Analysis and Implementation of the Effectiveness of Independent Curriculum at the Kupompong Child Growth and Development Clinic Inclusive Education Institution in Surabaya

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Abstract

The study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of the Independent Inclusion Curriculum in enhancing learning outcomes for students with learning difficulties, such as slow learners, and those with emotional, behavioral, and intellectual barriers, as well as ADHD. It also examines differences in curriculum implementation across various educational institutions, including therapy centers for children with special needs. This qualitative phenomenological study involved observations, interviews, and documentation at the Kupompong Surabaya Child Growth and Development Clinic. Researchers collected data from seven participants, including five psychologists and two class facilitators, who supported children aged 16-18 using the inclusive Independent Curriculum. Utilizing Nvivo software for data analysis facilitated efficient management and interpretation of qualitative data. The study found that the Independent Curriculum significantly enhanced engagement and learning outcomes for students with various disabilities. Key improvements included better social skills, increased participation in classroom activities, and higher academic achievement. The curriculum's flexible and individualized approach, incorporating adaptive teaching methods and therapeutic interventions, effectively addressed each student's unique needs. The Independent Curriculum's inclusive design successfully supports students with diverse learning difficulties by providing personalized learning plans and employing adaptive teaching methods. This research aligns with the global trend in inclusive education by promoting tolerance, respect for diversity, and integration of students with special needs into mainstream education settings. This approach benefits students with disabilities and enriches the learning experience for all students by fostering a more diverse and inclusive environment.

Keywords: Independent Curriculum, Adaptive Teaching Methods, Individualized Learning Plans, Social Skills Development, Psychological Support

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Introduction

The curriculum comprises plans and arrangements with objectives, content, and learning materials, along with the means to direct learning activities toward achieving academic goals (Kemdikbud, 2019). Serving as the cornerstone of education, the curriculum guides every educational institution in delivering quality education. It outlines the purpose, route, and ultimate destination of the educational journey, acting like a map for an adventure. The curriculum not only lists materials but also provides direction, ensuring each educational step has clear purpose and meaning. Like a skilled writer, the curriculum considers each student's interests, learning styles, and special needs, making every learning experience valuable and meaningful. An effective curriculum should always be updated and adjusted to stay relevant and impactful. As the world, technology, and societal demands evolve, the curriculum must adapt. Beyond setting paths and giving directions, the curriculum shapes students' character and morals. Through it, students learn life values, social skills, and responsibilities as society members. Indeed, the curriculum is a critical component that ensures every step holds clear meaning and direction. As a faithful guide, the curriculum helps students become leading roles in their lives.

Children, as vital human resources and the future of both the family and the nation, deserve comprehensive education preparation (Indriastuti et al., 2020). In inclusive educational institutions, the curriculum guides each student toward knowledge, success, and social integration. This inclusion curriculum reflects the values of inclusion embraced in education, serving not only as an academic guide but also as a symbol of acceptance. An inclusive educational institution welcomes diverse life stories, with each student bringing unique experiences and challenges. The inclusive curriculum lays a foundation that honors this diversity by offering relevant teaching materials, various learning approaches, and fair assessments for all students. It fosters a welcoming and inclusive community by promoting cooperation, customization, and recognizing each student's uniqueness. The inclusive curriculum also embraces challenges, ensuring equal access for all students, creating diverse learning experiences, and making every student feel accepted and valued.

The independent curriculum marks an important milestone, serving as a declaration of educational freedom. It empowers students to break free from a rigid curriculum, explore their interests, lead their learning, and reach their full potential. While the journey toward independent education presents challenges such as strict curriculum standards, limited resources, and societal views on educational inclusion, the desire to establish independent and inclusive education remains strong. The independent curriculum drives this change, paving the way for a more equitable, inclusive, and empowering educational future. It gives students the opportunity to become leaders of their own learning.

The independent curriculum stands as a major milestone in inclusive educational institutions, bringing hope and inspiration for a better future for all students. According to the Merdeka Curriculum, inclusive students who can benefit include those with visual

impairments, hearing impairments, intellectual disabilities, motor disabilities, emotional and behavioral disabilities, slow learners, specific learning disabilities, special smart/talented learners, autistic spectrum disorder (ASD), and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

According to Article 5 Paragraphs 2, 3, and 4 of the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, children with special needs are (Arriani et al., 2021):

1. Children with physical, emotional, mental, intellectual, or social disabilities
2. Children who have special talents and intelligence
3. Children living in remote or underdeveloped areas and remote indigenous communities, so that every child is entitled to special service education.

Researcher define a visually impaired child as one with blurred vision when looking at objects and a visual acuity score of 20/200 feet or below. We must assist two types of visually impaired children with special learning: those with low vision and those who are totally blind. Researcher classify a child as deaf if they have mild hearing loss of 20-30dB to very severe hearing loss of more than 75dB. We consider a child intellectually disabled if they have an IQ score of 70 to below 25, and this includes children with Down syndrome. Learners with physical or motor challenges experience loss or damage to some body functions, affecting their physical abilities, such as those with cerebral palsy, polio, amputation, or progressive muscular dystrophy. Children with emotional or behavioral barriers do not face cognitive problems but may show anxiety, depression, difficulty building interpersonal relationships, and disharmony between behavior and feelings. They can use the regular curriculum with adaptations and special attention. Slow learners, with an IQ of 70-90, perform better than children with intellectual disabilities and can use the regular curriculum with necessary adaptations due to their thinking delays.

Learners with specific learning disabilities have average or above-average IQs but achieve learning outcomes far below standard expectations. Exceptionally intelligent and gifted learners possess above-average IQ scores (>130), high creativity, and strong task commitment. They often feel bored and frustrated by the lack of challenge at school. Children with ASD (Autistic Spectrum Disorder) exhibit various behavioral symptoms that cause difficulties and show abnormalities in brain development (Shulman, 2002). The final classification includes children with ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), who experience attention disorders and exhibit overly impulsive and active behavior.

The first study by (Arriani et al., 2021) supports the idea that an inclusive curriculum leads to better academic and social outcomes for students with disabilities. This research provides concrete evidence of improved student performance and well-being, demonstrating how the Merdeka Curriculum can create a learning climate that embraces and respects social, cultural, religious, and ethnic differences. The second study by (Sari & Pujiastuti, 2023) shows that implementing the Merdeka Curriculum increases overall student participation with a more independent approach and a focus on individual interests. However, the participation of

students with special needs remains limited due to classroom environment challenges, lack of resources, and uncertainties in managing diverse needs.

Using the Independent Inclusion Curriculum for children facing obstacles aims to enhance effectiveness, assisting teaching staff in inclusive schools and educational institutions like therapy clinics for children with special needs. This curriculum is expected to help children refine their skills and achieve positive outcomes, especially for those unable to participate in standard curriculum learning due to various challenges. Based on this background, the study aims to (a) analyze the effectiveness of learning with the Independent Inclusion Curriculum and (b) examine differences in curriculum implementation in educational institutions, including therapy centers for children with special needs.

Literature Review

Review of Related Theories

Comparing these results with previous studies reveals that the Independent Inclusive Curriculum aligns with global trends in inclusive education by emphasizing individual learning pathways and inclusive pedagogical practices. The first study by (Arriani et al., 2021) supports the idea that an inclusive curriculum leads to better academic and social outcomes for students with disabilities. This research provides concrete evidence of improved student performance and well-being, demonstrating how the Independent Curriculum can create a learning climate that embraces and respects social, cultural, religious, and ethnic differences. Implementing the Independent Curriculum is expected to foster an inclusive learning environment, promote tolerance, and increase the participation and achievement of students with special needs. Thus, the Independent Curriculum can effectively enhance the quality of inclusive education in Indonesia.

The second study by (Sari & Pujiastuti, 2023) shows that implementing the Independent Curriculum increases overall student participation with a more independent approach and a focus on individual interests. Student achievement improved significantly, especially in developing independence skills. However, students with special needs still face challenges due to the classroom environment, lack of resources, and managing diverse needs. These students encounter difficulties in meeting the set learning standards, highlighting the need for further adjustments in learning and assessment strategies. Observations indicate that many teachers need additional training to design inclusive learning that addresses students' diverse needs, impacting the overall implementation of the Independent Curriculum. While there are efforts to provide personalized and individualized support to students, more structured strategies are necessary to ensure adequate support for students with special needs. The Independent Curriculum has the potential to increase parental involvement through a more open and collaborative approach, positively contributing to the success of students with special needs. However, the implementation often overlooks the crucial role of parents.

Educational Institution

Educational institutions actively provide education to people of all ages, including preschools, childcare centers, primary-elementary schools, secondary-high schools, and universities. These institutions offer diverse learning environments and spaces designed to impart knowledge and skills, preparing students for their future roles in society. They cater to a wide age range, from young children in preschools to young adults in universities, offering educational programs and activities tailored to each developmental stage.

Preschools and childcare centers focus on early childhood education, fostering social, emotional, and cognitive development in young children. Primary-elementary schools build upon these foundational skills, introducing basic subjects like reading, writing, and arithmetic. Secondary-high schools expand the curriculum to include specialized subjects like science, mathematics, and languages, preparing students for higher education or the workforce.

Universities provide advanced degrees and specialized training in fields such as engineering, medicine, and the arts. They offer a variety of learning environments, including classrooms, laboratories, libraries, and computer facilities, along with extracurricular activities like sports, clubs, and cultural events, enhancing students' overall educational experience.

Educational institutions create supportive and inclusive environments where students can learn and grow at their own pace. They provide various learning spaces, such as individualized instruction, group projects, and hands-on activities, to cater to different learning styles and needs. Their ultimate goal is to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to succeed in academia, the workforce, or personal life. By providing comprehensive education, educational institutions play a vital role in shaping the minds and futures of the next generation (Unesco, 2024).

Child Growth and Development Clinic

The Child Growth and Development Clinic actively offers comprehensive diagnostic assessments and early interventions for children with significant developmental challenges. This specialized clinic focuses on children with complex and prolonged concerns, such as Global Developmental Delay, Autism, or Intellectual Disability. As a tertiary service, it accepts referrals from professionals including Paediatricians, Child and Family Health Nurses, Speech Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, and Early Childhood Educators.

When children face persistent and severe developmental issues, these professionals refer them to the clinic for specialized care and support. The clinic's multidisciplinary team collaborates to provide thorough assessments and develop individualized treatment plans tailored to each child's unique needs. By delivering early interventions and support, the clinic enhances developmental outcomes and improves the quality of life for children with significant developmental challenges (Balasundaram & Avulakunta, 2023).

From conception to adulthood, basic biological processes known as growth and development impact people's lives. A complex interplay between genetic and environmental

factors influences these processes, with each element being essential in dictating the course of growth and development. In order to address a variety of health and developmental difficulties that may have an impact on the wellbeing of individuals and communities, it is imperative to comprehend the components that influence growth and development. The following are a few variables that affect development and growth (T.M, 2009):

1. Genetic Factors: Genetic composition primarily influences growth and development, especially during adolescence.
2. Fetal Health: Good perinatal care is essential for promoting fetal health, which positively impacts postnatal growth.
3. Environmental Factors: Environmental factors, such as parental health and nutrition, can significantly benefit growth and development.

The Purpose of Child Growth and Development Clinic

The Child Growth and Development Clinic actively monitors and assesses the growth and development of children from birth to adulthood. The clinic identifies any deviations or irregularities, which may indicate underlying health issues or developmental abnormalities. It provides a platform for early detection and intervention, ensuring children receive timely and appropriate care to address potential problems.

Designed to offer comprehensive assessments, the clinic evaluates children's physical, cognitive, and behavioral aspects. This includes monitoring height, weight, and head circumference, as well as assessing cognitive and motor skills, language development, and emotional and behavioral maturity. The clinic also educates parents and caregivers on normal growth patterns and ways to support healthy development in their children.

By focusing on early detection and intervention, the Child Growth and Development Clinic ensures children receive the necessary support for optimal growth and development outcomes. This is particularly important for children at risk of developmental delays or other health issues due to factors such as nutritional deficiencies, genetic conditions, or environmental influences. Overall, the Child Growth and Development Clinic provides a comprehensive and supportive environment for children to grow and develop healthily. It identifies and addresses any potential issues early on, preventing long-term complications and promoting positive outcomes (Gantini et al., 2022; Haryanti et al., 2024; Saputro et al., 2023).

Independent curriculum

Teachers and students are allowed to create and learn on their own, which is a hallmark of the independent curriculum. This flexibility permits innovative and adaptable methods of instruction, allowing pupils to study ideas and hone their abilities. The curriculum emphasises the development of character and soft skills based on competencies, focusing on the needs and potential of students through individual learning. It strives to raise the standard of instruction by using engaging, imaginative, and enjoyable teaching strategies that boost comprehension and student participation (Handayani & Mantra, 2023; Yunaini et al., 2022).

The Independent Curriculum places a high priority on the intellectual, social, and emotional growth of students. Its goal is to raise the standard of education in Indonesia by giving pupils the tools they need to be successful in a variety of spheres of life. To promote 4C abilities including teamwork, creativity, critical thinking, and communication, the curriculum integrates a variety of learning methods, including Problem-Based Learning (PBL), Project-Based Learning (PJBL), Discovery Learning (DL), and Inquiry Learning (IL). With the flexibility and adaptability provided by the Independent Curriculum, teachers can customise their lesson plans to meet the needs and skill levels of their students. One of the main distinctions between this flexibility and earlier curriculum, such as K13 (Sholeh, 2022).

The Benefits of an Independent Curriculum

An independent curriculum authority would be more qualified to deal with the gaps in students' learning that Ofsted and other agencies have brought to light. Through a comprehensive assessment of the curriculum frameworks for students ages 0 to 19, we can guarantee that the educational system is built to meet the needs of every student, from pre-school to post-compulsory education.

The capacity of an autonomous curriculum to empower educators and build a more efficient and interesting learning environment is ultimately what makes it advantageous. By granting educators the freedom to design the greatest education possible for their kids, we can help them reach their full potential and prosper in a world that is constantly evolving. The following are some advantages of having a separate curriculum (Mauliddina & Irianto, 2023):

1. Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)
   Particular requirements Private educational establishments frequently draft IEPs that are specific to each student's needs and highlight both their areas of strength and weakness. Every kid will receive the care and encouragement they require to achieve thanks to our individualised approach.
2. Smaller Class Sizes
   More one-on-one guidance and support for every student is possible in special needs private schools with smaller class sizes. This is especially crucial for kids with exceptional needs, who might need more specialised education.
3. Specialised Curriculum
   To meet the unique needs of every student, special needs schools frequently provide specialised curricula. Children with dyslexia, autism, ADHD, and other learning challenges can benefit from these programmes by learning at their own pace and gaining important life skills.
4. Skilled and Proficient Teachers
   Particular Requirements Teachers at private schools are usually very skilled and experienced, and they are prepared to deal with the particular difficulties that children with disabilities confront. These educators recognise the value of creating a safe and nurturing atmosphere.
5. Supportive Community

Individual Needs In order to foster a conducive learning environment, parents, educators, and administrators frequently get together in private educational institutions. Parents can get the resources and support they need in this community to help their child achieve.

6. Emphasis on Social and Emotional Growth

Individual Needs Since children with impairments may have trouble with social skills and emotional regulation, private educational institutions pay a heavy emphasis on social and emotional development. Children can improve these talents with the support of programmes and resources.

Research Method

Qualitative phenomenology

The method used in this research is qualitative phenomenology. Phenomenology is a method that focuses on the lived experience of the source to be studied and provides meaning regarding the intended phenomenon.
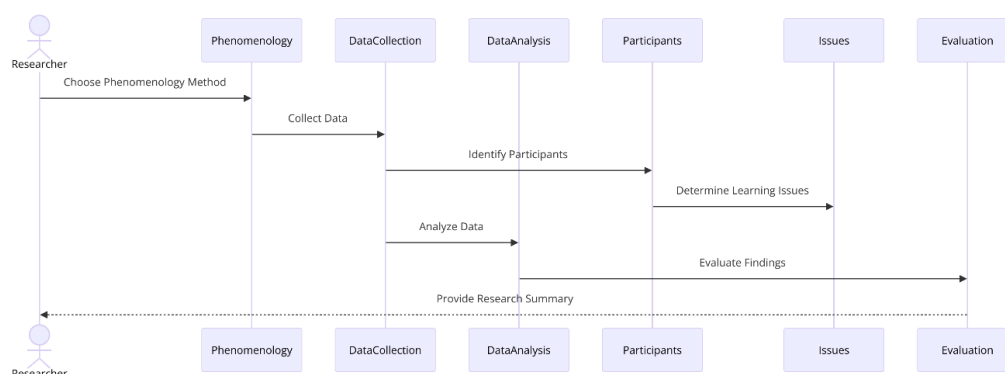

Figure 1. Diagram of Research Methodology

Research Instruments

Researchers collected data using observation, interviews, and documentation studies, with logbooks describing each child's development for every lesson.

Data Collection

The study took place at the Kupompong Surabaya Child Growth and Development Clinic, involving 7 participants: 5 psychologists and 2 class facilitators. These professionals assisted children aged 16-18 at the clinic, which uses the inclusive Independent Curriculum for the Remedial Social Skill Teaching program. This program supports children facing learning difficulties such as being slow learners, emotional and behavioral barriers, intellectual barriers, and ADHD.

Data Analysis

According to (Creswell, 2019) states that data analysis methods and procedures include describe the experiential phenomena experienced by research participants as a whole, find detailed interview statements, collecting experiences into similar groups and creating written summaries of the encounters, evaluating ideas through creative variants thoroughly, and elaborate on the research results as a whole.

Researchers use the Nvivo analysis program to efficiently assist qualitative research, enhance logical reasoning and research design, and provide tools for content analysis. This program proves invaluable in evaluating the effectiveness of the independent curriculum, as it allows researchers to manage and analyze data more effectively and efficiently (Salajang et al., 2023).

Results/Finding

Profile of Kupompong Child Psychology Clinic

Elisabeth Santoso, an experienced and competent child psychologist, leads the Kupompong Child Psychology Clinic Surabaya. Located in Surabaya, East Java, the clinic offers comprehensive psychology services for children and families. Kupompong Child Psychology Clinic offers a wide range of psychology services, including:

1. Child and family psychotherapy
2. Psychological evaluation and diagnosis
3. Counseling and guidance
4. Trauma and stress healing

Professional Team

Kupompong Child Psychology Clinic features a team of experienced and trained child psychologists skilled in various therapy and counseling methods. The team is dedicated to providing holistic and evidence-based care for every child they serve.

Mission:

To provide comprehensive and high-quality psychological support to children to help them achieve emotional well-being and optimal development.

Vision:

To be the leading child psychology clinic in Surabaya known for its holistic, innovative and child-centered approach in providing psychological services.

Facilities

Analysis and Implementation of the Effectiveness of Independent Curriculum at the Kupompong Child Growth and Development Clinic Inclusive Education Institution in Surabaya

The clinic features child-friendly therapy rooms, play areas, and additional supporting facilities, all designed to create a comfortable and supportive environment for children.

Analysis results

This study, conducted at Kupompong Child Development Clinic in Surabaya, assessed the effectiveness of the Independent Curriculum for children with special needs. Seven participants, including five psychologists and two classroom facilitators, implemented and observed the curriculum. The main findings revealed that the Independent Curriculum significantly enhanced the engagement and learning outcomes of students with various disabilities, such as slow learning, emotional and behavioral disorders, intellectual disorders, and ADHD. Notably, students showed improved social skills, greater participation in classroom activities, and better academic achievement. Additionally, the inclusive curriculum fostered a sense of community among students, demonstrated by increased peer interaction and cooperative learning activities.

Inclusive Design (Independent Curriculum) to Support Students with Learning Difficulties such as Slow Learner, Emotional Behavioral Barriers, Intellectual Barriers, and ADHD

The independent curriculum's inclusive design transforms educational methodologies to support students with learning difficulties. This innovative framework meets the diverse needs of students, including slow learners and those facing emotional, behavioral, intellectual challenges, and ADHD. By implementing a flexible and individualized approach, this inclusive design adapts to each student's specific needs, ensuring equitable learning opportunities and outcomes.
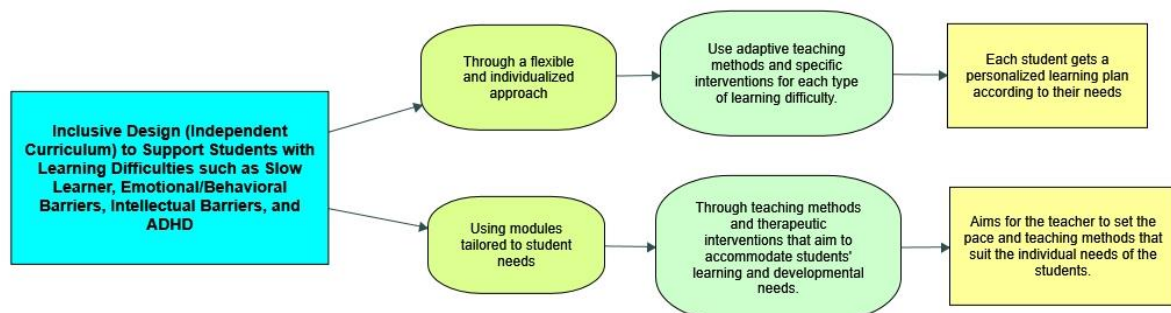

Figure 2. The Chart of Inclusive Design (Independent Curriculum) to Support Students with Learning Difficulties such as Slow Learner, Emotional Behavioral Barriers, Intellectual Barriers, and ADHD

The Nvivo analysis presents a framework for an inclusive design (independent curriculum) that supports students with learning difficulties, such as slow learners, and those with emotional, behavioral, or intellectual barriers, and ADHD. This framework incorporates two main approaches:

1) Flexible and Individualized Approach
2) Modules Tailored to Student Needs

Each approach includes specific methods and interventions to address students' unique needs, aiming to personalize their learning experiences. The following is an outline of the explanation:

Flexible and Individualized Approach

a. Adaptive Teaching Methods and Specific Interventions:
   1) This approach tailors adaptive teaching methods and specific interventions to each type of learning difficulty.
   2) Adaptive teaching methods modify instructional strategies to meet learners' diverse needs.
   3) Specific interventions target particular challenges faced by students, such as differentiated instruction, behavior management strategies, or therapeutic supports.
   ▪ Outcome:
   Each student receives a personalized learning plan that caters to their individual needs. This dynamic plan adjusts as the student's requirements evolve, ensuring continuous support and development.

Modules Tailored to Student Needs

b. Teaching Methods and Therapeutic Interventions:
   1) This approach uses teaching methods and therapeutic interventions to accommodate students' learning and developmental needs.
   2) Teaching methods include multisensory instruction, scaffolded learning, and assistive technology.
   3) Therapeutic interventions involve speech therapy, occupational therapy, or counseling services.
   ▪ Outcome:
   Teachers can set the pace and select teaching methods that best suit each student's individual needs. This ensures students progress at their own rate and in a manner most effective for their learning style.

The inclusive design model emphasizes flexibility and individualization in education for students with learning difficulties. By employing adaptive teaching methods, specific interventions, and tailoring modules to student needs, the framework ensures that each student receives the necessary support to achieve their full potential. This approach addresses both the academic and emotional needs of students, creating a comprehensive support system essential for their overall growth and success.

Teacher Challenges in Implementing the Merdeka Special Inclusion Curriculum, Analysis and Resolution Strategies

The implementation of Merdeka Curriculum provides a valuable opportunity for teachers to develop and implement comprehensive strategies for its successful adoption and implementation. It highlights the key challenges faced by educators and presents practical solutions to effectively address them.
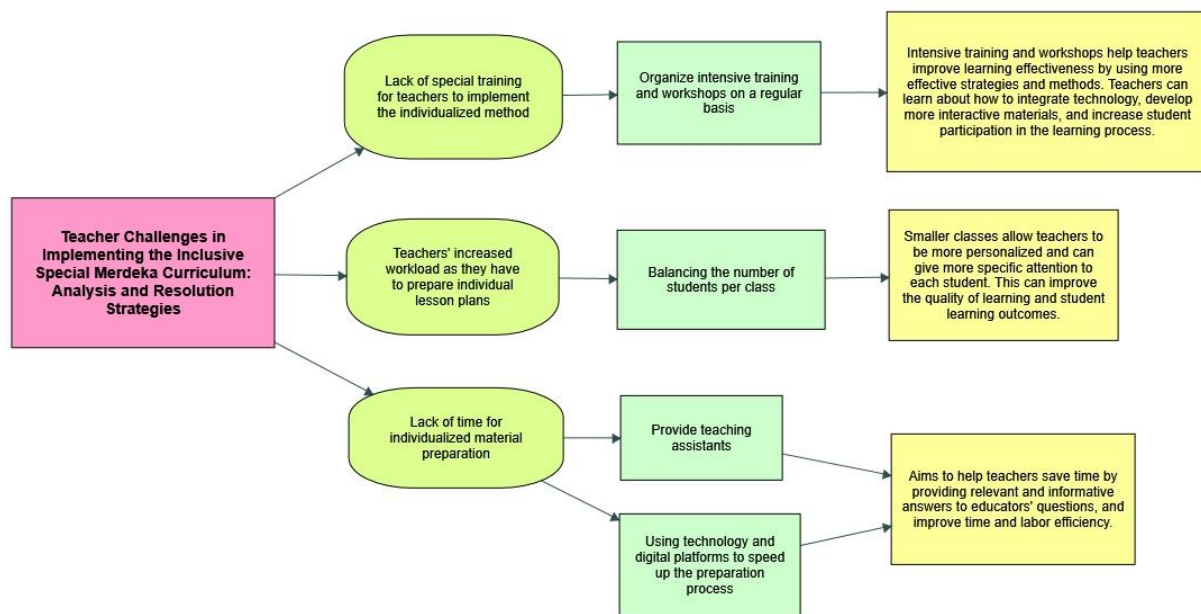
Figure 3. The chart of Teacher Challenges in Implementing the Merdeka Special Inclusion Curriculum, Analysis and Resolution Strategies

The Nvivo analysis explaines how teachers can effectively implement the Merdeka Special Inclusion Curriculum by addressing key challenges and suggests strategies to overcome them. These challenges fall into three main categories:

1) Lack of Special Training
2) Increased Workload Due to Individual Lesson Plans
3) Lack of Time for Individualized Material Preparation

Each challenge pairs with specific resolution strategies, improving the implementation process and enhancing the curriculum's effectiveness. The following is an outline of the explanation:

Challenge

a. Lack of Special Training

Teachers currently lack the special training needed to implement individualized teaching methods effectively. This gap can hinder their ability to meet the diverse needs of students with learning difficulties.

Resolution Strategy

▪   Organize Intensive Training and Workshops Regularly:
1) Provide teachers with regular, intensive training sessions and workshops.
2) Focus on equipping teachers with the skills to use effective strategies and methods.

3) Emphasize the integration of technology, development of interactive materials, and increasing student participation.

▪ Outcome:
These training sessions will empower teachers to improve their teaching effectiveness. They will learn to apply new techniques, use technology effectively, and create engaging learning materials, ultimately enhancing student learning outcomes.

Challenge

b. Increased Workload Due to Individual Lesson Plans

Teachers experience an increased workload as they need to prepare individualized lesson plans for each student. This can lead to burnout and decreased teaching quality.

Resolution Strategy:

▪ Balancing the Number of Students per Class:
1) Adjust class sizes to be smaller, allowing teachers to provide more personalized attention to each student.
2) Smaller classes help teachers manage their workload better and focus on individual student needs.

▪ Outcome:
Smaller class sizes enable teachers to dedicate more time and attention to each student, improving the quality of education and enhancing student learning outcomes.

Challenge

c. Lack of Time for Individualized Material Preparation

Teachers struggle to find enough time to prepare individualized materials for their students, affecting the quality of the learning experience.

Resolution Strategies

▪ Provide Teaching Assistants:
1) Introduce teaching assistants to support teachers in preparing materials and managing the classroom.
2) Teaching assistants can help reduce the workload and free up time for teachers to focus on instruction and student interaction.

▪ Using Technology and Digital Platforms:
1) Implement technology and digital platforms to streamline and speed up the preparation process.

2) Utilize educational software and digital resources to create and distribute individualized materials more efficiently.

▪ Outcome:
These strategies save teachers time and improve efficiency. By providing support through teaching assistants and leveraging technology, teachers can prepare high-quality, individualized materials more effectively.

The chart outlines the significant challenges teachers face in implementing the Merdeka Special Inclusion Curriculum and provides practical resolution strategies. By addressing the lack of special training, increased workload, and time constraints through intensive training, smaller class sizes, teaching assistants, and technology, the implementation process can be improved. These strategies aim to enhance teacher effectiveness, reduce burnout, and ultimately improve student learning outcomes in an inclusive educational environment.

The effectiveness of the Independent Special Inclusion Curriculum is measured and evaluated

The Independent Special Inclusion Curriculum ensures students with diverse learning needs receive an appropriate and impactful education. This diagram showcases the methods for measuring and evaluating the curriculum's success, emphasizing the importance of continuous assessment and feedback in fostering an inclusive educational environment.
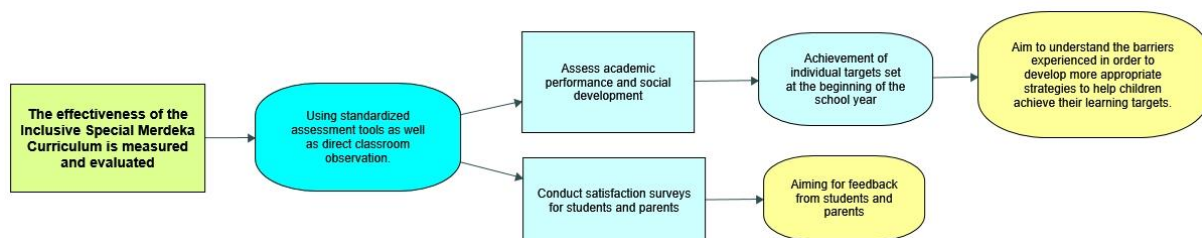

Figure 4. The Chart of The effectiveness of the Independent Special Inclusion Curriculum is measured and evaluated

The Nvivo analysis explains how to measure and evaluate the effectiveness of the Independent Special Inclusion Curriculum. It highlights the use of standardized assessment tools, direct classroom observations, and satisfaction surveys to assess both academic performance and social development. This evaluation aims to identify barriers and develop strategies to help students achieve their learning targets.

Standardized Assessment Tools and Direct Classroom Observation

▪ Methods
  a. Standardized Assessment Tools:
    1) Use standardized tools to measure academic performance and social development. These tools provide consistent and objective metrics for evaluation.

2) Examples include standardized tests, rubrics, and behavior checklists.

b. Direct Classroom Observation:
1) Conduct classroom observations to assess student engagement, interaction, and progress.
2) Observations capture qualitative data on student behavior, teacher-student interactions, and classroom dynamics.
▪ Outcome:
These methods provide a comprehensive view of each student's performance and development, ensuring all aspects of their learning experience are evaluated.

Assess Academic Performance and Social Development

▪ Steps
a. Achievement of Individual Targets:
1) Evaluate whether students meet the individual targets set at the beginning of the school year.
2) Targets may include academic goals, behavioral improvements, and social skills development.
b. Understanding Barriers:
1) Identify any barriers that students face in achieving their targets.
2) Understanding these barriers helps develop appropriate strategies to better support students.
▪ Outcome:
1. This step focuses evaluations on both academic and social aspects, providing a holistic view of student development.
2. By identifying and addressing barriers, educators can tailor interventions to effectively improve student outcomes.

Conduct Satisfaction Surveys for Students and Parents

▪ Methods:
a. Satisfaction Surveys:
1) Collect feedback from students and parents through structured surveys.
2) Surveys can include questions about their satisfaction with the curriculum, teaching methods, and overall school experience.
b. Feedback Collection:
1) Gather insights into how the curriculum impacts students and meets their needs.
2) Understand the perspectives of both students and parents to ensure a supportive learning environment.
▪ Outcome:
1. Feedback from satisfaction surveys provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of the curriculum from stakeholders' perspectives.
2. This data helps make informed decisions to improve the curriculum and address any concerns raised by students and parents.

Analysis and Implementation of the Effectiveness of Independent Curriculum at the Kupompong Child Growth and Development Clinic Inclusive Education Institution in Surabaya

The process for measuring and evaluating the effectiveness of the Independent Special Inclusion Curriculum is thorough and multifaceted. By using standardized assessment tools, direct classroom observation, and satisfaction surveys, educators gain a comprehensive understanding of both academic performance and social development. This approach highlights student achievements and identifies learning barriers, allowing for the development of targeted strategies to support students in achieving their learning targets. Collecting feedback from students and parents ensures the curriculum meets their needs and contributes to a positive educational experience.

Independent Curriculum Approaches and Strategies for Each Type of Learning Difficulty Slow Learner, Emotional Behavioral Barriers, Intellectual Barriers, and ADHD

The Independent Curriculum Approaches and Strategies for Each Type of Learning Difficulty, including Slow Learner, Emotional/Behavioral Barriers, Intellectual Barriers, and ADHD, emphasize the necessity of tailored educational methodologies to effectively address the diverse needs of students. This preface highlights the importance of differentiated approaches in fostering an inclusive and supportive learning environment.
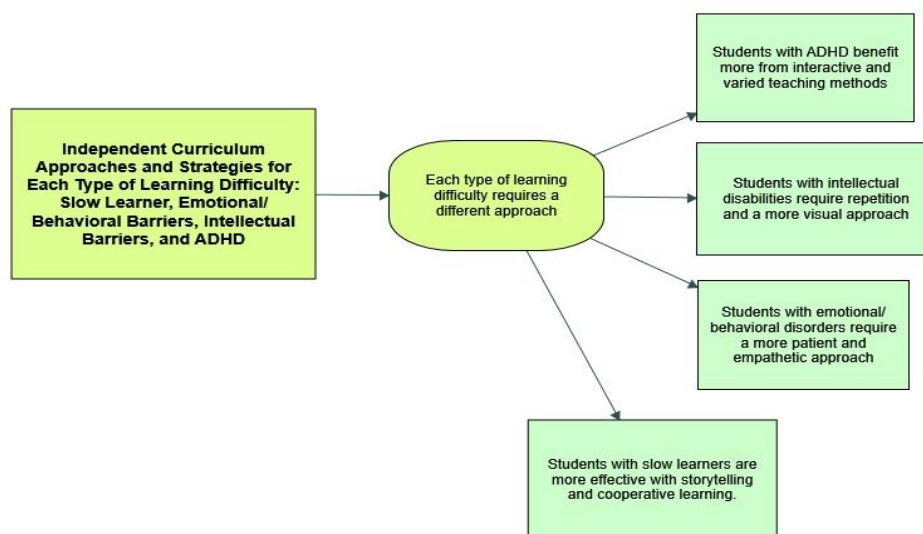

Figure 5. The chart of Independent Curriculum Approaches and Strategies for Each Type of Learning Difficulty Slow Learner, Emotional Behavioral Barriers, Intellectual Barriers, and ADHD

The Nvivo analysis outlines effective approaches and strategies for implementing an independent curriculum tailored to support students with various learning difficulties, including slow learners and those with emotional, behavioral, intellectual barriers, and ADHD. The central theme emphasizes that each type of learning difficulty benefits from a distinct and tailored approach. The following is an outline of the explanation:

General Principle: Different Approaches for Different Learning Difficulties

▪ Key Concept:
Each type of learning difficulty requires a unique approach to teaching and support. Understanding the specific needs associated with each difficulty is crucial for developing effective strategies.

Specific Strategies for Different Learning Difficulties

a. ADHD (Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder)
   ▪ Interactive and Varied Teaching Methods:
      1) Students with ADHD benefit significantly from interactive and varied teaching methods.
      2) Incorporate activities that engage multiple senses and provide frequent changes in activity to maintain attention and interest.
      3) Use hands-on learning experiences, interactive discussions, and multimedia resources.
   ▪ Outcome:
      These strategies help maintain the attention of students with ADHD, making learning more engaging and reducing instances of distraction and inattention.
b. Intellectual Disabilities
   ▪ Repetition and Visual Approach:
      1) Students with intellectual disabilities benefit from teaching methods that emphasize repetition and a strong visual component.
      2) Repetition helps reinforce learning and improve retention.
      3) Use visual aids, diagrams, and physical models to explain concepts.
   ▪ Outcome:
      These methods aid in better understanding and retention of information, catering to the cognitive processing needs of students with intellectual disabilities.
c. Emotional/Behavioral Disorders
   ▪ Patient and Empathetic Approach:
      1) Students with emotional and behavioral disorders thrive with a teaching approach that is patient and empathetic.
      2) Create a supportive and understanding classroom environment.
      3) Use strategies that promote emotional regulation and provide consistent positive reinforcement.
   ▪ Outcome:
      This approach helps create a safe learning environment where students feel understood and supported, reducing anxiety and improving behavioral outcomes.
d. Slow Learners
   1) Story Telling
      This method uses stories to help slow learners understand the material. Stories can help children understand and remember material more easily, and increase their interest in learning.

2) Cooperative Learning:

This method involves cooperation between students in learning. Cooperative learning can help slow learners overcome learning and behavioral problems, as well as improve social relationships and good learning outcomes.

- Outcome:

Storytelling could help slow learners remember the material better, so they can more easily apply the knowledge they gain. In addition, cooperative learning can also improve the learning outcomes of slow learners, as they could more easily understand the material and apply the knowledge they gain in group activities.

The chart emphasizes the necessity of adopting specific strategies tailored to different types of learning difficulties within an independent curriculum framework. For students with ADHD, interactive and varied teaching methods are most effective. Students with intellectual disabilities benefit from repetition and visual aids, while those with emotional/behavioral disorders thrive with a patient and empathetic approach. By customizing teaching strategies to meet the distinct needs of each group, educators can enhance learning outcomes and provide more effective support for all students.

Evaluating the Effectiveness of Merdeka Curriculum, Data Analysis and Empirical Evidence of Improving Student's Social Skills

Evaluating the effectiveness of the independent curriculum: data analysis and empirical evidence of improving student's social and academic skills underscores the transformative impact of this educational approach on diverse learning needs. This chart highlights the importance of data-driven analysis and empirical evidence in assessing the curriculum's success in enhancing students' social and academic development.
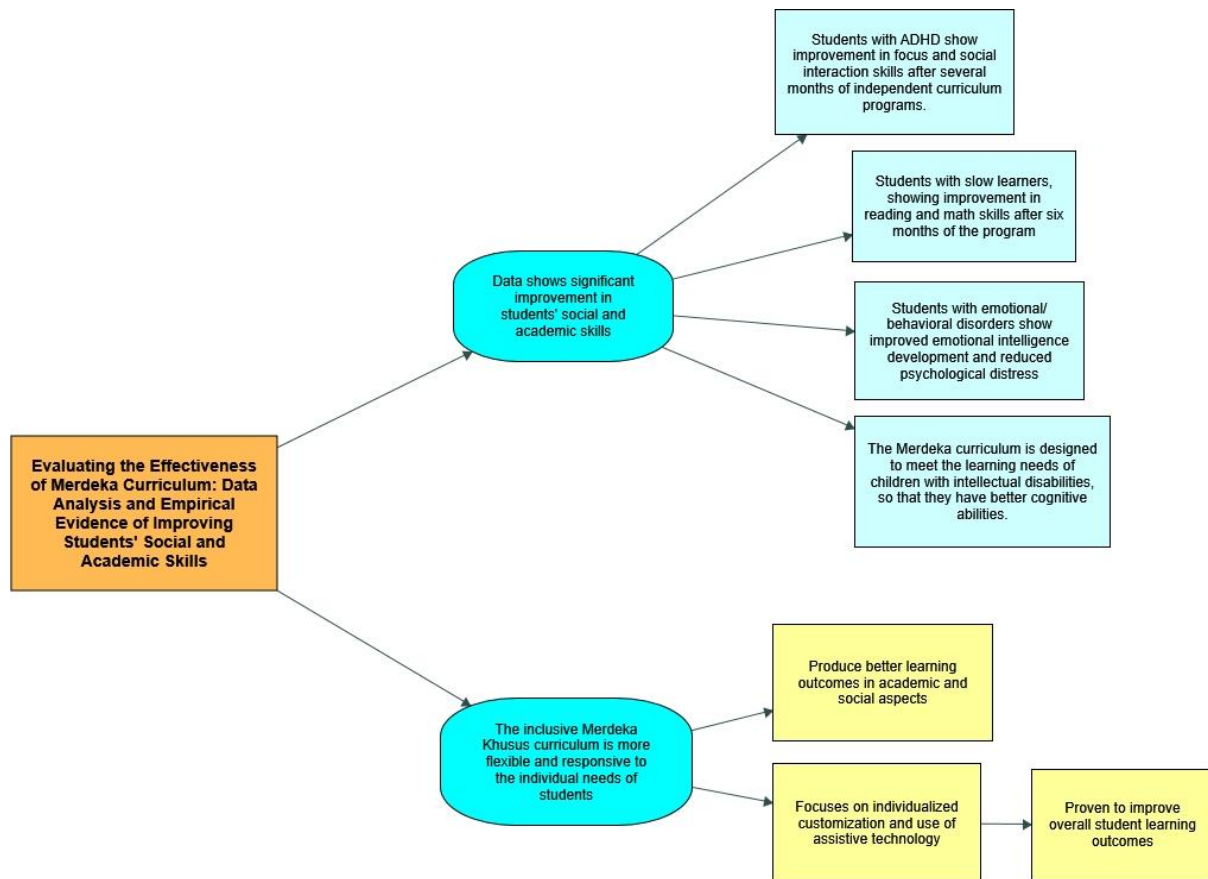
Figure 6. The chart of Evaluating the Effectiveness of Merdeka Curriculum, Data Analysis and Empirical Evidence of Improving Student's Social Skills

The Nvivo analysis showcases the results of evaluating the Independent Curriculum, focusing on data analysis and empirical evidence of students' social and academic skill improvements. It highlights significant progress across various learning difficulties, demonstrating the curriculum's flexibility and responsiveness to individual needs. The following is an outline of the explanation:

Significant Improvement in Student's Social and Academic Skills

Data reveals substantial improvements in social and academic skills among students with different learning difficulties after participating in the Merdeka Curriculum.

Specific Improvements

a. ADHD:
   ▪ Focus and Social Interaction:
     Students with ADHD demonstrated enhanced focus and social interaction skills after several months of independent curriculum programs. The tailored, engaging methods used in the curriculum help mitigate attention deficits and improve social behaviors.
b. Slow Learners
   ▪ Reading and Math Skills:

Slow learners showed marked improvement in reading and math skills after six months of the program. The structured, repetitive, and visual-based teaching methods proved highly effective for this group.

c. Emotional/Behavioral Disorders
- Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Distress:
  Students with emotional/behavioral disorders exhibited improved emotional intelligence and reduced psychological distress. The patient and empathetic teaching approach contributed to better emotional regulation and overall psychological well-being.

d. Intellectual Disabilities
- Cognitive Abilities:
  The curriculum is designed to meet the learning needs of children with intellectual disabilities, leading to better cognitive abilities. The focus on repetition and visual aids reinforces learning and cognitive development.

Inclusive Merdeka Special Curriculum

- Features:
  The curriculum excels in flexibility and responsiveness to the individual needs of students.
- Individualized Customization and Assistive Technology:
  1) Emphasis on personalized learning plans.
  2) The use of assistive technology ensures tailored support to enhance each student's learning experience.

Outcome

- Better Learning Outcomes:
  The inclusive approach produces better learning outcomes in both academic and social aspects. It consistently improves overall student learning outcomes, making it a successful model for inclusive education.

Data analysis and empirical evidence validate the effectiveness of the Independent Curriculum in improving both social and academic skills among students with various learning difficulties. The curriculum's flexibility and individualized approach, supported by assistive technology, address the specific needs of students with ADHD, slow learners, emotional/behavioral disorders, and intellectual disabilities. This leads to significant improvements in focus, social interactions, reading, math skills, emotional intelligence, and cognitive abilities. The Merdeka Curriculum stands as an effective inclusive educational framework that enhances overall student learning outcomes.

How to Integrate Inclusion to Increase Student Awareness and Self-Esteem through the Independent Curriculum

The Independent Curriculum aims to enhance student awareness and self-esteem through inclusivity. This preface outlines the strategies and purposes of fostering an inclusive educational environment that actively encourages student participation in group activities and discussions, thereby promoting social and academic growth. The Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes forming an inclusive classroom community. By creating an environment where every student feels valued and welcomed, the curriculum fosters increased engagement and participation. This inclusive approach builds confidence and a sense of belonging among students, essential components of self-esteem.
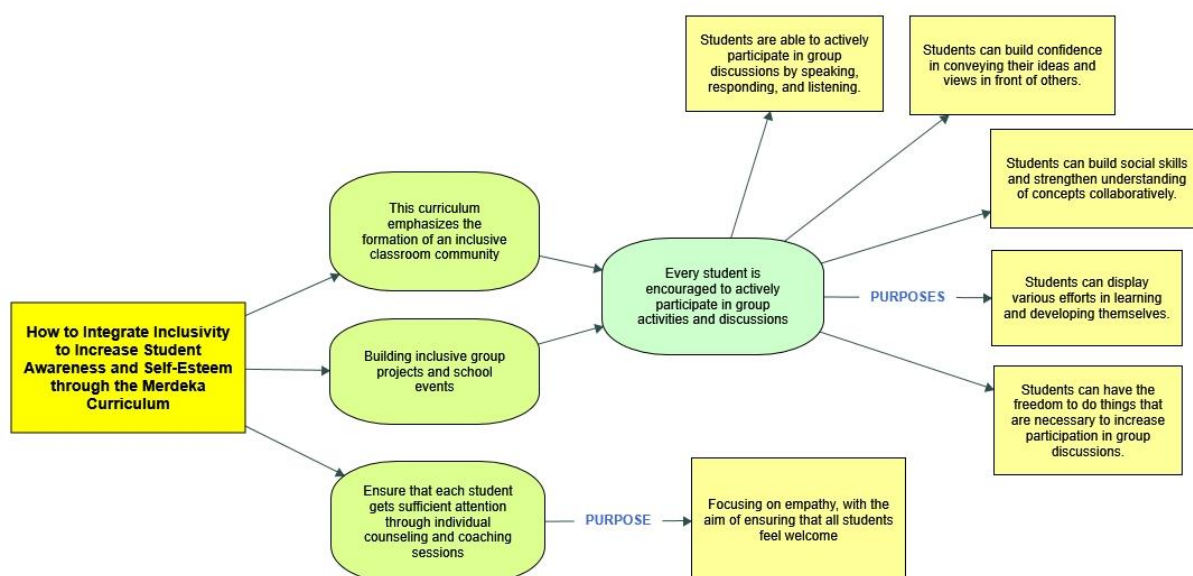

Figure 7. Chart of How to Integrate Inclusion to Increase Student Awareness and Self-Esteem through the Independent Curriculum

The Nvivo analysis outlines strategies for integrating inclusivity in the Merdeka Curriculum to enhance student awareness and self-esteem. This approach emphasizes creating an inclusive classroom community, promoting active participation in group activities, and providing individualized support through counseling and coaching sessions. The following is an outline of the explanation:

Formation of an Inclusive Classroom Community

a. Emphasizing Inclusivity:
    The curriculum builds an inclusive classroom environment where every student feels welcomed and valued. This sense of community helps students develop social skills and feel connected to their peers and teachers.
    ▪ Purpose
    1) Active Participation:

> Encourage every student to actively participate in group activities and discussions. Engaging in speaking, responding, and listening helps students connect deeply with the material and their peers.

- Outcomes
  1) Confidence Building:
     Students gain confidence in expressing their ideas and views in front of others.
  2) Social Skills Development:
     Participation in group activities enhances social skills and strengthens understanding of concepts collaboratively.
  3) Effort Display:
     Students showcase their efforts in learning and self-development.

b. Building Inclusive Group Projects and School Events
- Group Projects and Events:
  Organize inclusive group projects and school events that encourage collaboration among all students. These activities are designed to be accessible and engaging for students with diverse learning needs.
- Purpose
  1) Freedom and Support:
     Provide students with the freedom to engage in activities that increase their participation in group discussions. Support from peers and teachers fosters a sense of belonging and motivation.
- Outcomes
  1) Enhanced Engagement:
     Students feel more involved and committed to their learning experiences.
  2) Increased Motivation:
     Participating in inclusive projects and events motivates students to contribute more actively and take pride in their achievements.

c. Individual Counseling and Coaching Sessions
- Personalized Attention:
  Ensure each student receives sufficient attention through individual counseling and coaching sessions. These sessions address specific needs, providing tailored support to help students overcome challenges and build self-esteem.
- Purpose:
  1) Empathy and Support:
     Focus on empathy, ensuring all students feel understood and supported. Counseling and coaching sessions create a safe space for students to express their concerns and work on personal growth.
- Outcomes:
  1) Improved Self-Esteem:
     Personalized support helps students develop a positive self-image and confidence in their abilities.
  2) Better Academic and Social Outcomes:

Students with higher self-esteem are more likely to engage in academic and social activities, leading to better overall outcomes.

The strategies outlined in the diagram for integrating inclusivity into the Independent Curriculum aim to increase student awareness and self-esteem through forming an inclusive classroom community, active participation in group activities, and individualized support through counseling and coaching. By emphasizing inclusivity, fostering group collaboration, and providing personalized attention, the curriculum helps students build confidence, develop social skills, and achieve better academic and social outcomes. This comprehensive approach ensures that all students feel valued, supported, and motivated to succeed.

Assessment of Student Success in the Independent Curriculum, Analysis of Forms and Strategies

The Independent a Curriculum assesses student success through a nuanced analysis of various forms and strategies, emphasizing the importance of a balanced evaluation approach. This preface outlines the combination of formal and informal assessments that provide a comprehensive understanding of student progress and abilities. The Merdeka Curriculum gauges student success by employing a combination of formal and informal assessments. Formal assessments, such as standardized tests and exams, offer structured and quantifiable measures of student performance. These are complemented by informal assessments, which often provide a more holistic and natural view of student progress.
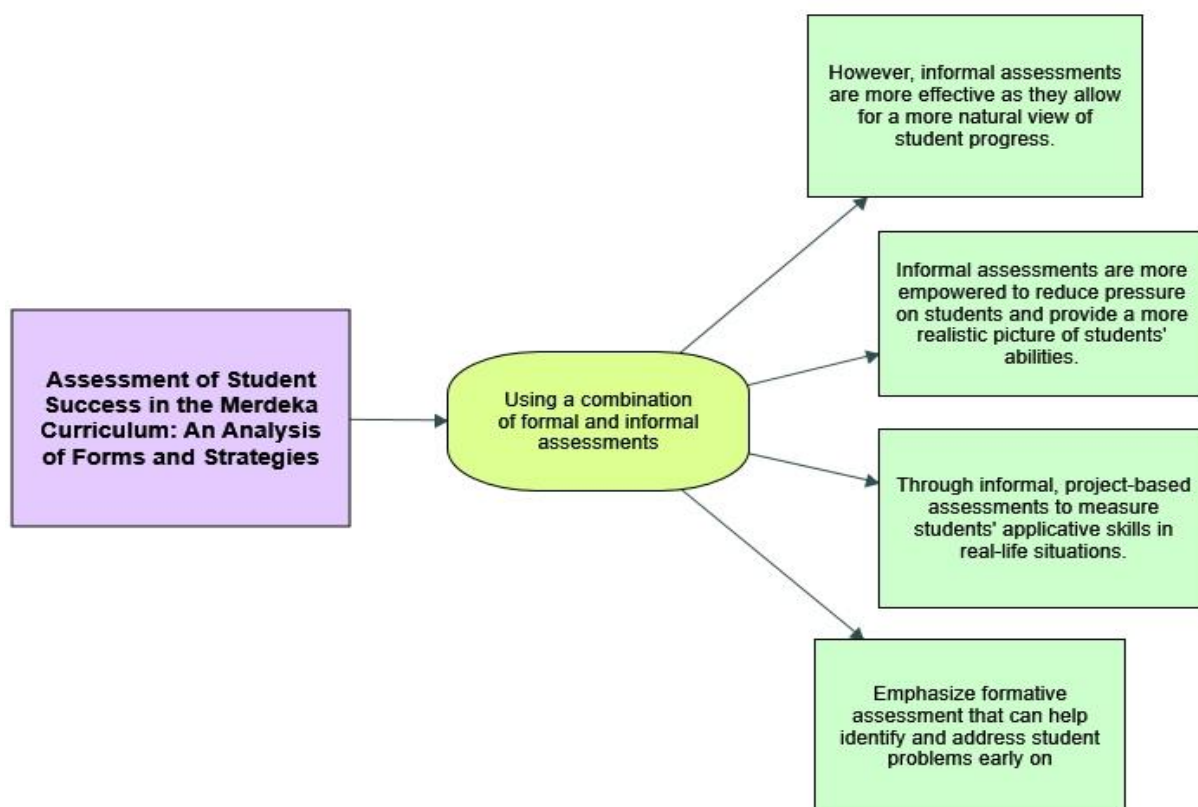

Figure 8. Chart of Assessment of Student Success in the Independent Curriculum, Analysis of Forms and Strategies

Analysis and Implementation of the Effectiveness of Independent Curriculum at the Kupompong Child Growth and Development Clinic Inclusive Education Institution in Surabaya

The Nvivo analysis showcases the assessment strategies used in the Independent Curriculum to measure student success. It highlights the importance of combining formal and informal assessments to gain a comprehensive understanding of student progress and abilities. By emphasizing a balanced approach, it reduces pressure on students while providing realistic insights into their capabilities. The following is an outline of the explanation:

Combination of Formal and Informal Assessments

Educators use both formal and informal assessments to gain a holistic view of student performance and development. Formal assessments include standardized tests, quizzes, and exams that provide quantitative data. Informal assessments encompass project-based evaluations, classroom observations, and student reflections, offering qualitative insights.

a. Effectiveness of Informal Assessments
   1) Natural View of Student Progress:
      Informal assessments effectively provide a natural and continuous view of student progress, capturing everyday learning and interactions that formal testing environments might miss.
   2) Reduced Pressure on Students:
      Informal assessments help reduce the pressure and anxiety associated with high-stakes testing. By integrating into regular classroom activities, these assessments enable students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in a stress-free setting.
   3) Realistic Picture of Abilities:
      They offer a realistic and comprehensive picture of students' abilities and learning processes, identifying strengths and areas for improvement in a nuanced way.
   4) Applicative Skills in Real-Life Situations:
      Project-based assessments, a form of informal evaluation, measure students' applicative skills in real-life contexts. These assessments focus on how students apply their knowledge and skills to solve practical problems, fostering critical thinking and creativity.
b. Emphasis on Formative Assessment
   ▪ Strategy:
      Formative assessments are ongoing evaluations used to monitor student learning and provide immediate feedback. They help identify and address student challenges early on, allowing for timely interventions and support.
   ▪ Outcome:
      Formative assessments guide instructional decisions and modifications to better meet student needs. They promote a growth mindset by focusing on learning progress and development rather than just final outcomes.

The Independent Curriculum assesses student success through a combination of formal and informal assessments. Informal assessments are particularly effective as they provide a natural, ongoing view of student progress, reduce pressure, and offer a realistic picture of student abilities. Project-based assessments enhance this by evaluating applicative skills in

real-life situations. Additionally, the curriculum emphasizes formative assessments to identify and address student challenges early, ensuring continuous improvement and support. This balanced assessment strategy fosters a comprehensive understanding of each student's learning journey, promoting both academic and personal growth.

Conclusion

The Independent Curriculum's inclusive design for the Merdeka Curriculum has achieved significant success in supporting students with various learning difficulties, including slow learners, emotional and behavioral barriers, intellectual barriers, and ADHD. By implementing flexible and individualized approaches, such as adaptive teaching methods and specific interventions tailored to each student's needs, the curriculum ensures equitable learning opportunities and outcomes. Comprehensive evaluation methods, including standardized assessment tools, direct classroom observations, and satisfaction surveys from students and parents, further validate the effectiveness of this inclusive design.

Key findings from the analysis reveal substantial improvements in both academic performance and social skills among students. For example, students with ADHD showed enhanced focus and social interaction skills, while slow learners exhibited marked improvements in reading and math. Students with emotional and behavioral disorders benefited from improved emotional intelligence and reduced psychological distress, and those with intellectual disabilities demonstrated better cognitive abilities.

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