

CRITICAL STUDY OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE KURIKULUM MERDEKA IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF PROGRESSIVISM

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ABSTRACT

Early childhood is a golden age where development and growth are very rapid. Currently, the government's promoted *kurikulum merdeka* is required for early childhood educational units. The research aims to look closely at how *kurikulum merdeka* is used in early childhood education units by explaining, finding, and suggesting ways to use a curriculum that doesn't require implementation using the progressivism philosophy. The research method uses qualitative approaches using primary and secondary data. Primary data is obtained through observations, interviews, and a FGD with educators and educational staff at Islamic kindergartens Taruna Prima and Masyitoh 1 Gemahan. Secondary data is obtained through searching the library according to the themes to be studied. The objective of this study is to examine scientific articles accepted in international scientific journals, or *Sinta 2* or *HKI* (intellectual property rights). The results of the research found that before using the *kurikulum merdeka*, both kindergartens only applied one game or model of learning, while when using the *kurikulum merdeka*, they used a variety of games so that children or students could choose their games freely. The substance of the *kurikulum merdeka* is aligned with the mission and purpose of both kindergartens. Both kindergartens have their own uniqueness in adhering to a religious-based progressive philosophy, learning experiences involving reflection, and being child-centric while not forgetting the role of teachers in accompanying learning.

Kata Kunci: *Implementation, Kurikulum Merdeka, Early Childhood Education, Progressivism*