



PROBLEMS OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION IN THE MERDEKA CURRICULUM

PROBLEMATIKA PENDIDIKAN ISLAM TERHADAP KURIKULUM MERDEKA

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ABSTRACT

The implementation of a merdeka curriculum is one of the ways the government has improved the quality of education. In its application, the learning process that occurs in educational institutions will become more diverse so that the concept of material can be learned more deeply. Of course, the curriculum change has become a topic of conversation because the concept is that educators have more opportunities to recognize the characteristics of students and help them improve their abilities based on their characteristics. However, the curriculum transition is relatively sudden where the previous curriculum has not been maximized and replaced again with a new curriculum with a different concept. The merdeka curriculum is a challenge for Islamic Religious Education Organizers because of the changing concepts and learning materials.

Keywords: *merdeka curriculum, islamic education*

ABSTRAK

Penerapan kurikulum merdeka merupakan salah satu cara yang dilakukan pemerintah untuk meningkatkan mutu dan kualitas pendidikan. Dalam penerapannya, proses pembelajaran yang terjadi di Lembaga pendidikan akan menjadi lebih beragam agar konsep materi bisa dipelajari lebih dalam. Tentunya, adanya perubahan kurikulum tersebut menjadi bahan perbincangan karena konsepnya pendidik memiliki lebih banyak peluang untuk mengenali karakteristik peserta didik dan membantu mereka meningkatkan kemampuan berdasarkan karakteristik yang mereka miliki. Akan tetapi transisi kurikulum yang terhitung mendadak dimana kurikulum sebelumnya belum maksimal dan diganti lagi dengan kurikulum baru dengan konsep yang berbeda. Kurikulum merdeka menjadi tantangan bagi Penyelenggara Pendidikan Agama Islam karena konsep dan materi pembelajaran yang berubah.

Kata-kata kunci: kurikulum merdeka, pendidikan islam

A. INTRODUCTION

In Education actually began since the creation of the first human being, namely the Prophet Adam As, since then the dynamics of life began such as not being able to live alone, needing others to be able to control themselves and others. Related to the dynamics of life, a complex knowledge is needed which is packaged in various ways and methods which are then called education.

Islamic education is referred to as human education as a whole, mind, heart, body, spirit, skills and morals because Islamic education makes humans live well and peacefully, equipping humans to face the dynamics of life and the sweet and bitter later.

The process of Islamic education is one of the efforts that can be done by humans to gain knowledge related to life as an answer to the dynamics that occur, as for the efforts made to gain knowledge is by seriously reading, examining and practicing in everyday life, therefore as a first step in educational activities is to prepare the necessary tools in the educational process, one of which is the curriculum. The curriculum design formulated should ideally be able to respond to the various demands and needs of both students and society as curriculum users. (Ainun Qalbiyah, 2022).

The curriculum is a set or a system of plans and arrangements regarding learning materials that can be guided in teaching and learning activities. In essence, the curriculum is a learning plan in education. (Ainun Qalbiyah, 2022).

Implementation of the curriculum is the application or implementation of programs that have been developed in the previous stage, then tested with implementation and management while always making adjustments to the field situation and the characteristics of students as actors of curriculum implementation both intellectual, emotional and physical development.

Each curriculum in addition to having to rest on a number of foundations must also apply or use certain principles. With this principle, each curriculum is bound by provisions or laws so that it has a clear direction in accordance with the agreed principles.

The curriculum in the world of education is said to be good and achieve maximum results if its implementation produces something on the target curriculum, namely students.

In its development, the curriculum has been revised several times or even replaced according to the needs of the times or the interests of certain regimes such as the implementation of the K-13

curriculum or the revision of the K-13 curriculum whose results or targets have not even touched all students throughout the archipelago and are now launching a new curriculum, namely the merdeka curriculum which is predicted to be able to improve the quality of education and in accordance with the characteristics of today's students.

However, in its implementation, which is still in a trial period for certain schools, there are several debates such as how problematic and how challenging the merdeka curriculum is, especially in Islamic education.

B. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Overview of Islamic Education and Merdeka Curriculum

Islamic Education

Education comes from the word "didik" by giving the prefix "pe" and the suffix "kan" meaning action (things, ways and so on). In a rather broad sense, education is a process with certain methods so that it can gain knowledge, understanding and ways of behaving according to needs, in a broader sense education is all stages of developing human abilities and behaviors as well as the process of using almost all life experiences.

According to the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System states: "Education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process so that students actively develop their potential to have religious spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble morals and skills, especially those needed for themselves, society and the nation.

According to Muhammad Arif Rohman in the large Indonesian dictionary, education is defined as the process of changing the attitudes and behavior of a person or group in an effort to mature humans through the process of teaching and training. (Arif Rohman, 2013).

The word "Islam" in "Islamic Education" indicates a certain color of education, namely education that is Islamic in color, Islamic education, namely education based on the source of Islamic teachings. Education in Islamic discourse is more popular with the terms tarbiyah, ta'lim, ta'dib, riyadhah, irsyad and tadrīs. In the English dictionary Oxford learner's Pocket Dictionary the word Education is defined as training and learning (Education is training and instruction). (Arif Rohman, 2013).

With regard to the various definitions that have been put forward, Islamic Education is defined as the process of forming individuals based on Islamic teachings. Through the education process, individuals are formed in order to achieve a high and perfect degree (*insan kamil*), in order to be able to carry out their function as 'Abdullah and their duty as *khalifahtullah* as well as possible. Thus, Islamic education is a very ideal education, because it harmonizes between physical and mental growth, physical and spiritual, individual and community development and happiness in the world and the hereafter. (Abdullah B, 2018)

The implementation of Islamic education in Indonesia as stipulated in the Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia No. 55 of 2007 concerning Religious Education and Religious Education can be organized in *Pesantren* and *Diniyah* in formal, non-formal and informal channels. There are four education providers, namely *pesantren*, *madrasah*, schools (secular) and Islamic schools.

Pesantren is actually a learning activity but by the wider community it is known as an Islamic religious education institution where the learning method is not only synonymous with Islamic meaning, but also contains the meaning of Indonesian authenticity (*indigenous*), while the characteristics or uniqueness of *pesantren* are the way of life adopted, the outlook on life and the value system followed and the internal power hierarchy itself which is fully obeyed. *Pesantren* have unique learning methods and characteristics, so it is not surprising that *pesantren* were referred to by the President of Indonesia during his time "Abdurrahman Wahid" as a subculture. (Zainal Arifin, 2018).

Madrasah is defined as a place of learning which is broadly defined as a place to educate students, eliminate ignorance or eradicate ignorance and train skills according to their talents, interests and abilities, in reality *madrasah* grows and develops among Islamic communities that apply education with the concept of Community Based Education (*community based education*). (Zainal Arifin, 2018).

Islamic schools are public educational institutions with Islamic values. In general, this model of educational institution is organized by Islamic community organizations in general, the implementation of education is the same as regular schools but characterized by

certain organizations as the background or breath of its establishment. (Zainal Arifin, 2018).

Of the various things related to Islamic education itself, gave birth to various interpretations contained therein. Namely, the existence of educative elements as well as the concept that education is an effort, the effort is carried out consciously, the effort is carried out by people who have responsibility for the future of the child, the effort has a certain basis and purpose, the effort needs to be carried out regularly and systematically, the effort requires tools or devices used which are then called the curriculum. and Islamic education providers such as pesantren, Madrasah, Secondary schools and public schools will be an important player in applying or adjusting Islamic education to the running curriculum.

Merdeka curriculum

Etymologically, the curriculum comes from the Latin word "curir" which means runner, and "curere" which means "place to run". So the term curriculum comes from the world of sports in ancient Roman times in Greece, which implies a distance that must be traveled by runners from the start line to the finish. (Baderiah, 2018).

The term "Curriculum" has various interpretations formulated by experts in the field of curriculum development from the past until today. These interpretations vary from one another, according to the core emphasis and views of the expert concerned. Curriculum or called "curriculae" which comes from Latin means the distance to be traveled because at that time the curriculum is a period of education that must be taken by students who aim to get a diploma. In Indonesia the term "curriculum" may be said to have only become popular since the fifties, which was popularized by those who received education in the United States previously commonly used is "learning plan" in essence the curriculum includes things that are broader than a "learning plan". (Widodo Winarso, 2015).

Terminologically, the term curriculum is used in the world of education with the understanding as a number of knowledge or subjects that students must take or complete to achieve a set educational goal or competency. As a sign or proof that a learner has achieved the competency standards that have been set is with a diploma or certificate.

According to Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, the curriculum is a set of plans and arrangements regarding the content and learning materials and the methods used

as guidelines for organizing learning activities to achieve certain educational goals.

In a broader sense or in another sense the curriculum is a number of student experiences that are planned, directed, implemented and accounted for by schools or teachers. Therefore, it should be the one who designs, implements and is responsible for the curriculum is a school or teacher as the spearhead in the field who knows and understands the conditions of students according to their background. So the curriculum is a set of plans and arrangements regarding the content and subject matter as well as the methods used as guidelines for organizing teaching and learning activities. All activities that provide learning or educational experiences for students are essentially the curriculum. (R. Masykur, 2018).

Along with the development of science and technology, the government has always made various improvements, improvements to the curriculum or educational program materials in order to flexibly move quickly in line with the demands of community life that change continuously. As a tangible manifestation of these efforts, among others, the 1968 curriculum was changed to the 1975/1976 curriculum which was goal-oriented, then refined in 1984 and 1994.

In 2004, the government made changes to the curriculum as an effort to meet the demands of the times that emphasized competence and skills, so that the Competency-Based Curriculum (KBK) policy emerged. KBK develops learning methods that humanize learners, learning that focuses on the needs of learners (student centered). When new educational institutions began to adjust to concepts related to the application of the Competency-Based Curriculum (KBK), whose application had not touched most schools in remote areas of the country, most did not know and did not really understand the concept under the KBK in early 2006 the government again made a surprise in the world of education by inaugurating a new curriculum, namely the Education Unit Level Curriculum (KTSP). (E. Mulyasa, 2015).

In the KTSP system, educational institutions or schools have full authority and responsibility in determining curriculum and learning in accordance with the vision, mission and objectives of the education unit. The role of curriculum developers is carried out by teachers, principals, as well as school committees and education councils. With the birth of KTSP, it is expected that educational institutions can develop their respective potential according to the

conditions of schools or educational institutions, the government only provides two standards, namely Content Standards (SI) and Graduate Competency Standards (SKL). Educational institutions can creatively and innovatively develop a curriculum that is in accordance with local conditions (character) so that it can meet these standards. (E. Mulyasa, 2015).

In 2013, the government again issued a curriculum change policy with the name 2013 Curriculum or often termed K-13. The development of the 2013 curriculum is based on Presidential Regulation No. 5/2010 on the National Medium-Term Development Plan 2010-2014, and Government Regulation No. 32/2013 on the amendment of Government Regulation No. 19/2005 on National Education Standards (SNP).

The new curriculum policy, namely K-13, is expected to answer the shift in the development paradigm from the 20th century to the 21st century which aims to prepare Indonesian people to have the ability to live as individuals and citizens who are faithful, productive, innovative, effective and able to contribute to the life of society, nation, state and world civilization.

On February 11, 2022, the Government, namely the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology (Mendikbudristek), Nadiem Anwar Makarim launched a new online Kurikulum called "Kurikulum Merdeka".

Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology Nadiem Makarim revealed that the Merdeka Curriculum is present to overcome the learning crisis, while creating an adaptive generation that can face changing times with independence. BSKAP Decree Number 044/H/KR/2022 has determined that more than 140,000 education units will implement the Merdeka Curriculum in the 2022/2023 academic year.

The Merdeka Curriculum is expected to be a way to build a liberating education, where students learn enthusiastically, cheerfully, according to their interests and talents. In the midst of the learning atmosphere at school, which has been monotonous and less interesting for students, the Merdeka Curriculum is here to offer freedom and flexibility.

Problems and Challenges of Islamic Education in the Era of the Merdeka curriculum

The government is currently conducting experiments or assisting the use of a merdeka curriculum in various selected schools or

educational institutions, be it public schools or madrasas, but of course every policy whose target is the wider community with different characters, especially in the world of education, this relatively new policy reaps pros and cons or various kinds of problems. The problems that arise later are the relationship and "balance" between the merdeka curriculum and Islamic education learning or PAI in public schools, which then these problems become their own challenges in the process of realizing a merdeka curriculum for Islamic education.

The problems of the merdeka curriculum for Islamic Education that are being discussed include: a) a merdeka curriculum whose orientation is on results not on processes; b) the concepts, learning methods and media circulating on merdeka curriculum platforms have not provided Islamic education learning; c) it has not been able to accommodate most of the local curriculum from Islamic boarding schools.

Merdeka curriculum Orientation

Looking at the concept of the Merdeka curriculum, namely giving students the freedom to learn freely, freely solve problems and find results. This learning concept reminds us of the learning process of Prophet Ibrahim AS when looking for the existence of God as stated in the Al-Quran letter al-An'am verses 76-79. It is told that Prophet Ibrahim AS conducted a monotheistic experiment through 3 objects. Namely the Star, the Moon, and the Sun. Then he, consciously or unconsciously, thinks through induction reasoning, which is collecting specific data to find a theory that can be generalized. In this case Prophet Ibrahim collected premises about the existence of a supernatural power that he called God.

Prophet Ibrahim AS began to find his first premise, namely the star that has a radiant light, illuminating the darkness of the night, so of course the star is the power he has been looking for all this time An-Nakhjawani in his Masterpiece Al-Fawatih Al-Ilahiyah wa Al-Mafatih Al-Ghaibiyah states that at first, Prophet Ibrahim thought that the star illuminated the night with its independently produced light, so it was worthy of worship as the biggest one, but when he saw the light disappear he concluded through his words "I don't like the drowned" that the star was the only one who could be worshiped. How could he worship something that can sink and change.

Then he noticed that there was something that outshone the starlight, the moon. But when its light slowly disappeared, his logic

spoke again that it was impossible for God to disappear, disappearing is the nature of creatures that are 'created', have a beginning and have an end. In this second reasoning, Prophet Ibrahim began to find a new title for God, namely Al-Hadi (the One who guides). In Tafsir Al-Bahr Al-Madid, it is mentioned that Prophet Ibrahim began to realize the existence of Taufiq or help from God in the version he aspired to as a guide to him so that he would not make a mistake in reasoning again.

Then, he saw the Sun, his confidence increased after seeing the intensity of its light which was much different from the Stars and the moon, even having a wider volume, in his words "Hadza Rabbi Hadza Akbar". but again the object disappeared from his sight. So Prophet Ibrahim returned to his conclusion that what disappeared was not God.

From the three premises above, namely the Stars, the Moon, and the Sun, in verse 79 Prophet Ibrahim gave a conclusion, that of course his God was greater than the 3 objects he had seen before. The conclusion is expressed in the words of Prophet Ibrahim "Inni Wajjahtu Wajhiya", which in Tafsir Al-Khazin is interpreted that what is meant is Sharraftu Wajhu 'Ibadati wa Qasartu Tauhidi, (I emphasize the purpose of my worship and I focus on my oneness), affirming his concept of god, to a fairly general specification (as a result of induction reasoning from the 3 premises) with the words Li Al-Ladzi Fathara As-Samawaat Wa Al-Ard (The One who created the Heavens and the Earth).

Of course, the conclusion that Prophet Ibrahim made by generalizing Heaven and Earth was the result of his analysis of the premises that he collected after carrying out the logico-hepotic-verification process from the 3 data he had obtained. That the heavenly bodies are not god, God is the one who created the 3 objects. That's how Prophet Ibrahim found the concept of God. His strong intuition led him to the logic that he should have taken to find his God for the first time, namely the Creator of Heaven and Earth / Al-Ladzi Fathara As-Samawat Wa Al-Ard.

After living the story of Prophet Ibrahim AS then we learn, can our students find the truth or solve their own problems? Maybe the example of the story or analogy of Prophet Ibrahim AS is too far to be associated with the concept of learning the Merdeka Curriculum, but isn't that the concept? Learners are expected to be able to think, choose their learning process and be free to achieve results.

In fact, especially Islamic education, everything is organized with a Tartib process. Ablution, prayer and all learning related to Islamic education must be based on the process first, because from a tartib process then reap the results in accordance with the sharia. In Islamic learning, what is pursued is not only a matter of results but in every process there is a baraka or blessing that accompanies.

The next orientation is a cheerful learning process without memorization, while learning Islamic Religious Education must indeed emphasize memorization with a very disciplined method, such as memorizing the Qur'an and Hadith, students are certainly not given the freedom to read as they wish, memorize as they wish, let alone process the Qur'an and Hadith as they wish. In this case, starting from the beginning to the process of depositing and murojaah, the process is certainly regulated or in other words, students are not free to learn.

Likewise with other learning processes if we examine the learning process of Islamic Education one by one, then these things then become a problem and challenge for Islamic education and need to be socialized again or discussed again regarding the application of a merdeka curriculum to Islamic education learning.

Merdeka Curriculum Platform

The Merdeka Platform is a teaching platform (application) that was built to support the Implementation of the Merdeka curriculum in order to assist teachers in getting references, inspiration, and an in-depth understanding of the Merdeka curriculum. This platform is also provided to become a driving friend for teachers and principals in teaching, learning, and working.

The platform launched by the Education Office currently provides various features that can be utilized by the independent learning curriculum actors as follows: 1) Learning Merdeka curriculum; 2) Teaching and Learning Activities; 3) Self Development; 4) Search and Share Inspiration.

Learning the Merdeka Curriculum, provides information on introducing the basic principles and concepts of student-centered new paradigm learning, as well as information on curriculum implementation by studying the profile of Pancasila students and learning outcomes in the Merdeka Curriculum and contains a collection of materials on the Merdeka Curriculum that can be studied independently through Independent Training.

Teaching and Learning Activities, provides information on a collection of diagnostic assessment question packages based on certain phases and subjects, to help obtain information on the process and results of student learning and contains various teaching materials to support teaching and learning activities, such as teaching materials, teaching modules, project modules, or textbooks.

Self-Development, provides information about various training materials that are made short, so that you can do training independently, anytime and anywhere and provides a variety of learning communities throughout Indonesia and can be used by teachers to share practices, learning tools as well as discussions with other teachers.

Finding and Sharing Inspiration, provides information on a collection of inspirational videos made by the Ministry of Education and Culture and experts, as a reference to improve the competence of educators and also provides content that can inspire to support the profession as an educator.

With the various features provided, it is hoped that teachers or educators will be able to apply the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum in accordance with the hopes, ideals and objectives of the curriculum.

After the inauguration of the official platform of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology, other platforms began to appear in Playstore (not yet available in Appstore), but the complaints of leaders or actors of PAI subjects in public schools or subjects characterized by Islamic education in private schools (madrasah) are that there is almost no platform that provides information about PAI and subjects characterized by Islamic education. The official platform itself does not provide it. This is what is problematic, which then becomes a challenge to the implementation of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum for Islamic education learning.

c. Merdeka curriculum and Islamic Boarding School

Islamic boarding schools are traditional Islamic educational institutions, where students study Islam and apply Islamic teachings into Islamic forms of behavior. Islamic boarding schools actually have many types of education or oversee several educational institutions, broadly speaking, the scope of Islamic boarding school education is divided into three, namely salaf, khalaf and a combination of salaf and khalaf:.

1). Salaf/classical boarding school

Salaf/classical boarding schools are boarding schools in which there is a salaf education system (yellow book learning, memorization and religious courses) which is usually not bound by diplomas such as tahfidz learning etc.

2). Khalaf/semi-developed boarding school

are Islamic boarding schools in which there is a salaf education system (yellow book learning, memorization and religious courses) and a private classical system (madrasah) with a curriculum of 90% religion and 10% general, for example, such as the PDF Wustha, Ulya to Ma'had Aly levels.

3). Developed boarding schools (combining salaf and khalaf)

Pondok pesantren are like semi-developed pesantren, except that they are more varied in terms of curriculum, namely 70% religion and 30% general. In addition, Madrasah Ibtidaiyyah, Tsanawiyah and Aliyah are also organized.

There are even Islamic boarding schools that have a wider scope by housing other formal institutions such as Islamic-based elementary schools to Islamic universities.

Seeing how complex Islamic education is in Pondok Pesantren, the curriculum used is also different according to the type of education used in that particular education unit. Of course the curriculum is different between salaf, khalaf and combined learning between salaf and khalaf. Therefore, the independent learning curriculum cannot be used absolutely by all levels and types of Islamic education in Islamic boarding schools, this is then a problem and challenge for Islamic education in adjusting government policies, namely using an independent learning curriculum.

If the implementation of this merdeka curriculum is examined further, it will certainly encounter various problems and other challenges, but the three challenges above are being discussed among the main actors or actors in the practice and process of Islamic education itself.

C. CONCLUSION

The implementation of a merdeka curriculum is one of the ways the government has improved the quality of education. In its application, the learning process that occurs in educational institutions will become more diverse so that the concept of material can be learned more deeply.

Of course, the curriculum change has become a topic of conversation because the concept is that educators have more opportunities to recognize the characteristics of students and help them improve their abilities based on their characteristics. However, the sudden transition of the curriculum and the assumption of the curriculum actors that the previous curriculum has not been maximized as it should and replaced again with a curriculum with a different concept, this requires the curriculum actors to be extra in learning, adjusting and applying the new curriculum.

Not yet completed the implementation or assistance stage of the independent learning curriculum in selected public and private schools, complaints or problems began to emerge, which problems then became challenges in implementing the independent learning curriculum. The problem in question comes from the actors or actors of Islamic Religious Education learning, namely PAI teachers in public schools and PAI clump teachers in private schools or madrasah. The problems that challenge the application of a merdeka curriculum in Islamic education are as follows.

1). Merdeka curriculum Orientation

The concept of the Merdeka curriculum is to give freedom to students to be free to learn, free to solve problems and find results. This learning concept reminds us of the learning process of Prophet Ibrahim AS when looking for the existence of God as stated in the Al-Quran letter al-An'am verses 76-79. It is told that Prophet Ibrahim AS conducted a monotheistic experiment through 3 objects. Namely the Stars, the Moon, and the Sun. Then he, consciously or unconsciously, thought through induction reasoning, which is collecting specific data to find a theory that can be generalized. In this case Prophet Ibrahim collected premises about the existence of a supernatural power that he called God. Until in the process of religious experimentation, Prophet Ibrahim AS received guidance from Allah SWT. Wallahu A'lam bishawab.

From the story of Prophet Ibrahim AS we then learn, can our students find the truth or solve their own problems? Maybe the example of the story or analogy of Prophet Ibrahim AS is too far to be associated with the concept of learning the Merdeka Curriculum, but isn't that the concept? Learners are expected to be able to think, choose their learning process and be free to achieve results.

2). Merdeka curriculum Platform

The Merdeka Platform is a teaching platform (application) that was built to support the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in order to assist teachers in getting references, inspiration, and an in-depth understanding of the Merdeka Curriculum. The platform, which was launched by the Education Office, currently provides various features that can be utilized by the independent learning curriculum actors as follows: 1) Learning the Merdeka curriculum; 2) Teaching and Learning Activities; 3) Self Development; 4) Search and Share Inspiration.

After the inauguration of the official platform of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology, it turns out that other platforms began to appear in the Playstore (not yet available in the Appstore), but there are almost no platforms that provide information about PAI and subjects characterized by Islamic education. The official platform itself does not yet provide it. This is what is problematic, which then becomes a challenge to the application of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum to Islamic education learning.

3). Merdeka curriculum and Pesantren Curriculum

Islamic boarding schools are traditional Islamic educational institutions, where students learn Islam and apply Islamic teachings into Islamic forms of behavior. Islamic boarding schools actually have many types of education or oversee several educational institutions, broadly speaking, the scope of Islamic education in Islamic boarding schools is divided into three, namely salaf, khalaf and a combination of salaf and khalaf.

Seeing how complex Islamic education is in boarding schools, the curriculum used is also different according to the type of education used in the particular education unit. Of course the curriculum is different between salaf, khalaf and combined learning between salaf and khalaf. Therefore, the independent learning curriculum cannot be used absolutely by all levels and types of Islamic education in Islamic boarding schools, this is then a problem and challenge for Islamic education in adjusting government policies, namely using an independent learning curriculum.

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