

Research Manuscript



Implementing the Merdeka Curriculum in History Education: A Case Study of Pedagogical Transition in Post-Colonial Indonesia

Ihdha Tantri ^{1✉}, R Soeharso ², Hany Nurpratiwi ²

¹ Kragan Senior High School, Indonesia

² History Education Program, Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

This study critically analyses the enactment of Indonesia's Merdeka Independent Curriculum within history education at SMA Negeri 1 Kragan, probing the disjuncture between policy rhetoric and classroom realities against a post-colonial backdrop. Adopting a qualitative case study design, the research reveals that whilst the curriculum affords progressive pedagogical freedom, implementation is obstructed by overlapping regulations, inadequate teacher training, and deficient communication networks. Teachers respond through self-directed efforts and peer collaboration, yet the absence of institutional support stifles the curriculum's transformative promise. The findings affirm that substantial reform in post-colonial contexts necessitates durable professional development, explicit transition plans, and due regard for teacher autonomy, and thus underscore key local contextual factors.

KEYWORDS

Merdeka Curriculum; History Education; Curriculum Implementation; Post-Colonial Pedagogy; Indonesia

ARTICLE HISTORY

Submitted:
11 June 2024
Revised:
6 November 2025
Accepted:
3 January 2026

ABSTRAK

Studi ini menganalisis secara kritis penerapan Kurikulum Merdeka dalam pendidikan sejarah di SMA Negeri 1 Kragan, dengan menyelidiki kesenjangan antara retorika kebijakan dan realitas ruang kelas di tengah latar belakang pascakolonial. Dengan mengadopsi rancangan studi kasus kualitatif, penelitian ini mengungkapkan bahwa meskipun kurikulum menawarkan kebebasan pedagogis yang progresif, implementasinya terhambat oleh regulasi yang tumpang tindih, pelatihan guru yang tidak memadai, serta jaringan komunikasi yang lemah. Para guru merespons melalui upaya belajar mandiri dan kolaborasi antarsejawat, namun ketiadaan dukungan kelembagaan meredam janji transformatif kurikulum tersebut. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa reformasi substantif dalam konteks pascakolonial memerlukan pengembangan profesional yang berkelanjutan, rencana transisi yang eksplisit, serta perhatian yang layak terhadap otonomi guru, dan dengan demikian menggarisbawahi faktor-faktor kontekstual lokal yang signifikan.

KATA KUNCI

Kurikulum Merdeka; Pendidikan Sejarah; Implementasi Kurikulum; Pedagogi Pascakolonial; Indonesia

SEJARAH ARTIKEL

Submit:
11 June 2024
Revisi:
6 November 2025
Diterima:
3 Januari 2026

Introduction

Curriculum reform constitutes one of the most significant yet challenging undertakings in educational systems worldwide. The translation of policy aspirations into classroom practice is rarely straightforward, as reforms encounter the complex realities of institutional culture, teacher capacity, resource constraints, and the entrenched practices that shape everyday pedagogical life (Fullan, 2025). This implementation gap is particularly pronounced in post-colonial contexts, where educational systems grapple with the legacies of colonial epistemologies, the imperatives of nation-building, and the demands of contemporary global educational discourse (Blackburn & Wu, 2021; Cairns, 2021).

Indonesia's Merdeka Curriculum, officially launched in February 2022, represents the most significant curriculum reform in the nation's recent educational history. Designed as a response to the learning losses precipitated by the COVID-19 pandemic and as a broader initiative to improve educational quality, the curriculum offers unprecedented flexibility to educational units in designing learning activities tailored to student needs (Kemdikbudristek, 2022). By the 2022-2023 academic year, more than 140,000 schools had adopted the curriculum, with numbers continuing to grow (Antara News, 2023). The curriculum emphasises essential materials, character development through the Pancasila Student Profile, and student-centred pedagogical approaches that depart from the more rigid structures of its predecessor, the 2013 Curriculum (Kemdikbudristek, 2022).

Within this reform landscape, history education occupies a particularly significant position. As a subject centrally concerned with national identity, collective memory, and civic formation, history has been repeatedly instrumentalised in Indonesian education to serve shifting political agendas (Stoddard, 2022; Vickers, 2023). The New Order regime (1968-1998) deployed history education as a tool for state legitimation, constructing a narrative that marginalised alternative perspectives and reinforced authoritarian governance. The post-1998 Reformasi era brought aspirations toward more critical and pluralistic historical education, yet the legacies of this instrumental approach persist in curriculum structures, teacher practices, and public expectations (Pratama, 2022). The Merdeka Curriculum's emphasis on the Pancasila Student Profile, with its dimensions of global diversity, critical reasoning, and mutual cooperation, represents an attempt to re-frame history education's purposes while maintaining its nation-building function (Muhardis, 2023).

However, the implementation of curriculum reform in Indonesian schools faces well-documented challenges. Research on previous reforms, including the 2013 Curriculum, has consistently identified gaps between policy intentions and classroom realities, with teachers struggling to translate reform mandates into practice amidst limited professional development, inadequate resources, and examination pressures (Ndomondo et al., 2022; Ogah, 2023; Rahman, 2022). These challenges are amplified in the context of the Merdeka Curriculum, which requires not only new pedagogical approaches but also fundamental shifts in teachers' conceptions of their roles and students' conceptions of learning (Martell, 2022; Ndomondo et al., 2022; Tilak et al., 2023).

The significance of this inquiry extends beyond the Indonesian context. As educational systems across the Global South pursue curriculum reforms aimed at enhancing quality, relevance, and equity, understanding the dynamics of implementation in specific institutional and cultural contexts becomes increasingly important (Bertram et al., 2021;

Dimmock et al., 2021; Wenske & Ssentanda, 2021). By examining the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in history education, this study contributes to broader international conversations about educational change in post-colonial societies, highlighting the complex interplay between policy innovation, institutional capacity, teacher agency, and the distinctive challenges of transforming pedagogical practice in resource-constrained environments.

Research Questions

1. How do teachers, students, and school administrators perceive the Merdeka Curriculum in history education?
2. How is the curriculum implemented in classroom practice, and what pedagogical strategies characterise this implementation?
3. What obstacles impede effective implementation, and what strategies do educational actors employ to navigate these obstacles?

Literature Review

Curriculum Implementation and Educational Change

Understanding the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum requires engagement with theoretical frameworks that illuminate the dynamics of educational change. Fullan's (2025) theory of educational change provides a foundational lens for analysing curriculum implementation as a multidimensional process rather than a singular event. Fullan argues that educational change involves three interrelated components: the possible use of new or revised materials, the possible use of new teaching approaches, and the possible alteration of beliefs. Successful implementation requires attention to all three dimensions, yet reforms often focus narrowly on materials while neglecting the deeper shifts in teacher beliefs and pedagogical practice that meaningful change demands.

Fullan's framework identifies several factors that influence implementation success, including the clarity and complexity of the innovation, the quality and practicality of professional development, and the presence of supportive organisational structures (Fullan, 2025). Crucially, Fullan emphasises that implementation is not a linear process but one characterised by uncertainty, struggle, and the need for sustained support. Teachers navigating curriculum reform must make sense of new expectations, develop new competencies, and reconcile reform demands with their existing professional identities and established practices. This sensemaking process is inherently subjective and shaped by teachers' prior experiences, institutional contexts, and the meanings they attach to educational change (Beni et al., 2025; Bümen & Holmqvist, 2022; Stollman et al., 2022).

Building on Fullan's work, Ndomondo et al.'s (2022) framework for curriculum implementation in developing countries offers additional analytical tools for understanding the Indonesian context. The framework identifies three interconnected constructs that shape implementation: the Profile of Implementation, which describes the extent to which a curriculum is enacted in practice; the Capacity to Innovate, which encompasses the human, material, and organisational resources available to support implementation; and Outside Support, which includes the policy environment, professional development systems, and community engagement that facilitate or constrain implementation (Girard et

al., 2021; Ogah, 2023) . This framework is particularly valuable for analysing implementation in resource-constrained settings, where the capacity to innovate and the availability of outside support often determine the fate of reform initiatives.

Harris et al.'s (2022) distributed leadership perspective complements these frameworks by focusing attention on how leadership for curriculum implementation is distributed across organisational actors rather than concentrated in formal leadership positions. Harris argues that effective implementation requires the coordination of multiple actors, including teachers, administrators, and external support providers, whose interactions shape the implementation process. This perspective is particularly relevant for understanding how teachers in the present study navigated implementation challenges through informal collaboration and self-directed learning in the absence of systematic professional development (de Jong et al., 2023; Lee et al., 2021) .

Post-Colonial Perspectives on Curriculum Reform

The implementation of curriculum reform in Indonesia must be understood within the country's post-colonial trajectory. Indonesia's educational system bears the imprint of Dutch colonial rule, which established a stratified system that privileged Western knowledge while marginalising indigenous epistemologies (Darmawan et al., 2025; Utami et al., 2022). The post-independence period saw efforts to decolonise education, yet these efforts have been uneven and contested. The New Order regime's centralisation of curriculum and instrumentalisation of education for state legitimisation created a system in which compliance and conformity were rewarded over critical thinking and intellectual independence (Pratama, 2022; Stoddard, 2022; Vickers, 2023).

Contemporary scholarship on decolonising education in Indonesia emphasises that the country still faces epistemic dependency on state-centred and Eurocentric narratives (Cairns, 2021; Stoddard, 2022; Vickers, 2023). History education, in particular, remains shaped by what scholars term "epistemic dependency" on state-centred and Eurocentric narratives (Cairns, 2021; Pratama, 2022; Santiago & Dozono, 2022). The Merdeka Curriculum's emphasis on the Pancasila Student Profile, with its dimensions of global diversity, critical reasoning, and mutual cooperation, represents an attempt to move beyond this dependency while maintaining the nation-building function of education. However, the tension between cultivating critical historical consciousness and inculcating prescribed national values remains unresolved in curriculum policy and classroom practice (Popa, 2023; Pratama, 2022).

This tension is not unique to Indonesia but reflects broader challenges facing history education in post-colonial societies. Scholars across the Global South have documented how history curricula are shaped by competing pressures: the demand for national unity and identity formation, the imperative to address historical injustices and plural perspectives, and the influence of global educational discourse that privileges certain forms of historical thinking (Awgichew & Ademe, 2022; Dube & Moyo, 2023; Thorp & Persson, 2020). Understanding how these pressures play out in specific national and institutional contexts is essential for comprehending the dynamics of curriculum implementation.

History Education and Historical Consciousness

The implementation of curriculum reform in history education also requires engagement with theoretical literature on historical consciousness and historical thinking. Rüsen's

(2005) foundational work conceptualises historical consciousness as the mental operations that define historical thinking's role in human culture, encompassing not merely cognitive operations but also moral and affective dimensions. Historical consciousness involves connecting interpretations of the past, understanding of the present, and orientations toward the future in ways that are both cognitive and ethical.

Rüsen's typology of historical consciousness, encompassing traditional, exemplary, critical, and genetic forms, offers a framework for understanding how students' engagement with the past operates at different levels of sophistication. The Merdeka Curriculum's emphasis on the Pancasila Student Profile, with its dimensions of critical reasoning and global diversity, suggests an aspiration toward more sophisticated forms of historical consciousness. However, the implementation challenges documented in this study raise questions about whether these aspirations are being realised in classroom practice.

Wineburg's (2001) work on historical thinking complements Rüsen's framework by emphasising the "unnatural" character of genuine historical understanding. Wineburg argues that historical thinking requires overcoming presentism, the natural tendency to interpret the past through contemporary categories, and recognising the fundamental otherness of the past. This recognition entails profound cognitive and affective dimensions: the discomfort of confronting perspectives that challenge our own, the ethical complexity of judging historical actors without anachronism, and the empathy required to engage with people whose worlds differ fundamentally from ours.

The Merdeka Curriculum's emphasis on student-centred learning and critical thinking aligns with Wineburg's conception of historical thinking. However, the implementation challenges documented in this study, including teachers' limited understanding of new pedagogical concepts and the persistence of teacher-centred approaches, suggest that realising this vision requires more than policy mandates. It requires sustained professional development, adequate resources, and recognition of the cognitive and affective demands that historical thinking places on both teachers and students (Thorp & Persson, 2020).

Method

Research Design and Approach

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to investigate the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in history education at SMA Negeri 1 Kragan. The qualitative approach was selected for its capacity to generate rich, contextualised understanding of educational practices as they unfold in natural settings (Creswell & Guetterman, 2025). Unlike quantitative methods that privilege measurement and generalisation, qualitative inquiry enables researchers to explore the meanings that participants attach to their experiences, the tacit knowledge that shapes practice, and the complex interplay of factors that influence educational outcomes.

The descriptive design was specifically chosen for its appropriateness in examining the status, characteristics, and dynamics of a particular phenomenon within its natural context (Creswell & Poth, 2023; Yin & Campbell, 2018). This design enables researchers to provide detailed accounts of how a phenomenon manifests in practice, the factors that shape it, and the relationships among these factors. In the context of this study, the

descriptive design enabled systematic documentation of how the Merdeka Curriculum was being implemented in history education, the perspectives of key stakeholders, and the obstacles and strategies that characterised the implementation process.

The selection of SMA Negeri 1 Kragan as the research site was purposive, based on the school's distinctive characteristics and relevance to the research questions. Located in Kragan District, Rembang Regency, Central Java, the school had been implementing the Merdeka Curriculum for approximately three years at the time of the study, providing sufficient experience for meaningful investigation. The school's status as a public senior high school serving a diverse student population made it representative of many Indonesian schools navigating curriculum reform. Additionally, the school's implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum across selected grade levels while maintaining the 2013 Curriculum for others created conditions for examining the dynamics of curricular transition.

Data and Sources of Data

Data for this study were drawn from multiple sources to enable comprehensive understanding of Merdeka Curriculum implementation. Primary data sources included four categories of informants. School administrators, including the Vice Principal for Curriculum, provided institutional perspectives on curriculum policy, implementation strategies, and systemic challenges. History teachers, as the primary implementers of the curriculum in classroom practice, offered insights into pedagogical approaches, professional development needs, and the practical challenges of translating policy into practice. Students from Grade X, who were experiencing the Merdeka Curriculum in history education, provided perspectives on their learning experiences, engagement with the curriculum, and perceptions of its effectiveness. Additional informants, including school staff and committee members, contributed contextual information about school operations and the broader institutional environment.

Classroom activities constituted a second major data source. Direct observation of history lessons across multiple sessions documented teacher-student interactions, instructional strategies, student engagement patterns, and the enactment of curriculum expectations in practice. Observations focused on identifying how curriculum principles were translated into classroom activities, the pedagogical approaches employed, and the nature of student participation.

Documentary evidence constituted a third data source. Curriculum documents, including the School Operational Curriculum (KOSP), teaching modules, lesson plans, and assessment materials, provided insight into the formal expectations and institutional frameworks shaping classroom practice. Student learning materials, including textbooks and worksheets, offered evidence of how curriculum content was operationalised in instructional resources. School policy documents and administrative records provided contextual information about the institutional environment.

Data Collection

Data collection occurred over a structured period from February 5 to February 23, 2024, enabling concentrated engagement with participants and observation of multiple instructional sessions. The research team employed four principal data collection techniques.

Observation was conducted to document classroom practices and institutional dynamics directly. The researcher observed history lessons across multiple sessions,

focusing on instructional activities, teacher-student interactions, student engagement behaviours, and the enactment of curriculum principles in practice. Observation was non-participatory, with the researcher maintaining an observer role while documenting activities through detailed field notes. Observation focused on three elements identified as central to the research: the setting (SMA Negeri 1 Kragan), the actors (teachers, students, and administrators), and the activities (history instruction and curriculum implementation processes).

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants to explore their perspectives on curriculum implementation in depth. Interview protocols were developed to address the research questions while maintaining flexibility to pursue emergent themes. Interviews with the Vice Principal for Curriculum explored institutional perspectives on curriculum policy, implementation strategies, and systemic challenges. Interviews with history teachers investigated their conceptions of the Merdeka Curriculum, pedagogical approaches, professional development experiences, and perceived obstacles to implementation. Interviews with students explored their perceptions of history instruction, engagement with the curriculum, and awareness of curriculum objectives. All interviews were audio-recorded with participants' consent and transcribed verbatim for analysis.

Document study involved systematic collection and analysis of relevant documents to supplement and triangulate interview and observation data. Documents collected included the School Operational Curriculum (KOSP), teaching modules, lesson plans, assessment materials, student learning resources, and school policy documents. Document analysis focused on identifying how curriculum expectations were articulated in formal documents and how these expectations aligned with observed practice.

Questionnaires were administered to gather additional data on teacher and student perspectives. The questionnaire combined closed-ended and open-ended questions to generate both structured data and rich qualitative responses. Questions addressed perceptions of the Merdeka Curriculum, experiences with implementation, and identification of challenges and successes. Questionnaire data were used to supplement and triangulate findings from interviews and observations.

Trustworthiness of Data

To ensure the trustworthiness of findings, this study employed multiple strategies aligned with qualitative research standards. Triangulation was pursued across sources, comparing data from administrators, teachers, students, and documents; across techniques, cross-verifying observation, interview, document study, and questionnaire data; and across time, comparing practices across multiple instructional sessions. This triangulation enabled identification of convergent patterns while also revealing tensions and contradictions that enriched understanding.

Member checking was conducted by sharing preliminary findings with participants and soliciting feedback on interpretations. This process helped ensure that researcher interpretations accurately reflected participant perspectives and enabled participants to correct misunderstandings or add nuance. The researcher maintained detailed field notes documenting contextual factors and reflexive observations throughout the research process.

Thick description of the setting, participants, and practices enables readers to assess the transferability of findings to other contexts. Detailed contextual information about the school, community, and educational policy environment supports informed judgment about applicability. The researcher documented the school's characteristics, the broader institutional and policy context, and the specific conditions shaping curriculum implementation at the site.

Data Analysis

Data analysis followed an iterative, thematic approach consistent with qualitative research conventions. The analysis process comprised several phases aligned with Miles et al.'s (2020) interactive model. Data reduction involved systematic review and condensation of interview transcripts, observation notes, questionnaire responses, and documentary evidence. This process entailed identifying relevant passages, coding for thematic content, and organising data according to emerging categories. Initial codes were derived both from the theoretical framework and from patterns emerging from the data.

Data display organised condensed data into thematic matrices and narrative summaries to facilitate pattern identification and cross-case comparison. Displays enabled systematic examination of relationships between concepts, identification of convergent and divergent patterns, and testing of emerging interpretations against the full range of evidence. Data were organised around the research questions, with themes addressing perceptions, implementation practices, obstacles, and coping strategies.

Conclusion drawing and verification were conducted iteratively through constant comparison of data across sources and techniques. Emerging interpretations were tested against discrepant cases and alternative explanations. The researcher engaged in ongoing reflection on how personal assumptions and perspectives might shape data collection and interpretation. Final conclusions were grounded in the full range of evidence and subjected to member checking to enhance credibility.

Results

Perceptions of the Merdeka Curriculum

The study revealed varied perceptions of the Merdeka Curriculum among different stakeholders, reflecting the complex dynamics of curriculum reform implementation. School administrators expressed positive views of the curriculum's potential while acknowledging significant implementation challenges. The Vice Principal for Curriculum described the Merdeka Curriculum as offering "a new paradigm" that emphasised essential materials, student-centred learning, and character development through the Pancasila Student Profile. However, administrators also acknowledged that implementation remained partial and uneven, with the school operating two curricula simultaneously: the Merdeka Curriculum for Grades X and XI, and the 2013 Curriculum for Grade XII.

This dual-curriculum arrangement created significant challenges. The Vice Principal explained that the school had adopted the Merdeka Curriculum gradually to manage the transition, yet this approach created confusion among teachers and students. Some teachers were observed using 2013 Curriculum approaches in Merdeka Curriculum classes, reflecting what administrators described as "stuck with the old curriculum." This finding aligns with Fullan's (2025) observation that curriculum change is a process, not an

event, and that teachers require sustained support to develop new understandings and practices.

History teachers demonstrated awareness of the Merdeka Curriculum's principles while expressing ambivalence about its implementation. One teacher noted that "essentially, learning in the Merdeka Curriculum is the same as learning in the 2013 Curriculum. The difference is only in the use of materials; if in the 2013 Curriculum the materials are broader, in the Merdeka Curriculum they are more focused and systematic." This perception that the new curriculum represents only incremental change, rather than fundamental transformation, may reflect teachers' limited engagement with the curriculum's deeper pedagogical principles. It may also reflect the reality that, in practice, the curriculum's innovations have not been fully realised in classroom instruction.

Teachers also expressed concern about their preparedness to implement the curriculum effectively. One teacher reported that they had not received formal training and had learned about the Merdeka Curriculum "independently and self-taught" through reading books, websites, and journals. This finding is consistent with broader research on curriculum implementation in Indonesia, which has identified insufficient professional development as a persistent challenge (Ndomondo et al., 2022; Ogah, 2023; Rahman, 2022). The absence of systematic training left teachers to make sense of the curriculum on their own, a process that Fullan's (2025) identifies as fraught with the risk of "false clarity" or "painful unclarity" that undermines meaningful implementation.

Students' perceptions of the Merdeka Curriculum were mixed. Some students reported finding history instruction more engaging when teachers employed varied methods and media. Others expressed confusion about the curriculum's purposes, with one student noting that the Merdeka Curriculum was "quite confusing" for students who did not understand its objectives. Students also observed inconsistencies in implementation across subjects, with some teachers appearing to use the new curriculum while others continued with previous approaches. This inconsistency reflects the challenges of implementing curriculum reform in contexts where teachers have varying levels of understanding and commitment.

Implementation Practices in History Education

The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in history education at SMA Negeri 1 Kragan was characterised by both continuity and change. Teachers employed a range of pedagogical strategies, including lecture, discussion, presentation, question-and-answer, and assignment methods. Learning models included Problem Based Learning, Two Stay Two Stray, Project Based Learning, and the Shortcut model. Media used included mind mapping, infographics, Canva, PowerPoint, video, and LCD projection. This variety reflects genuine effort to create engaging learning environments responsive to diverse student needs.

However, observation revealed significant gaps between the rhetoric of innovation and the reality of practice. The lecture method remained dominant, with other strategies employed intermittently and often superficially. Discussion sessions, while nominally participatory, frequently followed predictable patterns in which a small number of students dominated while others remained passive. Project-based learning, while mentioned as a

strategy, was observed only in limited forms, with projects often serving as summative assessments rather than as vehicles for sustained inquiry.

The persistence of traditional pedagogical approaches may reflect several factors. First, teachers' limited professional development left them without the pedagogical content knowledge needed to implement student-centred approaches effectively. Second, the pressure to cover extensive curriculum content, combined with large class sizes, created conditions that favoured teacher-centred instruction. Third, the dual-curriculum arrangement, with some teachers continuing to use 2013 Curriculum approaches, created ambiguity about expectations and reduced pressure to adopt new practices.

Assessment practices also reflected continuity with previous approaches. While the Merdeka Curriculum emphasises formative assessment and diagnostic assessment to inform instruction, teachers reported continuing to rely primarily on summative assessments. One teacher noted that assessment in the Merdeka Curriculum remained similar to the 2013 Curriculum, with the main difference being the use of new terminology. This finding suggests that assessment reform, like pedagogical reform, requires more than policy mandates; it requires sustained professional development and the development of new assessment competencies.

The Pancasila Student Profile, a central element of the Merdeka Curriculum, was addressed through both explicit and implicit means. Teachers reported integrating character education into history instruction, with an emphasis on nationalism, discipline, and learning motivation. However, the integration of the profile's six dimensions, including faith and devotion, global diversity, mutual cooperation, critical reasoning, and creativity, appeared partial and uneven. Affective dimensions such as faith and global diversity were relatively well integrated, while cognitive dimensions such as critical thinking and creativity remained less developed. This pattern is consistent with findings from other studies of Pancasila Student Profile integration (Muhardis, 2023).

Project-based activities intended to strengthen the Pancasila Student Profile were observed in some instances. One notable example was a democracy project involving student elections for the student council, which provided opportunities for students to engage with principles of democratic participation. However, such projects appeared isolated rather than systematically integrated into the curriculum. This finding suggests that while the Merdeka Curriculum provides a framework for character education, the integration of character values remains suboptimal due to overemphasis on the Pancasila Student Profile project, insufficient teacher training, and non-strategic scheduling (Ndomondo et al., 2022; Tilak et al., 2023).

Obstacles to Effective Implementation

The study identified several obstacles that impeded effective implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in history education. These obstacles can be analysed through Rogan and Grayson's (2003) framework, which distinguishes between capacity to innovate, profile of implementation, and outside support.

Human resource readiness emerged as a primary obstacle. Teachers lacked adequate preparation for the curriculum's demands, with limited professional development opportunities and reliance on self-directed learning. One teacher explained that they had to learn about the curriculum "independently and self-taught" through reading books, websites, and journals. The absence of systematic training left teachers without the

pedagogical content knowledge needed to implement student-centred approaches, design differentiated instruction, or develop formative assessments aligned with the curriculum's principles. This finding is consistent with broader research on Merdeka Curriculum implementation, which has identified insufficient professional development as a persistent challenge (Ndomondo et al., 2022; Ogah, 2023; Rahman, 2022).

Facility utilisation presented a second obstacle. While the school had invested in educational technology, including LCD projectors and internet access, the utilisation of these facilities was inconsistent. Technical problems, including unreliable internet connectivity and projector malfunctions, disrupted instruction. Teachers also varied in their capacity to integrate technology effectively into instruction, with some relying primarily on traditional media despite the availability of digital resources. This finding reflects broader challenges of technology integration in Indonesian schools, where infrastructure availability does not always translate into effective use (Muhaimin et al., 2020).

Communication networks constituted a third obstacle. The study found weak communication and coordination among stakeholders involved in curriculum implementation. Teachers reported limited opportunities for collegial sharing and collaboration, with professional development occurring primarily through individual effort rather than collective engagement. The dual-curriculum arrangement created additional coordination challenges, with some teachers using 2013 Curriculum approaches in Merdeka Curriculum classes and others attempting to implement the new curriculum without clear guidance. This finding aligns with (Durrant, 2020; Fox & Poultney, 2025; Simmie & Lang, 2020; Webber, 2023) emphasis on the importance of distributed leadership and coordination for effective implementation.

Dual-curriculum management emerged as a distinctive obstacle in this context. The school's operation of two curricula simultaneously created confusion among teachers and students, with some teachers reportedly using 2013 Curriculum approaches in Merdeka Curriculum classes. Students noted that "some teachers, including history teachers, sometimes still use the 2013 Curriculum as their guide." This overlap between curricula undermined the coherence of implementation and created ambiguity about expectations. The dual-curriculum arrangement also created inequities, with some students experiencing the new curriculum while others continued with the old.

Teacher training gaps represented a related obstacle. Despite the curriculum's emphasis on new pedagogical approaches, teachers had not received adequate preparation. One teacher explained that they had not been given "special training" and had to learn about the curriculum through self-directed study. This finding reflects broader patterns in Indonesian education, where curriculum reform has often outpaced teacher preparation (Asih et al., 2022; Martell, 2022; Rahman, 2022). The absence of systematic professional development left teachers to implement the curriculum with limited understanding of its principles or practical implications.

Strategies for Navigating Implementation Challenges

Despite these obstacles, teachers and school administrators employed several strategies to navigate implementation challenges. These strategies reflect the agency of educational actors in adapting to reform demands within resource-constrained environments.

Self-directed learning was the primary strategy employed by teachers to develop understanding of the Merdeka Curriculum. Teachers reported learning about the curriculum through reading books, websites, and journals, as well as through informal sharing with colleagues. This self-directed approach, while demonstrating teacher initiative, also reflects the absence of systematic professional development. As Fullan's (2025) notes, the burden of making sense of reform should not fall solely on individual teachers; systemic support is essential for meaningful implementation.

Informal collegial sharing provided a second strategy for navigating implementation challenges. Teachers reported sharing experiences, materials, and strategies with colleagues, creating informal networks of support that compensated for the absence of formal professional development. This finding aligns with (Fox & Poultney, 2025; Webber, 2023) distributed leadership perspective, which emphasises the importance of informal interactions and collaboration in shaping implementation outcomes.

Gradual experimentation with new pedagogical approaches represented a third strategy. Teachers reported gradually incorporating new methods and media into their instruction, experimenting with student-centred approaches while maintaining familiar practices. This gradual approach reflects the realities of curriculum change, which Fullan's (2025) describes as a process requiring time, experimentation, and adaptation. However, the absence of systematic support for experimentation, including feedback and reflection opportunities, limited the effectiveness of this strategy.

Institutional support measures were implemented by school administrators to address implementation challenges. These measures included In-House Training (IHT) sessions to familiarise teachers with the curriculum, introduction of the curriculum through Student Orientation (MPLS) activities, strengthening of digital technology through ICT initiatives, and facilitation of collaboration through the Pancasila Student Profile Project. These measures demonstrate institutional commitment to implementation, yet their impact was limited by the broader constraints of human resource readiness, facility utilisation, and communication networks.

Discussion

The Implementation Gap in Post-Colonial Curriculum Reform

The findings of this study reveal a significant gap between the aspirations of the Merdeka Curriculum and its realisation in classroom practice. Despite policy rhetoric emphasising student-centred learning, pedagogical flexibility, and character development, implementation at SMA Negeri 1 Kragan remained constrained by limited teacher preparation, inadequate resources, weak communication networks, and the persistence of traditional pedagogical approaches. This implementation gap is not unique to Indonesia but reflects broader patterns of curriculum reform in post-colonial contexts, where policy innovations encounter the complex realities of institutional culture, teacher capacity, and resource constraints (D'Agostino, 2023; Ho & Dimmock, 2023; Pham et al., 2023; van de Kuilen et al., 2022).

The implementation gap can be analysed through Fullan's (2025) framework, which emphasises the multidimensional nature of educational change. The Merdeka Curriculum introduced new materials, new teaching approaches, and new beliefs about teaching and learning. However, implementation focused primarily on the first dimension, the

introduction of new materials and terminology, while neglecting the deeper shifts in pedagogical practice and teacher beliefs that meaningful change requires. Teachers learned new vocabulary, including "Pancasila Student Profile" and "differentiated instruction," without developing the pedagogical content knowledge needed to translate these concepts into practice. This pattern reflects what Fullan identifies as "false clarity," where surface-level understanding masks the absence of deeper comprehension.

The post-colonial context adds distinctive dimensions to this implementation gap. Indonesia's history education system has been repeatedly reshaped to serve nation-building imperatives, creating expectations that history instruction cultivate nationalist values and patriotic sentiment (Stoddard, 2022; Sung, 2020). The Merdeka Curriculum's emphasis on the Pancasila Student Profile, with its dimensions of global diversity and critical reasoning, represents an attempt to move beyond this instrumental approach while maintaining the nation-building function of education. However, the tension between cultivating critical historical consciousness and inculcating prescribed values remains unresolved in practice, with teachers emphasising nationalist and disciplinary values while struggling to address the curriculum's more ambitious cognitive and ethical dimensions (Muhardis, 2023; Popa, 2023).

Teacher Agency and Professional Development

The study reveals the central role of teacher agency in navigating curriculum implementation challenges. Teachers in this study were not passive recipients of reform but active agents who made sense of the new curriculum, adapted it to their contexts, and developed strategies for addressing implementation obstacles. This finding aligns with research emphasising the importance of teacher agency in curriculum change, where teachers' interpretations, adaptations, and innovations shape implementation outcomes (Girard et al., 2021; R. Harris, 2021).

However, teacher agency operated within significant constraints. The absence of systematic professional development left teachers to make sense of the curriculum on their own, a process that Fullan's (2025) describes as fraught with the risk of superficial understanding or misunderstanding. Teachers' reliance on self-directed learning and informal collegial sharing, while demonstrating initiative, could not compensate for the absence of structured professional development opportunities that would enable deeper engagement with the curriculum's principles and practices.

The study also reveals the importance of professional development that is sustained, context-sensitive, and focused on pedagogical content knowledge. Research on effective professional development emphasises the need for ongoing support that addresses teachers' specific needs and contexts, rather than one-time workshops that provide general information without follow-up (Cinnamon et al., 2021; Tuithof et al., 2023). In the Indonesian context, professional development for the Merdeka Curriculum has been limited, with many teachers reporting insufficient preparation and support (Rohmah et al., 2024).

Comparative Perspectives on Curriculum Reform

The findings of this study resonate with international research on curriculum reform in post-colonial and developing country contexts. Studies from across the Global South

have documented similar patterns: policy innovations that promise pedagogical transformation, implementation that falls short of aspirations, and teachers who navigate reform demands with limited support and resources (Bremner et al., 2023). These patterns reflect the challenges of educational change in contexts where institutional capacity, teacher preparation, and resource availability lag behind policy ambitions.

In South Africa, for example, the implementation of Outcomes-Based Education faced challenges similar to those documented in this study, including limited teacher understanding, inadequate resources, and the persistence of traditional pedagogical approaches (Kennedy & Robinson, 2023). In Rwanda, the implementation of competency-based curriculum encountered obstacles related to teacher preparation, resource constraints, and the gap between policy intentions and classroom realities (Kwok, 2024; Nsengimana et al., 2021). These parallels suggest that the challenges of curriculum reform in post-colonial contexts are not idiosyncratic but reflect broader patterns shaped by colonial legacies, nation-building imperatives, and the dynamics of educational change in resource-constrained environments.

The Indonesian case also reveals distinctive features shaped by the country's specific historical trajectory. The New Order regime's centralisation of curriculum and instrumentalisation of education for state legitimisation created a system in which compliance and conformity were rewarded over critical thinking and intellectual independence (Pratama, 2022). The post-1998 Reformasi era has brought aspirations toward more critical and pluralistic education, yet the legacies of this instrumental approach persist in curriculum structures, teacher practices, and public expectations. The Merdeka Curriculum represents an attempt to move beyond these legacies, yet the implementation challenges documented in this study suggest that such transformation requires more than policy change; it requires fundamental shifts in institutional culture, teacher preparation, and the broader educational ecosystem.

Implications for Policy and Practice

The findings of this study have several implications for policy and practice in curriculum reform. First, sustained professional development is essential for meaningful implementation. Teachers require ongoing support that addresses their specific needs and contexts, including opportunities to develop pedagogical content knowledge, experiment with new approaches, and receive feedback and reflection. One-time workshops or self-directed learning are insufficient for the deep engagement that meaningful change requires (Cinnamon et al., 2021; Ventista & Brown, 2023).

Second, coherent transition strategies are needed to manage the shift from old to new curricula. The dual-curriculum arrangement observed in this study created confusion, inconsistency, and inequity. Schools and policymakers should develop clear transition plans that provide teachers and students with unambiguous expectations and adequate support. This includes alignment of assessment systems, professional development, and instructional resources with the new curriculum's principles.

Third, recognition of teacher agency is essential for effective implementation. Teachers are not passive recipients of reform but active agents whose interpretations, adaptations, and innovations shape implementation outcomes. Policy and practice should support teacher agency through opportunities for collaboration, experimentation, and reflection,

rather than through compliance-oriented approaches that undermine professional autonomy and engagement.

Fourth, institutional capacity building is needed to address the systemic constraints that impede implementation. This includes investment in educational technology, improvement of school infrastructure, strengthening of communication networks, and development of organisational structures that support curriculum implementation. Without attention to institutional capacity, policy innovations will continue to encounter the barriers documented in this study.

Fifth, attention to post-colonial dynamics is essential for understanding and addressing the distinctive challenges of curriculum reform in contexts shaped by colonial legacies and nation-building imperatives. Curriculum reform should engage critically with these dynamics, moving beyond the reproduction of state-centred narratives toward the cultivation of critical historical consciousness that embraces complexity, acknowledges multiple perspectives, and engages ethically with the past (Edling et al., 2022; Godsell et al., 2024; Rowan & Wansink, 2025).

Limitations and Future Research

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. As a single-site case study, the findings are not statistically generalisable to other contexts, though they may offer insights applicable to similar Indonesian secondary schools. The relatively brief data collection period limited the depth of understanding that could be achieved; extended observation over a full academic year would enable richer understanding of how implementation evolves over time. The study focused on teachers' and students' perspectives but did not include systematic analysis of curriculum documents at the national level, which would illuminate the policy context shaping implementation.

Future research should address these limitations through multi-site studies that examine Merdeka Curriculum implementation across diverse Indonesian contexts, including schools with different characteristics (urban-rural, public-private, high-performing-low-performing) and different curriculum orientations. Longitudinal studies would enable understanding of how implementation develops over time and what factors support or constrain its development. Comparative studies across post-colonial contexts would illuminate how different national histories and educational traditions shape the possibilities and challenges of curriculum reform.

Additionally, research examining student learning outcomes more directly would strengthen understanding of whether and how the Merdeka Curriculum influences student development of historical consciousness, critical thinking, and civic engagement. Intervention studies testing specific professional development approaches would provide evidence for effective practice. Research on the role of school leadership in supporting curriculum implementation would illuminate how leadership practices shape implementation outcomes.

Conclusion

This study has critically examined the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in history education at SMA Negeri 1 Kragan, revealing a significant disjuncture between policy aspirations and classroom practice. Despite the curriculum's emphasis on student-

centred learning, pedagogical flexibility, and character development, implementation remained constrained by limited teacher preparation, inadequate resources, weak communication networks, and the persistence of traditional pedagogical approaches. Teachers navigated these constraints through self-directed learning, informal collegial sharing, and gradual experimentation, yet the absence of systematic support undermined the curriculum's transformative potential.

The findings demonstrate that meaningful curriculum reform in post-colonial settings requires sustained professional development, coherent transition strategies, recognition of teacher agency, institutional capacity building, and critical engagement with the distinctive challenges of educational change in contexts shaped by colonial legacies and nation-building imperatives. These requirements extend beyond the Indonesian context to inform international conversations about educational change in the Global South, where policy innovations encounter the complex realities of institutional culture, teacher capacity, and resource constraints.

The implications of this study are significant for policymakers, teacher educators, and school administrators navigating curriculum reform. Policy must be accompanied by sustained investment in professional development, institutional capacity, and transition management. Teacher preparation must equip educators with the pedagogical content knowledge needed to implement student-centred approaches effectively. School leadership must create conditions that support teacher agency, collaboration, and experimentation. And all stakeholders must engage critically with the post-colonial dynamics that shape educational practice, moving beyond the reproduction of state-centred narratives toward the cultivation of critical historical consciousness that embraces complexity, acknowledges multiple perspectives, and engages ethically with the past.

Ultimately, this study argues that the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum represents both a significant opportunity and a profound challenge for Indonesian education. The curriculum's principles, including student-centred learning, pedagogical flexibility, and character development, align with international best practice and address long-standing concerns about the quality and relevance of Indonesian education. However, realising these principles requires more than policy mandates; it requires sustained investment in the human, material, and organisational resources that enable meaningful change. Without such investment, the Merdeka Curriculum risks becoming another instance of reform that promises transformation but delivers incremental change, leaving teachers and students to navigate the gap between aspiration and reality on their own.

References

- Asih, R., Alonzo, D., & Loughland, T. (2022). The critical role of sources of efficacy information in a mandatory teacher professional development program: Evidence from Indonesia's underprivileged region. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 118, 103824. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2022.103824>
- Awgichew, S., & Ademe, E. (2022). History education for nation-building in Ethiopia, Germany, Rwanda, South Africa, Switzerland, and USA: A comparative analysis. *Cogent Education*, 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2022.2113210>
- Beni, S., Ní Chróinín, D., Fletcher, T., Bailey, J., Cariño Fraisse, L., Down, M., Hamada, M., Riddick, T., Trojanovic, M., & Gross, K. (2025). Teachers' sensemaking in

- implementation of Meaningful Physical Education. *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy*, 30(6), 593–606. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17408989.2023.2260388>
- Bertram, C. A., Mthiyane, C. C. N., & Naidoo, J. (2021). The tension between curriculum coverage and quality learning: The experiences of South African teachers. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 81, 102353. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2021.102353>
- Blackburn, Kevin., & Wu, ZongLun. (2021). *Decolonizing the history curriculum in Malaysia and Singapore*. Routledge.
- Bremner, N., Sakata, N., & Cameron, L. (2023). Teacher education as an enabler or constraint of learner-centred pedagogy implementation in low-to middle-income countries. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 126, 104033. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2023.104033>
- Bümen, N. T., & Holmqvist, M. (2022). Teachers' sense-making and adapting of the national curriculum: a multiple case study in Turkish and Swedish contexts. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 54(6), 832–851. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220272.2022.2121178>
- Cairns, R. (2021). Recognizing, reproducing and resisting West as method discourse: An analysis of senior secondary Asia-related history curriculum enactment. *Journal of Curriculum and Pedagogy*, 18(1), 21–44. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15505170.2020.1764413>
- Cinnamon, S. A., Rivera, M. O., & Dial Sellers, H. K. (2021). Teaching Disciplinary Literacy through Historical Inquiry: Training Teachers in Disciplinary Literacy and Historical Inquiry Instructional Practices. *The Journal of Social Studies Research*, 45(4), 241–252. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jssr.2021.03.001>
- Creswell, J. W. ., & Guetterman, T. C. . (2025). *Educational research : planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. Pearson Education.
- Creswell, J. W. ., & Poth, C. N. . (2023). *Qualitative inquiry & research design : choosing among five approaches*. Sage.
- D'Agostino, T. (2023). Examination reform for higher order thinking: A case study of assessment-driven reform in Uganda. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 103, 102918. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2023.102918>
- Darmawan, I. G. Ngurah., Suryadi, Ace., Budimansyah, Dasim., & Susilo, Susilo. (2025). *Indonesian education : past, present, and future*. Routledge.
- de Jong, W. A., de Kleijn, R. A. M., Lockhorst, D., Brouwer, J., Noordegraaf, M., & van Tartwijk, J. W. F. (2023). Collaborative spirit: Understanding distributed leadership practices in and around teacher teams. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 123, 103977. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2022.103977>
- Dimmock, C., Tan, C. Y., Nguyen, D., Tran, T. A., & Dinh, T. T. (2021). Implementing education system reform: Local adaptation in school reform of teaching and learning. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 80, 102302. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2020.102302>
- Dube, B., & Moyo, N. (2023). A decolonial reading of the history curriculum: towards undoing *historicide* for curricular justice for the Zimbabwean learner. *Research Papers in Education*, 38(6), 865–885. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02671522.2022.2065521>
- Durrant, Judy. (2020). *Teacher agency, professional development and school improvement*. Routledge.

- Edling, S., Löfström, J., Sharp, H., & Ammert, N. (2022). Mapping moral consciousness in research on historical consciousness and education - a summative content analysis of 512 research articles published between 1980 and 2020. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 54(2), 282–300. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220272.2021.1970817>
- Fox, Alison., & Poultney, Val. (2025). *Professional learning communities and teacher enquiry: evidence-based teaching for enquiring teachers*. Routledge.
- Fullan, Michael. (2025). *The new meaning of educational change*. Teachers College Press.
- Girard, B., Harris, L. M., Mayger, L. K., Kessner, T. M., & Reid, S. (2021). "There's no way we can teach all of this": Factors that influence secondary history teachers' content choices. *Theory & Research in Social Education*, 49(2), 227–261. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00933104.2020.1855280>
- Godsell, S., Shabangu, B., & Primrose, G. (2024). Against colonial residues, towards decolonising assessment: a case study of a university history course. *Cogent Education*, 11(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2024.2362552>
- Harris, A., Jones, M., & Ismail, N. (2022). Distributed leadership: taking a retrospective and contemporary view of the evidence base. *School Leadership & Management*, 42(5), 438–456. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13632434.2022.2109620>
- Harris, R. (2021). Risk aversion in a performativity culture – what can we learn from teachers' curriculum decision making in history? *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 53(5), 659–674. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220272.2021.1884294>
- Ho, L., & Dimmock, C. (2023). Changing teachers' beliefs and practices towards learner-centred education: experiences and lessons from Vietnam's education system reforms. *PRACTICE*, 5(3), 200–219. <https://doi.org/10.1080/25783858.2023.2177191>
- Kennedy, K. J., & Robinson, D. (2023). Curriculum as policy text: shifting the gaze of South African curriculum implementation research. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 55(1), 105–118. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220272.2023.2172692>
- Kwok, P. K. P. (2024). Comparing stakeholders' perceptions of the implementation of 'learner-centred' pedagogy: the case of Rwanda. *Comparative Education*, 60(4), 555–572. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03050068.2024.2345471>
- Lee, Y., Lemanski, L. M., Van Deventer, M. M., & O'Brien, D. G. (2021). Leveraging Collaborative Expertise: Social Studies Teachers' Perspectives of Disciplinary Literacy Instruction. *Literacy Research and Instruction*, 60(3), 220–241. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19388071.2020.1826069>
- Martell, C. C. (2022). A longitudinal study of beginning elementary teachers' beliefs and inquiry-based practices in the history classroom. *Teacher Development*, 26(5), 627–643. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13664530.2022.2126883>
- Miles, M. B. ., Huberman, A. M. ., & Saldaña, Johnny. (2020). *Qualitative data analysis: a methods sourcebook*. SAGE.
- Muhaimin, Asrial, Habibi, A., Mukminin, A., & Hadisaputra, P. (2020). Science teachers' integration of digital resources in education: A survey in rural areas of one Indonesian province. *Heliyon*, 6(8), e04631. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2020.e04631>
- Muhardis, M. (2023). Learning about independence from Kaba Si Buyuang Karuik. *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, 10(2). <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2023.2270785>
- Ndomondo, E., Mbise, A., & Katabaro, J. (2022). History teachers' conceptualization of competency-based curriculum in transforming instructional practices in lower

- secondary schools in Tanzania. *Social Sciences & Humanities Open*, 6(1), 100331. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssaho.2022.100331>
- Nsengimana, T., Mugabo, L. R., Ozawa, H., & Nkundabakura, P. (2021). Science Competence-based Curriculum Implementation in Rwanda: A Multiple Case Study of the Relationship between a School's Profile of Implementation and its Capacity to Innovate. *African Journal of Research in Mathematics, Science and Technology Education*, 25(1), 38–51. <https://doi.org/10.1080/18117295.2021.1888020>
- Ogah, M. (2023). Implementation of Senior High School History Curriculum: A focus on teaching methodology and resources. *Cogent Education*, 10(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2022.2164021>
- Pham, K. T., Ha, X. Van, Tran, N. H., & Nguyen, Y. T. X. (2023). Curriculum reform in Vietnam: primary teachers' views, experiences, and challenges. *Education 3-13*, 51(3), 440–451. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03004279.2022.2162829>
- Popa, N. (2023). How Meaning Making Cultivates Historical Consciousness: Identifying a Learning Trajectory and Pedagogical Guidelines to Promote It. *The Social Studies*, 114(4), 139–159. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00377996.2022.2140641>
- Pratama, S. (2022). Teachers' narratives about the possibility to teach controversial history of the 1965 affair in Indonesia. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 43(6), 898–915. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2022.2070127>
- Rahman, A. (2022). Investigating school conditions for teachers' professional learning and development in Indonesia. *Teacher Development*, 26(2), 240–262. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13664530.2022.2034662>
- Rogan, J. M., & Grayson, D. J. (2003). Towards a theory of curriculum implementation with particular reference to science education in developing countries. *International Journal of Science Education*, 25(10), 1171–1204. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09500690210145819>
- Rohmah, Z., Hamamah, H., Junining, E., Ilma, A., & Rochastuti, L. A. (2024). Schools' support in the implementation of the Emancipated Curriculum in secondary schools in Indonesia. *Cogent Education*, 11(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2023.2300182>
- Rowan, E., & Wansink, B. (2025). Fostering mutual understanding through multiperspectivity: insights from 14 cross-border history education initiatives in post-conflict societies. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 57(3), 247–270. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220272.2025.2455700>
- Rüsen, J. (2005). *History: narration - interpretation - orientation*. Berghahn.
- Santiago, M., & Dozono, T. (2022). History is critical: Addressing the false dichotomy between historical inquiry and criticality. *Theory & Research in Social Education*, 50(2), 173–195. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00933104.2022.2048426>
- Simmie, G. Mooney., & Lang, Manfred. (2020). *School-based deliberative partnership as a platform for teacher professionalization and curriculum innovation*. Routledge.
- Stoddard, J. (2022). Difficult knowledge and history education. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*, 30(3), 383–400. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14681366.2021.1977982>
- Stollman, S., Meirink, J., Westenberg, M., & Van Driel, J. (2022). Teachers' learning and sense-making processes in the context of an innovation: a two year follow-up study. *Professional Development in Education*, 48(5), 718–733. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2020.1744683>

- Sung, P.-F. (2020). Historical consciousness matters: national identity, historical thinking and the struggle for a democratic education in Taiwan. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 52(5), 685–701. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220272.2020.1789225>
- Thorp, R., & Persson, A. (2020). On historical thinking and the history educational challenge. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 52(8), 891–901. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2020.1712550>
- Tilak, S., Glassman, M., Lu, M., Wen, Z., Pelfrey, L., Kuznetcova, I., Lin, T.-J., Anderman, E. M., Martinez Calvit, A., Ching, K., & Nagpal, M. (2023). Investigating social studies teachers' implementation of an immersive history curricular unit as a cybernetic zone of proximal development. *Cogent Education*, 10(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2023.2171183>
- Tuithof, H., Van Drie, J., Bronkhorst, L., Dorsman, L., & Van Tartwijk, J. (2023). Teachers' pedagogical content knowledge of two specific historical contexts captured and compared. *Educational Studies*, 49(4), 686–711. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03055698.2021.1877621>
- Utami, I. W. P., Sapto, A., Leksana, G. T., Ayundasari, L., & Ramadhan, F. (2022). Tracing the roots of decolonization of the history curriculum in Indonesia. In *Exploring New Horizons and Challenges for Social Studies in a New Normal* (pp. 20–23). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.1201/9781003290865-4>
- van de Kuilen, H., Altinyelken, H. K., Voogt, J. M., & Nzabaliwa, W. (2022). Recontextualization of learner-centred pedagogy in Rwanda: A comparative analysis of primary and secondary schools. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 52(6), 966–983. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2020.1847044>
- Ventista, O. M., & Brown, C. (2023). Teachers' professional learning and its impact on students' learning outcomes: Findings from a systematic review. *Social Sciences & Humanities Open*, 8(1), 100565. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssaho.2023.100565>
- Vickers, A. (2023). Erasing and re-inscribing Chinese into Indonesian history. *Asian Ethnicity*, 24(1), 78–92. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14631369.2022.2069083>
- Webber, C. Francis. (2023). *Teacher leadership in international contexts*. Springer.
- Wenske, R. S., & Ssentanda, M. E. (2021). "I think it was a trick to fail Eastern": A multi-level analysis of teachers' views on the implementation of the SHRP Program in Uganda. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 80, 102309. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2020.102309>
- Wineburg, S. S. . (2001). *Historical thinking and other unnatural acts : charting the future of teaching the past*. Temple University Press.
- Yin, R. K. ., & Campbell, D. T. . (2018). *Case study research and applications : design and methods*. SAGE Publications, Inc.