

ANALYSIS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MERDEKA CURRICULUM ON ANTI-CORRUPTION EDUCATION

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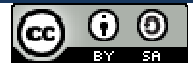
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*merdeka curriculum,
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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the implementation of Merdeka Curriculum in supporting anti-corruption education at SD Negeri 1 Pulongrambe, Tawangharjo District. The research method used is narrative qualitative with a descriptive approach. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and document analysis. The results showed that the implementation of Merdeka Curriculum provides flexibility for teachers to integrate anti-corruption values in learning activities. This finding provides new insights into the effectiveness of the Merdeka Curriculum in shaping students' character with integrity. The conclusion of this study emphasizes the importance of policy support and teacher training in implementing anti-corruption education.

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Introduction

Corruption is a significant issue in Indonesia, posing serious threats to the social and economic stability of the nation (Purnaweni et al., 2022). To combat this pervasive problem, anti-corruption education has emerged as a crucial strategy for shaping a generation with integrity. According to Suyantiningsih & Rahmadonna (2019) integrating anti-corruption education from an early age is essential to fostering a society that values cleanliness and integrity. Education plays a strategic role in developing students' character, enabling them to understand and practice anti-corruption values in their daily lives. Furthermore, ; Ardianti et al. (2019); ; Fardani et al. (2021); Fatina & Iskandar (2022) explained that the instillation of character values through learning can be strengthened by providing a correct understanding of character education in an integral manner. Furthermore, the emphasis on the application of character values is carried out by habituating the attitudes and behavior of students and providing examples from teachers as role models.

Recent studies have highlighted the importance of early anti-corruption education. For instance, research by Sriyanto et al. (2023) emphasizes the Merdeka Curriculum's potential to provide teachers with the freedom to develop learning materials tailored to students' needs. This curriculum aims to create a more adaptive and innovative learning environment. However, there remains a gap between the curriculum's idealism and its practical implementation, particularly in the context of anti-corruption education.

Despite the promising framework of the Merdeka Curriculum, challenges persist in effectively integrating anti-corruption values into daily learning activities. These challenges include limited resources, insufficient training, and a lack of adequate support from both schools and the government. Additionally, changing the mindset of students and parents, who may not fully appreciate the importance of anti-corruption education, poses another significant hurdle (Wiyatun, 2023).

To bridge the gap between the curriculum's potential and its actual implementation, the study explores various innovative teaching methods. For example, teachers can integrate real

case studies of corruption in Indonesia into the curriculum to help students better understand the detrimental effects of corruption. Additionally, group discussions and collaborative projects can be organized to encourage critical thinking and problem-solving regarding corruption (Afrilia et al., 2023).

The study also emphasizes the importance of continuous training and support for teachers. Adequate knowledge and skills are crucial for effectively teaching anti-corruption values. Therefore, ongoing professional development and support from the government and schools are essential (Elissanti, 2023). Furthermore, the study underscores the need for parental involvement, as collaboration between schools and parents can reinforce the anti-corruption values taught at school (Purnaweni et al., 2022).

This research aims to contribute meaningfully to the field of anti-corruption education by providing an in-depth analysis of the Merdeka Curriculum's implementation. The findings are expected to offer new insights and serve as a reference for other schools seeking to adopt similar educational approaches. Additionally, the study aspires to propose new values in anti-corruption education through a more flexible and innovative approach.

The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at SD Negeri 1 Pulongrambe demonstrates that curriculum flexibility can significantly enhance the integration of anti-corruption values in education. By leveraging innovative teaching methods and ensuring robust support systems for teachers and students, the curriculum can effectively shape students' characters with integrity. This research aims to provide a valuable reference for other schools and contribute to the broader discourse on anti-corruption education in Indonesia.

Research Methods

This study employs a qualitative narrative approach to explore the experiences and perspectives of various stakeholders regarding the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in anti-corruption education at SD Negeri 1 Pulongrambe, Tawangharjo District, Grobogan Regency. This design allows for an in-depth understanding of the implementation process and outcomes from multiple viewpoints (Patton, 2017).

The research subjects include teachers, students, and the principal at SD Negeri 1 Pulongrambe. The selected teachers are those directly involved in teaching using the Merdeka Curriculum. The student sample consists of 5th and 6th graders, deemed to have sufficient understanding of the anti-corruption values taught. The principal, responsible for supervising and supporting curriculum implementation, is also included. Specific numbers of participants are as follows: 8 teachers, 24 students, and 1 principal.

Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis. In-depth interviews were conducted face-to-face with teachers, students, and the principal using a pre-prepared interview guide (Kvale, 2007). These interviews aimed to obtain detailed information about their experiences with the Merdeka Curriculum and anti-corruption education. Classroom observations were made to witness firsthand how teachers integrate anti-corruption values into the teaching and learning process. Observations included teacher-student interactions and student-student interactions, providing a comprehensive picture of classroom dynamics. Document analysis involved examining lesson plans (RPP), learning modules, activity notes, and other relevant documents to complement interview and observation data. This analysis provided a broader context of how anti-corruption values are integrated into the curriculum (Bowen, 2009).

The research was conducted over six months, from July to December 2023. This period allowed for comprehensive data collection and analysis, ensuring the findings' reliability and

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validity. To ensure data validity, triangulation was employed (Denzin, 2015). Data from interviews, observations, and document analysis were cross-verified to identify consistencies and discrepancies. Member checking was also conducted, where participants reviewed and confirmed the accuracy of the recorded data.

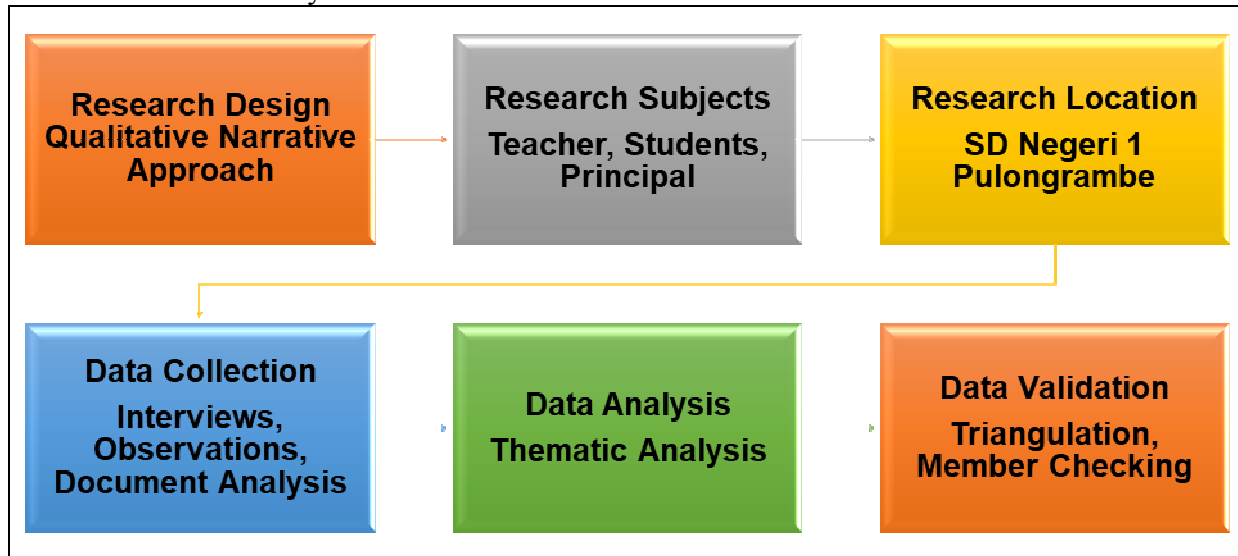


Chart 1. Research Implementation Flowchart

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques. The process involved initial coding, where segments of data relevant to the research topic were marked. This was followed by theme identification, grouping codes into larger themes to understand relationships between different data aspects. Finally, a narrative was compiled using the identified themes to describe the experiences and views of research subjects regarding the Merdeka Curriculum implementation in anti-corruption education.

Finding and Discussion

Research Results

The results showed that the implementation of Merdeka Curriculum at SD Negeri 1 Pulongrambe provides significant flexibility for teachers to integrate anti-corruption values in learning. This is reflected in several sub-topics that emerged from data analysis, namely teacher creativity in learning, student participation, and school environment support.

Teachers at SD Negeri 1 Pulongrambe show a high level of creativity in teaching anti-corruption values. They use various innovative learning methods that not only attract students' attention but are also effective in delivering anti-corruption messages. One method that is often used is project-based learning, where students are invited to work in groups to complete projects related to anti-corruption topics. This method allows students to learn actively and develop their critical thinking skills (Afrilia et al., 2023).

In addition, teachers also often use real case studies that occur in Indonesia as material for discussion in class. In this way, students can see firsthand the negative impact of corruption and the importance of integrity values in everyday life. One of the teachers stated, "I use corruption cases reported in the media as discussion materials in class. This helps students understand that corruption is a real problem that we must fight together".

Furthermore, teachers also develop teaching materials that are contextual and relevant to students' daily lives. They utilize digital media and information technology to make learning more interactive and interesting. For example, the use of videos and digital

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simulations to illustrate corruption situations and how to overcome them. This method has proven effective in improving students' understanding of the impact of corruption and the importance of integrity (Suyantiningsih & Rahmadonna, 2019)

Student participation in anti-corruption learning at SD Negeri 1 Pulongrambe also increased significantly. Students show increased understanding and awareness of the importance of integrity. They are actively involved in class discussions, group projects and extracurricular activities related to anti-corruption education. For example, in one of the group projects, students were asked to create posters promoting anti-corruption messages. These posters were then displayed around the school to remind all school members of the importance of integrity (Elissanti, 2023).

One student stated, "Through this project, I learned that corruption can harm many people. I became more aware to always be honest and not cheat". This increased awareness is also evident in the students' daily behavior, where they show honesty and responsibility more often.

Other activities that support student participation are class debates and court trial simulations. In class debates, students are given topics related to corruption cases and asked to debate the best solution to address the problem. Court trial simulations allow students to play the role of judges, prosecutors, and lawyers, so that they can understand the legal process and the importance of justice (Purnaweni et al., 2022).

Support from the school environment also plays an important role in the successful implementation of Merdeka Curriculum and anti-corruption education. Schools provide support facilities and policies that support the implementation of this curriculum. For example, the school has a policy that encourages the involvement of all school members in anti-corruption education activities. The principal stated, "We ensure that all school members, including teachers, students and staff, are actively involved in anti-corruption education activities. This is part of our commitment to creating a clean and integrity school environment".



Figure 1. Interview with student (Author, 2023)

In addition, the school also provides supportive facilities, such as classrooms equipped with visual aids to facilitate teachers in delivering learning materials. This support makes the learning process more effective and interesting for students (Muharam et al., 2022).

The school also conducts training programs and workshops for teachers to improve their competence in teaching anti-corruption values. This program is held regularly and involves resource persons from anti-corruption agencies and academics who are experienced

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in this field. Through this training, teachers can share experiences and gain new knowledge that can be applied in learning activities (Wiyatun, 2023).

Authentic evidence from empirical data shows that the implementation of Merdeka Curriculum at SD Negeri 1 Pulongrambe has succeeded in increasing students' awareness and understanding of the importance of anti-corruption values. One quote from an interview with a student is, "I now understand better why we must always be honest and not take other people's rights. I also learned that corruption can harm many people, including my own family".

From the field notes, it can be seen that students are very enthusiastic in participating in learning activities related to anti-corruption. They actively ask questions and discuss with the teacher and their friends. Classroom observations also show that students are able to apply the values they learn in their daily interactions, such as admitting mistakes and taking responsibility for their actions.



Figure 2. Interview with teacher (author, 2023)

Analysis of documents such as lesson plans (RPP) and learning modules shows that teachers have integrated anti-corruption values in various subjects. For example, in PPKn (Pancasila and Citizenship Education) lessons, teachers insert material about the importance of integrity and the negative impact of corruption. In Social Studies (Social Science) lessons, students are taught about examples of corruption cases in various countries and how these countries are trying to overcome them (Jannati et al., 2023).

The use of technology in learning is also evident in the document analysis. Teachers use digital media such as videos and presentations to reinforce the material taught. This technology not only makes learning more interesting, but also helps students understand complex concepts more easily (Kusumadewi et al., 2023).



Figure 3. Discussion after observation (author, 2023)

Overall, the results of this study show that the implementation of Merdeka Curriculum at SD Negeri 1 Pulongrambe is effective in integrating anti-corruption education into the learning process. Teacher creativity, active participation of students, and support from the school environment all contribute to this success. This research provides new insights into how Merdeka Curriculum can be implemented to support anti-corruption values education and shape students' characters with integrity.

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at SD Negeri 1 Pulongrambe effectively integrates anti-corruption values into daily learning activities. Teachers employ innovative methods such as project-based learning and real case studies, which engage students actively and enhance their critical thinking skills. These methods enable students to understand and apply anti-corruption concepts in real-life situations, fostering a deeper appreciation for integrity and honesty. The flexibility provided by the Merdeka Curriculum supports teachers in overcoming the limitations of a rigid curriculum.

Character education theory emphasizes the importance of flexibility in the curriculum to support student character building. According to Lickona (1991); Khotimah (2019), character education must be integrated in all aspects of the curriculum and school activities in order to shape students' attitudes and behavior as a whole. The findings from this study show that Merdeka Curriculum provides space for teachers to integrate anti-corruption values through various innovative learning methods. This is in line with the view that a flexible curriculum allows teachers to adapt to the needs and context of students, so that character education can be implemented more effectively.

Teachers at SD Negeri 1 Pulongrambe show high creativity in teaching anti-corruption values, using methods such as project-based learning and real case studies. These methods allow students to learn actively and develop their critical thinking skills (Afrilia et al., 2023). The use of these methods shows that flexibility in the Merdeka Curriculum helps teachers overcome the limitations present in a rigid curriculum, as often found in traditional education systems.

Students' active participation in anti-corruption learning is one indicator of the successful implementation of Merdeka Curriculum. Students show increased understanding and awareness of the importance of integrity, which is reflected in their involvement in class discussions, group projects, and extracurricular activities (Hidayat, 2023). This finding is

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consistent with previous research showing that students' active participation in learning activities can improve their understanding and application of the values taught (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005). In the context of anti-corruption education, students' participation in activities such as class debates and court hearing simulations provides them with practical experiences that strengthen their understanding of the concepts of honesty and responsibility. These experiences not only help students understand the theory, but also give them the opportunity to apply these values in real situations, which is an important step in character building (Handayani et al., 2021).

Support from the school environment also plays an important role in the successful implementation of Merdeka Curriculum and anti-corruption education. Schools provide facilities and policies that support the implementation of this curriculum, including classrooms equipped with visual aids and training programs for teachers (Kamarudin et al., 2022; Qudsiyyah et al., 2024). The principal also emphasized the school's commitment to creating a supportive environment for anti-corruption education, involving all school members, including teachers, students and staff. This study shows that support from a strong school environment can increase the effectiveness of implementing Merdeka Curriculum. This is consistent with the view that a supportive and collaborative school environment is one of the key factors in the successful implementation of character education (Lickona, 1991). In addition, support from parents is also important in strengthening the messages conveyed at school, as shown in research by (Heryadi et al., 2023).

The results of this study have several important implications for the development of educational policies and teaching practices. First, this study confirms the importance of flexibility in the curriculum to support anti-corruption values education. Merdeka curriculum allows teachers to develop innovative and locally relevant learning methods, which can increase the effectiveness of character education. Second, this research shows that training and professional development for teachers are essential to optimize the implementation of Merdeka Curriculum. Teachers need to get adequate support and resources to teach anti-corruption values effectively. Continuous and practice-based training programs can help teachers improve their skills and knowledge, as suggested by previous research (Kusumadewi et al., 2023). Third, this study underscores the importance of support from the entire school environment, including principals, staff and parents. A shared commitment to creating a supportive environment for anti-corruption education is key to the successful implementation of Merdeka Curriculum. Schools need to develop policies that encourage the involvement of all school members in anti-corruption education activities and provide facilities that support learning.

Compared to previous studies that show the difficulties in implementing character education in a rigid curriculum, this study shows that Merdeka Curriculum provides an effective solution. For example, research by Purnaweni et al. (2022) showed that flexibility in the curriculum can improve student character building by providing space for teachers to innovate in teaching methods. This research supports these findings by showing that teachers at SD Negeri 1 Pulongrambe have successfully integrated anti-corruption values in learning through innovative methods. Other research by Perdana (2018); Fardani et al. (2021); Fatina & Iskandar (2022) & Wiyatun (2023) also shows that the support of the school environment is very important in the success of character education. The findings from this study are consistent with these views, showing that commitment and support from the principal and all school members play an important role in the successful implementation of Merdeka Curriculum.

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The findings of this study can be integrated with character education theory to provide deeper insights into how Merdeka Curriculum can support anti-corruption values education. Character education emphasizes the importance of shaping students' attitudes and behaviors through meaningful learning experiences. The Merdeka Curriculum provides a flexible framework for teachers to create relevant and contextual learning experiences, which can help students internalize anti-corruption values. Character education theory also emphasizes the importance of involving the whole school environment in the formation of students' character (Lickona, 1991). The findings from this study support this view by showing that support from principals, teachers, staff, and parents is crucial in the successful implementation of anti-corruption education. The integration of these findings with character education theory may provide practical guidance for other schools that want to implement Merdeka Curriculum to support anti-corruption values education.

In addition to integrating the findings with existing theories, this research also has the potential to develop new theories or modify existing theories. For example, findings on the use of project-based learning methods and real case studies in teaching anti-corruption values can be developed into a new learning model specific to anti-corruption education. This model could include practical guidance for teachers on how to design and implement projects and case studies relevant to the local context. The research also shows that support from a strong and collaborative school environment is key to successful anti-corruption education. These findings can be used to develop a theory on the importance of school leadership and community engagement in character education. This theory could include principles of effective leadership and strategies to build collaboration between schools, parents and communities in supporting anti-corruption education.

This study provides several practical implications for educators and policymakers. First, schools that want to implement anti-corruption education can use the findings from this study as a practical guide. Teachers can apply project-based learning methods and real case studies to teach anti-corruption values, while principals can develop policies that support the involvement of all school members in anti-corruption education activities. Second, policymakers can use these findings to develop training and support programs for teachers. Training programs that focus on developing teaching skills and knowledge of anti-corruption values can help teachers optimize the implementation of Merdeka Curriculum. In addition, policies that support collaboration between schools, parents and communities can strengthen the implementation of anti-corruption education. Third, this research also has implications for curriculum development at the national level. Findings on the effectiveness of Merdeka Curriculum in supporting anti-corruption education can be used to inform the revision and development of the national curriculum. A flexible and contextualized curriculum can help increase the effectiveness of character education and anti-corruption values throughout Indonesia.

Overall, this study highlights the potential of the Merdeka Curriculum in effectively integrating anti-corruption education, supporting the development of student character, and promoting a culture of integrity in schools. By providing a flexible framework for innovative teaching methods and fostering a supportive school environment, the Merdeka Curriculum proves to be a valuable approach in the context of character education and anti-corruption efforts.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of *Merdeka Curriculum* at SD Negeri 1 Pulongrambe, Tawangharjo District, Grobogan Regency, shows that the flexibility offered by this

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curriculum provides significant opportunities for teachers to integrate anti-corruption values in the learning process. The results of this study reveal that teachers in this school are able to use innovative learning methods, such as project-based learning and real case studies, to effectively deliver anti-corruption materials. Through this approach, students not only learn important concepts about anti-corruption, but also apply them in their daily lives.

One of the key findings of this research is the increased student participation in anti-corruption learning. Students showed increased understanding and awareness of the importance of integrity, which was reflected in their involvement in class discussions, group projects, and extracurricular activities related to anti-corruption education. Support from the school environment has also proven to be very important in the successful implementation of *Merdeka Curriculum*. Schools provide supportive facilities and policies, as well as training programs for teachers to improve their competence in teaching anti-corruption values.

This finding is consistent with character education theory, which emphasizes the importance of flexibility in the curriculum to support student character building. By providing space for teachers to innovate in teaching methods, *Merdeka Curriculum* helps overcome the limitations often found in rigid curricula. In addition, support from the entire school environment, including principals, staff and parents, is crucial to creating a supportive environment for anti-corruption education.

This research also shows that training and professional development for teachers are key to optimizing the implementation of *Merdeka Curriculum*. Teachers need adequate support and resources to teach anti-corruption values effectively. Continuous and practice-based training programs can help teachers improve their skills and knowledge, so they can better integrate anti-corruption education in various subjects.

In addition, this research underscores the importance of using innovative learning methods for anti-corruption education. Project-based learning and real case studies not only help students understand the theory, but also give them the opportunity to apply these values in real situations. This kind of practical experience is an important step in character building, as it helps students internalize integrity values and apply them in their daily lives.

Overall, the results of this study indicate that *Merdeka Curriculum* can be effectively implemented to support anti-corruption values education and shape students' characters with integrity. The findings provide new insights into how flexibility in the curriculum can increase the effectiveness of character education, as well as the importance of support from the entire school environment in this process. By integrating anti-corruption values in daily learning, students not only understand important concepts, but also apply them in real actions, ultimately helping to shape a generation with more integrity and responsibility.

This research makes a meaningful contribution to the field of anti-corruption education by showing that *Merdeka Curriculum* can support more contextualized and relevant learning. Hopefully, these findings can serve as a reference for other schools looking to implement anti-corruption education and encourage the development of more flexible and innovative education policies across Indonesia. Thus, the *Merdeka Curriculum* is not only an educational approach, but also a movement to create young people who are honest, responsible, and have high integrity, ready to fight corruption in all aspects of life.

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