

The Curriculum Changes Impact on School and English Learning Process in Senior High School at Rural Area North Maluku

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Abstract

This present research aims to investigate the impact of the Indonesian curriculum changes to teachers, students and schools in rural area and its impact on learning English in rural area North Maluku. The participants in this study is Principal, Students, English Teacher, and Vice Principal at SMA N 29 Halmahera Selatan as the representative to acquired data. This study was designed using qualitative through observation and interviews. As the result, this current research states that, both teachers, students, and schools experience panic in implementing each curriculum that is launched so that it affects the mentality of all elements of the school involved including: 1.) Teachers: they panic to readjust the new rules and their teaching abilities. 2.) School: In terms of administrative adjustments, schools will make adjustments that take a long time, such as holding workshops that required additional costs, etc. In addition, this study states that if teachers are required to choose modern media in teaching but in reality access is limited such as the internet, learning media facilities and infrastructure ultimately do not guarantee the implementation of the demands of the national curriculum in rural schools. In conclusion, we found that there is inequality education between urban schools and the rural school. In the future, this research must continue into policy research, namely by suggesting a specific curriculum for schools in rural areas without making it difficult for teachers and schools about a lot of documents or administration, so it doesn't take a lot of time for adjustments but it's immediately implemented. Considering that Indonesia is a country consisting of islands and is not united by one mainland. Therefore, the Indonesian education curriculum should

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not be equated with the curriculum adopted by developing countries or other developed countries with state conditions that are on the same continent. The second is that, next research should find a proper method to be used for English learning in rural school.
Keywords: Curriculum Changes, English Learning, Rural Area

1. INTRODUCTION

The curriculum is a very important tool for educational success. Curriculum changes are based on the awareness, that developments and changes that occur in social, national, and state life in Indonesia cannot be separated from the influence of global change, developments in science and technology as well as art and culture. In Indonesia, the education curriculum reform has been updated time by time. In history of Indonesia curriculum has experienced several curriculum changes from the 1975, 1984, 1994, 2004 (KBK), 2006 (KTSP), and 2013 curricula, and the current educational curriculum is Independent Learning (Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar). The fact that, today's quality of our educational curriculum became a complaint for the intellectual community. The curriculum changes from year after year are policies taken by the policymakers with reason for making changes to the quality educational curriculum in Indonesia, where the purpose is to improve the quality of education in Indonesia. However, the government's goals are not always in line with the reality on the ground.

Considering that Indonesia is a country consisting of islands and is not united by one mainland, so that a national curriculum may not necessarily be applied to every school in rural areas. Therefore, decision makers should see this problem more clearly. Intellectual people realized that the role of curriculum developers is very important for the world of education to achieve better learning processes and outcomes. But at present, a well-known complaint found from the community in rural schools about the role and implementation of the curriculum.

We know that urban and rural schools have different contexts, locations, support for learning media, and so on. So as (Drummond, 2012) said that it may be necessary to differentiate support for rural and urban schools. We also know that the government and all policymakers want every lesson to be of high quality, so learning is required to always be fun. But troubles come from the rural areas need attention. This is not much different from learning English in schools in rural areas which are researched at SMA Negeri 29 Halmahera Selatan. The location of the school which is far from the city can get in the way of both students and teachers in accessing facilities to support their English learning process. In addition, the

English teachers experience difficulties in teaching English with a fun way as recommended by the national curriculum.

Almost every student in rural areas does not have the ability and skills in a foreign language (English). Therefore, the aim to create fun English learning and to comply with the demands of implementing the curriculum is not guaranteed. One of the reasons is the limitations of existing facilities in rural schools. This is becoming a crucial problem faced by English teachers and students in rural areas. According to (Ssentanda, Southwood, & Huddleston, 2019), the reasons for failure to achieve the target of learning English include the lack of availability of teaching and learning support materials, limited exposure to English for rural students inside and outside of the classroom, low level of English proficiency of teachers, and limited time allotted for learning English. Here, the national curriculum should pay attention to those rural schools community with their problems to be solved. In future studies, it is necessary to do more in-depth study on behavioral and psychological adjustments and perspectives (Andiyan et al., 2021).

In this present study, we want to see the contribution of the curriculum by investigating how the impact of the Indonesian curriculum changes to a rural school and its English teacher and students in the English Learning process at the school.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

The curriculum is one of the determining objects. It is an important basis for measuring the success of a group in carrying out teaching and learning activities. It also aims to assist the administration of the school. Government policies in changing the curriculum in Indonesia always raises pros and cons for schools (teachers and students) and the community. To address this issue, this study aims to answer these questions:

1. How do the curriculum changes impact the school in a rural area?
2. How do curriculum changes impact on English Learning process in rural schools?

In order to reach the results and answer the research questions, the hypothesis is stated that: curriculum changes cannot affect the teacher's mentality in teaching English itself.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Definition of Education and Curriculum

The curriculum starts from the expectations of quality education in a country. According to (Rajasekaran & Anburaj, 2015), education is the most basic necessity in this competitive world to survive and reach heights. There are so many definitions of curriculum that are scattered in various books and authors from intellectual circles. According to

(Thijs & Van Den Akker, 2009) "curriculum as a learning plan". This simple definition is neither easy nor necessary narrows the perspective, but allows all sorts of elaboration for a given curricular level, context and representation. The other definition stated by (Beauchamp, 1968) that curriculum is a written document that may contain a lot of material, but basically it is a student's educational plan for entering a particular school. Even though this is an old theory, it is very real with the face of the current Indonesian curriculum and education.

Ronald (Sukmadinata, 2018) stated that the generally accepted definition of curriculum has changed from course content and lists of courses and courses to all experiences offered to students under the auspices or directly school. According to (Asnur, Idris, & Mustafa, 2019) "Narrowly, the curriculum can be interpreted as a number of subjects that must be followed/taken by students in order to complete their education at certain educational institutions." Thus (Nasution, 2001) adheres to a broad attitude regarding the curriculum, explaining that the meaning of the curriculum is very broad and includes not only knowledge, skills, habits, attitudes, appreciation, ideals and norms, but also the personality of the teacher, principal and all parties school employee, administrative staff, and others related to students. (Sukmadinata, 2018) added that there are three concepts of curriculum, curriculum as substance, as a system, and as a field of study. In addition, the regulation provides direction on the need to develop and implement eight national education standards: 1) content standards, 2) process standards, 3) graduate competency standards, 4) teacher and education staff standards, 5) facilities and infrastructure standards, 6) management standards, financing, and 6) educational assessment standards(Elwanti, 2012).

2.2. English Learning and Its Problem

Moving away from the curriculum can be linked to learning English as well as thousands of problems faced by teachers and students. According to (Hossain, 2016) English is introduced here at the primary level and inclusion continues up to the tertiary level. Most primary school students in rural areas are weak in English due to a lack of skilled and trained teachers who are familiar with modern teaching methods and approaches as well as a lack of teaching materials in class. What revealed here by Hossain is described us that primary school as a basic foundation for students prior to secondary education and advanced. In addition, there so many causes for the lack of students skill and those English learning process for students and teacher. According to (Khulel, 2021) encountered at list three difficulties; Students' socio-economics condition, the status of English in the school, and Covid-19 pandemic.

2.3. Definition of Rural Areas

According to (Bosak & Perlman, 1982), rural areas is defined as rural sociology, rural mental/mental health, rural human service. This is an old definition but it seems very related to the living conditions of people who are in rural areas. The other definition by (Surchev, 2010) defines that “In the west literature, rural areas are considered as different territorial communities with villages and small city to 30 thousand inhabitants” (p. 235). Meanwhile, according to (Bibby & Shepherd, 2004), rural areas are always related to villages and are scattered, outskirts, less sparse, sparsely populated. Even on another occasion, according to (Straka & Tuzová, 2016) that in general, to check village development always using categories such as economic, social and cultural. These categories become indicator to see whether a rural can be identified as a developing area or not.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1. Findings

3.1.1 Independent Learning Curriculum in Indonesia (Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar)

As an effort to restore learning caused by the pandemic, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Kemendikburistek) issued a policy for the development of the Independent Curriculum. This curriculum is given to education units as an additional option to restore learning during 2022-2024. The Ministry of Education and Culture's policies regarding the national curriculum will then be reviewed in 2024 based on evaluations during the learning recovery period.

Merdeka Curriculum is the new name of the prototype curriculum launched by the Minister of Education and Technology Nadiem Anwar Makarim. This curriculum will be implemented in 2024. At this time in 2022, schools are still allowed to choose the curriculum that will be used in their respective education units. Curriculum options provided include the 2013 Curriculum, Emergency Curriculum, and Independent Curriculum. The Independent Learning Curriculum is the development and implementation of an emergency curriculum launched to respond to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Understanding Independent Learning is an approach that is taken so that students and students can choose the subjects they are interested in.

The choice for schools to use one of these three curricula is based on the following two reasons:

- Schools have the authority and responsibility to develop a curriculum according to the needs and context of each school.

- The curriculum selection policy by the school is expected to facilitate the learning process at the school. But it must be done gradually. For example, the Merdeka curriculum as Indonesia's newest curriculum at this time. It can be said that the policy of providing school curriculum choices is one of the change management efforts.

A detail explanation that we are trying to reveal here is that, even though the government is trying to change the quality of Indonesian education. They want to centered instruction to independent learning based on the context of the school situation, but several things were found to be contradictory:

1. It is contra to the points above that in rural schools students cannot be allowed to study independently (must always be under strict control by the teacher) because of limited knowledge and English skills.
2. Teachers experience difficulties if they too follow what is expected of the curriculum

3.2. Discussions

According to (Soetopo & Soemanto, 1991), the factors that are seen as encouraging curriculum changes are: The freedom of certain areas of the world from colonial rule. With the independence of these countries, they realize that so far they have been nurtured in an education system that is no longer in accordance with the ideals of an independent nationality. To that end, they began planning for significant changes in the existing curriculum and education system. The rapid development of science and technology. On the one hand, developments in various branches of science taught in schools resulted in the discovery of old theories. On the other hand, developments in psychology, communication, and other sciences have led to the discovery of new theories and ways of teaching and learning. The two developments above, in themselves, encourage changes in the content and strategy of implementing the curriculum.

3.2.1 Consideration in Implementing the National Curriculum in Rural Area

Some rural schools' case which faced trauma in North Maluku tried hard to adjust self to every curriculum change. A new curriculum arrival had released since this two years namely Curriculum of Independent Learning (Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar) is also challenging all the educators in many aspects such as; facilities, mental, preparation, etc. Considering all aspects is necessary to finally reveal attitude about whether the curriculum could be implemented or not. It is similarly what is stated by to (Arifin, 2012) that in implementing curriculum development, the following stages must be taken: Stage 1. Feasibility study and needs analysis. Stage 2. Curriculum planning. Stage 3. Development of curriculum operational plans. Stage 4.

Implementation of field curriculum trials. Stage 5. Implementation of the curriculum. Stage 6. Curriculum Monitoring and Evaluation. Stage 7 Revision and adjustment.

Generally, at last rural schools would had their own perspective and observation stage by stage about a curriculum. They would analyzed whether it is feasible or infeasible, whether it is profitable or unprofitable, or it is instead of causing them confuse and being busy to just adjust to the regulation and wasting time year by year. The only reason why it was wasting time and money matter is that because a curriculum without deep socialization from the decision maker and government to all rural schools is not enough to implement it. Halsey and van Breda (Roberts, 2014) demonstrated that the perceived lack of adequate consultation is a concern for rural communities. In the other hands, we have to admitted that there are many limitations owned by rural schools, such (Petrone & Olsen, 2021) stated that rural communities are often considered lacking in many ways, including education. Hence, in this case of national curriculum changes have to considered all the deficiencies and educational needs there should receive the same treatment and support as schools in urban areas either by public society or government itself. The proposed system leverages high performance when compared to the existing models(Kumar et al., 2022).

Some concrete evidences had been gathered based on real data that as the curriculum changes continuously, it can also have a qualitative effect on English subjects and their processes. The following will explain in detail about who gets this influence and the positive and negative impacts of each curriculum change in Indonesia.

KTSP Curriculum

The curriculum, which was released and patented in 2006, tries to spread the concept of context-based learning. This means that each lesson is adapted to the environment of each learner.

Positive & Negative Impact to Teacher.

The most advantage thing in KTSP is that the teacher is given the freedom to plan lessons according to the environment and the conditions of the students and the conditions the school are in. However, the worst reality is that teachers were charged with the amount of administration or mandatory paperwork. In reality, that instead of obtaining or preparing quality learning, the teacher will get tired and in the end the process of delivering learning becomes unstable in terms of health and teaching quality.

Positif & Negative Impact to Students.

Teachers work hard to apply the provisions of the KTSP in learning in class causing panic in students. KTSP by designing a student-centered learning concept shakes the psychology of the students themselves.

The causes include a change in the learning atmosphere from the previous curriculum where students at the previous time only listened without being forced to ask questions actively, studied in groups, conveyed ideas, etc.

K13 Curriculum

The K13 curriculum is a curriculum patented by the Indonesian government through the Ministry of Education in 2013 to replace the KTSP curriculum. This curriculum was then patented to be implemented by all public and private schools throughout Indonesia, without exception in rural parts of the country. Besides a curriculum that was launched there were various shortcomings and impacts.

Positive and Negative Impact to Teacher.

The results of interviews with teachers in North Maluku revealed that the most difficult thing in implementing K13 was evaluating the process and student learning outcomes, including; assessment of the knowledge, attitudes, etc. The teacher admitted that the stages of the assessment were very complicated and long-winded. So it takes more time to be able to assess each student. The advantage is that teachers can easily arrange classes before the implementation of learning.

Positive and Negative Impact to Students.

Several schools in rural areas have a learning culture that is still teacher-centered. This is caused by the nature of students who are shy and reluctant to learn actively such as asking questions, conveying ideas, discussing, etc. So teachers experience difficulties in implementing this K13. In the end, the success of learning by following the K13 stages does not reach the K13 target itself.

3.2.2. Independent Learning Curriculum (Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar)

The newest curriculum in 2022 is the Independent Learning Curriculum, which the essence of this curriculum is similar to KTSP and K13 above which aim to focus learning on student activities. The government policy through the ministry of education designed a curriculum with a deeper and simpler scheme to be applied to all schools in Indonesia. The curriculum focused on students learning more about literacy and numeracy, Project-Based Learning, and benefits for teachers to be more flexible in choosing learning and methods based on the needs of their students. Although there have been no valid results regarding the full impact on education personnel in North Maluku, as far as this research is conducted reveals that at a glance obtained data that students who study at high schools in rural areas of North Maluku may not be mentally prepared for learning with the scheme and curriculum characteristics above (Ananda, 2017).

3.2.3. English Learning in Rural School Vs Curriculum Changes

The national curriculum of course focuses on improving the quality of education, but it also brings new difficulties for educators. English teachers were faced a current concern. Popham revealed that Unfortunately, in most current state content standard collections, there are too many curricular objectives to teach or test at that time available for teaching or testing (King & Zucker, 2005).

We interviewed some English teachers and the results came down to denial and objections toward the national curriculum

I am facing a shortage of English learning resources because schools do not get books or media from the government like other urban schools. This really hindered us in implementing the target curriculum and most importantly, teaching English was far behind. We are forced to use old methods such as writing on whiteboards to prohibit conversations that should be displayed on digital media such as infocus media. This causes me to work harder in class, write more on the board and then explain it with the lecture method. Our English learning becomes ineffective because of the lack of counseling media in schools, while the national curriculum demands more active and modern learning. Never mind applying, just going through the stages of understanding it's been so long.

Based on the discussions with a teacher above, it is being a newest problem occurs that did the government meant to only fulfill their desire by relying on their policies and power? As what (Poedjiastutie, Mayaputri, & Arifani, 2021; Watanabe, 2006) stated that when the curriculum is set by those in control, there may be a mismatch between what learners need to learn in the target language, and what the government wants them to achieve (Poedjiastutie et al., 2021).

The community guesses and compares what the policy maker actually recommends through the curriculum and what is needed by each school in various parts of the country. Are the curriculum and schools needs related? Is the designed curriculum appropriate to the various needs of teachers and students, as well as the school environment in various rural areas? In fact, the learning style and culture of each student in different places have differences. We wonder, does the presence of this curriculum help all schools in Indonesia or does it make it difficult? Perhaps, as (King & Zucker, 2005) said, teachers have become overwhelmed by curricular goals that they must convey to their students. The teacher will only focus on explaining the demands of the curriculum to students and that will turn out to be pressure and disrupt the essence of learning English itself. As well as the expectations of student-centered learning did not seem to be implemented evenly in this rural school. Teachers and students need more time to adjust to this learning style. Judging from the time and

period of implementing a curriculum that is not long and move to the policy of implementing the new curriculum in such a sudden time without even socialization, this can cause confusion and panic for all educators. Based on Wah and his discussion, he was surprised to find evidence of the studies developing Islamic economics and its principles, welfare, and economic democracy based on Pancasila (Guritno et al., 2023).

The point of view here is that there are, however, interesting nuances happened in schools in North Maluku, that the curriculum which is just commanded to be implemented without any socialization would be caused verity reactions from teacher and schools:

We spend extra time learning and adapting to each curriculum. If the socialization from experts has not reached us, then we will try to interpret it according to our perspective. Because on the one hand, we are tired and don't want to adapt to something foreign anymore, but we also don't want violate government policies and don't want to be left behind by other schools.

Generally, people understand that one of the main reasons for moving to a national curriculum in Indonesia is the pursuit of equality in Indonesia education. But it should also be noted that not all schools are ready with the rules and policies of the decision maker. The fact that the national curriculum cannot be imposed on all schools, especially on how teacher teaches, or how students learn English as well as the general difficulties reasons behind it such. According to (Harlina & Yusuf, 2020), teaching English is becoming increasingly difficult for students, especially when learning English is associated with the context of a rural school. This is very closely related to inadequate resources and learning environment. A huge of results of research on the causes of difficulties for students and teacher in rural areas. These studies reveal nothing but socio-economic reasons, learning media, and limited access to learning. So that one should not force them to learn with the style, approach, and method determined by others as competencies conceptualized in the Indonesian national curriculum. After all, according to Wong (Malaikosa & Taopan, 2020) several studies have shown that: Competency-Based Curriculum cannot implemented effectively, therefore curriculum, teaching and ratings cannot be correlated with each other.

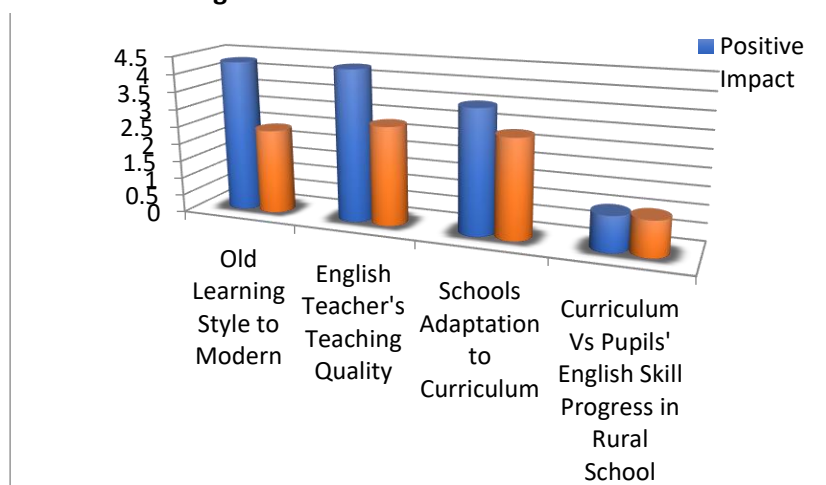
I was forced to get straight to the point. For example I immediately spelled every sound in English before they even tried it. because I understand that apart from their non-existent skills, they also do not have sufficient learning facilities such as an English dictionary, extensive internet access. in the village, both teachers and students cannot access the internet freely. It requires extra credit on a smart phone, doesn't have a smartphone, no internet access. We cannot reach the standards of every national curriculum in this rural area. The

methods that I apply in teaching above are the old ways that we always do. Thus, for independent curriculum, what is it? we can't even though we are trying time by time. Therefore, learning competence cannot reach the target because the possibility for each standard is small.

The data above clearly introduces us to the fact that teachers in rural schools still rely on teacher-centered. Students with below average English proficiency had more difficulty pronouncing some of the vocabulary words boldly. In rural schools, before the teacher finds out whether his students have made mistakes or not in pronunciation, the teacher has to tell them first, because apart from ignorance, the students also do not have the courage within themselves, such as being afraid of being laughed at by their friends and ashamed of being said to be pretentious by their classmates. This is contrary to what is expected and recommended in the present Indonesian national curriculum which emphasizes student-centered learning. For these reasons, teacher always becoming the center in learning process for pupils. According to (Saiful & Triyono, 2018) teacher-centered learning, which the teachers became the sources of knowledge, was an appropriate teaching approach to teach English to students of rural areas. Therefore, the teacher centered method does not have to be stopped for use. Doesn't mean that it's not appropriate to apply in an era where for the general public, this era has to use modern and independent methods. If there are too many reviews, it will take a lot of time and they will start to be biased. Sentiment classification tries to solve this problem by putting user reviews into groups based on whether they are positive, negative, or neutral(Rijal et al., 2023).

Furthermore, it can be described as follow:

Graph 1. Percentage of Positive and Negative Impacts from Curriculum Changes at Rural School



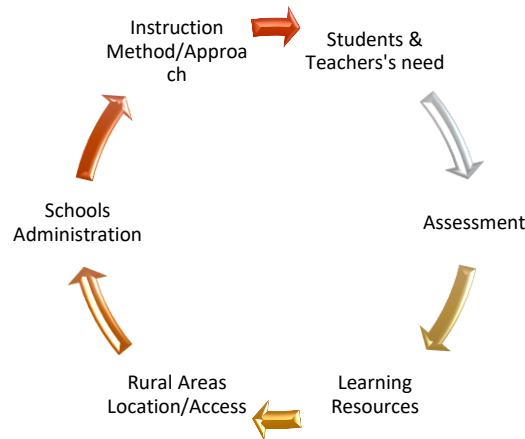
The graph above describes that curriculum changes impact so much to four categories that are the important discussion in this present study. Here is becoming a consideration that the positive or negative impact of the presence of the national curriculum has no impact on learning English in rural schools. As shown in the graph above, it is 1% of the progress of English learning skills of students in rural schools. This data explains that the implemented curriculum in this time did not affect, it is still the same as it was before. It is caused by student learning needs that do not match the demands of the curriculum. However, the advantage of one national curriculum brings change to schools to change the face of administration to be more organized and integrated 3.5%, but in the reality is that the implementation of the teaching and learning process is not guaranteed to run according to the provisions of the curriculum itself (A. Anan, 2020).

3.2.4. Reconceptualizing the Target of the Curriculum for Rural Areas

Reconceptualization of the curriculum to suit the conditions and needs of teachers and students in rural schools is really needed. Regarding learning time, the learning tools used by teachers, materials, assessment systems and so on must be reconsidered based on the context of each school in rural areas. As long as the rural school system is based on strict content standardized by the State, learning will not meet Indonesia's educational targets. If this continues to be maintained, no matter how often the curriculum is changed, it will still experience a narrowing of the curriculum. Don't let it happen like the results of this research and like the ideas conveyed by (McEneaney & Meyer, 2000) that the idea is that the curricular tracks vary and are not equally available to students of different social status, gender, or ethnicity, and that participation in these different paths influences the various desired outcomes. In addition, another focus of attention by (McEneaney & Meyer, 2000) is that the implicit knowledge carried in the system is consistent only with the arbitrary culture of higher status groups, so that lower status students are disadvantaged.

The discussions above can be described in the following figure that can be taken into consideration and concern for policy makers:

Figure 1. Circle of Contextual Consideration for Rural School



The six important things that must get concerned in determining the curriculum for rural schools:

1. Students and teacher's Need: what do teachers and students need in learning in rural areas?
2. Assessment: Is the assessment system offered through the curriculum representative?
3. Learning Resources: Is it certain that the learning resources are in accordance with the demands of the curriculum?
4. Rural Areas Location/Access: Can rural locations implement curricula with limited access?
5. School Administration: Isn't there a pile of new work that revolves around administration and ignorance? For example, inputting grades through applications that are not socialized properly, and/or preparing various things for school accreditation needs according to national accreditation standards.
6. Instruction Method/Approach: Certain whether the demands of the suggested methods/approaches are following the learning styles of students in rural areas or not.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Indonesia's national curriculum changes caused panic among educators and education staff. Of course, this is not known in depth by the government, in this case, the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Indonesia. This impact has an impact on several vital items; 1.) Teachers: they panic to readjust the new rules and their teaching abilities. 2.) School: In terms of administrative adjustments, schools will make adjustments that take a long time, such as holding workshops that require additional costs, etc.

In addition, curriculum changes also have an impact on learning English in schools located in rural areas. The most visible and felt impact is where teachers are forced to teach with an emphasis on student-centered, while on the other hand students in rural areas do not have basic English abilities and skills, so that does not guarantee the implementation of learning with a student-centered system. In addition, if teachers are required to choose modern media in teaching but in reality access is limited, such as the internet, learning media facilities and infrastructure ultimately do not guarantee the implementation of the demands of the national curriculum in rural schools. Thus, we cannot equate the context of urban schools and rural schools, because that only creates educational inequality.

5. SUGGESTIONS

In the future, this research must continue into policy research, namely by suggesting a specific curriculum for schools in rural areas without making it difficult for teachers and schools to a lot of documents or administration, so it doesn't take a lot of time for adjustments but it's immediately implemented. Considering that Indonesia is a country consisting of islands and is not united by one mainland. Therefore, the Indonesian education curriculum should not be equated with the curriculum adopted by developing countries or other developed countries with state conditions that are on the same continent. The second is that, next research should find a proper method to be used for English learning in rural school.

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