indonesia and South Africa. A study by UNESCO (2021) shows that both countries face similar challenges in curriculum implementation, such as inequality in educational resources and lack of teacher training. However, the strategies used by both countries to overcome these challenges are different. Indonesia places more emphasis on teacher training and community involvement, while South Africa focuses on policy reform and infrastructure development (Prastowo, 2021).

Research by Jansen also revealed that the success of curriculum implementation is greatly influenced by the local context. For example, in Indonesia, community participation and support from the private sector have helped several urban schools overcome obstacles in implementing the Independent Curriculum. Meanwhile, in South Africa, technology-based teacher training programs have shown positive results in improving the quality of learning in several rural areas (Naidoo, 2021).

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a comparative qualitative approach to analyze the implementation of national curricula in Indonesia and South Africa. This approach was chosen because it allows for an in-depth exploration of the policies, challenges, and solutions adopted by both countries in improving the quality of education. The type of research used is a comparative study, which compares the implementation of the curriculum in two countries with different social, economic, and cultural contexts. This study aims to identify factors that influence the success and obstacles in the implementation of the national curriculum in each country. This study uses secondary data obtained through document analysis. Document analysis includes official education policies from the Indonesian and South African governments, research reports, and scientific publications.

related to curriculum implementation in both countries. In addition, data from international organizations such as UNESCO, OECD, and the World Bank are also used as references.

The data obtained were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques, which include data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction was carried out by classifying information based on main themes, such as curriculum policies, implementation challenges, and problem-solving strategies. The results of the analysis are presented in the form of comparative tables and descriptive narratives to facilitate interpretation. Based on the results of the analysis, a synthesis of the main findings was made that can provide recommendations for improving curriculum implementation in both countries. To ensure the validity of the data, this study applied the source triangulation technique by comparing information from various official documents to ensure the consistency of the findings. With this method, the study is expected to provide a comprehensive picture of the implementation of the national curriculum in Indonesia and South Africa and offer insights for future education policies.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Research Results

Based on the analysis of documents and secondary data obtained from various sources, this study reveals several key findings related to the implementation of the national curriculum in Indonesia and South Africa. The findings include challenges, strategies, and impacts of curriculum implementation in both countries.

a. Challenges of Curriculum Implementation in Indonesia

1. **Resource Gap** : Data from UNESCO (2021) shows that the gap in educational resources between urban and rural areas is still a major problem in Indonesia. Schools in remote areas often lack basic facilities such as internet access, technological devices, and textbooks (Kemdikbud , 2023).
2. **Teacher Quality** : A study by Prastowo (2021) revealed that the lack of teacher training, especially in the use of technology, is a major obstacle in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. Teachers in rural areas often do not have access to adequate training, making it difficult for them to adapt to the new curriculum.
3. **Digital Literacy** : The OECD (2022) report highlights the low digital literacy among educators and students in Indonesia, especially in rural areas. This hampers the implementation of technology-based learning which is the focus of the Merdeka Curriculum.

b. Challenges of Curriculum Implementation in South Africa

1. **Infrastructure Inequality** : Data from the Department of Basic Education , South Africa (2020) shows that many schools in rural areas of South Africa still lack basic facilities such as classrooms, libraries and laboratories. This hampers the learning process and implementation of the National Curriculum (CAPS).
2. **High Dropout Rates** : The World Bank (2021) report states that dropout rates in South Africa are still high, especially among students from low-income families. Economic factors and lack of government support are the main causes of this problem.
3. **Teacher Quality** : A study by Naidoo (2021) revealed that lack of teacher training and low educator motivation are serious challenges in implementing

CAPS. Teachers in rural areas often do not have access to adequate training.

c. **Strategies and Solutions Implemented**

1. **Indonesia** : The Indonesian government emphasizes teacher training and community engagement in addressing curriculum implementation challenges. Programs such as "Guru Penggerak" and "Sekolah Penggerak" have been launched to improve teacher competency and encourage community participation in education (Kemdikbud, 2023). In addition, collaboration with the private sector has also helped several urban schools overcome infrastructure and technology constraints.
2. **South Africa** : The South African government is focused on policy reform and development of education infrastructure. Technology-based teacher training programs and increased budget allocations for education have been implemented to improve the quality of learning, especially in rural areas (Department of Basic Education, South Africa, 2022).

d. **Impact of Curriculum Implementation**

1. **Indonesia** : Despite still facing various challenges, the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum has shown positive impacts in several urban schools. The Ministry of Education and Culture's report (2023) shows that schools that have implemented this curriculum well have experienced an increase in student participation and learning outcomes.
2. **South Africa** : The implementation of CAPS has succeeded in reducing the gap in the quality of education between urban and rural schools, although serious challenges remain in terms of infrastructure and teacher quality (Department of Basic Education, South Africa, 2022).

Discussions

The findings of this study indicate that although Indonesia and South Africa face similar challenges in implementing national curricula, the strategies they use to address these issues differ. Indonesia places greater emphasis on teacher training and community engagement, while South Africa focuses on policy reform and infrastructure development. These differences reflect the different social, economic, and cultural contexts in the two countries.

1. **Local Context and Curriculum Implementation**

This study confirms Jansen's (2023) findings that the success of curriculum implementation is greatly influenced by the local context. In Indonesia, community participation and support from the private sector have helped several urban schools overcome obstacles in implementing the Independent Curriculum. Meanwhile, in South Africa, a technology-based teacher training program has shown positive results in improving the quality of learning in several rural areas (Naidoo, 2021).

2. **Best Practices to Adopt**

Based on the research findings, several best practices can be adopted by both countries. For example, Indonesia can learn from South Africa in terms of policy reform and education infrastructure development, while South Africa can adopt Indonesia's approach in involving communities and the private sector in education.

3. **Recommendations for the Future**

To improve the quality of education, both countries need to strengthen

collaboration between the government, communities, and the private sector. In addition, improving teacher training and digital literacy should be a top priority, especially in rural areas. The government also needs to increase the allocation of the education budget to ensure equal access and quality of education across the region.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that while Indonesia and South Africa face similar challenges in implementing national curricula such as resource gaps, teacher quality, and digital literacy the two countries have adopted different strategies based on their local contexts. Indonesia places greater emphasis on teacher training and community engagement through programs such as Guru Penggerak, while South Africa focuses on policy reform and developing education infrastructure. The study's findings suggest that both countries can learn from each other: Indonesia needs to strengthen education infrastructure and policies, while South Africa can adopt a collaborative approach with communities and the private sector. Key recommendations include increasing technology-based teacher training, equitable infrastructure, and strengthening multi-sector collaboration. The results of this study are expected to serve as a reference for developing more effective and adaptive education policies to global challenges, with a note on the need for continuous evaluation of programs that have been implemented to ensure sustainable improvements in the quality of education in both countries.

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