

Primary Education in Southeast Asia: A Comparative Analysis between Indonesia and Philippines School Curriculum

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to compare the implementation of elementary curricula in the Philippines and Indonesia, focusing on ten key aspects: Curriculum Function, Curriculum Vision, Aims and Objectives, Values and Principles, Philosophy of Teaching and Learning, Curriculum Architecture, The Importance of Competency, Areas of Learning, Teaching Methodology and Strategies, and Assessment. The objective is to describe and analyze the differences between the curricula of these two countries. A qualitative approach with a multi-site case study design was employed, involving elementary schools in both Indonesia and the Philippines. Data collection methods included surveys, in-depth interviews with staff from six schools in each country, lesson observations, and document analysis. Informants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure the inclusion of experienced individuals from the Education office, school principals, and teachers, totaling 12 informants from both Indonesia and the Philippines. The findings reveal notable differences in the curricula across the ten aspects studied. The Indonesian education curriculum emphasizes the development of character, morals, and social skills, whereas the Philippine education curriculum prioritizes the enhancement of students' cognitive abilities.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The process of educational development continues to evolve, both in terms of methods and goals to be achieved. Successful education is education that encourages development and does not cause regression (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020; Yafie et al., 2021). Improving the quality of education in Indonesia is the responsibility of the government, and one way to achieve this is through curriculum development. The curriculum serves as the basis of the values that will be instilled in students (Kirkgöz,

2021). To improve the quality of education, curriculum development serves as a very important foundation for shaping student character (Gouédard, Pont, Hyttinen, & Huang, 2020).

The basic education system in the Philippines has many similarities with other countries, including Indonesia. One example is the use of cooperative learning models in the teaching and learning process. Cooperative learning refers to the idea that humans are social beings who interact and share goals, tasks, and responsibilities (Hogenkamp, Van Dijk, & Eysink, 2021). This is an important step in the goal of educating the nation, as mandated in the 1945 Constitution. The success of K-12 programs and the implementation of effective teaching models will help achieve this goal and contribute positively to the advancement of education in the Philippines (Dizon, Calbi, Cuyos, & Miranda, 2019).

Previous research found that the primary and secondary education curriculum in Indonesia is still not fully up to date (Shaturaev & Bekimbetova, 2021). Meanwhile, research by (Hufron & Juanedi, 2021) shows that the development of the curriculum in Indonesia is characterized by the Merdeka Belajar curriculum which raises philosophical, pedagogical, and sociological aspects. Research by (Nasir, Yawan and Saifullah, 2023) focused on identifying comparisons between the 12 (K-12) curriculum in the Philippines and the 12 (K-13) curriculum in Indonesia on its impact on various stakeholders. Meanwhile, research by (Rahmawati, Ridwan, & Calambro, 2021) focused on the similarities and differences in the English curriculum between Indonesia and the Philippines which focused only on the Senior High School level. Meanwhile, this study examines the comparison of the school curriculum in Indonesia and the Philippines at the primary education level. Research by (Nasir et al., 2023) used a comparative approach method by critically comparing official curriculum documents obtained from both countries. Research by (Rahmawati et al., 2021) uses a qualitative approach with compare with multi-case and multi-site case studies. Meanwhile, this study uses a qualitative approach with comparative and descriptive analysis to compare the implementation of the curriculum in Indonesia and the Philippines at the elementary school level.

This study aims to compare the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum at the primary level in the Philippines and Indonesia, focusing on 10 key aspects which include Curriculum Function, Curriculum Vision, Aims and Objectives, Values and Principles, Philosophy of Teaching and Learning, Curriculum Architecture, The Importance of Competencies, Areas of Learning, Teaching Methodology and Strategies and Assessment.

2. METHODS

This research aims to analyze and compare the Indonesian and Philippine education curricula using a comparative descriptive qualitative method. The research begins with a literature study with a review of the education literature from both countries, conducting interviews at primary schools in the Philippines and Indonesia, and analyzing official curriculum documents. Data collection will be done through official sources such as government websites and interviews with education experts. The collected data will be analyzed using a comparative descriptive approach, focusing on similarities, differences, and emerging patterns.

In this study, researchers used a purposive sampling method to select informants for the comparison of Indonesian and Philippine education curricula. The data collection methods used involved a) semi-structured interviews with relevant informants totaling 12 informants. Data analysis in this study uses Miles and Huberman. The first stage, data collection, involved semi-structured interviews with relevant informants and documentation of learning curriculum activities. Meanwhile, observations were made directly in the classroom regarding the practical aspects of the curriculum. After data collection, the second stage, data condensation, requires researchers to group and summarize the results of interviews, observations, and documents into relevant categories. This process helped to simplify the information for further processing.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Research Informant

In the context of the research, coding and grouping informants from the data collected from interviews, observations and documentation plays a crucial role in the analysis process. Grouping informants allows researchers to compare and contrast information between different groups or individuals, supporting an understanding of the demographic context that influences informants' perspectives. Demographic aspects in this study include country name, position, gender, year of entry and length of teaching.

Table 1. Research Informant

No	Country Name	Name	Position	Gender	Year of Entry	Length of Teaching
1	Indonesia	JEF	Education Office	Male	2011	11 Years
2		BEL	Principal 1	Male	1997	25 Years
3		DAF	Principal 2	Female	2001	21 Years
4		DIT	Teacher	Female	1994	28 Years
5		ARK	Teacher	Male	2009	13 Years
6		WAT	Teacher	Female	2014	8 Years
7	Philippine	SEN	Education Office	Female	2011	11 Years
8		SUM	Principal 1	Male	2017	5 Years
9		ZAK	Principal 2	Male	1993	29 Years
10		MIC	Teacher	Female	2014	8 Years
11		MES	Teacher	Male	2011	11 Years
12		KIN	Teacher	Female	2001	21 Years

3.2. Research Findings

During data analysis, key findings emerged from the participants' narratives and experiences. These findings were then organized into categories and given in the form of key points. The findings include the differences between Indonesian and Philippine curriculum using seamless learning approach. The research findings are shown in Figure 1. Schematic Comparison of Indonesian and Philippine Curricula.

Table 2 Comparison of Curriculum Function Indonesia and Philippines

Indicator	Indonesia (Merdeka Curriculum)	Informant	Philippine (K-12)	Informant
Curriculum Approach	The Merdeka Curriculum was introduced as part of Indonesia's education reform. The focus was on giving schools and teachers greater freedom to design the curriculum according to local needs and student characteristics.	I-JEF-DS, I-DIT-GR, I-ARK-GR	The K-12 curriculum in the Philippines is designed to extend the basic curriculum from 10 years to 12 years to give students a longer time to prepare for life after school.	F-ZAK-KS2
Purpose and Function of the Curriculum	Provide greater freedom and flexibility to schools and teachers in designing the curriculum according to local needs and student characteristics. Emphasizes the development of life skills and student empowerment.	I-BEL-KS1	Extend the duration of basic education to give students the opportunity to develop better skills and abilities before entering the world of work or higher education. Emphasize the development of academic and technical skills.	F-MIC-GR, F-SUM-KS1, F-KIN-GR

Curriculum Structure	<p>Merdeka Curriculum aims to provide greater flexibility in designing learning that suits the local context and student needs.</p> <p>This curriculum prioritizes the skills, character and personality aspects of students.</p>	I-DAF-KS2,I-ARK-GR	<p>The K-12 curriculum has a two-stage structure: 6 years in elementary school, 4 years in junior high school, and 2 years in senior high school.</p> <p>It emphasizes academic and technical skills, and includes specialized subjects to prepare students for the world of work or higher education.</p>	F-MES-GR
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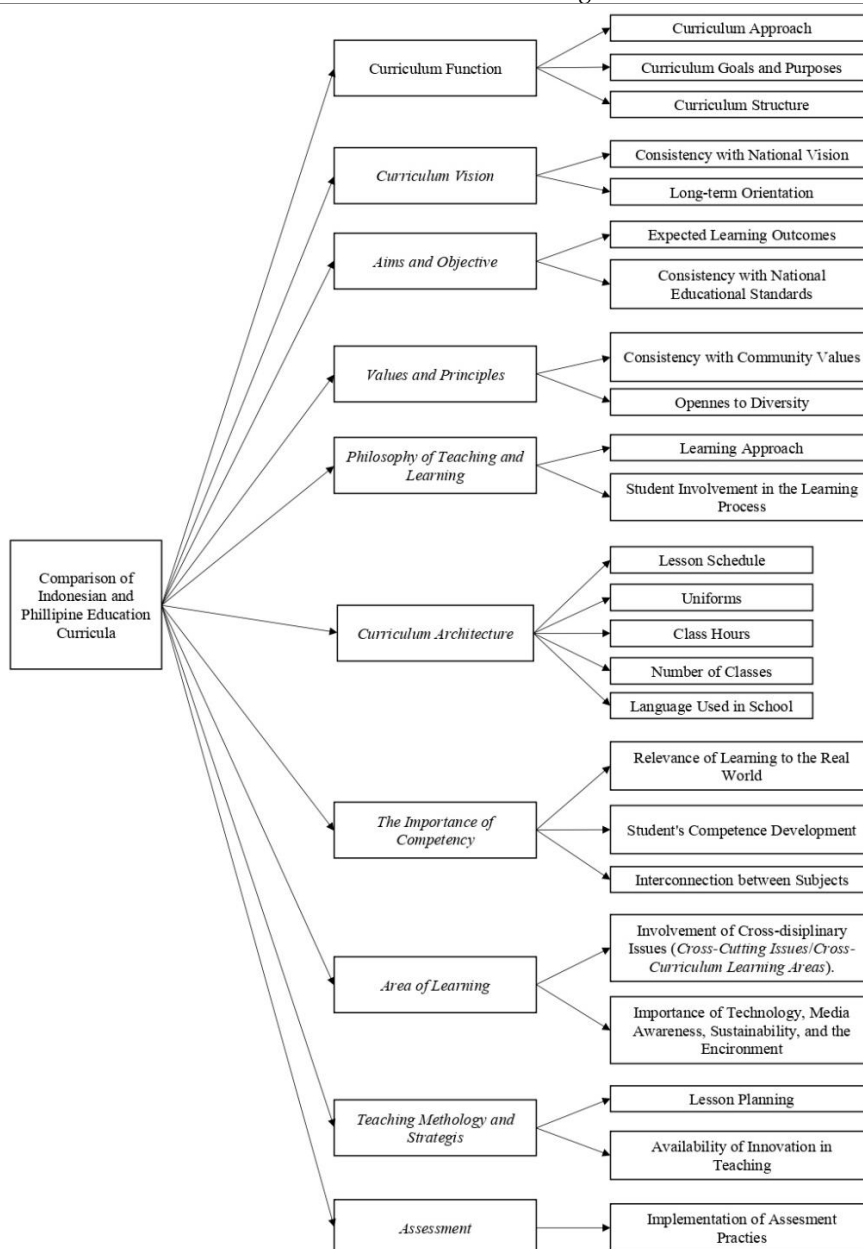


Figure 1. Curriculum Comparison Scheme of Indonesia and the Philippines

The differences between the education curriculum in Indonesia and the Philippines based on the results of interviews with each informant in 6 schools in Indonesia and the Philippines on compatibility with community values are that the education curriculum approach in Indonesia was introduced as part of the Indonesian Education Reform, giving greater freedom to schools and teachers in designing

the curriculum while the K-12 education system in the Philippines is designed to extend the basic curriculum from 10 years to 12 years.

Table 3. Comparison of Curriculum Vision Indonesia and the Philippines

Indicator	Indonesia (Merdeka Curriculum)	Informant	Philippine (K-12)	Informant
Alignment with National Vision	Merdeka Curriculum is based on the spirit of independence, empowerment, and freedom of schools in developing the curriculum according to local needs and student characteristics. Aims to provide greater flexibility for schools in tailoring the curriculum to local needs and student potentials. Emphasizes school empowerment and strengthens character education	I-WAT-GR, I-DAF-KS2, I-ARK-GR	K-12 is an education system consisting of 13 years, with an additional two years at the upper level (Senior High School). The main goal is to provide a more holistic education and prepare students with skills relevant to the needs of the workforce. Focus on improving the quality of education, enhancing skills, and adapting to international standards	F-MIC-GR, F-KIN-GR
Long-term Orientation	The Merdeka Curriculum provides flexibility to schools in developing a curriculum that suits the needs and potential of students. Oriented in creating an inclusive and student-centered learning environment. Encourages the application of technology and innovation in learning to prepare for the future needs of students	I-JEF-DP, I-BEL-KS1, I-DIT-GR, I-WAT	K-12 has a long-term focus on preparing students with skills relevant to global needs. Encourages the development of 21st century skills. Create students who are ready to enter the workforce or continue to higher education with the appropriate skills	F-SEN-DP, F-ZAK-KS2

The differences in the education curriculum in Indonesia and the Philippines based on the results of interviews with each informant in 6 schools in Indonesia and the Philippines on compatibility with community values are that the accuracy with the national vision of education in Indonesia is based on the spirit of independence, empowerment, and freedom of schools in developing the curriculum according to the needs of students, while in the K-12 education system in the Philippines consists of 13 years providing a more holistic education, focusing on improving the quality of education, improving skills, and adjusting to international standards.

Table 4. Comparison of Aims and Objectives of Indonesia and the Philippines

Indicator	Indonesia (Merdeka Curriculum)	Informant	Philippine (K-12)	Informant
Expected Learning Outcomes	The Merdeka Curriculum encourages broader learning outcomes (in academic and non-academic aspects). Emphasizes the development of social, emotional, creativity, leadership, adaptability, and social responsibility skills	I-DAF-KS2	K-12 focuses on academic-focused learning outcomes and practical skills relevant to the world of work. Expects students to have a strong understanding in math, science, language, and social studies subjects	F-SUM-KS1, F-MIC-GR, F-MES-GR
Consistency with National Education Standards	The Merdeka Curriculum is consistent in providing flexibility to schools by tailoring the curriculum to local needs	I-JEF-DP, I-DAF-KS2	K-12 has a more structured and targeted approach in accordance with established national education standards	F-SUM-KS1

<p>The Merdeka Curriculum refers to the competency standards set by the government as core guidelines. Provides freedom but must remain in accordance with the framework of national education standards.</p>	<p>Designed to adhere and follow the guidelines set by the Philippine Department of Education. Subjects and curriculum are designed according to the guidelines set by the national education authority.</p>
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The differences between the education curriculum in Indonesia and the Philippines based on the results of interviews with each informant in 6 schools in Indonesia and the Philippines on conformity with community values are based on the expected learning outcomes of education in Indonesia paying more attention to social skills, emotional, creativity, leadership, adaptability, and social responsibility and encouraging students to understand moral values, ethics, and local wisdom by contributing positively in society, while in the K-12 education system in the Philippines expects students to have a strong understanding in the subjects of math, science, language and social sciences. In consistency with national education standards in the learning process in Indonesia, the curriculum refers to the competency standards set by the government as core guidelines.

Table 5. Comparison of Values and Principles of Indonesia and the Philippines

Indicator	Indonesia (Merdeka Curriculum)	Informant	Philippines(K-12)	Informant
Conformity to Community Values	Indonesia's education system prioritizes character education	I-JEF-DP	The education system prioritizes their academics and talent development.	F-ZAK-KS2, F-MES-GR, F-KIN-GR
Openness to Value Diversity	The Merdeka Curriculum provides more space for schools to accommodate local values and cultural diversity in their curricula. Gives special attention to the development of local values, customs and traditions in the education process. Allows for the integration of local values into learning to enhance students' cultural identity and diversity.	I-DIT-GR, I-ARK-GR	K-12 emphasizes respect for the diverse cultures, languages, and values of Philippine society. Incorporates elements of local values into the curriculum to appreciate and understand the diverse cultures that exist in the Philippines. Seeks to create multicultural awareness and respect for differences as an important part of education.	F-SEN-DP

The differences in the education curriculum in Indonesia and the Philippines based on the results of interviews with each informant in 6 schools in Indonesia and the Philippines in accordance with community values, namely that the education curriculum system in Indonesia is the Merdeka Curriculum with the education system in Indonesia prioritizing character education while the K-12 education system in the Philippines prioritizes academics and talent development for students. Education in the Philippines includes elements of local values in the curriculum to appreciate and understand the cultural diversity that exists in the country.

Table 6 A Comparison of Indonesian and Philippine Philosophies of Teaching and Learning

Indicator	Indonesia (Merdeka Curriculum)	Informant	Philippine (K-12)	Informant
Learning Approach	Merdeka Curriculum has a flexible learning approach. More varied learning approaches, including project-based learning, active learning, and experiential learning. Facilitates the application of technology in teaching and learning to support more active interactions between teachers and students.	I-DAF-GR, I-WAT-GR	K-12 has a more structured and targeted approach to learning. Relies on traditional approaches, such as lectures, practice questions, and standardized tests to measure student understanding. National standards-based teaching with a broadly defined curriculum.	F-SUM-KS2, F-MES-GR, F-KIN-GR
Student Engagement in the Learning Process	Merdeka Curriculum encourages more active student involvement in the learning process. Provides more space for students to express opinions, discuss, and develop their social, critical, and creative skills in learning.	I-JEF-DP, I-DAF-KS2, I-DIT-GR, I-WAT-GR	K-12 uses traditional, more teacher-centered approaches to learning, such as lectures and standardized tests that may not always encourage active student engagement. Efforts to incorporate project-based learning, group discussions, and the use of technology to increase student engagement.	F-SEN-DP, F-ZAK-KS2

The difference between the education curriculum in Indonesia and the Philippines based on the results of interviews with each informant in 6 schools in Indonesia and the Philippines in accordance with community values is that the learning approach in Indonesia uses a flexible and more varied learning approach including experiential learning. While the learning approach used by the Philippines in K-12 is with more structured and directed learning and by implementing national standards-based teaching with a broadly defined curriculum. Student involvement in the learning process in Indonesia is by providing space for students to express opinions, discuss, and develop critical social skills.

Table 7 Comparison of Indonesian and Philippine Curriculum Architectures

Indicator	Indonesia (Merdeka Curriculum)	Informant	Philippine (K-12)	Informant
Lesson Schedule	Learning schedule is different every day	I-DAF-GR, I-DIT-GR	Learning schedule is the same every day	F-SEN-DP
Uniforms	Students must wear school uniform when coming to school	I-WAT-GR	Students are not required to wear uniforms and are allowed to choose what they wear to school	F-MIC-GR
Class Hours	Students must be at school during school hours	I-BEL-KS1, I-DIT-GR	Students may go home during long breaks	F-MES-GR, F-KIN-GR
Number of Classes	Classes are divided evenly by grade	I-JEF-DP	Classes are divided based on student proficiency	F-MIC-GR
Language Used in School	English is not a second language	I-BEL-KS1	Students in elementary school are able to speak and learn English fluently	F-SEN-DP, F-SUM-KS1

The differences in the education curriculum in Indonesia and the Philippines based on the results of interviews with each informant in 6 schools in Indonesia and the Philippines in accordance with community values are that based on the learning schedule in Indonesia, each day uses a different schedule while in the Philippines uses the same schedule every day. Independent Curriculum lesson hours in Indonesia require students to be at school during school hours while in K-12 Philippines students are allowed to go home during recess.

Table 8 Comparison of the Importance of Indonesian and Philippine Competencies

Indicator	Indonesia (Merdeka Curriculum)	Informant	Philippine (K-12)	Informant
Relevance of Learning to the Real World.	Encourage project-based and experiential learning to demonstrate the relevance of subject matter to everyday life Provide opportunities for students to engage in practical activities or learning experiences outside the classroom	I-DAF-KS2, I-BEL-KS1, I-DIT-GR, I-ARK-GR	K-12 is more focused on the application of academic knowledge into real-life contexts and work environments Integrate internship or work practice programs as part of the curriculum at the Senior High School level Focuses on students' readiness to enter the world of work or continue their education to college	F-SEN-DP
Learner competency development	Majority of Schools Do Not Implement Integrated School (Slb & Public School Separate)	I-DAF-KS2, I-ARK-GR	Many schools have implemented integrated schools, and it is even possible for exceptional children to receive education together with other students in mainstream schools with the help of the following	F-SEN- DP, F-SUM-KS1, F-MIC-GR
Interconnections between Learning.	Merdeka Curriculum provides flexibility for schools to integrate and connect various subjects Encourages the development of a more integrated curriculum, linking concepts and skills between subjects Emphasizes the development of	I-BEL-KS1	K-12 has a separate education structure, starting from primary to senior secondary level Subjects are clearly demarcated and separate from each other, the curriculum is more structured Focus on mastering knowledge and skills in separate areas. with	F-MES-GR, F-KIN-GR

The differences between the education curriculum in Indonesia and the Philippines based on the results of interviews with each informant in 6 schools in Indonesia and the Philippines in accordance with community values, namely that the relevance of learning to the real world, namely in Indonesia tends to encourage project-based and experiential learning to demonstrate the relevance of subject matter to everyday life while the curriculum in the Philippines is to integrate an internship program as part of the curriculum at the Senior High School level as a provision for entering the world of work. The development of student competencies in Indonesia, the majority of schools do not apply Integrated School (SLB & Public School Separate) while in the Philippines many schools have implemented integrated schools.

Table 9. Comparison of Area of Learning between Indonesia and the Philippines

Indicator	Indonesia (Merdeka Curriculum)	Informant	Philippine (K-12)	Informant
Engagement of Cross-Curricular Issues	No Entrepreneurship Learning Lessons	I-BEL-KS1, I-DIT-GR	There are lessons related to entrepreneurship starting from elementary school level.	F-SEN-DP
Importance of Technology Aspects, Media Awareness	Children in elementary schools cannot maximize technology-based learning	I-JEF-KS1, I-ARK-GR, I-WAT-GR	The use of technology such as digital TV connected to the internet, laptops, and other electronic devices is very common to support learning. Not infrequently during breaks or empty class hours they watch together in class.	F-ZAK-KS2

The differences in the education curriculum in Indonesia and the Philippines based on the results of interviews with each informant in 6 schools in Indonesia and the Philippines on the alignment with community values, namely that in the involvement of cross-cutting issues /cross-curriculum learning areas in Indonesia, namely by not having entrepreneurship learning lessons while in the Philippines there is entrepreneurship learning. The importance of technological aspects, media awareness, sustainability, and the environment in Indonesia is that the use of technology is still common, children in elementary schools have not been able to maximize technology-based learning while in the Philippines, the use of technology such as digital TVs connected to the internet, laptops, and other electronic devices is very common to support learning.

Table 10. Comparison of Indonesian and Philippine Teaching Methods and Strategies

Indicator	Indonesia (Merdeka Curriculum)	Informant	Philippine (K-12)	Informant
Lesson Planning	Learning Implementation Plan (RPP) Made every semester	I-ARK-GR	The lesson plan is shorter and made per material, maximum one material is divided into three meetings only	F-SUM-DP, F-ZAK-KS2
Availability of Innovation in Teaching.	The Merdeka Curriculum encourages the application of technology in the learning process, including the integration of information and communication technology (ICT) Provide opportunities for teachers to create innovative teaching methods, such as project-based learning, integrated learning, and skill development.	I-DAF-GR, I-BEL-KS1, I-DIT-GR, I-ARK-GR	K-12 is implementing innovations in several aspects, including the development of a more structured curriculum and an emphasis on 21st century skills - Adopt new approaches to teaching and learning, such as the use of technology in the classroom, project-based learning, and an emphasis on developing critical skills and creativity	F-SUM-KS1

The differences in the education curriculum in Indonesia and the Philippines based on the results of interviews with each informant in 6 schools in Indonesia and the Philippines in accordance with community values, namely that lesson planning in Indonesia is the existence of a Learning Implementation Plan made per semester while in the Philippines using a shorter lesson plan and made per material, a maximum of one material is divided into only three meetings. The availability of innovation in teaching in Indonesia is that the Merdeka Curriculum encourages the application of technology in the learning process, including the integration of information and communication technology (ICT) while K-12 in the Philippines applies innovation in several aspects.

The difference between the education curriculum in Indonesia and the Philippines based on the results of interviews with each informant in 6 schools in Indonesia and the Philippines on alignment with community values is that the implementation of assessment practices implemented in Indonesia supports the use of technology in assessment, such as applications or online platforms to facilitate tracking student progress while in the Philippines the assessment is more likely to be a final exam that measures students' understanding of the subject matter in general.

Table 11. Comparison of Indonesia and Philippines Assessments

Indicator	Indonesia (Merdeka Curriculum)	Informant	Philippine (K-12)	Informant
Implementation of Assessment Practices	The Merdeka curriculum provides continuous formative assessment, including student portfolios, projects, teacher observations, and performance-based assessments Supports the use of technology in assessment, such as apps or online platforms for easy tracking of student progress Has more room for teachers to develop assessment methods that are more diverse and relevant to students' needs	I-DAF-KS2, I-ARK-GR	K-12 uses a large number of national standardized tests as the primary assessment tool to measure student mastery of subject matter Assessments are more likely to be final exams that measure students' understanding of the subject matter in general Implementation of assessments is more likely to follow nationally established test formats	F-SEN-DP, F-ZAK- KS2, F- MIC-GR, F- MIN-GR

Discussion

Curriculum Function

The Indonesian education curriculum provides greater freedom to schools and teachers in designing the curriculum according to student needs, which can encourage the development of creativity and innovation in teaching methods, increasing student motivation and learning outcomes (Hang & Van, 2020). In addition, giving teachers greater responsibility can improve their professionalism and student learning outcomes (Cilliers et al., 2022). Meanwhile, the Philippine Education curriculum on curriculum extension gives students longer time to use to prepare themselves more comprehensively and deeply for the challenges of life after school, including preparation for admission to college or to directly engage in the world of work (Li et al., 2022).

The emphasis on life skills development in Indonesian education aims to prepare students to face the challenges of everyday life and improve their competitiveness in the world of work (Tavares, Azevedo, & Marques, 2022). Whereas Education in the Philippines that focuses more on academic skills can provide students with the necessary provisions to succeed in the modern world of work.

Curriculum Vision

The alignment with the national vision of the curriculum in Indonesia, which emphasizes school empowerment and strengthens character education, has significant advantages. In Permendikbud No 20 of 2016, school empowerment provides flexibility for educational institutions to adapt the curriculum to local needs and student characteristics, creating a more responsive and inclusive learning environment. Whereas in the Philippines education has a rationale that focuses on preparing students with relevant skills, including technical skills, interpersonal skills, and critical thinking abilities, education can be a more effective tool in increasing students' chances of success in the future (Tzenios, 2020).

Aims and Objective

The learning outcomes of education in Indonesia are expected to incorporate moral and ethical values, creating students who are not only academically intelligent but also have social sensitivity and involvement in community development. The hallmark of this focus is creating citizens who are moral, ethical and can play an active role in improving the welfare of society (Birhane, 2021). As for Education

in Indonesia, a strong understanding in these core subjects can provide a solid foundation for the development of students' intellectual skills, problem solving, and critical thinking (Alsaleh, 2020).

In Indonesian education, referring to the competency standards set by the government, as stated in the national curriculum policy, can ensure that the education provided covers important aspects recognized by the government as essential for student development (González-pérez & Ramírez-montoya, 2022). In addition, education in the Philippines in designing subjects and curricula in accordance with the guidelines set by the national education authority involves efforts to ensure the quality and consistency of education throughout the national level (Ahtiainen, Fonsén, & Kiuru, 2021).

Values and Principles

In the Merdeka Curriculum in Indonesia, the emphasis on Character Education signifies a paradigm shift in the education system. The Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes that education is not only about academic knowledge, but also about building strong character (Zaini & Wahib, 2022). This is rooted in the belief that strong character is a crucial foundation for the next generation. In Indonesia's Merdeka Curriculum, giving special attention to the development of local values, customs and traditions demonstrates a commitment to preserving and passing on cultural heritage. This recognizes the importance of local values as an integral part of the nation's identity (Tien, 2021).

The Merdeka Curriculum in Indonesia features a more flexible learning approach, providing space for students to customize learning according to their needs and interests. Meanwhile, K-12 in the Philippines has a more structured and directed learning approach. With this approach, learning has a clearer and more structured framework to ensure competency achievement at each level (Barrett, 2020). The Merdeka curriculum in Indonesia features diverse and inclusive learning approaches, including project-based learning, active learning, and experiential learning (Ulfatin, Bagus, Rahma, & Zahro, 2023). This approach encourages students to be actively involved in the learning process, allowing them to learn through hands-on experience, real problem solving (González-pérez & Ramírez-montoya, 2022).

Curriculum Architecture

In Indonesia's Merdeka Curriculum, the decision to require students to be at school during school hours demonstrates a commitment to maximizing learning time in educational settings. Students' presence in school during class hours aims to optimize their opportunities to acquire the knowledge, skills and experiences taught in the curriculum (Carlos, Feij, Su, & Chiy, 2021). It also reflects an approach that focuses on more structured learning within the school environment to ensure students get the full benefit of the subject matter taught. While in the Philippines, the policy of allowing students to go home during long breaks shows a more flexible approach to learning time (Esteron & S, 2021).

The Importance of Competency

The Merdeka curriculum in Indonesia emphasizes project-based and experiential learning to demonstrate the relevance of subject matter to everyday life. This approach allows students to learn through practical experience, solve real problems, and participate in projects related to their daily lives (Kwangmuang, Jarutkamolpong, Sangboonraung, & Daungtod, 2021). Meanwhile, in the Philippines, the education system implements the integration of internship or work practice programs as part of the Senior High School level curriculum. This approach provides students with the opportunity to gain hands-on experience in the workplace relevant to their field of study (Torrado & Gomez, 2020).

Area of Learning

In Indonesia, in the current education system, the curriculum has not specifically provided lessons that focus on entrepreneurship. This reflects an aspect that is still being developed in the country's education curriculum (Lohmann, Breithecker, Ohl, Gieß-stüber, & Brandl-bredenbeck, 2021). However,

going forward, there is a push to include elements of entrepreneurship in the curriculum in an effort to improve students' entrepreneurial skills in the future. Meanwhile, in the Philippines, the education system has incorporated entrepreneurship-related lessons since the elementary school level. This shows a commitment to introducing and developing an early understanding of entrepreneurship (Ikram, Zhang, & Sroufe, 2020).

Teaching Methodology and Strategies

The education curriculum in Indonesia, the education system stipulates that lesson plans (RPP) are made per semester. This approach allows teachers to plan learning for a full semester with various subjects (Todd, 2020). Whereas in the Philippines, lesson plans are shorter and made per subject, with a maximum of one subject divided into three meetings. This approach shows a more detailed and targeted focus in the preparation of lesson plans for each material separately, paying special attention to the details of learning implementation in each meeting (Morze & Terletska, 2021).

Assessment

The education system in Indonesia supports the use of technology in assessment, including online applications or platforms that assist in tracking student progress. The use of online applications or platforms can provide better access to information on student performance, facilitate faster evaluation, and help teachers develop more personalized learning plans (Kumar & Bansi, 2021). Whereas in the Philippines, the education system tends to emphasize final exams that measure students' understanding of the subject matter in general. Indonesia's education system provides more room for teachers to develop assessment methods. Thus, teachers can be more flexible in determining the form of assessment that can provide a more holistic picture of student progress. Meanwhile, in the Philippines, the implementation of assessments tends to follow a nationally prescribed test format.

4. CONCLUSION

Effective curriculum development and implementation are key to educational progress in both Indonesia and the Philippines. Both countries recognize the importance of quality education and the need to adapt the curriculum to the changing demands of society. In Indonesia, the Merdeka Curriculum represents a progressive shift aimed at creating an enjoyable learning environment for students and teachers. However, it faces challenges, including the need for nationally consistent implementation and ensuring students can develop relevant skills. On the other hand, the Philippine K-12 Basic Education Program was introduced to improve the quality of education, providing students with essential skills for lifelong learning and employment. While the program has been praised for its potential, it also faces issues such as the scarcity of teaching materials and technology-assisted teaching materials. From a comparison of 10 key aspects that include Curriculum Function, Curriculum Vision, Aims and Objectives, Values and Principles, Philosophy of Teaching and Learning, Curriculum Architecture, The Importance of Competency, Areas of Learning, Teaching Methodology and Strategies and Assessment, the Merdeka Curriculum in Indonesia emphasizes the development of character, morals, and social skills as an integral part of education, to encourage learners to become individuals with integrity, responsibility, and concern for society.

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