

# Does the Merdeka Curriculum Potentially Integrate with the Cambridge Curriculum? Perspective Through Physics Subject

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#### Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis kemungkinan mengintegrasikan kurikulum Merdeka dengan kurikulum Cambridge sesuai dengan mata pelajaran fisika di tingkat SMA. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif dengan metode analisis. Berdasarkan kerangka kurikulum, keduanya saling berkaitan satu sama lain, kecuali poin " Beriman, Bertakwa kepada Tuhan YME, dan berakhlak mulia " dalam kurikulum Merdeka yang tidak berkaitan dengan kerangka kurikulum Cambridge. Analisis lebih lanjut dalam buku pelajaran fisika untuk sekolah menengah atas dan A level, mendapatkan hasil secara keseluruhan kedua kurikulum memiliki materi yang sama untuk diajarkan dan alur aktivitas siswa pada buku tersebut. Namun, tampilan buku ajar berdasarkan kurikulum Merdeka tidak semenarik di buku ajar Cambridge. Kurikulum Merdeka dan kurikulum Cambridge memiliki potensi untuk diintegrasikan. Mengingat pengintegrasian kurikulum membutuhkan banyak alokasi waktu, keuangan, dan sumber daya manusia, maka diperlukan analisis yang lebih dalam terhadap aspek-aspek lain dari kurikulum, termasuk perspektif siswa atau guru terhadap kurikulum integrasi.

Kata kunci: Integrasi Kurikulum, Kurikulum Merdeka dan Kurikulum Cambridge

#### Abstract

This study aims to analyze the possibility of integrating the Merdeka and Cambridge curriculum in accordance with the physics course at the senior high school level. This research is qualitative research with analytical methods. Based on the curriculum framework, both are related to each other, except for the point of "Have Faith, Fear God, and Have a noble character" in the Merdeka curriculum. Further analysis was conducted in the physics coursebook for senior high school and A level and found that both curriculum have similar material to teach and the flow of student activity in the coursebook. However, the display of the coursebook based on the Merdeka curriculum is not as engaging as in the Cambridge. Merdeka and Cambridge curriculum have the potential to be integrated. Regarding the need for time, financial, and human resources to integrate the curriculum, hence deeper analysis of other aspects of the curriculum is needed.

Keywords: Integrated curriculum, Merdeka Curriculum, and Cambridge Curriculum

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## INTRODUCTION

Mediating, standardizing, and controlling the school system requires a written academic curriculum (Glatthorn et al, 2009). Since the curriculum plays a vital role in providing a guide for teachers and learners, putting more effort into a comprehensive curriculum is needed. Educational practitioners believe that the school authority in designing curriculum can help to achieve the designated learning outcomes, as a result of growth, maturation, and learning meant to be best utilized for life in a changing society (Mulenga, 1993). Thus, innovation in designing the curriculum needs to be considered in order to achieve the vision of the school.

Indonesian curriculum has been reformed from exclusive to inclusive, bringing a better paradigm for teaching and learning activities (Mukminin et al., 2019). The inclusive curriculum implemented as the Merdeka curriculum is the result of innovation in designing the curriculum. This current curriculum started implement in school since 2020, it attempts to ensure that all students are part of the class that shares learning experiences and equal opportunities. It also gives more attention to inquiry learning approaches that are ultimately related to social, economic, and humanitarian (Antika et al., 2022). These transformations of the curriculum are expected to gain the long life learner as "Pelajar Pancasila" (Satria et al., 2022).

Further implementation and innovation of the Merdeka curriculum conducted by differentiated learning (Yasir et al., 2023) and integrating Merdeka curriculum with other topics, such as environment, ethnoscience, and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Dinurrohmah, Mispi, et al., 2023; Dinurrohmah, Sulaeman, et al., 2023; Mispi et al., 2022). Despite the integration of the Merdeka curriculum and any other related topic, the study found the possibility of integrating two different curriculum into one unified curriculum, such as integrating KTSP and IGCSE (Rahman, 2014) and the elementary 2013 curriculum with the Cambridge curriculum (Hasanah, 2019). It is concluded that studies of integrating curriculum for some models, both national and international are explicitly important for researchers.

Studies about curriculum are really flexible due to the flexibility of its definition (Wall & Leckie, 2017). An integrated curriculum is effective for academic learning, especially in preparing students for 21stcentury skills as a long life learners (Drake & Reid, 2018). However, curriculum reform, like many other reforms, has a high opportunity cost (Wardani & Nugroho, 2016). It requires an enormous amount of time, and financial and human resources to make it happen (Gouëdard et al., 2020). Therefore, planning to integrate the curriculum needs a deep analysis of its possibility, in the aspect of time, finances, also resources.

In specific of integrating the Merdeka curriculum as the recent curriculum in Indonesia with the Cambridge curriculum as the most used curriculum globally, it needs to consider some aspects. Curriculum framework and technology play part of the curriculum (Pratikno et al., 2022). The transformation into the Merdeka curriculum brings a simpler and more in-depth, more independent; more relevant, and more interactive hypothesized to be suited to be integrated with the Cambridge curriculum (Hadi et al., 2023). Furthermore, the integration of the curriculum needs preliminary study into the curriculum framework.

Therefore, Analyzing the possibility of innovating the curriculum by integrating national and international curriculum is intriguing to be conducted. It can provide a new path to spread the quality of education nationally. Therefore, the aims of this study concluded

- 1. Analyze the comparison of the Merdeka curriculum with the Cambridge curriculum
- 2. Find the possibility to integrate the Merdeka curriculum with the Cambridge curriculum



# **METHODS**

To identify the opportunity of integrating the Merdeka curriculum with the Cambridge curriculum, qualitative research with content analysis method will be utilized. The content analysis method will be used to analyze the content (Respatiadi et al., 2022) that is related to both curriculum. In this case, the content analyzed is the curriculum document both for the Merdeka curriculum and Cambridge curriculum, as well as science coursebooks for senior high school / A level by Table 1.

	Table 1. Analysis of Curriculum Documents and Coursebook			
No	DOCUMENT/COURSEBOOK	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION		
1.	Syllabus Cambridge International AS & A Level Physics 9702 (Cambridge Assessment International Education, 2019)	-		
2.	Learning Outcomes in Early Childhood Education, Primary Education Level, and Secondary Education Level in the Independent Curriculum (Kemendikbud, 2022)	-		
3.	Physics for Cambridge International AS&A Level Coursebook Third Edition (Sang et al., 2020)	Authors : David Sang, Graham Jones, Gurinder Chadha, Richard Woodside Publisher : Cambridge University Press Year : 2020 ISBN : 978-1-108-85903-5		
4.	Physics for class X (Lasmi, 2021b)	Authors : Dr. Ni Ketut Lasmi, M.PFis Publisher : Erlangga Year :2021 ISBN : 978-623-266-627-6		
5.	Physics for class XI (Lasmi, 2021a)	Authors : Dr. Ni Ketut Lasmi, M.PFis Publisher : Erlangga Year : 2021 ISBN : 978-623-266-817-1		
6.	Physics for class XII (Sarah & Suwarna, 2022)	Authors : Lia Laela Sarah Irma Rahma Suwarma Publisher : Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi Year :2022 ISBN : 978-623-472-720-3		

Regarding the conceptual design framework is the first step of the implementation of the curriculum, followed by the coursebook (Button, 2021). Content that is being analyzed is the commonly used coursebook in the Merdeka curriculum and Cambridge curriculum. Since the implementation of the curriculum is contextual in 3 grades, therefore the analysis of the coursebook was also conducted for 3 grades of Senior High School Coursebook.

# **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Comparison between the Merdeka Curriculum with the Cambridge Curriculum

Integration of the former Indonesia Curriculum (curriculum 2013) and Cambridge Curriculum resulted in improving students' ability in English language, reasoning, and creative thinking (Hasanah, 2019). Therefore, science subjects as the subject that are essentially related to scientific reasoning, can be categorized as potential subjects to be integrated into Merdeka curriculum and Cambridge curriculum. The development of the curriculum is closely related to its framework (International Bureau



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of Education, 2017). Thus, the implementation and new innovation of curriculum in the educational sector need to consider how the curriculum approaches purposively work. As well as integrating curriculum, analyzing both curriculum frameworks to make sure that both of them have similar visions of their teaching and learning systems. Figure 1 depicts the curriculum framework of both the curriculum.



Figure 1. Curriculum approaches (a. Merdeka Curriculum and b. Cambridge Curriculum)

The curriculum framework for the Merdeka curriculum translated into English would be "Kreatif = Creative"; "Bernalar Kritis = Critical Thinking"; "Mandiri = Independent"; "Beriman, Bertakwa kepada Tuhan YME, dan berakhlak mulia = Have faith, fear God, and have a noble character"; "Berkebinekaan Global = Globally engaged"; "Gotong Royong = Mutual Aid". Thus, both of the curriculum frameworks would be related as shown in Table 2 and Figure 2.

Table 2. Description of each	element in both curriculum
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	Have faith, fear God, and have a noble character				
I	The curriculum objective closely related to the noble moral in relation to God Almighty. The curriculum				
	highlighted the religion and beliefs and applies these understandings in their daily life. It consists of				
	(a) religious morality; (b) personal morality; (c) morality to men; (d) morality to nature; and (e) the				
	morals of the state.				
I	Creativity	Innovative			
ľ	Modify and produce something original,	Learners think of innovative solutions to			
	meaningful, useful, and impactful. Having	problems and suggest a course of action that will			
	flexibility of thinking in finding alternative	make a positive difference to those in their local			
solutions to problems.		community. Applying problem-solving with new			
		tools and techniques to develop successful			
		approaches.			
I	Both of the curriculum aimed to encourage the students to think and find innovative solution to				
	problems. Those designed problems was also designed based on local phenomena.				
I	Critical Thinking	Reflective			
Objectively process information both qualitative		Learners are reflective about their own learning,			
and quantitative, build linkages between various		behavior and its consequences. They also reflect			
information, analyze information, evaluate and		on how information changes or reinforces their			
conclude it. reflecting on thoughts and thought		ideas about a topic.			
processes in decision making.		Confident			
		Learners gain the skills they need to analyze and			

	evaluate information which will allow them to			
	confidently choose information sources to use in			
	their own research. They will have opportunities			
	to present their work to peers which will help			
	them to become confident communicators.			
Learners are formed to be great at analytical	and reflective about their own learning. In both			
curriculums. they focused on their thinking	process and consider their decision deeply.			
Mutual Aid	Responsible			
Work together, carry out activities together	They contribute to group problem solving and are			
voluntarily so that the activities run smoothly,	responsible for completing specific tasks			
easily and lightly. The elements of mutual aid are	allocated to them. They show academic honesty			
collaboration, caring, and sharing	and give credit to others for their contributions.			
Independent				
Independent learners, responsible for the				
learning process and outcomes. The key				
elements of self-reliance consist of awareness of				
self and the situation at hand as well as self-				
regulation				
Designed project in both of the curriculum are a	imed to trained learners work in group. They still			
need to be responsible on each specific task they had, perharp, they are also part of the group, in				
which need to giv	re credit to others.			
Globally Engaged	Engaged			
Maintain their noble culture, locality and identity,	As learners better understand the causes and			
and keep an open mind in interacting with other	consequences of local issues they will engage			
cultures, thus fostering mutual respect and the	with solutions and actions to improve the			
possibility of forming a new positive culture.	situation.			
Both curriculums highlighted the important in c	onsidering the local issue, open minded but still			
engaged with locality.				
References: Merdeka Curriculum (Kemendikbudristek, 2022) and Cambridge Curriculum (Cambridge				
Assessment International Education, 2018				



Figure 2. Curriculum Framework Relation

Based on Table 2, both of the curriculum related based on their framework. However, in the Merdeka curriculum, there is an additional point related to religion, since Indonesia is hugely considered a noble character and religion (Zuhdi, 2005). The Merdeka curriculum considered more essential materials and project-based learning to shape the character of Pancasila students, and be flexible



according to the needs and character of each school (Rizaldi & Fatimah, 2022). It is related to the Cambridge curriculum in fostering active learning and autonomy, giving them great involvement and control over their learning and giving them skills for lifelong learning (Cambridge, 2019).

# Possibility to Integrate Based on Physics Subject

This result showed that the integration of both curriculums is possible to be conducted, with additional points of noble character and religion. Nevertheless, the integration of the curriculum will be a challenge in adjusting the topic for both curriculums, since both curriculums have different schemes for presenting the topic (Table 1). In addition, to find the possibility of integrating both curriculums, one needs to compare the topics based on the coursebook. Based on the coursebook that is commonly used in school, some topics aren't taught in the Merdeka curriculum and Cambridge Curriculum. The physics coursebook based on the Merdeka curriculum was designed by compounding some topics into one huge topic.

TOPIC	MERDEKA	CAMBRIDGE
	CURRICULUM	CURRICULUM
Physics and scientific thinking	✓	-
Kinematics	✓	$\checkmark$
Accelerated motion	Presented the topic of	$\checkmark$
Dynamics	"dynamic movement"	$\checkmark$
Forces		$\checkmark$
Work, Energy, and Power	✓	$\checkmark$
Momentum	✓	$\checkmark$
Matter and Materials	Differentiated as topic of	$\checkmark$
	static/dynamic fluid, and	
	harmonic vibration	
Electric Current	Presented as the static	$\checkmark$
Kirchoff's Laws	current topic	$\checkmark$
Resistance and Resistivity		$\checkmark$
Practical Circuits		$\checkmark$
Waves	Presented on the topic of	$\checkmark$
Superposition of Waves	"waves"	$\checkmark$
Stationary Waves		$\checkmark$
Atomic Structure	✓	$\checkmark$
Circular Motion	Presented the topic of	$\checkmark$
Gravitational Fields	"dynamic movement"	$\checkmark$
Oscillations	✓	$\checkmark$
Thermal Physics	✓	$\checkmark$
Ideal Gases	✓	$\checkmark$
Uniform Electric Fields	Presented the topic of	$\checkmark$
Coulomb's Law	"static and dynamic	$\checkmark$
Capacitance	current"	$\checkmark$
Magnetic Fields and Electromagnetism	✓	$\checkmark$
Motion of Charged Particles	✓	$\checkmark$
Electromagnetic Induction	✓	$\checkmark$
Alternating Currents	$\checkmark$	$\checkmark$
Quantum Physics	$\checkmark$	$\checkmark$
Nuclear Physics	✓	√

Table 2. Topics Comparison in Both Curriculum



TOPIC	MERDEKA	CAMBRIDGE	
	CURRICULUM	CURRICULUM	
Medical Imaging	-	$\checkmark$	
Astronomy and Cosmology	-	✓	
Energy Resource	✓	-	
Vector	$\checkmark$	Integrated in kinematics	
		topic	
Climate Change	$\checkmark$	-	

The result shows that essential material in physics class is taught in both of the curriculum. It is indicated both curriculums have similar ways to achieve the curriculum in specific learning objective through the physics materials. However, since Indonesia still struggles with issues of access and equality in terms of infrastructure, teacher quality, and Internet access (Rifai & Rombot, 2021). It might hamper the implementation of the curriculum in Indonesia.

In line with the statement of the obstacles encountered in integrating curriculum, further research needs to be conducted by comparing the common learning methods, and assessment based on the curriculum, also analyze deeper for the objective of the course. Both of the curriculums are categorized as inclusive curriculum which means there are huge opportunities for the teacher to be more innovative in their classes. Further research also can continue to explore the impact of this approach on student and teacher perspectives (Wall & Leckie, 2017).

## CONCLUSION

Merdeka curriculum and Cambridge curriculum have the potential to be integrated. Both curriculum materials are similar, except for quantum physics that doesn't include in the Merdeka curriculum, and the Cambridge curriculum usually breaks down the material into pieces of simple topics. The display of the coursebook is also quite different, with the Cambridge curriculum having more illustrative examples than the Merdeka curriculum coursebook. Regarding the need for an enormous amount of time, financial, and human resources to integrate the curriculum, a deeper analysis of other aspects of the curriculum is needed, such as analyzing of any other subject, the common learning methods, and assessment, including the student or teacher perspective toward the integration curriculum.

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