

Implementation of Global Perspective Curriculum in Elementary Schools: Literature Analysis

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Abstract

A globally oriented curriculum is an important need in primary education to prepare students to become global citizens with broad insight, cross-cultural empathy, and critical thinking skills in facing the challenges of the globalization era. Its implementation in Indonesia can be carried out through two main forms: integrating global issues into the national curriculum such as the Merdeka Curriculum, and adopting international curricula such as Cambridge. This literature review aims to examine the concepts, implementation strategies, challenges, and best practices of implementing a globally oriented curriculum in primary schools. The results of the review show that integration can be effectively carried out through thematic, contextual, and project-based approaches by linking global issues with students' local contexts. However, its implementation still faces various challenges, including limited teacher competence and understanding of global concepts, conventional teaching methods, limited infrastructure and resources, and a lack of alignment between the curriculum and local realities. Therefore, strengthening teacher capacity, policy support, development of contextual learning resources, and cross-sector collaboration are needed to ensure that the implementation of a globally oriented curriculum can run optimally and sustainably.

Keywords: Global Perspective Curriculum; Primary School; Implementation; Merdeka Curriculum; Global Citizenship Education

INTRODUCTION

Education plays a crucial role in developing students' potential so that they are able to compete and adapt to the rapidly changing demands of the modern world. In the era of globalization and the Industrial Revolution 5.0, the need for education with a global perspective has become increasingly urgent, as events occurring in one part of the world can directly or indirectly influence societies in other regions. This condition aligns with Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, which states that every citizen has an equal right to access quality education, including education that is oriented toward a global perspective. The rapid advancement of science and technology has connected countries into a single interdependent global community, making the ability to understand global dynamics an unavoidable necessity (Marlin, Rahmadani, Farhan, Farid, & Lukitoaji, 2026).

The Indonesian national education system is directed toward developing students' skills and shaping character values that contribute to national life. In the context of globalization, this goal can be achieved through the integration of global perspectives into the curriculum, which not only emphasizes mastery of knowledge but also strengthens

humanitarian values, tolerance, cultural diversity, and mutual respect among individuals. The curriculum is designed as a strategic instrument to instill attitudes of global responsibility, empathy, and critical awareness through contextual and meaningful learning content. Several studies have shown that globally oriented curricula can help students develop a deeper understanding of the world and their role within it as active global citizens (Mulyani, Fazlirachman, & Setyaningrum, 2024; Sa'diyyah, 2023).

Elementary education is considered the most appropriate level to introduce global perspectives to children, as at this stage they begin to develop self-awareness and understanding of their surrounding environment. At this developmental stage, children generally possess high curiosity and a natural ability to accept diversity in a more open and flexible way. However, learning in primary schools is still often dominated by conventional teaching methods that limit the optimal use of global issues as a means of expanding students' perspectives and fostering their sense of awareness and concern for global matters. In addition, the implementation of international curricula such as Cambridge also faces challenges in terms of adaptation to local contexts and unequal accessibility across different regions in Indonesia (Ramadianti, 2024; Ningrum, 2025).

Based on these conditions, this study aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the implementation of globally oriented curricula in elementary schools, including basic concepts, implementation strategies, challenges encountered, and best practices that can serve as references. This study also seeks to identify gaps in existing literature and provide recommendations for further development. Therefore, this study is expected to contribute valuable insights for teachers, policymakers, and researchers in optimizing the implementation of global perspective-based curricula in Indonesia, so that it can help shape a young generation that is ready to face global challenges while maintaining their local cultural identity (Hardiyanti, Yantoro, Hadiyanto, & Sastrawati, 2024; Ananda, Andini, & Wijayanti, 2024).

METHOD

This study employs a literature review method by examining 19 relevant scholarly sources related to the implementation of a globally oriented curriculum in primary schools. The sources used include scientific journal articles published between 2021 and 2026. The selection of sources was conducted based on three main criteria: (1) relevance of content to the focus of the study, namely the implementation of a global perspective curriculum in elementary education; (2) credibility of authors and publishers, assessed through institutional affiliation and journal reputation; and (3) currency of information, with priority given to publications from the last five years. The scope of discussion in this study is organized into four main aspects, namely the concept and urgency of a globally oriented curriculum in primary schools, forms and strategies of implementation through both national and international curricula, challenges encountered in implementation, and best practices along with recommendations for future development (Pannudin & Sutrisno, 2024; Adilah, 2024).

The data from each source were analyzed critically through several systematic steps, including thoroughly reading and understanding each source, identifying key points relevant to the research focus, classifying information into predetermined themes, identifying similarities, differences, patterns, and gaps across studies, and synthesizing the information into a coherent and structured argument. In addition, attention was also given to the diversity of perspectives and findings from various researchers in order to provide a more objective and comprehensive overview of the implementation of globally oriented curricula in primary schools in Indonesia (Sa'diyyah, 2023; Rizki, 2023).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Concept and Urgency of a Globally Oriented Curriculum

A globally oriented curriculum is part of Global Citizenship Education (GCED), which aims to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and values needed to understand and address global challenges and contribute to a peaceful and sustainable world. This concept includes understanding global interdependence, dynamic global changes, cultural diversity, and the limited availability of natural resources that must be managed wisely. Global citizenship education has been recognized as an essential component of 21st-century education needed to address global challenges such as climate change, inequality, and cross-cultural conflicts (Mulyani et al., 2024; UNESCO, 2023).

The integration of global issues into elementary education is a systematic approach that connects learning topics with global phenomena such as climate change, cultural diversity, human rights, and environmental sustainability. The main principle of globally oriented education is think globally, act locally, which encourages students to understand global issues while also taking action in their local context. This approach helps students recognize the relationship between local and global events and understand that actions in one place can impact people in other parts of the world (Marlin et al., 2026; Wihardit, 2002).

At the international level, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) serve as an important reference for integrating global issues into school curricula. Goals such as ending poverty, ensuring gender equality, protecting the environment, and promoting global peace are relevant learning materials for elementary students. At the national level, Indonesia's Merdeka Curriculum provides space for schools to integrate global concepts through the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5), which encourages students to conduct project-based learning on global issues using local context as a starting point. In addition, international curricula such as Cambridge are also adopted by some schools in Indonesia as a form of global perspective-based education, focusing on higher-order thinking skills and English communication as an international language (Ramadianti, 2024; Ningrum, 2025).

The implementation of a globally oriented curriculum in elementary schools is highly urgent due to rapid developments in science, technology, and communication. Without global awareness, students may develop narrow ethnocentric perspectives that can lead to prejudice, discrimination, and social conflict in the future. Furthermore, global education helps students develop 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and cross-cultural communication. Global perspective-based education at the elementary level also helps students form a strong identity as both Indonesian citizens and responsible global citizens (Hardiyanti et al., 2024; Sa'diyah, 2023).

2. Forms of Implementation of a Globally Oriented Curriculum

The implementation of a globally oriented curriculum in Indonesian elementary schools is carried out in two main forms: integration into the national curriculum and the implementation of international curricula (Ananda et al., 2024; Adilah, 2024).

a. Integration into the National Curriculum

The integration of global issues into the national curriculum, such as the Merdeka Curriculum, is done by linking learning materials with relevant global issues without changing the overall curriculum structure. Global issues such as climate change, cultural diversity, social justice, world peace, and environmental sustainability are integrated into subjects such as Social Studies, Civic Education, Science, Indonesian Language, English, and Arts through thematic and contextual

approaches (Marlin et al., 2026; Purwanti, Handini, & Susanti, 2020). In the Merdeka Curriculum, this integration is realized through the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5). For example, the “World Without Waste” project examines waste issues in schools and connects them to global warming and environmental sustainability. Another example is the “World Cultural Map” project, which introduces cultural diversity from countries such as Japan, India, Brazil, and Kenya while linking them with Indonesian local culture. The “Global Health” project can also explore nutrition and health issues across countries and relate them to local health programs in schools and communities (Marlin et al., 2026; Handini, 2022).

b. Implementation of International Curriculum

The implementation of international curricula such as Cambridge is another form of global perspective-based education in elementary schools. According to Ramadianti (2024), this implementation can be carried out in several models. The first model is the full model, where schools apply the Cambridge curriculum for all core subjects using English as the medium of instruction. An example is SD Metro Makassar, which implements the Cambridge curriculum from Grade 1 to Grade 6 focusing on Mathematics, Science, English, Mandarin, and Music (Ramadianti, 2024; Fazlirachman & Mulyani, 2024). The second model is the partial model, where only certain subjects or assessments use the Cambridge curriculum, such as English, Mathematics, and Science. An example is MI Ma’arif Ketegan Bilingual Islamic School. The third model is the integrated or hybrid model, where the Cambridge curriculum is combined with the national curriculum. An example is SD Nasima Semarang, which integrates Cambridge standards with Indonesian curriculum content (Nisa, 2024; Syafaati & Widodo, 2023).

c. Strategies for Implementation of a Globally Oriented Curriculum

Implementation strategies vary depending on the chosen model and are designed to ensure effective learning outcomes (Pannudin & Sutrisno, 2024; Rizki, 2023). One strategy is the thematic approach, which integrates global issues into existing learning themes such as environmental topics. The second is the contextual approach, which connects global issues with students’ daily lives and local environments (Marlin et al., 2026; Adawiyah, Sari, & Wijaya, 2024). The third is the project-based approach, where students engage in activities such as recycling programs, cultural festivals, or environmental campaigns. The fourth is the cross-curricular approach, which integrates global issues across multiple subjects such as Science, Social Studies, Language, and Arts to provide a comprehensive understanding. For international curriculum implementation, strategies include planning, implementation, evaluation, and continuous development. Planning involves preparing curriculum documents and teacher training. Implementation includes active learning methods and English instruction. Evaluation assesses student progress and curriculum effectiveness. Continuous development ensures the integration of local values such as Indonesian culture and Pancasila values (Ningrum, 2025; Fazlirachman & Mulyani, 2024).

d. Challenges in Implementation

Challenges include curriculum and content limitations, teacher readiness, infrastructure constraints, accessibility issues, and societal perceptions (Hardiyanti et al., 2024; Sa’diyah, 2023). One major issue is the difficulty of linking global issues with local contexts and adapting content to students’ cognitive levels. Teacher-related challenges include limited understanding of global education

concepts, lack of training, and low English proficiency (Mulyani et al., 2024; Pigai, 2024). Infrastructure limitations such as lack of internet access, learning facilities, and digital tools also hinder implementation. Accessibility issues arise due to the high cost of international curricula, creating inequality between urban and rural schools. Additionally, some parents still prioritize academic scores over global competencies and worry about cultural identity loss (Ningrum, 2025; Fazlirachman & Mulyani, 2024).

e. Best Practices and Solutions

Several schools have implemented best practices such as integrating religious values with global values at SD Khadijah Surabaya and student exchange programs at SD Al-Azhar Jakarta (Handini, 2022; Marlin et al., 2026). Other schools implement community-based learning focused on environmental and social issues. Solutions include teacher training programs, development of contextual learning resources, infrastructure improvement, collaboration with stakeholders, and stronger government policies (Pannudin & Sutrisno, 2024; Pigai, 2024). Digital technology can also support global collaboration between students across countries. Government support and continuous research are essential to ensure sustainable implementation of globally oriented curricula in Indonesia (Mulyani et al., 2024; Ningrum, 2025).

CONCLUSION

The implementation of a globally oriented curriculum in elementary schools plays an important role in preparing the younger generation to face the challenges and opportunities of the globalization era. This concept can be implemented through two main forms: integration into the national curriculum such as the Merdeka Curriculum and the adoption of international curricula such as Cambridge. Effective implementation strategies include thematic, contextual, project-based, and cross-curricular approaches, which aim to make learning materials more meaningful, relevant, and engaging for students.

The concept of a globally oriented curriculum is part of Global Citizenship Education, which aims to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and values needed to become responsible global citizens. The Sustainable Development Goals serve as an important reference for integrating global issues into the curriculum, while the Merdeka Curriculum provides space for such integration through the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5). The implementation of a globally oriented curriculum at the elementary level is highly urgent because it supports the development of 21st-century skills and fosters positive attitudes toward diversity and global challenges.

However, the implementation of a globally oriented curriculum in elementary schools still faces various challenges that need to be addressed. These challenges include limited teacher competence and understanding of global concepts, conventional teaching methods, inadequate infrastructure and resources, lack of alignment between the curriculum and local contexts, as well as limited support from parents and the wider community. Despite these challenges, several best practices can be used as references to optimize implementation, such as integrating religious values with global values, student exchange programs, and community-based learning initiatives.

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