

Assessing Indonesian Islamic schools' readiness for the independent curriculum using text analytics



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Abstract The *Merdeka* (Independent) Curriculum is an initiative program from Indonesia's government that aims to enhance education by focusing on student needs and supporting personalized learning. However, this program has received different acceptance from academic communities at elementary to secondary school levels, especially in Islamic schools. Therefore, this study aims to assess the readiness of Islamic schools in Indonesia to implement this curriculum using text analytics techniques, specifically sentiment analysis, text networks, and automatic text summarization. The study analyzed 13,344 survey responses from Islamic school academic communities to evaluate sentiment and understanding regarding the curriculum. A pre-trained Bidirectional Encoder Representations from Transformers (BERT) model was used for sentiment analysis to classify opinions into positive, negative, and neutral categories. The findings revealed that 52.14% of respondents expressed positive sentiments, indicating a strong understanding and favorable outlook toward the Independent Curriculum. However, 36.28% showed negative sentiments, citing challenges such as inadequate resources and infrastructure limitations, while 11.58% remained neutral. These results suggest that while the majority support the curriculum, there are significant areas that require improvement for successful implementation. The report suggests targeted teacher training, improved infrastructure, and continuing evaluations to help the Independent Curriculum be adopted effectively. These findings have important policy implications for educational stakeholders, ensuring a smoother transition and higher effectiveness in curriculum reform efforts.

Keywords: education, sentiment, summarization, survey, transformers

1. Introduction

The Independent curriculum in Indonesia is a policy implemented by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology. It aims to optimize student learning achievement by providing opportunities to explore their interests and talents. The curriculum is designed to facilitate the transition process of the national curriculum and improve the quality of education affected by the COVID-19 pandemic (Aji, 2023). The 2022 Independent curriculum for primary schools follows an incremental approach and focuses on restoring learning quality and preparing for the golden generation of 2045. It includes programs such as Character Education Strengthening and Pancasila Student Profile to emphasize ethics education (Wardani et al., 2023). The Independent curriculum also aligns with the values of Pancasila, which is the foundation of the Indonesian education system. It aims to liberate students, educators, and educational institutions to advance the quality of education in Indonesia (Lukitoyo et al., 2023). Implementing the Independent curriculum in Islamic senior high schools has shown positive results in unifying divisions in the learning process and promoting student-centered learning (Marlina et al., 2023).

Islamic Schools through the Directorate of Curriculum, Facilities, Institutions, and Student Affairs Islamic Schools at the Directorate General of Islamic Education, Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia welcome the Independent Curriculum by preparing Guidelines for Implementing the Independent Curriculum in Islamic Schools as stipulated by the Decree of the Minister of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia number 347 of 2022 (Direktorat Jenderal Pendidikan Islam, 2022). Another distinction of implementing the Independent Curriculum in Islamic Schools is that there is not only a strengthening of the Pancasila Student profile but also a strengthening of the *Rahmatan lil 'Alamiin* (love for the universe) Student Profile. Implementing the Independent Curriculum in Islamic Schools aims to address students' challenges in the current era, such as being left behind in technology and confined to monotonous formal school education (Putri et al., 2023). Islamic Schools must understand and apply the Independent Curriculum to its fullest potential, as the success of the educational process depends on implementation quality (Wijayanti & INgazizah, 2023). The independent learning curriculum emphasizes independent learning according to the needs and characteristics of students to increase student understanding (Nafi'ah, 2023), especially Islamic values (Syamsiah & Haryanto, 2024). However, teachers may need help implementing the Independent



Curriculum, which becomes a challenge that must be addressed (Athifah et al., 2023). The concept of the Independent Curriculum includes project-based learning, focusing on essential materials, and allowing teachers to carry out differentiated learning based on students' learning styles and abilities (Ningrum & Andriani, 2023).

Previous research found that teachers still need help implementing an independent and challenging curriculum (Athifah et al., 2023; Ndari et al., 2023), so the implementation must be comprehensive. In fact, in 2022 (until the Even semester 2021/2022), only 2,472 out of 86,780 (2.85%) Islamic School institutions have implemented the Independent Curriculum (Khoeron, 2023). Based on the survey results, which were attended by 13,344 respondents, consisting of students, teachers, and education personnel from 6,674 Islamic Schools, 10,086 (7.56%) of them said they had implemented the Independent Curriculum. This shows an increase in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Islamic Schools by 3.61% from 2.85% to 7.76% in 2023 if it is assumed that all Islamic Schools surveyed have implemented the Independent Curriculum. However, the implementation of the Independent Curriculum is not evenly distributed and is still small, so it is necessary to evaluate Islamic Schools' readiness to implement the Independent Curriculum. This readiness can start from the Islamic School's response to the Independent Curriculum, which is supported by the student's academic potential. The Islamic School's response to implementing the Independent Curriculum used Natural Language Processing (NLP) techniques with sentiment analysis and automatic text summarization.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Datasets

Previous research on sentiment analysis through Independent curriculum uses Twitter (X) tweets (Darmawan et al., 2023; Maulana et al., 2023; Septiana et al., 2024; Susanto et al., 2023). This causes the analysis results to be less precise because they come from non-specific opinions, which can come from the wider community of Twitter users, not even necessarily the academic community of schools that run this Independent Curriculum. Meanwhile, in this study, opinion data is primary data obtained directly from surveys distributed at various Islamic Schools, both at the Islamic School *Ibtidaiyah* (MI equivalent with elementary school), Islamic School *Tsanawiyah* (MTs equivalent with junior high school), and Islamic School *Aliyah* (MA equivalent with senior high school) levels throughout Indonesia.

There are 13,344 opinions on understanding and implementing the Independent Curriculum from 6,674 Islamic Schools at the MI, MTs, and MA levels. Respondents comprised 8,561 teachers (*Guru*), 743 education personnel (*Tenaga Kependidikan*), 3,660 students (*Siswa*), and 380 other (*lainnya*) academicians (see Figure 1). The distribution of Islamic School levels participating in the questionnaire was ideal. 5,033 MI respondents participated, 4,907 MTs respondents, and 2,285 MA respondents.

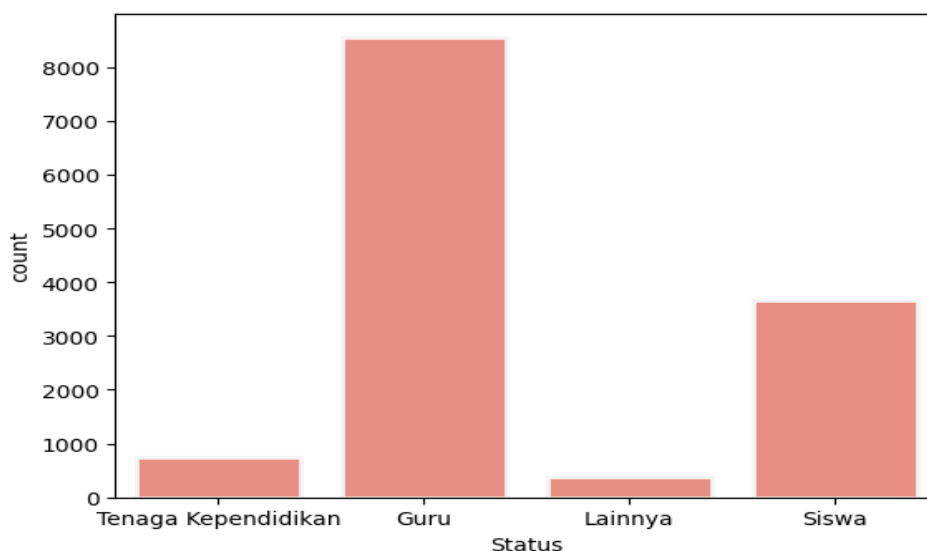


Figure 1 Distribution of respondents.

2.2. Text pre-processing

Data preparation for text data, also known as text data preprocessing, is an important step in text analysis or NLP (Maylawati et al., 2019). This research conducted several pre-processing stages, including text cleaning, tokenization, removing stopwords, and stemming. In text cleaning, special characters, punctuation marks, and irrelevant numbers are removed. Furthermore, text can be converted into lowercase letters (case-folding) for text data uniformity because the Python programming language is case-sensitive or distinguishes between capital and lowercase letters. Next, the tokenization stage



divides the text into tokens or individual words that can form structured text representations such as a bag of words, n-gram, and sequence of words (Ahonen-Myka, 2002; Doucet & Ahonen-Myka, 2004; Maylawati et al., 2018; Saptawati, 2019). The forms of text representation used in this research are a bag of words and n-grams.

The stopwords removal stage is done after the tokenization process. Stopwords are words that have no meaning or do not provide essential information in the analysis. This research uses the Sastrawi library to perform the stopwords removal process. The following is a list of stopwords in Indonesian that can be reduced or added as needed. The last pre-processing stage is stemming, which returns the affixed word to its base word form. Stemming removes the prefix or suffix of the word to get the base form. Stemming is one of the most important pre-processes, not only to reduce the database's size and increase effectiveness but also because stemming returns the word to its base word, which contains the meaning of the word. There are many studies on stemming algorithms, including for Indonesian texts (Adriani et al., 2007; Rizki et al., 2019; Setiawan et al., 2016). This research uses the Literature library to perform the stemming process (Robbani, 2016).

2.3. In-depth sentiment analysis with automatic text summarization

Natural Language Processing (NLP) technology is snowballing, where NLP technology utilizes computation to understand natural language content and context (Chowdhary, 2020; Raina & Krishnamurthy, 2022). NLP is a combination of Natural Language Understanding (NLU) and Natural Language Generation (NLG) to find important information from language data in the form of both text and sound (Cahyawijaya et al., 2021; Wilie et al., 2020). Many techniques can be used in NLP, including sentiment analysis and automatic text summarization, which are used in this research.

Sentiment analysis is a subset of NLP technology that detects the emotional impact of a text, whether the message is positive, negative, or neutral (Hussein, 2018; Medhat et al., 2014; Taboada, 2016). Previous research on sentiment analysis of the independent learning program did not conduct an in-depth analysis. They only produce a percentage of each sentiment (positive, negative, or neutral). Therefore, this study performs a more in-depth analysis of opinions on each sentiment that can contribute to developing an Independent curriculum in Islamic Schools. In-depth analysis is carried out with the help of automatic text summarization technology. Automatic text summarization is a subset of NLP technology that generates summaries of text documents using feature-based, graph-based, or machine-learning approaches (El-Kassas et al., 2020, 2021; Widyasari et al., 2019). Automatic text summarization is divided into two types, namely extractive and abstractive summarization. Extractive summarization selects sentences that contain the main idea or ideas as the summary result without changing the sentence structure (Moratanch & Chitrakala, 2016; Rahimi et al., 2017; Zhong et al., 2020). In contrast, abstractive summarization produces a summary in a different sentence structure, like the paraphrasing technique (Moratanch & Chitrakala, 2016). This research uses extractive summarization to find in-depth opinions from each sentiment.

2.4. Bidirectional encoder representations from transformers (BERT)

Transformer is a neural network-based artificial intelligence method that uses an encoder-decoder structure connected with an attention layer in its architecture (Vaswani et al., 2017). Model transformers simplify the recurrent and convolutional neural network models by replacing the recurrent and convolution layers with an attention mechanism. Figure 2 shows the architecture of the model transformer.

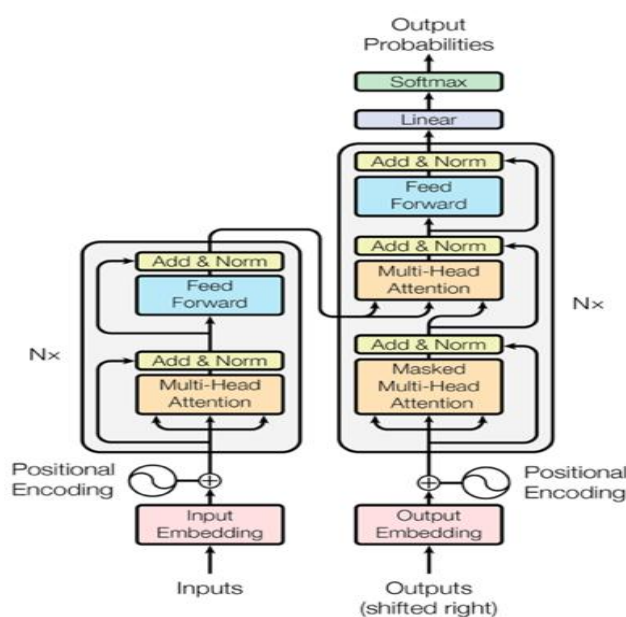


Figure 2 Model architecture of transformer. Source: Vaswani et al., (2017)



The Transformers method continues to evolve from the original transformers (Vaswani et al., 2017), Bidirectional Encoder Representations from Transformers (BERT) (Devlin et al., 2018), Text-to-Text Transfer Transformer (T5) (Raffel et al., 2020), Generative Pre-trained Transformer (GPT)-1 (Yenduri et al., 2023), GPT-2, GPT-3, GPT4, Robustly Optimized (Thoppilan et al., 2022), Pretraining Approach (RoBERTa) (Liu et al., 2019), Language Models for Dialog Applications (LaMDA) (Thoppilan et al., 2022), and Transformer XL (Dai et al., 2019). The transformer model has been proven to perform excellently for various NLP techniques or tasks, such as chatbots, automatic text summarization, sentiment analysis, spelling correction, search engines, and others.

BERT is a transformer model that uses pre-trained language representation methods for a variety of NLP tasks (Devlin et al., 2018). BERT trains a language understanding model using a large text corpus (such as Wikipedia) and then uses the model for NLP tasks. BERT has two stages, including pre-training and fine-tuning. Pre-training aims to train BERT models that do not know specific NLP tasks. A self-attention mechanism in the pre-training process is used to learn word representations that capture the relationship between words in a sentence. Meanwhile, Fine-Tuning is customizing the trained model to a specific task. In its development, BERT has various variants, including DistilBERT (Sanh et al., 2019), Robustly Optimized Pretraining Approach (RoBERTa) (Liu et al., 2019), and ALBERT (Lan et al., 2019).

Previous research used classic machine learning algorithms for sentiment analysis related to the Independent Curriculum in schools, such as K-Nearest Neighbor (Kurniawan et al., 2023; Jumiati et al., 2023), Naïve Bayes (Jumiati, et al., 2023; Susanto et al., 2023), Support Vector Machine (Jumiati et al., 2023) then evolved by using Adaboost (Septiana et al., 2024) and Long Short-Term Memory (Maulana et al., 2023). Meanwhile, this research uses Transformers for sentiment analysis and automatic text summarisation for sentiment analysis of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Islamic Schools.

3. Results and Discussion

Natural Language Processing (NLP) technology is developing rapidly, where NLP technology utilizes computing to understand natural language content and context (Chowdhary, 2020; Raina & Krishnamurthy, 2022). NLP is a combination of Natural Language Understanding (NLU) and Natural Language Generation (NLG) to find important information from language data in the form of both text and sound (Cahyawijaya et al., 2021; Wilie et al., 2020). Many techniques used in NLP, including sentiment analysis and automatic text summarization, were used in this research. The data processed is text from a loose-leaf questionnaire that reveals an understanding of the Independent Curriculum and opinions regarding the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Islamic Schools. The sentiment analysis technique is used to classify the opinions of the Islamic School academic community toward implementing the Independent Curriculum into positive, negative, and neutral sentiments. Meanwhile, automatic text summarization is used to uncover more profound opinions from each sentiment. In addition, automatic summarization reveals more concisely the academic community's understanding of the Independent Curriculum. This research uses Indonesian texts based on the opinions of Islamic School academicians, which are processed using sentiment analysis and automatic text summarization techniques.

3.1. Islamic school academic community's understanding of independent curriculum

Of the total 13,344 respondents, 10,086 respondents said that their Islamic School had implemented the Independent Curriculum, 2,907 respondents said they had not, and 351 others said they did not know, as presented in Figure 3. Before implementing the Independent Curriculum in Islamic schools, the academic community needs to know what the Independent Curriculum is, what its characteristics are, and how it is implemented in learning. This study reveals the academic community's understanding from the loose questionnaire data for the question, "What do you think is the Independent Curriculum?". The understanding of the academic community is divided based on groups of respondents who have, have not, and need to know about implementing an Independent Curriculum in their Islamic schools. Figure 4 also visualizes the understanding of the academic community implementing an Independent Curriculum. The following are the results of an analysis of the understanding of the Islamic School academic community that has implemented an Independent Curriculum.

The educational community understands that the Independent Curriculum is a concept introduced in an education reform effort to give schools and teachers more freedom in designing and implementing learning. One of the key concepts of the Independent Curriculum is diverse intracurricular learning. The academic community understands that an Independent Curriculum can provide diverse learning relevant to students' needs. This includes various aspects, such as subject matter, learning methods, and assessment. Diverse learning allows for more comprehensive development of students' various skills and potentials. With diverse intracurricular learning, the Independent Curriculum creates a learning environment that is more dynamic, inclusive, and responsive to students' needs, diversity, and potential. Diverse intracurricular learning also aims to develop various student competencies. These include academic and life skills competencies, creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration.

Furthermore, Figure 5 shows a visualization of the understanding of the Independent Curriculum in the Islamic School community group that still needs to implement the Independent Curriculum. Based on the analysis results, the Islamic School academic community who have not implemented the Independent Curriculum understands the Independent Curriculum,

which carries the concept of intracurricular learning by developing potential according to student needs. Likewise, with the group of Islamic School academicians who need to know whether they have implemented the Independent Curriculum or not, it can be seen in Figure 6 that they understand the Independent Curriculum. Based on the text analysis related to the Islamic School academic community's understanding of the Independent Curriculum, it is found that, in general, the Islamic School academic community already understands what the Independent Curriculum socialized by the Ministry of Education is. The Islamic School academic community believes that the Independent Curriculum is present as intracurricular learning that optimizes the potential and interests of students. The diversity of student needs is supported by an Independent Curriculum that provides diverse content according to student needs.

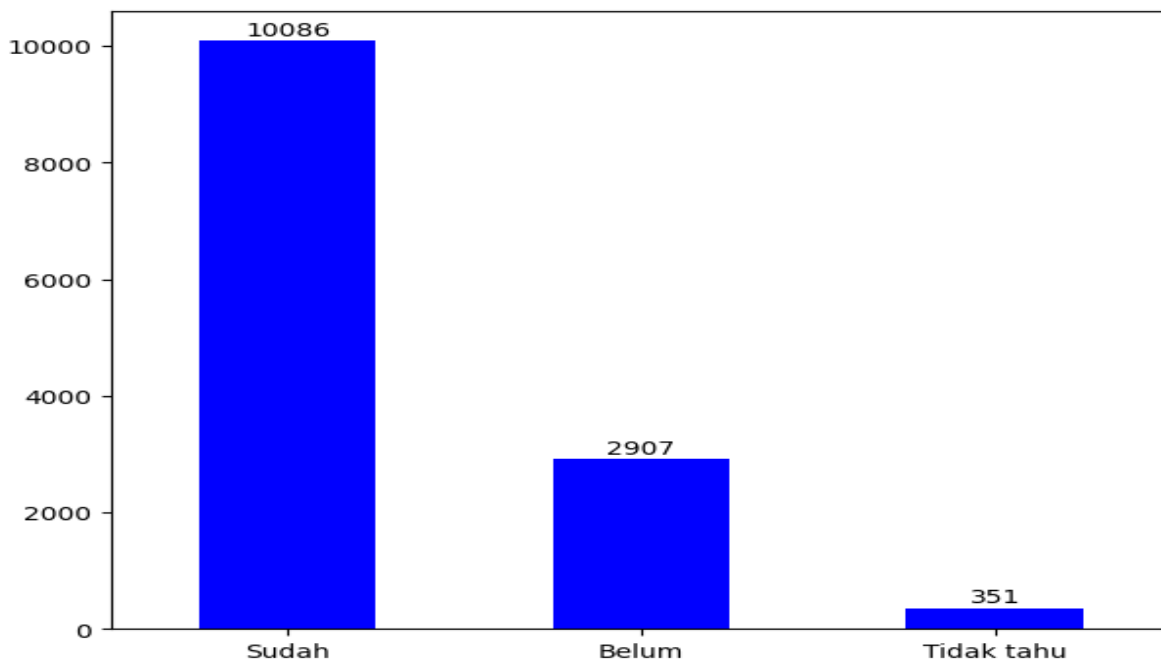


Figure 3 Result of implementation and academic community's understanding of independent curriculum in islamic schools.



Figure 4 Wordcloud result academic community's understanding of independent curriculum in islamic schools.





Figure 5 Academic community's understanding of the independent curriculum that has not been implemented in islamic schools.



Figure 6 Academic community's understanding who do not know whether the independent curriculum in islamic schools has been implemented.

3.2. Sentiment analysis of Islamic school academic community towards the implementation of independent curriculum

It is known that, in general, the Islamic School academic community understands the concept of the Independent Curriculum. However, what are your opinions on the implementation of the Independent Curriculum? By using sentiment analysis techniques and automatic text summarization, this research reveals the sentiment of the Islamic School academic community towards implementing the Independent Curriculum in Islamic Schools in more depth.

The data processed comes from 13,344 opinions of the academic community through a loose-leaf questionnaire with the question, "Give your opinion on the implementation of Independent Curriculum in Islamic Schools, in terms of readiness, expectations, and other opinions." Furthermore, the data was classified based on positive, negative, or neutral sentiments using the BERT pre-trained model. Opinions with positive sentiments are given a value of 1; negative sentiments are given a



value of -1, and neutral sentiments are given. Based on the sentiment classification results in Figure 10, it is known that the sentiments of the Islamic School academic community towards implementing this Independent Curriculum mostly have positive sentiments. There are 6,958 opinions with positive sentiments, 4,841 with negative sentiments, and the remaining 1,545 with neutral sentiments (see in Figure 7).

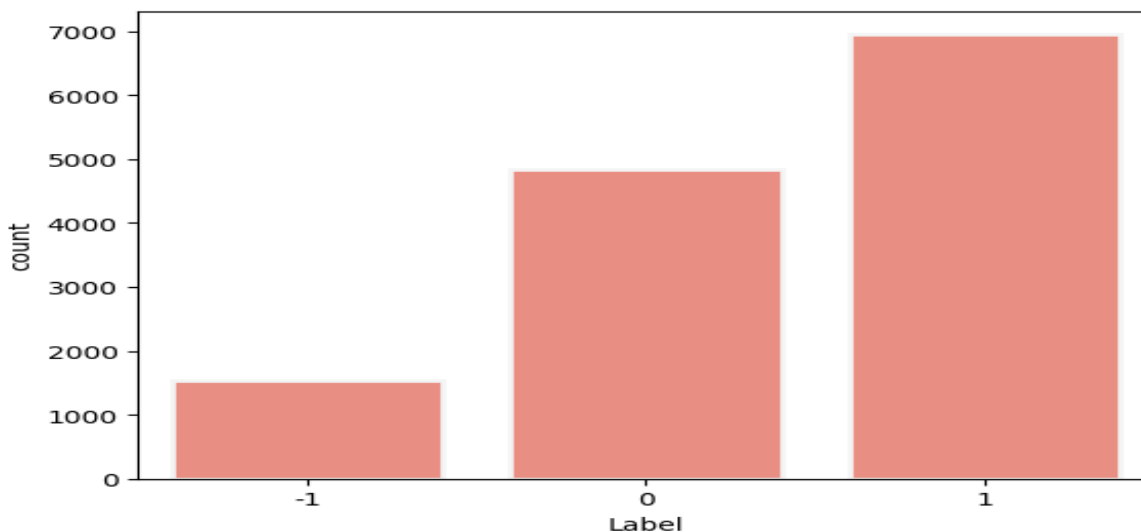


Figure 7 Results of sentiment of islamic school academic community opinions on the implementation of independent curriculum.

Based on the results of sentiment classification, in general, it can be concluded that most of the Islamic School academic community welcomes the implementation of this Independent Curriculum. Even the distribution of sentiments based on the status of the academic community shows that most teachers, students, education personnel, and other academic communities have opinions with positive sentiments toward the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Islamic Schools (Figure 6). Respondents who stated that they did not know about the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in their Islamic Schools also had mostly positive opinions. These positive sentiment results indicate that Islamic Schools are ready to implement the Independent Curriculum (Figure 8).

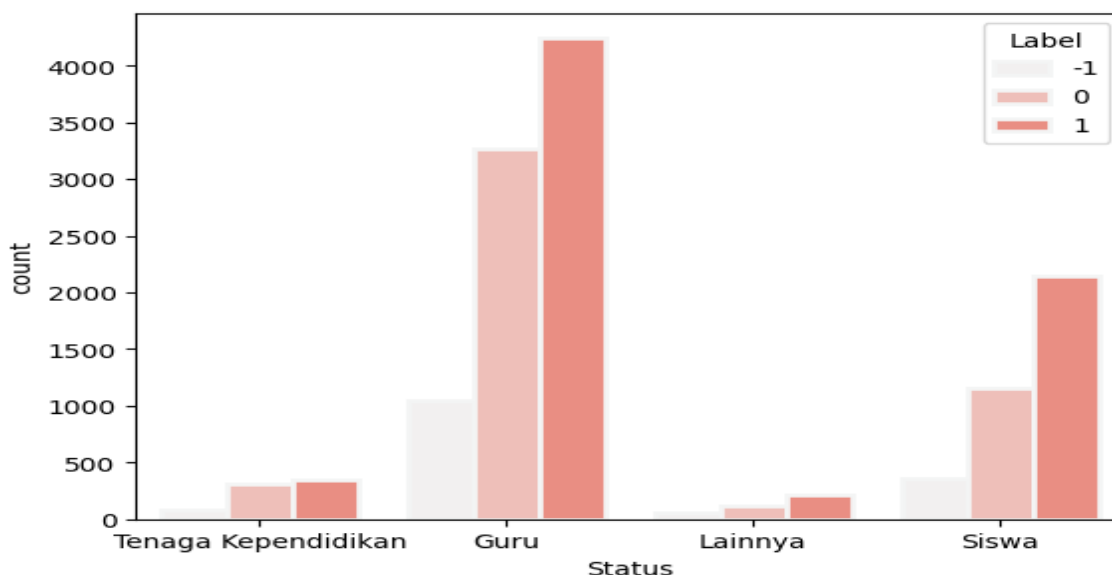


Figure 8 A distribution of opinion sentiments of islamic school academic community towards the implementation of independent curriculum based on respondent type.

However, further analysis is needed of each sentiment as part of supporting the readiness of Independent Curriculum implementation in Islamic Schools. Even negative sentiments can be used as evaluation and improvement materials for a more optimal implementation of the Independent Curriculum. This in-depth analysis was conducted using automatic text summarization and text networking. Figure 10 shows a visualization of the positive sentiments toward the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Islamic Schools. The positive sentiment results in Figure 7 are supported by the text network in



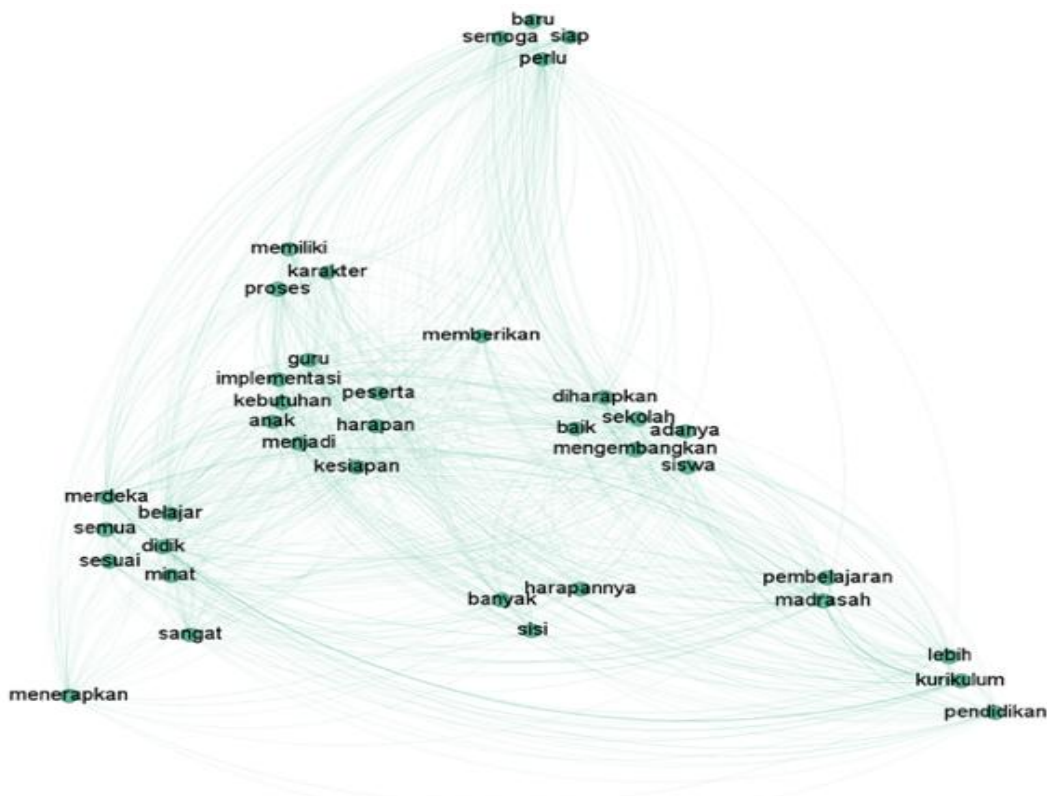


Figure 11 Text network of positive sentiments towards the implementation of independent curriculum in Islamic schools.

Furthermore, Figure 12 shows a visualization of negative sentiments supported by a network of opinion texts with negative sentiments in Figure 13. The analysis results show that this negative sentiment reveals that it takes careful preparation to implement an Independent Curriculum in Islamic Schools. It is felt that the Islamic School academic community feels unprepared and needs help implementing an Independent Curriculum with various limitations in infrastructure, learning facilities, and the need to adapt to curriculum changes. The following is an example of the results of an automatic summary of opinions with negative sentiments toward the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Islamic Schools:

- kekurangan buku pembelajaran guru guru mungkin terlalu mengerti bagaimana pembelajaran kurikulum Independent kita belajar kurang bebas (shortcomings of the teacher's learning book the teacher may be too understanding of how to learn the Independent Curriculum we learn less freely);
- sekolah banyak kekurangan sumber media pembelajaran (the school lacks many learning media resources).



Figure 12 Word cloud of negative sentiments towards the implementation of independent curriculum in Islamic schools.



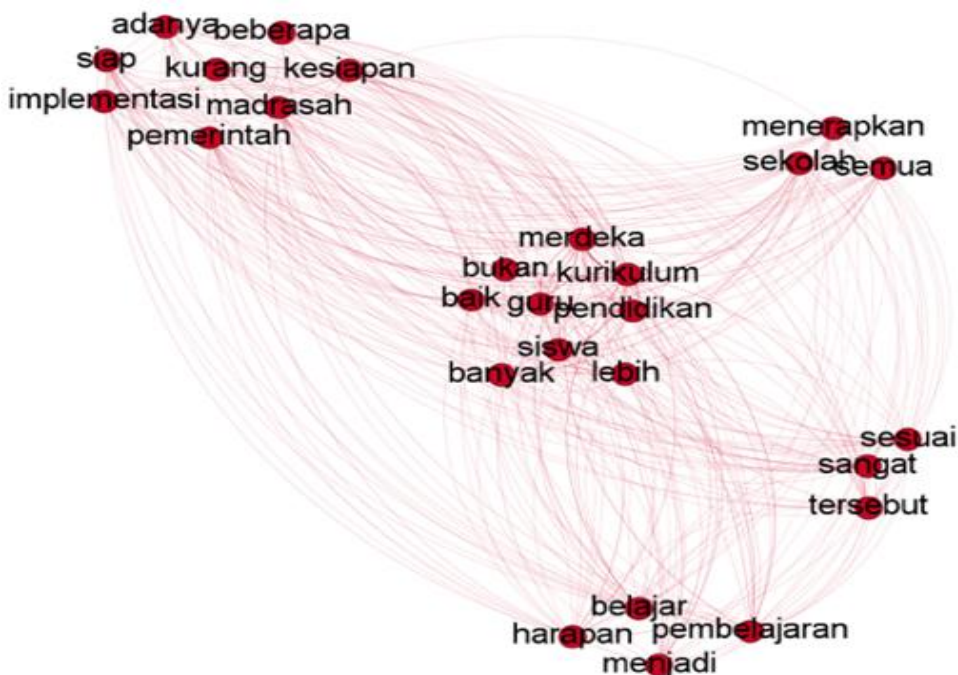


Figure 13 Text network of negative sentiments towards the implementation of independent curriculum in Islamic schools.

Furthermore, opinions with neutral sentiments toward the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Islamic Schools are presented in Figure 14 and Figure 15. It was found that opinions in the neutral group revealed that the Independent Curriculum can develop students' potential and create fun learning. However, this neutral opinion still considers the readiness of the Islamic School in its implementation. This is also supported by the following example of a summary of the opinions of the Islamic School academic community towards the implementation of an Independent Curriculum that has a neutral sentiment:

- mulai mempersiapkan sistem pembelajaran kurikulum Independent kurikulum Independent berjalan sesuai program Islamic School termasuk warga Islamic School (began to prepare the Independent Curriculum learning system Independent Curriculum runs according to the Islamic School programme including Islamic School residents);
- diharapkan adanya keterlibatan pemerintah pergantian buku mata pelajaran Islamic School keberatan pengadaan buku buku terbaru berdasarkan kurikulum Independent (It is hoped that the government's involvement in the replacement of Islamic School textbooks will object to the procurement of the latest books based on the Independent Curriculum).



Figure 14 Word cloud of neutral sentiments towards the implementation of independent curriculum in Islamic schools.



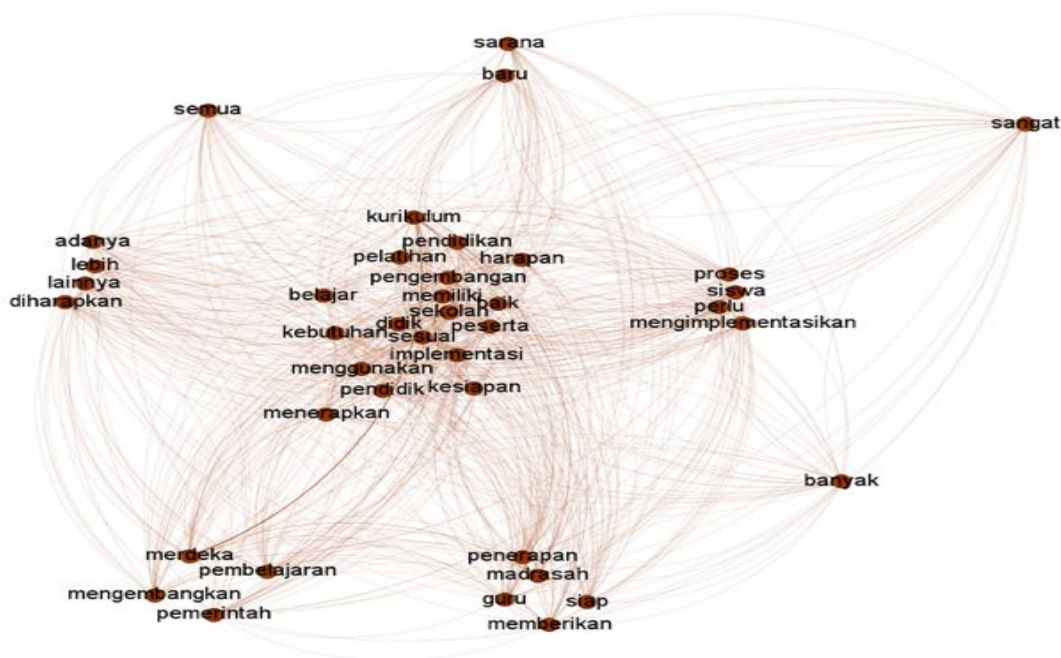


Figure 15 Text network of neutral sentiments towards the implementation of independent curriculum in Islamic schools.

3.3. Summary and recommendations on aspects of academic community understanding of the independent curriculum

Based on the results of the text analysis of the loose questionnaire with the question "What do you think is an Independent Curriculum?" it was found that, in general, the Islamic School academic community already understands what an Independent Curriculum is and believes that it is present as intracurricular learning that optimizes students' potential and talent interests and supports the diverse needs of students by providing diverse content according to their needs, some further analysis includes:

1. These findings show that the Islamic School academic community understands the independent curriculum concept quite well. They understand that the Independent Curriculum is not only about independence in an administrative context but also about providing freedom to design learning that suits students' needs and interests. This result in accordance with several research studies that in general, Islamic schools' academic member, especially teachers, understand the Independent curriculum (Asy'ari et al., 2024; Said et al., 2023).
2. Focus on students' potential and interests. One important aspect of the Independent Curriculum is paying special attention to students' potential and interests. These findings indicate that the Islamic School academic community recognizes the importance of understanding and utilizing students' potential and interests in designing learning. This reflects a student-centered approach to education. The student-centered learning approach has been implemented in many Islamic educations (Al Faruki et al., 2019; Jasmi et al., 2022; Kadafi & Ulpah, 2023; Kasim, 2022).
3. The Independent Curriculum also emphasizes the importance of supporting the diversity of student needs. By providing varied content according to student needs, the Independent Curriculum aims to provide a more inclusive and relevant learning experience for all students, including those with special needs.
4. The Islamic School academic community's well-documented understanding of the Independent Curriculum can be a strong foundation for effective implementation. By understanding the goals and principles of the Independent Curriculum, they can more easily adapt learning strategies and adapt them to the Islamic School context. Research conducted at an MI found that training or technical guidance related to the Independent Curriculum is an important activity for understanding and implementing the Independent Curriculum (Zainol, 2024).
5. Although a strong understanding is a positive first step, implementing the Independent Curriculum can still face challenges, such as adjusting infrastructure, teacher training, and coordination between stakeholders. The information and technology support also challenge the implementation of an Independent curriculum, not only in Islamic schools (Puspitasari & Maisarah, 2025; Satriani et al., 2023). Therefore, it is important to monitor the implementation process and respond to emerging challenges with appropriate solutions.

Thus, these findings provide a positive picture of the level of understanding and support of the Islamic School academic community for the Independent Curriculum, which can be a solid basis for improving the quality of education in Islamic Schools by applying this concept. Understanding the concept of an Independent Curriculum by the academic community, including



teachers, Islamic School heads, and other stakeholders, is an important first step in implementing it. However, successful implementation requires more than just understanding the concept.

Implementing the Independent Curriculum may require adjustments to educational infrastructure, including learning devices, physical facilities, and technological support (Puspitasari & Maisarah, 2025; Satriani et al., 2023). Ensure that Islamic Schools have adequate infrastructure to support the implementation of a diverse curriculum. Then, teachers must receive adequate training to develop the skills and knowledge needed to design and implement Independent Curriculum-based learning (Jasiah et al., 2024; Rasyidi & Idrus, 2024). Continuous support in their professional development is also important (Succarie, 2024). Implementing the Independent Curriculum may require additional resources in terms of curriculum, learning materials, and other support. Ensure that schools have adequate access to these resources.

Apart from the academic community, it is also important to involve parents, students, and the community in understanding and supporting the Independent Curriculum (Marlina et al., 2023). Effective communication about the goals, benefits, and changes occurring in the curriculum can help gain their support. Implementation of the Independent Curriculum requires a continuous evaluation process to identify successes, challenges, and areas of improvement. The curriculum can be updated and adjusted regularly by using feedback from stakeholders and student learning outcome data. Then, strong and committed school leadership is essential in facilitating the implementation of the Independent Curriculum. Principals need to actively support and encourage these initiatives and provide the necessary resources and support to teachers and staff. So, although understanding the Independent Curriculum is an important first step, successful implementation requires cross-disciplinary efforts, ongoing support, and adaptation to changes occurring at the Islamic School and community levels.

3.4. Summary and recommendations on aspects of academic community opinions on the implementation of the independent curriculum

Based on the results of the sentiment classification of the opinions of the Islamic School academic community regarding the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, most of the academic community has opinions with positive sentiment content compared to negative and neutral content. Positive sentiment from the results of this research can indicate the Islamic Schools' readiness to implement the Independent Curriculum. Here are several reasons why positive sentiment can indicate readiness to implement the Independent Curriculum:

1. Support from the academic community. The positive sentiment from the Islamic School academic community, which welcomed the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, shows that they generally accept and support the concept. Support from internal stakeholders such as teachers, principals, and school staff is very important in ensuring successful implementation. Because the preparation of each educator and educational unit varies, these implementation stages are meant to allow each educator to confidently attempt to apply the Merdeka Curriculum (Ibrahim et al., 2024).
2. Acceptance of the Independent Curriculum concept. If most of the Islamic school's academic community welcomes the Independent Curriculum, this may indicate that they have understood and accepted the concept. They understand about Independent Curriculum, but the implementation is still challenging (Said et al., 2023). Acceptance of the concept is an important first step in implementing an initiative, as it can increase motivation and engagement in the implementation process.
3. Readiness for adaptation and positive sentiment can also show that the Islamic School academic community is ready to adapt to the changes needed in designing and implementing the Independent Curriculum. They may be open to new learning, skill development, and adapting learning practices to support the Independent Curriculum concept (Saputri et al., 2023).
4. Commitment to change and positive sentiment can reflect the commitment of the Islamic School academic community to improve the quality of education and achieve better learning goals. This commitment is important in ensuring that the Independent Curriculum is implemented diligently and consistently. Stakeholder collaboration is needed to implement the Independent Curriculum because it is a basic requirement in Islamic education curriculum management (Aliyah et al., 2024; Marlina et al., 2023; Saputra, 2024).

Although positive sentiment can indicate readiness, it is also important to look at other aspects such as infrastructure readiness, teacher training, support from related parties, and student readiness to ensure the Independent Curriculum's successful implementation in Islamic Schools. Therefore, for implementing the Independent Curriculum, it is necessary to consider the various opinions of the Islamic School academic community more carefully, not only positive ones.

The opinion of the academic community reflects hopes for improving the quality of education, especially in Indonesia and Islamic Schools. The hope is that the world of education, including teaching staff and educators, can contribute to the intelligence of the nation's children with sincere intentions. There is positive sentiment and strong support from the Islamic School academic community for implementing the Independent Curriculum. They see it as an opportunity to make learning more enjoyable, enable students to discover their talents and interests, and improve overall learning progress.

Implementing the Independent Curriculum is expected to increase student literacy in various fields, such as arithmetic, reading, writing, and reciting the Qur'an, as well as increase student creativity in getting to know the environment around them. There is an emphasis on the readiness and responsibility of the Islamic School academic community, both in terms of students and teachers, in implementing the Independent Curriculum. They expressed their readiness to adapt to change, undergo a deep and meaningful learning process, and improve the quality of learning with optimal infrastructure.

The opinion of the Islamic School academic community reflects optimism regarding educational progress, especially in Indonesia. The hope is that the Independent Curriculum can bring better change for students, produce an independent, critical, and innovative generation, and improve students' overall knowledge and skills. There are complaints about the lack of books, which are an important resource in the learning process. This can be an obstacle for teachers when designing learning according to the Independent Curriculum. There are indications that Islamic Schools still need to be fully ready to implement the Independent Curriculum. This is indicated by a need for learning media resources, less than optimal readiness, and a lack of learning support.

Implementing the Independent Curriculum requires thorough preparation in terms of concept and practice (Ibrahim et al., 2024). However, there are complaints that this curriculum may be too focused on administration and needs to provide more guidance to teachers in substantive technical learning matters. There is criticism of the consistency of the Independent Curriculum, which is changing, and the training needs to be more focused on administration rather than technical learning. This can make it difficult for teachers to implement the curriculum effectively. However, there is hope that the teacher council and students can better understand the Independent Curriculum to achieve it well. Criticism was also directed at the possibility of teacher performance fatigue due to changes that were too frequent.

The opinion of the Islamic School academic community illustrates the importance of acceptance, support, readiness, and optimism in facing the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in the context of Islamic School education in Indonesia. The message is that implementing the Independent Curriculum is an independent choice that adapts to the characteristics of each educational unit. However, to successfully implement the Independent Curriculum, thorough preparation is required, including training for teachers to understand and implement the curriculum well. The importance of improving educational facilities and infrastructure was also highlighted because this greatly influences the successful implementation of the Independent Curriculum (Puspitasari & Maisarah, 2025; Satriani et al., 2023). In addition, the message emphasizes that the Independent Curriculum provides flexibility for educators to create quality learning according to students' needs and the educational unit's conditions. The negative opinions highlighted several challenges that needed to be overcome in implementing the Independent Curriculum in Islamic Schools, such as lack of resources, less than optimal readiness, difficulties in implementation, and the need for more substantial training and a focus on technical aspects of learning.

5. Conclusion

This research found that the Islamic School academic community already understands the Independent Curriculum, although some Islamic Schools still need to implement it. The Islamic School academic community's understanding of the Independent Curriculum concept is closely related to the curriculum implementation in Islamic Schools. A strong and in-depth understanding of the Independent Curriculum concept by the Islamic School academic community is the key to successfully implementing this curriculum in Islamic Schools. This paves the way for improving the quality of education by applying concepts that are more adaptive, responsive, and relevant to the demands of the times and students' needs. A good understanding of the Independent Curriculum concept can indicate readiness to implement the curriculum in Islamic Schools. Good understanding from the Islamic School academic community, including teachers, Islamic School heads, and other stakeholders, indicates that they have understood the objectives, principles, and learning methods promoted by the Independent Curriculum.

In addition, based on the results of sentiment analysis of the opinions of the Islamic School academic community regarding the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, this research found that most opinions of the Islamic School academic community contained positive sentiments towards implementing the Independent Curriculum in Islamic Schools. Positive sentiment from research results can be an important indicator of Islamic School's readiness to implement the Independent Curriculum because it reflects acceptance, support, mental readiness, and confidence in the success of this educational change. However, although most opinions from the Islamic School academic community have positive sentiments towards implementing the Independent Curriculum, the significant number of negative opinions also needs to be taken into account.

Policy recommendations and further research development include adequate support and training, regular monitoring and evaluation, strengthening student literacy, managing negative sentiment, as well as further research to understand more deeply the factors that influence the implementation of the Independent Curriculum and strategies to increase participation and support from various stakeholders. By implementing these recommendations, the readiness and implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Islamic Schools can be improved so that it can make a positive contribution to improving the quality of Islamic School education in Indonesia.

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Ethical Considerations

This research will adhere to ethical principles to ensure the integrity, confidentiality, and well-being of all participants. Informed consent will be obtained from all respondents before data collection, ensuring they understand the study's purpose, procedures, and potential risks. Participants' privacy and confidentiality will be protected by anonymizing responses and securely storing data. Additionally, the research will strive for objectivity, avoiding biases in data collection, analysis, and reporting.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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