

Analysis of Curriculum Administration Implementation in the Application of the Merdeka Curriculum at State Senior High School 15 Padang

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the implementation of curriculum administration within the context of the Merdeka Curriculum at SMA Negeri 15 Padang. The research employed a qualitative descriptive approach, with data collected through interviews involving teachers and the vice principal for curriculum affairs. The study revealed that most teachers demonstrated a good understanding of the Merdeka Curriculum principles and had implemented curriculum administration effectively, particularly in preparing teaching modules, lesson plans, and P5 project designs. However, challenges remained in diagnostic assessment design, digital documentation, and consistent archiving of curriculum documents. The study concludes that curriculum administration at SMA Negeri 15 Padang is generally well implemented but requires ongoing professional development to strengthen teachers' administrative and pedagogical competencies.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Curriculum administration is a crucial component of educational management as it ensures that learning activities run effectively, efficiently, and in alignment with national educational goals. It encompasses a comprehensive set of processes, including planning, implementation, evaluation, and control of curriculum-related activities within schools. Lestari et al. (2024) emphasize that curriculum administration plays a strategic role in enhancing the effectiveness of the learning process because it ensures that instructional activities are systematically organized, implemented according to standards, and properly documented. Well-managed curriculum administration also supports the consistency and quality of teaching and learning across educational institutions.

In the context of ongoing educational reforms, the Merdeka Curriculum provides teachers with greater flexibility to design learning experiences that are student centered. This curriculum emphasizes differentiated instruction, teacher autonomy, and the adjustment of learning methods and materials based on students' needs. However, this flexibility also increases teachers' administrative responsibilities, particularly in preparing teaching modules, assessment instruments, and learning documentation. Rosyada, Syahada, and Chanifudin (2024) highlight that the Merdeka Curriculum introduces significant administrative demands, making the quality of learning closely dependent on teachers' ability to manage these responsibilities effectively. The Implementation Guide for the Merdeka Curriculum issued by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Kemendikbudristek, 2022) also underscores the importance of administrative readiness, especially in the development of teaching modules, diagnostic assessments, Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Projects (P5), and documentation of learning

outcomes. Proper curriculum administration is essential to ensure that teaching and learning processes are structured, goal-oriented, and continuously evaluated.

SMA Negeri 15 Padang is one of the designated “Sekolah Penggerak” (Driving Schools) that has implemented the Merdeka Curriculum since 2023. The implementation of this curriculum requires strong teacher readiness, particularly in administrative aspects such as preparing teaching modules, conducting diagnostic assessments, and planning P5 projects. Therefore, analyzing the implementation of curriculum administration in this school is important to determine the extent to which the Merdeka Curriculum has been effectively carried out and to identify challenges encountered by teachers and school administrators in meeting its administrative requirements.

In addition, curriculum administration functions as a managerial mechanism that ensures coherence between curriculum policy and classroom practice. Ornstein and Hunkins (2018) emphasize that curriculum administration bridges curriculum planning and instructional implementation, enabling schools to maintain consistency and accountability. Fullan (2016) further argues that educational reform efforts often fail not because of policy design, but due to weak administrative capacity at the school level. Therefore, strengthening curriculum administration is essential to support the successful implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum and to ensure that curriculum reforms lead to meaningful learning experiences.

Article Type

This article is an original research article presenting field findings on the implementation of curriculum administration within the framework of the Merdeka Curriculum at SMA Negeri 15 Padang. The study employs a qualitative descriptive approach with data collected through interviews, observations, and documentation of administrative practices conducted by teachers and school management.

Figure 1 is inserted in the text box and illustrates the level of curriculum administration implementation across three key components: planning, implementation, and evaluation. As shown in the figure, the level of curriculum administration is measured based on the completeness and accuracy of documents prepared by teachers, including teaching modules, diagnostic assessments, learning reports, and P5 project documentation. The figure provides a clear comparison of administrative performance in each component and shows that curriculum administration is most consistently carried out in the planning stage, followed by implementation, with evaluation being the area requiring the most improvement. The image is drawn with a line width of 1 pt and maintains good contrast quality to ensure clear visualization and interpretation.

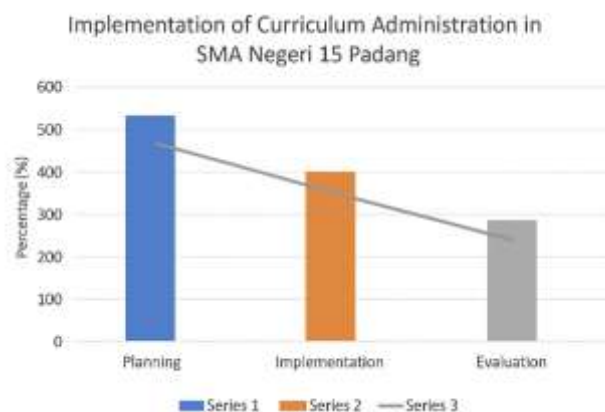


Figure 1. Implementation of Curriculum Administration at SMA Negeri 15 Padang

The bar chart illustrates the relative performance of teachers in compiling curriculum administration documents at SMA Negeri 15 Padang. The blue bars represent the first data series, the orange bars indicate the second data series, and the gray line reflects the overall administrative trend across all components. The chart highlights that planning activities such as preparing teaching modules and semester programs are the most well-executed administrative tasks. Meanwhile, implementation and evaluation show slightly lower performance, indicating that teachers may still need coaching or continuous professional development in areas such as digital documentation, assessment design, and systematic archiving to fully support the successful implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum.

This research article contributes empirical evidence to the field of educational administration by examining curriculum administration practices in a senior high school implementing the Merdeka

Curriculum. The findings provide insights into administrative readiness, challenges, and professional development needs at the school level.

2. METHOD, DATA, ANALYSIS

This research used a qualitative descriptive method.

1. Research Site and Participants

The research was conducted at SMA Negeri 15 Padang, located in Kuranji District, Padang City, West Sumatra. Participants included the vice principal for curriculum affairs and three teachers representing major subject areas such as Physics, Bahasa Indonesia, and Sociology. These participants were selected based on their direct involvement in preparing and implementing curriculum administration under the Merdeka Curriculum.

2. Data Collection Techniques

Observation: Conducted on curriculum documents used in learning activities, including teaching modules, journals, semester programs, and P5 project documentation.

Interviews: Carried out with teachers and the vice principal to explore their experiences, challenges, and readiness in implementing curriculum administration.

Documentation: Analysis of teaching materials, administrative files, assessment instruments, and digital archives prepared by teachers as part of the Merdeka Curriculum implementation.

3. Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's (1994) interactive model consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. This process was used to identify patterns of curriculum administration across planning, implementation, and evaluation stages.

The use of qualitative methods allows for a contextual understanding of curriculum administration practices within real school settings. According to Creswell (2014), qualitative research is effective for capturing complex administrative processes and participants' perspectives. The application of triangulation through observation, interviews, and documentation strengthens the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), ensuring that the conclusions are grounded in multiple sources of evidence.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The results show that curriculum administration at SMA Negeri 15 Padang is generally well implemented. Teachers have successfully prepared teaching modules, semester programs, and P5 project schedules in accordance with the Capaian Pembelajaran and students' learning characteristics. During implementation, teachers applied student-centered learning and carried out P5 projects with relevant themes such as sustainability and local wisdom. In the evaluation stage, a digital documentation system has been introduced, although some teachers still struggle with diagnostic assessments, formative rubrics, and consistent record-keeping.

Discussion

These findings are consistent with Melati et al. (2023), who reported that the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in senior high schools requires strong teacher readiness in both planning and execution. Likewise, Ibrahim et al. (2025) found that effective curriculum implementation positively influences student learning outcomes when administrative procedures are well managed. The results from SMA Negeri 15 Padang show a similar pattern, where strong planning is evident, but challenges persist in assessment design and documentation. Therefore, continuous professional development, improved digital literacy, and strengthened academic supervision are needed to ensure that curriculum administration aligns with the goals of the Merdeka Curriculum and supports improved learning quality.

The findings also indicate that curriculum administration competence reflects teachers' professional capacity. Mulyasa (2022) states that teachers' ability to manage curriculum documents is closely related to their pedagogical readiness. Furthermore, Sudjana (2019) and Arifin (2020) highlight that weaknesses in assessment administration may affect the validity of learning evaluation. The challenges found at SMA Negeri 15 Padang, particularly in diagnostic assessment and digital documentation, align with national trends indicating that teachers require continuous mentoring to adapt to curriculum reforms effectively.

4. CONCLUSION

The study shows that curriculum administration at SMA Negeri 15 Padang is generally well implemented, with strong performance in planning and adequate implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum principles. However, challenges remain in the evaluation stage, particularly in diagnostic assessments, formative rubrics, and digital documentation. Continuous training, improved digital practices, and strengthened supervision are needed to enhance the overall effectiveness of curriculum administration. These findings confirm that curriculum administration serves as a strategic foundation for curriculum implementation and must be supported through institutional commitment, continuous capacity building, and sustainable academic supervision. Practically, these findings suggest that schools should strengthen systematic curriculum administration through continuous teacher training, structured academic supervision, and institutional support to ensure the effective implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum.

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