CAMBRIDGE CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION AT SMP MADINA ISLAMIC SCHOOL

Abstract: This study aims to describe and analyze the implementation of the international curriculum, namely the Cambridge curriculum, to determine the concept of the Cambridge curriculum and the manifestation of the concept, namely the application of the Cambridge curriculum and to determine the results achieved in implementing the Cambridge curriculum at Madina Islamic School. This research is qualitative descriptive research. Data collection was done by interview, observation, and documentation methods. To check the validity of the data obtained, the researcher used the source triangulation method. The results of the research conducted indicate that (1) The form of application of the Cambridge curriculum at Madina Islamic School is by requiring all students to have a Cambridge certificate in at least one field of study by taking the Cambridge certification exam. Coaching is held once a week for one subject or one subject as well as intensive coaching is carried out for two days before the Cambridge certification exam. (2) The inhibiting and supporting factors of the implementation of the Cambridge curriculum in student learning from the results show that the guidance and assistance carried out by the school, namely the principal and the teacher council to their students through the implementation of the Cambridge curriculum in student learning so that students increasingly show their true identity character.

Keywords: Curriculum, Cambridge Curriculum, Implementation
The curriculum is the most important element that becomes a guide in educational growth. According to Nana S. Sukmadinata, the curriculum plays a critical role in the educational process. Some teachers continue to describe the curriculum superficially, focusing on the topics that students are taught. Deciding a suitable curriculum is needed in order to improve the quality of learning processes in the institution (Budiningsih, 2015).

However, upon closer inspection, it is divided into four curriculum functions: 1) Curriculum as planning, in which the curriculum functions as a planning tool for teaching and learning activities that are developed in accordance with the objectives to be achieved; Plans, both written and unwritten, 2) Curriculum as a regulator, that is, a curriculum that is important in the horizontal and vertical organization of material (related to sequence and continuity). 3) Curriculum As a method of curriculum, suggest the use of effective learning methods based on the use of teaching aids that will improve understanding, problem-solving methods, and training thinking skills to improve education. 4) Curriculum as a guide, that is, the curriculum serves as a guide in carrying out learning activities by containing ideas and goals to be achieved through curriculum implementation.

Benchmarking the curriculum is a step in the process of creating an adaptive curriculum. Curriculum benchmarking, in general, is a process for supporting curriculum development by combining domestic and international curriculums, with developed countries serving as the assessment guide. In addition, to carry out adaptive curriculum development, a curriculum development team comprised of school principals and a team of subject teachers was created. The principles of curriculum creation must be followed in the adaptation and development of the curriculum. Analyzing the competencies and resources found in the international curriculum is one way to do this.

Of the many international curricula, one that is popularly used in Indonesia is the Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) curriculum. Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) is part of The Cambridge Assessment Group, a non-profit organization under the University of Cambridge. This curriculum system administrator network has been used in 150 countries. This curriculum emphasizes flexibility, from elementary to secondary education. Students are free to choose lessons according to their abilities and interests, so that they can explore their abilities. The curriculum system, which is common to British schools, is also widely used in the United States, Canada and other countries, with some adjustments. Periodically, university
boards and syndicates will help guide the implementation of the Cambridge curriculum system in schools using this system. Cambridge International Examination (CIE) provides several types of curriculum qualifications (cambridgeinternational.org, 2022).

The types of curriculum qualifications include the Cambridge General Certificate of Education Ordinary Level curriculum which is commonly called the GCE "O" level, the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGSSE), the Cambridge IGCSE Co-ordinated Sciences and the Cambridge General Certificate of Education Advanced and Advanced Subsidiary. Level or what is commonly called GCE A & AS Level. Cambridge IGCSE, Cambridge AS and A Levels have been recognized by the world's leading universities and companies as evidence of leading academic excellence. Cambridge IGCSE, the world's most popular international curriculum for 16 years, has been implemented in 3,700 schools in 140 countries.

Meanwhile, Cambridge AS and A Level, which are intended for students aged 16 to 19, have been implemented in more than 125 countries. Therefore, some schools use an adaptive curriculum with reference to the Cambridge curriculum. This is done because educational institutions (schools) wish to produce quality graduates who are internationally recognized. School graduates using the international curriculum can continue their studies with the same curriculum.

The student does not need to take an equivalence or adjustment test, as was the case with students from other schools, with a different curriculum system. This is the reason some schools in Indonesia use an adaptive curriculum. A well-designed curriculum will be meaningless without the learning process. Curriculum and learning are two different terms but cannot be separated from one another. Both have the same position. The curriculum is everything that is ideal, while learning is the realization of the idealism of an idea. If the curriculum is the program, then learning is the implementation. If the curriculum is the theory, then learning is the application. If the curriculum is the theory, then learning is the practice. What is seen and done in learning is the real curriculum.

Based on the description above, the authors conducted a study about the Cambridge Curriculum, which is entitled "Cambridge Curriculum Implementation at SMP Madinah Islamic School".

Cambridge curriculum is the most difficult curriculum in the world, catering to students aged 5 to 19, and is divided into four levels or levels. CIE (Cambridge International Examination) is a non-profit organization affiliated with the University of Cambridge. Curriculum system for network organizers that has been used in schools in 150 countries. From elementary to secondary school, the Cambridge curriculum emphasizes flexibility. Students are free to select subjects based on their ability and interests, allowing them
to explore their abilities. The common curriculum system, which is embedded in English schools, is also widely used in the United States, Canada, India, New Zealand, and other countries around the world with minor modifications. The Syndication Council and the University will monitor and direct the implementation of the Cambridge system in schools that use this system on a regular basis (Examination, 2013).

Though it consists of some obstacles, some studies shown that Cambridge Curriculum is still interested to be observed. Rahman (2013) revealed that: 1) English learning planning at SDIT Baitul Izzah Nganjuk consists of the following elements: content, media, goals and strategies, and learning. The goal of English classes at SDIT Baitul Izzah Nganjuk is to prepare students to face challenges. Cambridge guide curriculum is tailored to students’ needs. Print and electronic media, such as books and OHP, are used as learning media. The strategies used in English learning are adapted from the students' material, situation, and condition in class, while English assessment is done through test and non-test assessments such as writing tests and affective assessments. 2) Implementation of English learning at SDIT Baitul Izzah Nganjuk in accordance with the syllabus and lesson plan based on Cambridge curriculum guides.

While (Azzah, 2016) found that 1) The concept of implementing Cambridge curriculum in SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT Jombang is to require all students to have a Cambridge certificate in at least one field of study by passing the Cambridge certification exams. 2) The essence of Cambridge curriculum implemented at intra-curricular school, it also held coaching once a week for one Subject or one of subjects as well as intensive coaching is done for two days before the Cambridge exam certification. 3) Results achieved in the implementation of the Cambridge curriculum namely it gives a positive effect for teachers and especially students. Student insights as well as having broader competitiveness both at national and international levels, it is evidenced by the large number of achievements in various competitions as well as the large number of graduates or the alumni of the college are accepted at overseas with scholarship. Due to above description, the objectives of this study are the following: 1) To explore the reason of SMP Madina Islamic School implemented the Cambridge curriculum. 2) To elaborate the Cambridge curriculum concept used at SMP Madina Islamic School. 3) To describe the implementation of Cambridge curriculum at SMP Madina Islamic School. 4) To elaborate factors that contribute to the implementation of the Cambridge curriculum at SMP Madina Islamic School.

**METHOD**

This article presents the case study as a type of qualitative research. It is conducted at SMP Madina Islamic School during May to December 2021. This study's data sources are divided into two categories: human and
nonhuman. Human data sources used as subjects or key informants, as well as data obtained through informants, are examples of soft data (soft data). While the data sources are not human, they are in the form of documents relevant to the research theme, such as photos, notes, or writing pertaining to the research theme, and the data obtained through the documents are hard data. (Nasution.S, 2003).

Following that, the necessary data sources, such as informants deemed appropriate to provide in-depth information on the research themes raised, are: SMP Madina Islamic School's curriculum sector vice principal and SMP Madina Islamic School teachers. The instruments used are structured interviewed, observation checklist, and curriculum document.

The analysis technique used by the writer is through a qualitative approach which emphasizes the analysis on the inductive process. In this case the writer goes directly to the field by studying, analyzing, interpreting, and drawing conclusions based on the reality in the field, while data analysis is carried out simultaneously with data collection (Azwar, 2003).

RESULTS

The Cambridge curriculum, or curriculum adopted from abroad, has been in place since 2004, when the University of Cambridge was founded; over time, this curriculum has become more widely known among the public and educational institutions. Madina Islamic School, for example, has been using the Cambridge curriculum since 2012. The implementation of this international curriculum in an educational institution will improve the educational quality of the institution.

Rationale of Madina Islamic School implemented Cambridge Curriculum. The principal of Madina Islamic School admitted: "The curriculum is adopted by adopting and adapting, which is the same as the higher national curriculum." Several other schools in DKI Jakarta, he claims, do not own the three curricula (National Curriculum, Cambridge School Curriculum, and Al-Azhar Cairo Curriculum). Some schools use the Cambridge University curriculum, but not the Al-Azhar Cairo curriculum, which is used at Madina Islamic School. "Alhamdulillah, our students are capable of accepting all of these curricula."

Further, Waka Curriculum Madina Islamic School explained: "It must be acknowledged that the English curriculum is superior to the national curriculum." The challenges of education quality in this global era are becoming more difficult; we are attempting to update education in this global era, one way being by implementing a curriculum using an adaptive curriculum. The term adaptive curriculum refers to the enrichment of the national curriculum through the adoption and adaptation of the Cambridge
We use the Cambridge curriculum because it is widely used in other schools and is widely recognized by the global community. Furthermore, the use of foreign curricula consumes foreign exchange while enriching foreign countries. We can learn from and benefit from the benefits of foreign curricula. Muslims, on the other hand, can create their own better curriculum, namely one that does not conflict with or endanger Muslims' faith.

**Cambridge Curriculum Concepts Implementation at SMP Madina Islamic School.** Objective: The curriculum is intended to achieve educational objectives. The number of goals achieved can indicate whether an educational program is successful or unsuccessful. As in Madina Islamic School, which describes the educational goals that students must achieve or are known as instructional goals in the school curriculum. The learning objectives, according to the documentation data from the school profile, are as follows: 1) Produce graduates who can think logically, independently, creatively, and with knowledge. 2) Produce graduates with high moral and ethical standards. 3) Produce graduates who value and are sensitive to aesthetic values. 4) Produce graduates who are environmentally conscious and sensitive to human needs. 5) Create graduates with practical skills (Life skills).

Part contents: According to documents such as the syllabus, the Cambridge curriculum at SMP Madina Islamic School includes three subjects: English, Science, and Mathematics. Reading, writing, usage, listening, and speaking are all topics covered in English classes. Science materials include scientific inquiry, biology, chemistry, and physics. Numbers, Geometry, Measure, Data Handling, and Problem Solving are among the topics covered in mathematics. "Yes, because we chose to use the first language of our guidelines, yes, from the first book of the first framework," explained the principal.

a) Method: The teacher's method in the learning process at SMP Madina Islamic School is to adjust and adapt the material to the needs of the students. The Deputy Head of Curriculum was responsible for this, he explained: "It's all the same, it's all the same, it's just the teacher's creativity, and the school has provided the internet and other media. It is also used in the classroom, so it is dependent on creativity and needs". Methods are frequently included in lesson plans, and teachers frequently discuss and ask questions. Teachers frequently use a variety of teaching methods to engage students in active participation in learning. This is demonstrated by the observation of the teacher's lesson plans being carried out by the teacher's implementation in the classroom.

**Implementation of Cambridge Curriculum at SMP Madina Islamic School.** Regarding the implementation of the curriculum at Madina Islamic
School, it means developing students' mindsets towards educational needs that are truly beneficial for students and schools, so that students learn to deepen their English properly and produce quality education where these results will provide extraordinary character development in students. Regarding the strategy used to implement the Cambridge curriculum on students by Mr. Helmi says: "Here, I am the deputy head of the curriculum with the team of teachers who are responsible for developing the Cambridge curriculum at Madina Islamic School, actualizing the potential of the school in implementing the Cambridge curriculum as the heart of education for students by carrying out the vision, mission and goals, implementing the curriculum at this school is the responsibility of I answered as the waka of the curriculum. Mentoring and coaching by providing training and implementing work activities or programs. The Cambridge curriculum that we implement brings our school as one of the favorite schools".

The Cambridge curriculum can serve as a pillar for teachers, students, schools, and life outside of school. One method for ensuring that this curriculum continues to evolve is to provide training on the implementation of the Cambridge curriculum as well as training for the teacher council, as well as to conduct selections for students who want to study at this Madina Islamic School because madrasas provide very special facilities. Mr. Helmi defines training in this context as "training that is commonly used to equip teacher councils for the implementation of the Cambridge curriculum, such as giving lessons in English in a school setting." The activities listed above are part of a program at Madina Islamic School to implement and develop the Cambridge curriculum. There are also programs or activities that cannot be implemented in the following program. The number of new student admissions is not limited because it has no bearing on the maximum and efficiency with which the Cambridge curriculum is implemented. Each student who registers is subjected to a written test and an interview in order to be admitted as a new student.

In connection with the implementation of the Cambridge curriculum at Madina Islamic School, the role of the entire teacher council and all students who participate in developing the Cambridge curriculum is urgently needed. At the subject stage, the development of the Cambridge curriculum is realized in the form of learning tools in the form of a syllabus for each subject that is developed and contains the results of adaptation/adoptation of the Cambridge curriculum. The impact of the implementation of the Cambridge curriculum on student learning at Madina Islamic School is that it can meet the educational needs of students to become competent and characterized graduates.

**Factors Supporting the Implementation of the Cambridge Curriculum at Madina Islamic School.** Participation in the Teacher Council Participation is an important factor in a learning device's development or success. The
achievement of objectives is realized through participation in all aspects of curriculum implementation.

Collaboration among the teaching teacher councils. The curriculum is also interpreted as an effort to improve educational quality in which all members of the teacher council must have strong bonds of solidarity, because bonds of solidarity allow cooperation to be built more concretely. In fact, this bond of solidarity can be strengthened in order to achieve higher educational goals. It is possible to conclude that the presence of strong solidarity among teachers or the teacher council can be a driving force in achieving educational goals.

The effectiveness of teachers. Teachers who implement the curriculum play a critical role in the success of the Cambridge curriculum as a means of improving educational quality. As a result, teacher performance plays a role in determining the success of curriculum implementation. Teachers with high levels of competence will be able to improve the Cambridge curriculum. Debriefing instruction, teaching or implementing the Cambridge curriculum necessitates debriefing, which will serve as a reference for all teacher councils involved in the Cambridge curriculum implementation. The debriefing in question is intended to provide maturity in communicating in English in a school setting. Students' English habituation, students also require guidance in developing the habit of speaking English in the school setting; the teacher will teach English communication correctly every day because students who are still young can rarely memorize fluently. Furthermore, what is memorized in this case is English.

**DISCUSSION**

Language as an introduction to knowledge has yet to gain a firm foothold in the national curriculum (Ilyosovna, 2020). Indonesian subjects were one of the major barriers to graduation in the 2010 national exams. According to data from the Center for Educational Assessment of the Research and Development Agency of the Ministry of National Education (Puspendik Balitbang Kemdiknas), of the total 1,522,162 students who took the 2010 National Examination, 154,079 students repeated, with Indonesian being one of the most repeated subjects.

This fact, as stated by the Minister of National Education, may be difficult to believe because how could Indonesian students who speak the Indonesian national language fail in their own language test? This fact is a wake-up call for educators to reflect on their mistakes in teaching Indonesian. One of the factors is the poor quality of Indonesian textbooks, which makes it difficult for students to comprehend them. Thus, textbook is recommended in teaching and learning when it is supported by other textbook (Agustina Wulandari, 2016). Grammar is thoroughly peeled away, leaving only the meaning and
material to support grammatical needs. Discussions about life values are regarded as unrelated to the subject and are thus completely ignored.

This is not the same as the English lessons in Cambridge books. Students are strongly encouraged to express their opinions and engage in debate when discussing social issues. Furthermore, the materials are carefully chosen so that they are interesting and can help students learn more. When learning Listening, for example, students are invited to listen to presentations about the life of the Flamingo bird, the Hurricane phenomenon, and the effects of ecosystem damage. Students are invited to enjoy the beauty of various types of world architecture, as well as the lives of victims of the Serbian-Bosnian war and the enchanting situation of the city of Dubai, while learning to read. It means that Cambridge textbook design is excellent (Rynanta, 2013). In contrast to the national curriculum, which emphasizes memorizing formulas and complex number calculations, the Cambridge curriculum provides basic formulas and allows students to use calculators, allowing students to focus on problem solving, reasoning, logic, and analysis (Suhaila Zakiya Najah, 2020).

A poll was once conducted with several students who were using Cambridge books. According to them, the teaching model provides more analytical and less theoretical questions, whereas the national curriculum employs reason, logic, and concepts. It also emphasizes logical thinking rather than just memorizing and counting, which helps us think critically and deepens our learning while not making it difficult for students to learn despite the fact that they are using a foreign language. Interestingly, some claim that the Cambridge curriculum requires them to "sharpen their brains" in order to answer the questions, confirming many parties’ claims that the national curriculum does not train intelligence. It is believe that the equivalency module has an important role to the effectiveness of learning process (Hafni, 2019).

The implementation of the Cambridge curriculum for students at Madina Islamic School plays a critical role in improving educational quality, as evidenced by how teachers and students communicate in English, school institutions in collaboration with the University of Cambridge, the community, and other agencies. The implementation of the Cambridge curriculum in student learning, in particular, for the implementation and management of education, so that it can grow and build into a tough person, virtuous character, and big spirit.

Education, which is financed through internal and external efficiency, can be used to improve skills that will result in a high-productivity workforce. It is in line with the research conducted by (Hoeben, 1994). In order to develop a national education system that is based on equity, relevance, quality, efficiency, and effectiveness in relation to the goals and aspirations of our
education, it must be considered, studied, and discussed, both theoretically and empirically.

One of the most important things to do in order to achieve optimal educational goals is to develop a curriculum that is well aligned with the educational needs that are required. Curriculum development must be carried out strategically and interactively among stakeholders in order to realize this condition. Mutual trust must be built both internally by the government and between the government and society and society itself in order to grow (Englund, 2011). The key words to realize the effective implementation of the Cambridge curriculum are openness, participation, and accountability in the implementation of education beginning with planning, implementation, and supervision (Isma Priandani, 2022).

The implementing the Cambridge curriculum in student learning is one way to maximize this curriculum's application, continue to exist, and be useful. To meet the needs of students and to serve as a learning platform for students, a teacher's role is to provide assistance, direction, guidance (Nurul Arifah, 2014), and training to students so that the Cambridge curriculum continues to evolve.

Madina Islamic School also held a coaching and debriefing program for the entire board of teachers who teach at the school regarding the implementation of the Cambridge curriculum (Pillai, 2012). It is hoped that by providing training to teaching teacher councils, they will be able to compose, plan, and understand procedures, as well as shape and develop the Cambridge curriculum.

**CONCLUSION**

Based on the findings and discussion above, the following conclusions can be drawn: First, Madina Islamic School uses the Cambridge Curriculum because the owner wishes to transform Madina Islamic School into an international school capable of preparing a quality society in this day and age. Further, the teacher adapts the material and adapts it to the concept of the Cambridge curriculum at Madina Islamic School, including objectives, content, methods, and evaluation, in the learning process at Madina Islamic School.

The learning objectives of the school are as follows: (a) produce graduates who can think logically, independently, and creatively and are knowledgeable; (b) produce graduates who have noble character and ethics; (c) produce graduates who appreciate and are sensitive to aesthetic values; and (d) produce graduates who care about the environment and are sensitive to humanity. (e) Produce graduates with hands-on experience (Life skills). The material taught is in accordance with the material included in the student needs framework. Since joining the Cambridge Curriculum, SMP Madina
Islamic School has been required to take the Cambridge exam. SMP Madina Islamic School administers two types of Cambridge exams: the Primary Development Test and the Check Point Test.

In addition, the Cambridge curriculum implementation at SMP Madina Islamic School includes planning, implementation, and evaluation. Cambridge curriculum planning is equipped with English language competence, as well as the creation of syllabus and lesson plans based on the framework and developed in accordance with the 2013 curriculum. The Cambridge curriculum implementation includes learning activities in class. The material is taught by the teacher in accordance with the lesson plans and syllabus, which are based on the Cambridge curriculum guidelines. Lesson plans include learning steps such as preliminary activities, core activities, and closing activities.

The teacher provides feedback at the end of the lesson to determine the students' understanding of the material that has been taught. The teacher's strategy/method in the learning process is to adapt the material. Learning implementation with reference to the Cambridge curriculum can be described as excellent because all indicators are met and implemented. A progression test and a Primary Check Point were used to assess the Cambridge curriculum at SMP Madina Islamic School.

The Cambridge school carried out several evaluations developed by the school, such as the final exam for three subjects, to familiarize students. The school administers Cambridge curriculum examinations. Its goal is to prepare students to pass the actual Cambridge exams. The last, funding, extracurricular activities, and parental participation are factors that support the implementation of the Cambridge curriculum at SMP Madina Islamic School.

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