



Analysis of curriculum development and implementation at SMP Negeri 12 Bandung

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ABSTRACT

Careful evaluation at the school level is necessary because the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka is inseparable from practical obstacles. The main challenges of implementation include the readiness of human resources, infrastructure, and supporting regulations. Therefore, case study-based research at SMP Negeri 12 Bandung is expected to reveal these specific factors. This study aims to analyze the development and implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka. The Kurikulum Merdeka was designed as a response to the post-pandemic learning crisis and aims to provide flexibility to education units in managing learning according to local characteristics and the needs of students. The descriptive qualitative method with a case study approach was chosen to examine the problem through interviews, observation, and documentation. The results showed that the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka at SMP Negeri 12 Bandung was carried out in stages with several contextual adjustments. The school has integrated the Proyek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila and implemented differentiated learning as the primary strategy. However, challenges such as a lack of in-depth understanding among teachers and limited infrastructure remain obstacles that need to be overcome. This study recommends continuous training for teachers and systematic support from the government to improve the effectiveness of curriculum implementation.

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ABSTRAK

Evaluasi yang cermat di tingkat sekolah sangat diperlukan karena implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka tidak terlepas dari hambatan praktis. Tantangan utama implementasi mencakup kesiapan sumber daya manusia, infrastruktur, dan regulasi pendukung. Oleh karena itu, penelitian berbasis studi kasus di SMP Negeri 12 Bandung diharapkan dapat mengungkap faktor-faktor spesifik tersebut. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengembangan dan implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka. Kurikulum Merdeka dirancang sebagai respons terhadap krisis pembelajaran pasca-pandemi dan bertujuan memberikan keleluasaan kepada satuan pendidikan dalam mengelola pembelajaran sesuai dengan karakteristik lokal dan kebutuhan peserta didik. Metode deskriptif kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kasus dipilih untuk mengkaji permasalahan melalui wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka di SMP Negeri 12 Bandung dilakukan secara bertahap dengan beberapa penyesuaian kontekstual. Sekolah telah mengintegrasikan Proyek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila dan menerapkan pembelajaran berdiferensiasi sebagai strategi utama. Namun, tantangan seperti kurangnya pemahaman mendalam dari guru dan keterbatasan sarana prasarana masih menjadi hambatan yang perlu diatasi. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan pelatihan berkelanjutan bagi guru dan dukungan sistematis dari pemerintah untuk meningkatkan efektivitas implementasi kurikulum.

Kata Kunci: implementasi kurikulum; inovasi pembelajaran; Kurikulum Merdeka; pendidikan menengah; Profil Pelajar Pancasila

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INTRODUCTION

Curriculum is an important component in the education system that determines the direction, content, and learning process. Indonesia, as a country with high political and social dynamics, has undergone several curriculum changes since its independence. These changes were made to adapt to the evolving times, the demands of globalization, and national development needs. However, too frequent curriculum changes without thorough evaluation have caused problems in the field, such as confusion among educators and students and disruption of the continuity of the learning process (Said, 2017). The government has implemented the Kurikulum Merdeka, developed from the Kurikulum 2013, as a response to improving the quality of education. This curriculum offers more flexibility and autonomy to educational units in designing learning processes that cater to local needs, potentials, and characteristics. With this bottom-up model, it is expected that the relevance and quality of education in Indonesia will improve, as schools can optimize the curriculum according to their respective contexts.

The Kurikulum Merdeka is positioned as an adaptive and student-centered learning framework. It provides a flexible framework that restores the learning system post-pandemic, making the learning experience relevant for students in both formal and non-formal pathways (Okta *et al.*, 2024). This approach aims to foster independent personalities and enhance students' critical thinking skills by providing learning tailored to individual needs. The COVID-19 pandemic experience illustrated a significant learning crisis, as face-to-face learning was temporarily halted. The Kurikulum Merdeka is one of the government's efforts to address the post-pandemic learning crisis (Ariga, 2022). This curriculum is designed to aid learning recovery by providing a more flexible and relevant framework. Thus, it is expected that the quality of learning, which had declined due to the pandemic, can quickly recover. The development of information and communication technology (ICT) has become a fundamental foundation in the transformation of modern education. Teachers and students are increasingly inseparable from the use of digital devices in daily learning activities, including those related to implementing the Kurikulum Merdeka (Ghafara *et al.*, 2023).

The Kurikulum Merdeka responds to these developments by integrating digital literacy, knowledge, skills, and 21st-century attitudes into the learning process. Through this approach, students are expected to master digital devices and develop technological literacy that supports learning and readiness to face global challenges (Anggraeni & Fitria, 2023). In the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka, the role of teachers is crucial. Teachers become the central pillar of Merdeka Belajar's success (Ariga, 2022). Teachers serve as facilitators and leaders of the learning process, directing, motivating, and guiding students to be actively engaged in project-based learning. Additionally, teachers are responsible for designing teaching materials and diagnostic assessments that cater to the unique characteristics of their students. The success of implementing the Kurikulum Merdeka heavily depends on teachers' competence in managing learning innovatively. Teachers not only act as instructors but also as designers, managers, innovators, and evaluators in the learning process, all of which contribute to the effective implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka (Putri & Nukman, 2024).

The role of schools is vital in the development of the Kurikulum Merdeka. The curriculum policies implemented provide educational units with the flexibility to adapt the learning process to local contexts. At SMP Negeri 12 Bandung, for example, the principal and stakeholders must actively develop an operational curriculum based on regional and student needs. This effort includes enhancing teacher competence through training, providing adequate facilities and infrastructure, and collaborating with various parties to support the effective implementation of learning. Previous research has shown that the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka has a positive impact on improving students' understanding, creativity, and critical thinking skills (Risna, 2023).

Unlike previous studies that examined the effectiveness and implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka, this study specifically evaluates the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka. Careful evaluation at the school level is essential because the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka is not free from practical obstacles. The main challenges in implementation include the readiness of human resources, infrastructure, and supporting regulations. Therefore, a case study-based research at SMP Negeri 12 Bandung is expected to reveal these specific factors. The results of this study will provide stakeholders with concrete input to improve learning strategies and curriculum policies, particularly at the junior high school level. Specifically, this study aims to analyze the process of curriculum development and implementation at SMP Negeri 12 Bandung, focusing on the strategies applied, challenges faced, and good practices that can be replicated in other educational units.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Curriculum Development: Models and Procedures

Curriculum development is defined as the process of planning and composing the curriculum by developers, resulting in teaching materials and a reference to achieve educational goals (Nurhayati *et al.*, 2025). This process must not be carried out carelessly, but instead based on a solid foundation, considering national education standards, local needs, and the needs of students. Curriculum development procedures generally include the stages of planning, organizing, personnel assignment, and curriculum control. In the context of schools, the success of curriculum development is greatly influenced by effective communication and adequate resource support. Hilda Taba later developed an inductive model that prioritizes needs analysis and specific steps in the preparation of learning materials. Additionally, cyclical models such as those proposed by Wheeler and the dynamic model from Skilbeck are often used to illustrate the comprehensive curriculum design process. Teachers can choose appropriate curriculum development models, including the Tyler model, the Taba model (converter model), the Wheeler model, and Skilbeck's dynamic model (Ramadhan *et al.*, 2023).

Besides model selection, curriculum development also involves specific operational procedures. Curriculum development procedures include curriculum planning activities, curriculum organization, personnel recording, and overall curriculum management (Ramadhan *et al.*, 2023). These procedures encompass determining curriculum objectives and content, arranging lessons and schedules, preparing learning devices, and establishing evaluation mechanisms. Important steps in curriculum development are needs analysis, goal formulation, selection of learning materials, organization of content and learning experiences, as well as proper assessment to ensure the resulting curriculum is coherent and effective (Sobriyah, 2025). In detail, the curriculum development process begins with a needs assessment, followed by the formulation of goals and vision, selection and organization of learning materials, preparation of learning plans such as syllabi and lesson plans (RPP), implementation of learning, and evaluation and assessment of learning outcomes using various methods (formative and summative). It outlines the criteria for selecting learning media, which include alignment with instructional objectives, characteristics of learners, time, cost, availability, and technical quality. These criteria are important to ensure that the learning materials and media effectively and efficiently support the achievement of curriculum goals (Miftah & Rohkman, 2022).

Curriculum Implementation: Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

Curriculum implementation is the stage where the curriculum design is applied in real learning activities. Curriculum implementation is the practice of applying curriculum ideas, concepts, and policies into the teaching and learning process, thereby influencing changes in students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The success of curriculum implementation largely depends on the availability of information regarding the implementation plan and support from all necessary resources. Commitment from school leadership, teacher readiness, and supporting resources (including facilities and infrastructure, textbooks, and technology) are key factors in successful curriculum implementation (Ramadhan *et al.*, 2023). Other research has found that factors such as school principal leadership, the active roles of teachers and students, availability of facilities, and support from the school committee also determine the success or failure of curriculum implementation in schools (Munthe, 2020).

Conversely, various obstacles are often encountered when applying new curricula. For example, the implementation of the Kurikulum 2013 identified obstacles such as low basic literacy and numeracy skills among students, low learning motivation, suboptimal implementation of the scientific approach, as well as limitations in infrastructure, including a shortage of textbooks and learning technology facilities (Saputra & Stiawan, 2024). These resource limitations can hinder teachers in designing and conducting learning activities in accordance with curriculum demands. Other recorded obstacles include a lack of understanding among teachers and stakeholders regarding curriculum changes, heavy administrative burdens, and insufficient opportunities for professional training for teachers. Therefore, both supporting factors (such as the availability of teacher training, motivation of policymakers, and good coordination) and inhibiting factors (such as lack of facilities, teacher readiness, and system resilience) must be identified to ensure effective curriculum implementation (Ramadhan *et al.*, 2023).

Kurikulum Merdeka: Concept and Implications

The Kurikulum Merdeka is a new curriculum introduced as an improvement to the Kurikulum 2013 through the "Merdeka Belajar" policy. The Kurikulum Merdeka is an educational approach that grants greater autonomy to schools, teachers, and students in designing, managing, and evaluating the learning process (Fitra, 2023). In this approach, learning is no longer confined to rigid schemes or standardized norms but is adapted to the needs, interests, and potential of each student. In other words, the Kurikulum Merdeka is designed to make the educational process more relevant and contextual for students. As a practical implementation, when Minister Nadiem Makarim introduced the four central policies of Merdeka Belajar: replacing the National Standardized School Examination/Ujian Sekolah Berstandar Nasional (USBN) with internal school assessments, transforming the National Examination/Ujian Nasional into the Minimum Competency Assessment/Asesmen Kompetensi Minimum (AKM) and Character Survey, simplifying the Lesson Plan/Rencana Pelaksanaan Pembelajaran (RPP), and providing flexibility in new student admissions. These four policies are outlined in the Keputusan Menteri Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Nomor 56/M/2022 as guidelines for learning recovery post-pandemic.

The core concept of the Kurikulum Merdeka emphasizes competency-centered and freedom-based learning. There are three main elements: (1) competency-based learning that integrates knowledge, skills, and attitudes continuously; (2) flexible learning organized in phases of 2-3 years so that students can learn according to their needs and individual styles; and (3) strengthening Pancasila character through routine activities. Teachers are given the freedom to implement various learning strategies that suit the context of their students. The implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka focuses on project-based learning to develop 21st-century skills and the character of the Profil Pelajar Pancasila. This approach also emphasizes essential material to allow time for in-depth learning of basic competencies such as literacy and numeracy (Kurniati *et al.*, 2022). Furthermore, this flexibility enables teachers to design differentiated learning experiences tailored to students' abilities.

In terms of benefits, the Kurikulum Merdeka is viewed as capable of simplifying teaching materials to focus more on the main topics. This curriculum is designed to provide more space for in-depth exploration of material and to strengthen the core competencies essential for students. The simplification of content in the Kurikulum Merdeka allows students to understand the material deeply without rushing to complete too many targets (Fatah *et al.*, 2023). Additionally, teachers gain flexibility to design learning that aligns with students' developmental stages and achievements. Schools are also given the authority to adapt the curriculum according to the local context, thereby creating more relevant and contextual learning (Wicaksono & Rahman, 2023). The implication of this concept is the importance of enhancing teachers' capacity as adaptive learning facilitators, as well as the need for systemic support from the government and schools in the form of training, mentoring, and provision of supporting facilities. The Kurikulum Merdeka has the potential to increase students' learning motivation and support the formation of character aligned with the values of the Profil Pelajar Pancasila through proper implementation (Sistia *et al.*, 2023).

The Kurikulum Merdeka emphasizes the integration of Pancasila values into the learning process as an effort to shape resilient and globally competitive student character. This curriculum is designed to produce future generations who are not only academically and digitally competent but also firmly uphold national values such as cooperation, responsibility, and self-confidence (Hanifah *et al.*, 2025). Previously known as the Prototype Curriculum, it adopts a flexible, student-centered approach to essential learning, including through the Proyek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila (P5) activities, which facilitate creativity and innovation in learning (Shakina *et al.*, 2025). The instillation of these values is carried out through contextual and project-based approaches tailored to the local conditions and needs of the school (Yuniarto *et al.*, 2022). One of the distinctive features of the Kurikulum Merdeka is the implementation of project-based learning (PjBL) that provides meaningful learning experiences and fosters student character through active involvement in completing projects relevant to real life (Wulandari & Nawangsari, 2024).

The Proyek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila (P5) projects are developed based on specific themes, without being tied to the learning outcomes of particular subjects, thus giving students the space to deepen their understanding and strengthen their competencies (Hanifah *et al.*, 2025). This varied intracurricular approach also gives teachers the flexibility to choose learning resources according to students' interests and needs, while facilitating creativity and innovation in the learning process (Qothrunada & Putri, 2024). The Kurikulum Merdeka aligns with the demands of 21st-century education, which emphasizes the importance of student learning independence. The concept of "Merdeka Belajar" (Freedom to Learn) grants students the freedom to explore knowledge according to their interests and talents, encouraging them to become independent learners who take responsibility for their own learning process (Magdalena & Yulianti, 2022). This freedom creates opportunities for students to develop broad literacy, as well as critical and creative thinking skills essential for facing the challenges of the 21st century.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach, utilizing semi-structured interviews as the primary data collection technique. The selection of this method aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the curriculum development and implementation process, particularly in the Informatics subject at SMP Negeri 12 Bandung. A case study was chosen as the research approach to investigate curriculum implementation at SMP Negeri 12 Bandung. This method allows the researcher to collect data from various sources (interviews, observations, documentation) to understand practices and challenges contextually. The case

study provides comprehensive insights into specific field practices, making it suitable for exploring how the Kurikulum Merdeka is implemented and adapted by teachers at this school.

Semi-structured interviews were selected because they offer the researcher flexibility to explore information in depth from the informants while remaining focused on the research themes. The list of questions used is open-ended, allowing informants to provide broad and contextual answers, yet within the boundaries of the predetermined issues. The interviews were conducted face-to-face with the Informatics teacher, who served as the primary informant. Iba and Wardhana, in their book "*Teknik Pengumpulan Data Penelitian*", argue that this method enables researchers to gain a more profound and nuanced understanding of the subject and allows flexibility in data collection and explanation. This interview technique is designed to adjust the sequence and depth of questions according to the informant's responses, so that the data obtained is in-depth and rich in information. The interview focuses on curriculum planning, implementation challenges, available support, and strategies applied within the context of the Kurikulum Merdeka.

The informants are Informatics teachers and curriculum staff who actively teach and are involved in the process of curriculum development and implementation at SMP Negeri 12 Bandung. The data collection process is carried out in several stages, namely: 1) preparation of the interview guide; 2) conducting interviews with the primary informants; 3) recording and transcribing the interview results; 4) thematic data analysis to identify patterns, challenges, and strategies in curriculum implementation. Data analysis is conducted by reviewing the interview transcripts and grouping the data based on themes relevant to the research objectives. Data validation is performed through limited source triangulation, namely by comparing interview results with supporting documents obtained during the research process. This approach is expected to provide a comprehensive and in-depth overview of the development and implementation process of the Kurikulum Merdeka in the Informatics subject at SMP Negeri 12 Bandung.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION



Figure 1. Implementation of Interviews with the Curriculum Team at SMP Negeri 12 Bandung
Source: Author's Documentation 2025

Figure 1 was taken after conducting a direct interview with the curriculum team of SMP Negeri 12 Bandung. In the interview, several pre-prepared questions were asked to gather information related to the development and implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka, particularly in the Informatics subject. The questions were open-ended and tailored to the research objectives, allowing the informants to provide broad, contextual, and in-depth answers.

Implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka at SMP Negeri 12 Bandung

SMP 12 Bandung, as part of the first batch of Sekolah Penggerak, has implemented the Kurikulum Merdeka (KM) since the 2021/2022 academic year. The curriculum management process at this school involves preparing a comprehensive Kurikulum Operasional Satuan Pendidikan (KOSP), which includes annual and semester programs, teaching modules for each subject, as well as schedules for Proyek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila (P5) and extracurricular activities. Teachers collaborate on learning achievement reviews with MGMP to integrate competencies across subjects, in line with the principles of flexibility and collaboration in KM. The interview results with the principal indicate that the success of this implementation is supported by a clear vision, government support (through the driving school program), and the active involvement of the entire school community. Schools implementing the KM must develop a KOSP and differentiated learning programs holistically (Irnanta, 2024).

Curriculum Revision and Evaluation at the Education Unit Level

KM management at SMP 12 is dynamic; teachers conduct real-time reflection and revision of lesson plans (RPP) when discrepancies are identified between plans and field practices. Evaluation is conducted through supervision by the principal and supervisors, which includes classroom observations and an analysis of planning and assessment documents. Teacher training plays a crucial role in supporting this. Workshops are important in preparing KOSP to enhance teachers' understanding of KM, where face-to-face training successfully improves teachers' competence in designing operational curricula (Pawartani & Suciptaningsih, 2024). Teachers become more capable of adjusting teaching modules and lesson plans according to students' needs with continuous guidance.

Informatics Subject and Its Challenges

The Kurikulum Merdeka designates Informatics as a mandatory subject at the junior high school level, replacing ICT/Crafts in the previous curriculum. This change reflects a shift in focus toward digital literacy and computational thinking as essential 21st-century competencies. Project-based learning (PBL), flipped classroom, and blended learning models are the most effective methods for Informatics subjects in junior high schools, as they enhance students' understanding and skills in the field (Syawalia *et al.*, 2023). However, a significant challenge also arises in terms of teacher readiness and the availability of supporting facilities. Interview and observation findings indicate that many teachers are not yet accustomed to teaching informatics material, and not all schools have adequate computer laboratories or internet connections. Many teachers still require ongoing training to effectively integrate digital technology into their teaching practices (Cantika *et al.*, 2022). Limited access to technology and learning resources remains a significant obstacle; the suggested solution is to enhance teacher training and provide supporting technological facilities (Masurah *et al.*, 2024).

Infrastructure Support and Digital Transformation

In supporting digital transformation, SMP 12 has adopted electronic-based administrative and evaluation systems (such as attendance reports and online exams). Government policies strongly support this: the School Operational Assistance Fund/Dana Bantuan Operasional Sekolah (BOS) is allowed to be used flexibly for the procurement of digital devices (computers, tablets) and improving internet access. Major infrastructure projects, such as the Palapa Ring, have also improved connectivity to previously hard-to-reach areas. The use of technology has become a key aspect of the Kurikulum Merdeka; it has been found that active utilization of information technology in learning can enhance students' literacy and 21st-century skills (Masurah *et al.*, 2024). The school's initiative to allocate resources (such as computers and Chromebooks) aligns with national policy recommendations emphasizing the strengthening of human resources and digital support facilities.

Discussion

This study reveals several important findings related to the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka in Informatics subjects at SMP Negeri 12 Bandung. In general, Informatics teachers report using more flexible learning strategies that are based on students' interests, such as project-based learning and group discussions. These findings indicate that the Kurikulum Merdeka encourages increased creativity, independence, and collaboration among students (Risna, 2023). Learning approaches such as problem-based learning and project-based learning, as recommended and also evidently pursued by Informatics teachers, demonstrate that they actively develop innovative teaching modules and interactive teaching methods (Simbolon *et al.*, 2025). In line with 21st-century education theory, this strategy emphasizes the development of students' critical and creative thinking skills, in accordance with the Profil Pelajar Pancasila (Nurhayati *et al.*, 2025). Furthermore, school leadership support and collaboration among teachers are good practices that strengthen implementation (Amanulloh & Wasila, 2024).

Despite many innovative practices, teachers face several challenges. Some teachers still lack a clear understanding of the core components of the Kurikulum Merdeka (for example, the difference between Learning Outcomes and Learning Objectives), making it challenging to design lesson plans that fully comply (Jamilah *et al.*, 2023). The interview results align with reports indicating that teachers' understanding of curriculum tools remains low (Tanggur, 2023). Other challenges include limited facilities and the need for teacher training. The importance of having computer laboratories and active internet access to support Informatics learning is emphasized (Wahdini *et al.*, 2024). Teacher readiness and

technological infrastructure are key determinants of success, consistent with the obstacles identified by Nurhayati et al. (2025). The lack of intensive training for teachers, as revealed by interview participants, also supports recommendations for the necessity of training and the formation of teacher learning communities to overcome implementation challenges (Munandar et al., 2025).

In the face of these obstacles, teachers adopt various adaptive strategies. They actively adjust materials and teaching methods according to the conditions of students and school facilities. Informatics teachers tailor learning to the availability of student and school resources, which aligns with good practices in other junior high schools (Farhan et al., 2023). Additionally, teachers utilize intensive training and inter-teacher collaboration to enhance teaching skills (Munandar et al., 2025). Other good practices include the use of innovative learning media and digital learning strategies. Informatics teachers make this subject compulsory and equip it with computer laboratories and adequate internet networks, supporting the teaching and learning process. This indicates that strengthening infrastructure and utilizing technology are part of best practices in implementing the Kurikulum Merdeka.

Further research confirms the effectiveness of project-based and problem-solving learning strategies in improving learning outcomes in Informatics subjects. The application of Project-Based Learning (PBL) significantly enhances Informatics learning outcomes (Ali & Hasanah, 2023). Through the PjBL approach, students gain meaningful learning experiences by constructing their own knowledge through real projects, thereby improving conceptual understanding and practical skills. Similarly, the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model also shows positive effects. There is a significant increase in Informatics learning outcomes after the implementation of PBL (Afifah et al., 2023). This method successfully encourages active student engagement in identifying and solving problems, developing collaboration skills, and enhancing higher-order reasoning abilities. These results reinforce recommendations regarding the importance of constructivist learning approaches in implementing the Kurikulum Merdeka (Simbolon et al., 2025).

Recent studies have found that improving teachers' digital competence through learning community mentoring has a positive correlation with the effectiveness of Informatics learning (Selviani et al., 2025). Technological infrastructure has proven to be one of the primary needs in implementing the Kurikulum Merdeka for Informatics subjects. This aspect includes the availability of computer devices, stable internet connectivity, as well as projectors and digital teaching aids. The use of technology in learning can increase student engagement and facilitate more effective collaborative approaches. Unequal distribution of facilities and infrastructure across all classes or subjects becomes a real obstacle in implementation. Teacher learning communities are an effective solution to overcome the challenges of implementing the Kurikulum Merdeka. Learning communities enhance their teaching competencies, especially in project-based and cooperative learning methods (Arifin & Hanif, 2024).

Learning communities enable young teachers to share knowledge with senior colleagues, helping them overcome technological barriers and facilitating easier adaptation to digital learning tools. According to the Dindikpora Yogyakarta website, learning communities are implementing the Kurikulum Merdeka to facilitate joint learning processes, problem-solving discussions, sharing best practices, and peer learning reflections (<https://dindikpora.jogjakota.go.id/detail/index/23025>). The success of implementing the Kurikulum Merdeka in the Informatics subject is closely tied to a strong regulatory foundation (Farhan et al., 2023).

Informatics became a mandatory subject at the junior high school level after the transition from the Kurikulum 2013 to the Kurikulum Merdeka. This change is based on considerations of the continuity of Informatics material with the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka, which emphasizes the development of digital skills as an integral part of the Profil Pelajar Pancasila (Nabilah et al., 2022). These findings collectively indicate that implementing the Kurikulum Merdeka in the Informatics subject at junior high schools requires a holistic approach involving teacher competency development, infrastructure strengthening, learning innovation, and sustained policy support. The success of the implementation

depends on the ability of schools and teachers to adapt to challenges and utilize various available resources, including learning communities and digital technology.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of this qualitative study, it can be concluded that the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka in the Informatics subject at SMP Negeri 12 Bandung involves several key strategies, namely the application of active learning methods (project-based and collaborative), the development of innovative teaching modules, and the adjustment of materials to the characteristics of students. The main challenges faced include the need to improve teachers' understanding of curriculum components, limited training, and inadequate support facilities and infrastructure. Best practices identified include inter-teacher collaboration, the utilization of information technology, and school leadership support in curriculum development. Thus, this study briefly addresses the research objectives: highlighting teachers' creative strategies in Informatics learning. These operational challenges must be overcome, as well as examples of effective practices that can be replicated. Critically, although this curriculum offers many opportunities for learning innovation, continuous improvement is necessary, particularly in terms of teacher training and resource provision, to truly achieve the curriculum's goals.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

This article is an original work and has never been published in other media nor is it under consideration for any other journal. The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest affecting the content or results of this study.

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