

# Exploring Student Perspectives on Quality Assurance in Independent Curriculum Services within Educational Institutions

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## Abstract:

This study examines students' perceptions of quality assurance of independent curriculum services implemented by SMA Nurul Jadid. Using a descriptive quantitative approach. With a proportional random sampling technique, as many as 100 students. The type of data collected is quantitative, using a closed questionnaire. The questionnaire was tested for validity and reliability with a significance of 0.05 with the SPSS 16 application. A Likert scale of 1-4 was used to measure student perceptions with positive and negative categories. The following are tangible, reliability, and assurance indicators as indicators of quality assurance for the independent curriculum service. The percent interval is used as a measuring tool to determine the categories of strongly agree/very good, agree/good, disagree/good enough, and strongly disagree/strongly disagree with implementing quality assurance services for the independent curriculum. The research results prove that 58% of students perceive positively and 42% negatively. However, no students rated it as very bad at 0%; in fact, the good category was the most percentage, namely 59%, and even perfect at 7%; there were also those who rated it quite well, as much as 34%. The assessment of the most significant percentage being good is due to the socialization process evenly distributed to all components of the school; staff, teachers, students, and parents. This is done to process the quality assurance of the independent curriculum services provided by schools to run effectively and efficiently.

**Keywords:** *Student Perception, Quality Assurance, Service, Independent Curriculum*

## Abstrak:

Penelitian ini mengkaji persepsi siswa terhadap jaminan mutu layanan kurikulum merdeka yang telah di terapkan oleh SMA Nurul Jadid. Menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif deskriptif. dengan teknik proporsional random sampling sebanyak 100 siswa. Jenis data yang dihimpun menggunakan kuantitatif dengan menggunakan angket tertutup. Angket di uji validitas dan reabilitas dengan signifikan 0.05 dengan aplikasi SPSS 16. Skala likert 1-4 digunakan sebagai alat ukur persepsi siswa dengan katagori positif dan negatif. Berikut indikator tangible, reliability dan assurance sebagai indikator jaminan mutu layanan kurikulum merdeka. Interval persen digunakan

sebagai alat ukur untuk mengetahui katagori sangat setuju/sangat baik, setuju/baik, tidak setuju/cukup baik dan sangat tidak setuju/sangat tidak setuju terhadap pelaksanaan jaminan mutu layanan kurikulum merdeka. Hasil penelitian membuktikan bahwa 58% siswa mempersepsikan positif dan 42% negatif. Namun tidak ada siswa yang menilai sangat tidak baik 0%, justru katagori baik merupakan prosentase paling banyak yaitu 59% bahkan sangat baik 7% ada juga yang menilai cukup baik sebanyak 34% . penilaian prosentase terbesar menjadi baik ini karena proses sosialisasi yang merata kepada seluruh komponen sekolah; staff, guru, siswa, dan orang tua. Hal ini dilakukakan sebagai upaya proses jaminan mutu layanan kurikulum merdeka yang diberikan sekolah berjalan dengan efektif dan efisien.

**Kata Kunci:** *Persepsi Siswa, Jaminan Mutu, Layanan, Kurikulum Merdeka*

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## INTRODUCTION

Before learning loss and learning gaps due to the 19 pandemic, the Indonesian government had faced challenges in linking the learning of the nation's children. Learning lag is caused by indications of students experiencing difficulties in understanding and mastering learning competencies; they are also unable to complete material at the grade level. A good curriculum will produce quality education (Mukhlason, 2022). From this, the 13th curriculum change switched to an independent curriculum to become the policy choice of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology, Directorate General of Higher Education. So that we can master various kinds of knowledge so that it is valuable and able to compete in the world of work or industry in the 21st century and society 5.0. The concept of independent learning is very suitable today because Society 5.0 combines developments in technological progress that can help solve problems and the social needs of individual life.

The concept of an independent learning curriculum initiated by the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology, Directorate General of Higher Education, Nadiem Makarim, is a solution to address problems in Indonesian education today (Manalu et al., 2022). Several considerations have been made by policymakers and education implementers so that the independent curriculum can be implemented and perfected in the 2013 curriculum (Jayusman & Shavab, 2020). Also, in the journal, several school principals revealed that implementing the independent curriculum was easy and not limited by rigid rules. Thus, to develop quality and existence, especially in the sphere of education, the formation and design of the curriculum must be by the times.

Government policy in changing curriculum management has implications for the emergence of demands for educational institutions to continue to design and implement innovative learning processes so that students can achieve optimal results (Suryaman, 2020). As well as, students are given the opportunity, experience, and responsibility for their learning. So that the knowledge obtained is not only abstract, but students can implement their abilities with each relevant need (Petrie & Darragh, 2018). So far, quantitatively, the independent curriculum has continued to develop. However, the quality of implementing the independent curriculum still needs maximum quality service guarantees.

Therefore, it is necessary to manage the quality service of the independent curriculum through several approaches so that the presence of the independent curriculum can meet the current standardization of the Indonesian curriculum.

Nurul Jadid High School is a pesantren-based school that implements Pancasila project-based learning. The process of reviewing documents and socializing the implementation of the independent curriculum to all school committees, teachers and students, and parents has been carried out by SMA Nurul Jadid as the first step in implementing the Pancasila project. The independent curriculum is a program that explores the potential of students and students in increasing innovation in the quality of learning in the classroom (Angga et al., 2022). A new curriculum that prioritizes the needs and interests of students requires learning that adapts to the needs of students, whereas, in the independent curriculum service, the teacher must be able to be creative in carrying out the learning process (Anwar, 2021).

In the independent curriculum concept, each school has authority and responsibility in developing its curriculum. Which is adjusted to the vision and mission, scientific development and stakeholder needs, curriculum development guidelines, and curriculum implementation guidelines, including monitoring and reviewing the curriculum (Suryaman, 2020). SMA Nurul Jadid developed an effective and efficient strategy for achieving reasonable quality assurance of independent curriculum services by outreach to all school staff, teachers, students, and parents called In house Teaming (IHT) at the start of the new school year. Furthermore, curriculum management was developed by SMA Nurul Jadid as an independent technical user that is precise and consistent. The purpose of education will be achieved maximally if it is accompanied by the teacher's role in implementing the curriculum in education units carried out correctly. So in implementing service quality assurance, it is necessary to look at how students perceive the learning process as a preference for further learning (Kunze & Rutherford, 2022).

Robbins stated, "Perception is a process by which individuals organize and interpret their sensory impressions to give meaning to their environment" (Puspitasari, 2021). Each individual will bring up different perceptions, perceived negatively or positively, by the expected quality to be fulfilled in each need (Şen & Maya, 2022). Positive perceptions arise from individual assessments of objects or information by existing rules and what is expected (Priyastuti & Suhadi, 2020). The cause of emergence of negative perceptions arises due to individual dissatisfaction with the object that is the source of their perception, individual ignorance, and lack of individual experience of the object being perceived and vice versa (Saputra & Asiyah, 2022). If the individual perceives something positively, it will produce a good adaptation and vice versa. The existence of service inequality is something that a new change cannot avoid. New changes will bring new adaptations. Adaptation has a very significant influence. If students are ready to adapt to new learning habits, students will quickly adapt to the ongoing learning process (Wenny, 2022).

Adaptation is an adjustment to the environment through behavior and skills; a person's adaptation, in general, can be seen as a reflection of a person's

social adjustment, whether he can get along with himself and others well or not. Good adaptation will increase student learning outcomes and vice versa (Rohmah, 2021). Good adaptation of students refers to the service process, which includes planning, assessment, and meeting student needs according to standard requirements (Baharuddin, 2021). A good adaptation process is the best choice to reduce the emergence of negative perceptions in a change.

Changing the curriculum<sup>13</sup> into a curriculum raises new adaptations for students. Not all students can adapt well (Aisyah et al., 2023) due to learning inequality in implementing the independent curriculum. Such as the implementation process that is still lacking, as well as socialization that is not perfect, or because of limitations that are owned, both in terms of competence, Teachers are not Adaptive and Have Insufficient IT Capabilities, as well as financial capabilities that do not have access to digital devices and lack of support from a parent. As a result, services cannot take place optimally so that which gives rise to many inappropriate actions, such as parents' concerns about whether the school's output will be able to meet needs and answer current problems in the industrial world, the job market, community needs, progress in science and technology, and others.

The quality assurance system model is essential for ensuring educational quality implementation in achieving predetermined organizational targets (Lathifah et al., 2022). The community as users of educational services is very concerned about the quality assurance of graduate institutions, especially senior high schools, which are formal education pathways. It is hoped that it will be a benchmark for continuing higher education. Moreover, hope to compete domestically and abroad in the industrial world (Sa'idu, 2021).

The results of previous research revealed that: Schools carry out monitoring and evaluation to determine the effectiveness of implementing quality assurance which is carried out on an ongoing basis (Sukaryanti, 2020). Likewise, curriculum changes are also urgently needed and necessary depending on global developments (Angga et al., 2022). One of the previous studies also revealed that implementing a "new" program nationally is not easy. So it is necessary to prepare human resources, infrastructure, and other supporting factors, as well as schools are required to prepare and adjust their curriculum while maintaining the quality of learning services and the profile of subsequent graduates (Saputra et al., 2022).

An independent curriculum is a student-centered educational program planning where education has autonomy in developing its curriculum. The principal has a strategic role in the curriculum development process. Thus, the principal must be ready to carry out his role as a supervisor and a leader for change in his educational institution (Ramadina, 2021). The implementation of the independent curriculum is still constrained when it is implemented because the independent curriculum still needs to be implemented, and on average, it still uses curriculum 13, so an evaluation is needed to follow up on what needs to be fixed. An independent curriculum will be implemented correctly with good application techniques (Zahrok, 2020). The right strategy, reliable teachers, and strong collaboration between other stakeholders are needed to answer further

educational challenges (Wahyudin, 2022). An independent curriculum is a form of strengthening the learning system in responding to the challenges of the times to produce sound, superior seeds capable of superior competence and competition nationally and internationally (Hilmin et al., 2022).

The challenge of changing the curriculum must be prepared in a short time due to the forced switching of methods from offline to online in 2020, which is accompanied by other challenges that must be faced to solve interactive learning problems and remain focused on quality and effectiveness while students are dissatisfied in service delivery. Design of the online learning process (Anwar, 2021). Educational entrepreneurs are stakeholders who can innovate, recognize and create opportunities, work in teams, take risks, and respond to challenges and changes. Adopting technological changes for learning systems is demanded, quickly called learning management systems, to simplify and facilitate learning and teaching needs (Kartika et al., 2021). In other research, meeting the standards of educators and education staff also fulfills the need for facilities and infrastructure to support the maximum implementation of learning (Lin et al., 2019).

From some of these studies, research still needs to discuss the quality assurance of independent curriculum services in general, especially regarding the perceptions and adaptation of students as users of the quality of independent curriculum services as implemented by the current government.

Departing from this phenomenon, the researcher is interested in researching students' perceptions of the Quality Assurance of Independent Curriculum Services. Nurul Jadid High School is the researcher's choice for research because these high schools implement an independent curriculum under the auspices of the Nurul Jadid Paiton Paiton Islamic Boarding School Foundation, Probolinggo, East Java. The main problem in this study is how students perceive the quality assurance of the independent curriculum services that are currently taking place so that students can adapt to the independent curriculum.

## RESEARCH METHODS

Based on the above objectives, this research is descriptive. Data were analyzed using quantitative descriptive data analysis. Moreover, processed with percentage descriptive statistics. Descriptive research is intended to describe existing phenomena, both natural and engineered. This descriptive method systematically describes specific facts and characteristics and describes facts and phenomena in detail (Rokhani & Purnami, 2021).

Moreover, objectively describe past or present situations (Dikmenli, 2022). The population in this study were Nurul Jadid high school students in grade 10, totaling 350 students from 6 classes. The research sample used a proportional random sampling technique (Puspitasari, 2021). A total of 100 students.

To collect data, researchers used a closed questionnaire. The instrument for exploring and measuring students' perceptions of the quality assurance of independent curriculum services uses a Likert scale of 1-4 with the categories: SS strongly agrees, S agrees, TS does not agree, and STS strongly disagrees. This



study uses the SPSS application. Validity test with a significance level of 0.05 and reliability test with alpha Cronbach formula. At the same time, the criteria for measuring perceptions use two kinds, namely. Perception is positive if the total score obtained by the respondent from the questionnaire is > the total mean. Negative perception if the total score obtained by respondents from the questionnaire is < of the total mean.

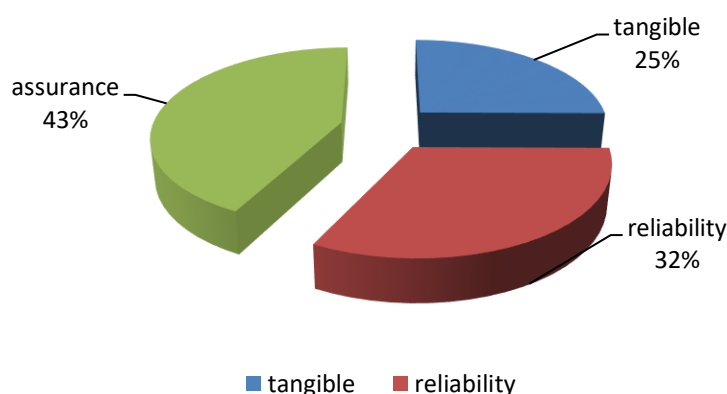
Meanwhile, the perception interval scale uses the following method:

1. Determine the lowest score and highest score of all alternative answers.  
 $\text{Scoremax} = \text{maximum value of } X \text{ and the number of questions } X \text{ the number of respondents}$   
 $\text{Scoremin} = \text{minimum value } X \text{ number of questions } X \text{ number of respondents}$
2. Determining the interval of students' perceptions of the quality assurance of independent curriculum services.

$$\text{Interval} = \frac{\text{highest score} - \text{lowest score}}{\text{category}}$$

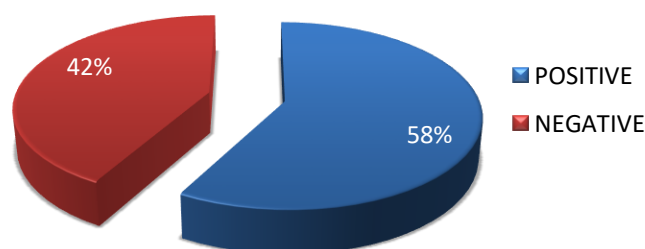
## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the research results obtained from 100 respondents related to student perceptions of the quality assurance of independent curriculum services, it can be described as follows:



**Figure 1. Respondents' Answers to Indicators of Quality Assurance Services For The Independent Curriculum**

The results of the categories of negative and positive perceptions obtained the following data:



**Figure 2. Perception Category Data Results**

The figure reveals that 58% of students perceive positively the quality assurance of independent curriculum services provided by the school. Both in intra-curricular, extra-curricular and co-curricular services as a support for the expected reasoning power of students. This positive thing is evidenced by the tangible, reliability and assurance indicators.

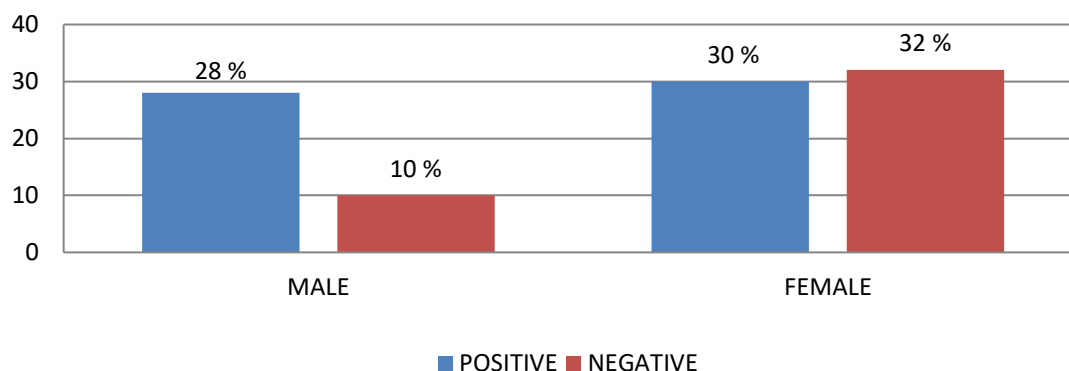
**Table 1. Categories of Student Perceptions**

Category	Intervals	% Intervals	Circle %	Frequency	%
Strongly agree	42-48	≥86%	88%	7	7,0
Agree	32-41	66-85%	85%	59	59,0
Don't agree	22-31	45-65%	65%	34	34,0
Totally disagree	12.-21	≤44%	44%	0	0,0
				100	

Negative perceptions are still 42% of the research subjects, but on average, the independent curriculum quality service indicators are considered good; perfect to as many as 7% or seven people, good to as many as 59 people or 59%, and quite good as many as 34 people or 34%. The score calculated in the tangible indicator item number 1 is considered very good by students, namely a mature socialization process since the beginning of the new school year, which has involved all elements of the school, including teachers, staff, and parents. Thus, the independent curriculum service facilitator is considered good and supports the student learning process. While point number 3 is considered quite good by students because some school facilities and infrastructure still do not exist.

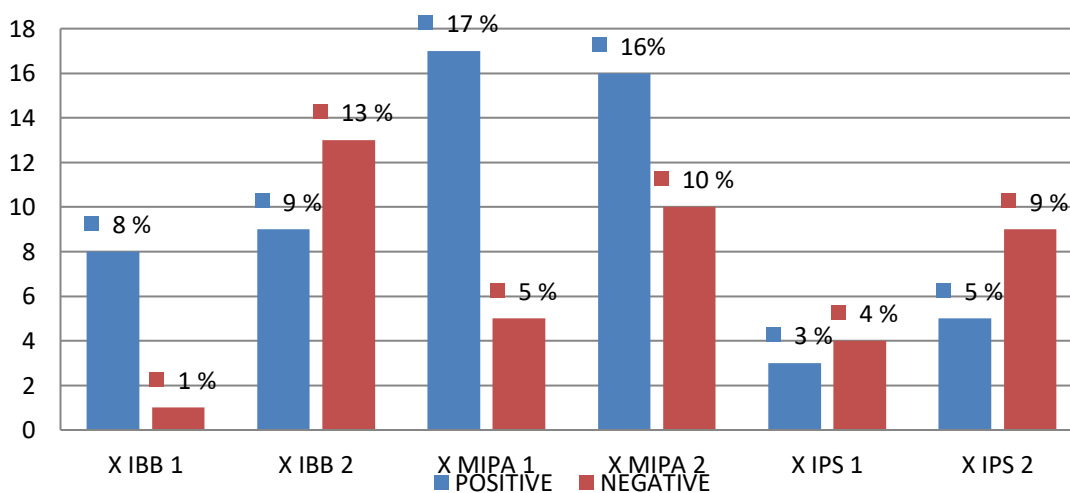
The following is the reliability provided by the school regarding comfort, time, and two patterns of Islamic boarding school services aligned with the ministries of culture, research, and education, which are broken down to revitalize Islamic boarding schools and the state to run effectively and efficiently. Meanwhile, the students considered the assurance in this study excellent in terms of the five aspects of quality that were used as guarantees by the ministers of culture, research, and education. It is just that the unfavorable assessment is in point number 11. Students comment that only the composition of the independent curriculum is applied while the process or model of student learning services is still like curriculum 13.

The results of the processed data show no significant relationship between gender; this occurs because the ratio of male and female respondents is very far, namely 1/5. Nonetheless, the average value of students' perceptions of the quality assurance of independent curriculum services yielded positive values, namely 30% female and 28% male. This value is higher than 32% of women and 10% of men who rated it negatively. The large percentage of women is because female research subjects are more significant than male, namely 62% versus 38%.



**Figure 3. Analysis of Positive and Negative Perceptions by Gender**

The positive value for the quality assurance of independent curriculum services based on the most significant percentage occurs in class X MIPA 1, as much as 17%, while the negative is 5%. Then, class X MIPA 2 was rated as positive as much as 16% and downbeat as much as 10%. X IBB 1 rate positive by 8% negative 1%. However, those who perceived more excellent negatives were class X IBB 2, as much as 13% and positive 9%; class X IPS 1 rated 4% with a positive value of 3% and as much as 9% positive and 5% negative assessed by class X IPS 2. This happened because more research subjects were taken from class X IBB 1 and 2 and MIPA 1 and 2. This was done because there were fewer enthusiasts in the field of the IPS program than in the IBB and MIPA programs.



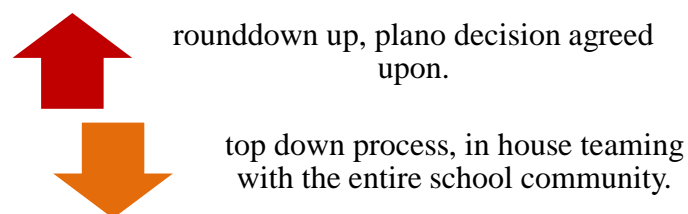
**Figure 4. Analysis of Positive and Negative Perceptions by Class**

Most student assessments of the quality assurance of the independence curriculum service were good at 59%; some rated it very well at 7%. Some rated it quite good 34%, but no one rated it very bad 0% of the assessment was evidenced by the respondents' answers to items 1 and 8 very high, namely average in the process of socialization and assurance of adding faith and morals as a provision to return to society and obey God. In the process of changing curriculum 13 to the independent curriculum that is currently underway, schools have certainly tried to provide the best service. Even so, some obstacles in the service process were unexpected. Even so, in the end, objectively, the students



rated it quite well, and no one rated it as bad in the process of independent curriculum services.

The strategy carried out by Nurul Jadid High School in providing its best service is to carry out a thorough study of the independent curriculum concept as a guideline for quality assurance services to decide on relevant implementation and evaluation standards (Stukalo & Lytvyn, 2021). Didik Rahwini, deputy head of the department curriculum, said, "In describing good service quality assurance for school service users, we apply an independent curriculum as a reference for future curriculum use. We do this following government regulations and Islamic boarding schools. The following is in line with the pesantren curriculum, where the concept of an independent curriculum was implemented by Nurul Jadid High School 2 years ago, namely changing the UNBN with a final assignment project (assessment) for class XII students which is then held a placement test to determine student graduation eligibility, as well as an increase the capacity of teachers and schools to improve service quality assurance. To minimize students' misunderstanding in implementing the independent curriculum here, Nurul Jadid High School has reviewed the independent curriculum documents. The school has reviewed Document 1, which contains; characteristics of educational units, school vision and goals, learning organization, and learning planning. Next, we carry out in-house taming socialization involving all school staff, teachers, students, and parents. Namely by exporting from the top down to the bottom with OSIS and MPK and then having an agreed-upon joint plan. This is what we do so that the implementation of the independent curriculum runs optimally."



**Figure 5. Service Process**

Negative perceptions, or the lowest score of 25, were given by respondents 3 and 16, number 2; they wanted complete facilities and infrastructure during the learning process. Meanwhile, most of the students were satisfied as users of the learning facilities provided by the school, such as science and language laboratories, to help broaden students' horizons. Other support services are also provided with extracurricular activities for all Nurul Jadid High School students with selected categories; majoring in Japanese, robotics, Arabic, and batik.

While the lowest percentage of 25 was also given by respondents 47,61, and 67, who commented, "I still do not understand the independent curriculum learning because, in my opinion, it is the same as curriculum 13". Moreover, some students want "a collaborative link with other agencies in developing and proving the real abilities and qualities possessed by students." This is seen from the process and quality of educational activities and products of maximal educational services (Yusuf, 2018).

The maximum form of service has been provided by schools with 3 track services by the independent curriculum concept, namely, Intracurricular: Improving teacher teaching patterns as support for shaping student character in achieving maximum learning. Teachers must be able to have the development of a will to channel ideas to support the abilities possessed by students during learning activities taking place (Petrie & Darragh, 2018). Extracurricular and Co-curricular; student character development activities on the Pancasila student profile (Mundayati, 2022). Furthermore, it is packaged in 3 categories; national wisdom, local wisdom, and global challenge. These three visions have contained the Pancasila profile as a guarantee of the quality of independent curriculum services.

Theoretically and practically, students already know the concept of an independent curriculum. However, each student has a different perception of the quality assurance of the independent curriculum service implemented at Nurul Jaidid High School. The services provided in the learning process are carefully designed and conceptualized to ensure that the learning process will be able to produce graduates who meet the expected specifications. As well as being able to refine the previous curriculum, the independent curriculum is a continuation of the development direction of curriculum 13, which is holistically oriented, competency-based, contextualized, and personalized (Suardipa, 2022).

Stakeholder elements in guaranteeing the quality of independent curriculum services at Nurul Jaidid High School consist of principals, supervisors, teachers, school committees, parents, and students. Some of these elements are involved in supporting effective and efficient education implementation. So that the wishes of the government and schools can get maximum results (Indriyani, 2019), from these elements will appear the factors that affect the quality assurance of education. At least several factors affect the quality assurance of education, namely, Effective leadership of school principals, and students, maximum involvement of teachers, dynamic curriculum, networks of cooperation in the school environment, community and companies or other agencies, and stakeholders and the entire school committee become a team (teamwork) that supports each other and complements deficiencies so that the target well created (Makinuddin, 2019).

The curriculum is a guideline used in carrying out the learning process. So we need management that is relevant to government directives. So that the results of graduates are what is desired; for this reason, the curriculum is a benchmark for the success of achieving the vision and mission of education (Rahman et al., 2022). The Indonesian curriculum is one of the high expectations of policymakers for their work performance. At least eleven curricula have been and are currently in effect in Indonesia from 1947-2022 (Syafira, 2023). During the old order three times, the new order four times, and during the reform period four times (Hidayat et al., 2022). In 2022 the Minister of Education, culture, research, and technology technology launched the independent curriculum as an independent learning program. Curriculum that is more flexible and focuses on essential materials for curriculum development based on characteristics and qualifications as a curriculum framework. Three independent curricular

principles are used in learning activities: Internal Learning, Joint Learning, and External Learning (Iskandar et al., 2023).

SMA Nurul Jadid follows government regulations as a reference for further curriculum guidelines. The reasons driving the curriculum change are; free from the colonists' power, the rapid development of science and technology, and the rapid growth of the world's population with an increasing population (Nurwiatin, 2022). It is hoped that it will print and produce input, output, and output relevant to the needs of the 0.5 era of society as it is today. Education Input is considered quality if it can create an active, innovative, creative, effective, and fun learning atmosphere (Makinuddin, 2019). The government later adopted this statement to become one of the independent learning policies. The following educational output is successful if the student's academic and non-academic learning outcomes are high. Meanwhile, the outcome is declared successful if graduates can be absorbed in the world of work, and all elements recognize graduates' abilities and feel satisfied. (Hermiliah et al., 2020).

The independent curriculum is centered on developing student potential, emphasizing student freedom in learning, and making it easier for teachers to provide learning to students. However, the teacher has a mandate and an essential role as a driving force in planning, evaluating, and following up on these evaluations (Isniah et al., 2020). Conceptualize learning according to the needs of the times and become a facilitator who can shape students' character according to the Pancasila project (Daniel et al., 2023). Project-based learning at SMA Nurul Jadid refers to the essential capacity of post-secondary education that uses a differentiation strategy. Assessment strategy, reflection strategy, questioning strategy, and mentoring strategy.

The quality assurance of the independent curriculum service at Nurul Jadid High School has supported the maximum implementation of the learning process. And by government directives and Islamic boarding school's Akup. The two collaborate so that the revitalization of both runs effectively and efficiently today (Hidayah, 2021). Even though there are still some deficiencies that need to be improved by the needs of students. The research results show that the average student wants adequate facilities and infrastructure; this supports previous research, which uncovered the inhibiting factors for implementing the independent curriculum (Iskandar et al., 2023). However, students still have a high fighting spirit in the learning process of the independent curriculum, with teacher encouragement, motivation, and innovation accompanying their learning process (Mihajlov et al., 2020). This is evidenced by the goals expected by students to get maximum results. So that students are encouraged to have to adapt well.

## CONCLUSION

58% of students have a positive perception of the quality assurance of independent curriculum services at Nurul Jadid High School. Even though 42% of students perceive it negatively, the average student thinks it is good, even very good. Likewise quite good, but no one says it is not good. This means that

students have an excellent response to quality assurance services that take good evaluation due to the socialization or top-down process evenly distributed by the school to all components of the school with house teaming, which involves all school staff, teachers, students, and parents. In this case, it was broken down from the regulations of the pesantren and the government and then aligned with the aim of revitalizing both of them to run effectively and efficiently. Then later in the round-down, the decision was agreed upon as a reference for implementing the independent curriculum. Even though only the composition of the independent curriculum is used by Nurul Jadid High School, the results of student perceptions in guaranteeing the quality of independent curriculum services can complement curriculum 13 on average well.

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