

## **English Language Teachers' Perspectives and Experiences of Teaching English as Cross Interest Subject (EACIS)**

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### **Abstract**

Since the issuance of the 2013 curriculum (K13), many Islamic senior secondary schools (MA) offer English as Cross Interest Subject (EaCIS) in addition to compulsory English subject (CES). The subject is designed to help students expand their English language competence beyond their major courses and what they have learnt from CES. Due to a reduction in the number of hours allocated for CES in the K13, teaching EaCIS has become a way for certified English language teachers to accrue the required hours to receive certification payment. This qualitative study was designed to understand teachers' perceptions and experiences of teaching EaCIS and shares the findings from the interview and focus group data collected from six English language teachers teaching at state Islamic senior secondary schools (MAN) in Indonesia. Findings reveal that whilst EaCIS provides an opportunity for teachers to improve student's English abilities, none of the participants received support to teach it. Whilst it is acknowledged that this is a small study and the findings cannot be generalised to the broader population of teachers responsible for teaching EaCIS, the experiences shared by participants provide valuable and interesting insights into curriculum change. Recommendations for improving the implementation of EaCIS and the future design of curriculum change initiatives in Indonesia are discussed.

Keywords: English as Cross Interest Subject, teacher experiences, teacher perceptions, curriculum change, K13 curriculum

### **1. Introduction**

Since the issuance of the 2013 curriculum (K13) and until Merdeka curriculum, all senior secondary schools (SMA), including Islamic senior high schools (MA), are required to provide Cross Interest Subjects. The subjects are designed to help students expand their abilities beyond their major courses (Indonesia Minister of Education and Culture, 2018). Alongside the introduction of Cross Interest Subject, the curriculum revisions also included a reduction in the number of hours allocated for teaching the compulsory English subject (Zein et al., 2020). As a result, EaCIS quickly became a solution for certified English language teachers to accrue sufficient teaching hours to receive certification fees. The rationale for the reduction in teaching hours from the Indonesian government was that they wanted students to master the Indonesian

language first and was concerned that too much emphasis on teaching English and foreign languages could contribute to Indonesian people losing their identity.

In K13, before enrolling on SMA or MA, the students are asked to fill in the forms to choose their major courses. Generally, there are three major courses provided by the MA and SMA: (a) Science, (b) Social, and (c) Language. Students are required to choose two Cross Interest Subjects outside of their major courses. For example, students who choose a science major course could choose Cross Interest Subject from social (Geography, Anthropology, History, and Economy) or language (English and other languages literature) major courses. According to Sumayani et al. (2018), although students studied English as a compulsory subject in their major course, EaCIS was the most preferred Cross Interest Subject.

In Merdeka curriculum, there is no more major courses for the students. Year 10 students at SMA and MA must learn all subjects provided by their schools. The students are required to choose Cross Interest Subject when they are in year 11 and 12 (Indonesia Ministry of Education, 2022). Nevertheless, both curriculums offer EaCIS for the students.

Few studies on EaCIS have been conducted in Indonesia, but the limited number that do exist explore a range of perspectives. For example, Sumayani et al. (2018) examined the relevance of teaching and learning materials for compulsory English subject and EaCIS. They concluded that the materials were appropriate for teaching compulsory English subject. Safitri et al. (2018) researched the implementation of two Cross Interest Subject (EaCIS and Economics as Cross Interest Subject) for Math and Science students at MAN at Pontianak Indonesia. They found that the subject teachers had implemented Cross Interest Subject well, although the EaCIS teacher participants admitted that the students found it hard to understand the material. Wati (2015) investigated the contribution of EaCIS to students' achievement in Compulsory English Subject. She found that EaCIS positively contributed to students' compulsory English subject achievement. Putri (2019) conducted research on exploring students' learning needs taking EaCIS. She found that students' target needs were related to their academic and occupational English in the future which more focus on speaking and reading skills. Unfortunately, she found that the students did not have enough speaking practice in studying EaCIS.

To date, while the existing studies have examined several essential aspects of EaCIS teaching, very few studies have researched EaCIS from the perspectives and experiences of teachers, especially in the Islamic senior secondary school context. Therefore, this study aims to better understand English language teachers' perceptions and experiences in teaching EaCIS. Based on the purpose of this study, the research was guided by the following questions:

1. What are teachers' perceptions of teaching EaCIS?
2. What are teachers' experiences of teaching EaCIS?

Curriculum change is a complex process. The complexity is due in part to the fact that teachers are required to change their teaching practices within multi-layers and dynamic systems. Researchers suggest that to implement the changes required, teachers need: (a) to be fully informed, (b) professional learning support, (c) appropriate resources, (d) continuous assistance and, (e) to monitor progress; all this needs to occur in a supportive context (Hall & Hord, 2020). To support teachers, all parts of the education system: state, province, district, community, and

the school need to internalise the agenda of curriculum change and create new capacities to do their job, support, and respect other parts (Fullan, 2016; Hall & Hord, 2020). Failure to develop key aspects that support the curriculum change implementation process by all parts of the education system prevents successful change implementation. Fullan (2016) suggests that there are three broad phases to the change process: (a) initiation; (b) implementation; and (c) continuation.

Initiation consists of a process that includes a decision to adopt a change. Implementation is the first two or three years of putting a change initiative into practice. Institutionalisation is a determination about routinisation based on the attitude to the change, which may be positive or negative. Teachers need to successfully navigate each of these stages to implement and institutionalise the required changes fully.

Indonesia has undergone eleven curriculum changes since its independence in 1945: Curriculum 1947, 1964, 1968, 1973, 1975, 1984, 1994, 1997, 2004, 2006, 2013 (Asri, 2017; Hidayah et al., 2022; Mukminin et al., 2019) and Merdeka curriculum. Although the curriculum in Indonesia was changed to adjust the students' competence to the demands of times and technology (Nur & Madkur, 2014; Pajarwati et al, 2021), curriculum change in Indonesia was always dominated by political interest (Hastuti, 2020; Pardini, 2017; Setiawan, 2018). The Indonesian curriculum changed when there were changes in leadership and political conditions in Indonesia (Hastuti, 2020).

The K13 was issued in 2013. One of the reasons for developing the K13 was to allow Indonesian students to develop cognitive skills based on their talents and interest (Indonesia Minister of Religion, 2014). Firman et al. (2019) found that English language teachers' pedagogical competence is appropriate to the demands of K13 and they also show readiness and enthusiasm to implement the curriculum. However, according to Suyanto (2017) and Apsari (2018), the teachers' readiness to implement the K13 was low. Similarly, Nuryana & Sahrir (2020) reported that many teachers had low competence in implementing the K13 due to a lack of professional development and supporting facilities (Retnawati et al., 2016). Moreover, the K13 was revised almost every year, adding to the teachers' confusion on implementing the curriculum (Nuraeni, 2018; Rizqi, 2017).

As previously outlined, the introduction of EaCIS was a product of K13 revisions, which saw the reduction in English subject teaching time from four hours to two and the requirement to have Cross Interest Subjects (Indonesia Minister of Education and Culture, 2013). As a result, EaCIS became used as a solution for English language teachers to accrue sufficient teaching hours to retain their certification (Muhfiyanti & Aimah, 2018; Wati, 2015). According to Indonesian directorate of senior secondary school development (Indonesian Directorate of Senior Secondary School Development, 2017), students choose Cross Interest Subject or specifically EaCIS based on their personal interests. However, some schools determined that all students must learn EaCIS because the school had a high number of English language teachers available to teach the EaCIS, and not enough teachers to teach other cross-interest subjects (Andriani, 2021; Muhfiyanti & Aimah, 2018; Riafadilah & Dewi, 2018; Safitri et al., 2018).

Researchers discovered that schools that adopted a policy to provide EaCIS, not based on students' choice, resulted in some students being less enthusiastic about learning the subject

(Andriani, 2021; Muhfiyanti & Aimah, 2018). In addition, Safitri et al. (2018) found that the students' knowledge score in EaCIS was low due to complicated instructional materials, and contained dense linguistic features and poetry. However, the students' skill scores were high because they enjoyed practising English in activities such as creating and reading poems (Safitri et al., 2018). In addition, Wati (2015), who researched the students at the school that implemented EaCIS based on students' preference, reported that the EaCIS positively impacted students' compulsory English subject achievement and found students who completed EaCIS had better compulsory English subject scores than those who did not undertake EaCIS (Wati, 2015).

## 2. Method

The findings shared in this paper are part of a larger project investigating teachers' perspectives on continual curriculum revisions in Indonesia, and data were collected at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. A qualitative case study research design was used. The qualitative case study was appropriate to this research as it is an in-depth investigation of small sample views and experiences within a circumstance (Cohen et al., 2018; Yin, 2016a, 2016b, 2018).

### 2.1 Research Participants

There are three state Islamic senior secondary schools (MAN) in the city where the research was conducted. However, there are only two MAN which offered EaCIS: MAN A and MAN B. Therefore, the researcher only invited MAN A and MAN B to take part in the research. MAN A was a highly accredited school. MAN B was a medium accredited school. Six out of eleven EaCIS teachers volunteered to take part in this research. The participants comprised three males and three females. Three participants were from MAN A, and three were from MAN B. Participants varied in their teaching experience, employment, and certification status as detailed in the following table.

Table 1. Participants by Years of Teaching Experience, Certification, and School

Male	Female	Number of years teaching experience	Civil Servant	Non-civil servant	Certified	Not certified	MAN A	MAN B
0	1	5-10 (n=1, 17%)	0	1	0	1	0	0
1	2	11-20 (n=3, 50%)	1	2	2	1	1	1
2	0	21-30 (2, 33%)	2	0	2	0	2	2

### 2.2 Research Procedures

Data were obtained by interviewing the English language teachers individually and collectively through focus group discussions (FGD). All six teachers took part in individual

interviews, which were conducted one- on-one by WhatsApp. Each interview took approximately one hour, and participants were asked ten questions. Focus group discussions were conducted by WhatsApp, with each taking approximately one hour, where participants were asked ten questions. Two FGD were held, with three teachers from MAN A joining one group and three English language teachers from MAN B joining another.

### **2.3 Research Instruments**

There were two instruments in this research. They are interview and FGD protocols. Both the instruments were semi structured to allow interviewee mention and describe more data. This is relevant to what was mentioned by Adeoye-Olatunde & Olenik (2021) that a primary benefit of the semi-structured interview and FGD is that it permits interviews to be focused while still giving the investigator the autonomy to explore pertinent ideas that may come up during the interview, which can further enhance understanding of the topics being assessed.

### **2.4 Data Analysis**

An inductive thematic analysis was used in this study. Braun & Clarke (2006) stated that inductive thematic analysis is the process of coding the data without trying to fit into pre-existing coding frame or the researcher's analytic preconceptions. After data were collected, the individual interviews with six teachers and FGD from both schools' recordings were transcribed verbatim. Then, inductive coding was used by marking the transcripts with keywords that emerged from teachers' comments. The codes were then organised into emergent themes.

## **3. Result and Discussion**

Data were categorised into two main areas: (a) teacher's perceptions of EaCIS, and (b) teacher's experiences of EaCIS. A pseudonym was used for each participant to preserve anonymity (Habibis, 2017). Table 2 provides the background information for each of the teachers, including the pseudonyms assigned to each. Besides, for clarity, additional identifiers were used to indicate the quote was derived from Individual Interview (II), Focus Group Discussion (FGD), MAN A, and MAN B. For example [Mawar, II, MAN A] indicated the quote was derived from an individual interview with Mawar, a teacher from MAN A.

Table 2. Background information for each participant

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Pseudonym	Gender	Civil Servant	Non-Civil Servant	Certified	Not certified	High accredited school	Medium accredited school	Years of Teaching
Mawar	F		√		√	√		15
Asoka	M	√		√		√		31
Kamboja	M	√		√		√		27
Melati	F		√		√		√	8
Anggrek	M		√	√			√	14
Dahlia	F	√		√			√	12

### 3.1 Teachers' perceptions of EaCIS

Three main themes emerged from teachers' perceptions: (a) Teachers believed EaCIS to be an opportunity to improve students' English ability, (b) EaCIS demands teachers to be creative in determining instructional materials, and (c) EaCIS curriculum is less aligned across grade levels. Each theme is described in detail below.

The first theme mentioned by teachers was that EaCIS was an opportunity to improve student's English ability. Whilst most teachers reported that they use EaCIS to ensure they get sufficient teaching hours to meet certification requirements, four teachers believed that the EaCIS was beneficial in improving students' English competence. Dahlia, a MAN B teacher, said that EaCIS was teachers' opportunity to use instructional content of compulsory English which could not be delivered to students due to teaching time reduction, "we are lucky to have EaCIS as the students could learn more English although compulsory English subject time was reduced" [II]. Similarly, Mawar said that the students could have better English with EaCIS as the students have more time to study English. With the EaCIS, students could study English for six hours per week: two to three hours for compulsory English subject and three hours for EaCIS. As stated by Mawar, "now students study English for six hours weekly. Students could have better English than before when EaCIS was not available." [Mawar, MAN B, II].

Moreover, Melati reported that in EaCIS, teachers could freely give the students materials that the teachers perceived as important and relevant to the current situation for example the use of social media such as Facebook and Instagram, "In EaCIS, I can give interesting topics for students such as about pandemic or something that students could find in the social media" [Melati, II, MAN B]. Besides, Anggrek said that EaCIS had helped him to deliver all the instructional content in the compulsory English subject because he was so overwhelmed to teach all the teaching content in compulsory English subject before EaCIS was available, "without EaCIS, too many instructional content in English subject were neglected" [Anggrek, FGD, MAN B].

The second theme of teachers' perception was EaCIS demanded teachers be creative in determining teaching and learning content. Since the syllabus and guidelines for teaching EaCIS

were unavailable to them, all the teachers reported that they worked alone to determine the instructional materials to be delivered in the class. As a result, four teachers reported that they needed to be creative when deciding upon teaching materials to ensure they designed exciting and engaging lessons. The increase in teaching time to three hours per lesson, meant that a lot of planning was required. Anggrek said, "we must be creative in giving students interesting English materials as Cross Interest Subject" [MAN B, FGD]. Similarly, Kamboja, a MAN A teacher, said in the individual interview that if the teachers were not creative, students quickly got bored during the three-hour classes.

Similarly, Melati said that sometimes she and the students became disengaged in a hour-long teaching period allocated for EaCIS, the increase in time added an extra burden, "We must be creative to determine and present the teaching and learning materials. If not, three hours will be felt so long and boring" [Melati, MAN B, II].

Dahlia commented that although she was concerned about the unavailability of a textbook and student worksheets specifically for EaCIS, she was creative by choosing the more complex instructional content from the textbook for compulsory English subject and presented them using interesting games, "I refer to English textbook to sort the difficult materials and I use interesting games" [MAN B, FGD]. Similarly, Mawar said that she adjusted the syllabus of EaCIS that she bought from the book publisher of the of English and literature textbook and that she also bought from a book publisher outside the government. She always tried to ask the students to practice the instructional content she taught through speech or conversation. According to her observation, the students were keen to practice speaking, "I matched the syllabus to the textbook. In teaching, I frequently ask my students to do the speaking skill. I see that students are more enthusiastic in speaking or making a speech" [Mawar, MAN A, II].

The third theme mentioned by participants was that EaCIS curriculum was less aligned across grade levels. The curriculum guide, which includes objectives, instructional resources, and suggestions for learning experiences, is essential in helping teachers to implement a program well. However, the teachers reported they received no communication or information regarding the EaCIS teaching guidelines. The lack of guidelines to teach EaCIS has resulted in a lack of consistency in implementing the curriculum and a coherent set of learning expectations. All teacher participants reported that they had taught EaCIS based on what they thought was necessary for their students and were unsure what was required nationally. Thus, each teacher has his/her curriculum for EaCIS, as Melati from MAN B explained:

In EaCIS, each teacher teaches as they want. We do not know what contents are taught by other teachers. This is a new subject that we did not have any idea to teach initially. So, mostly we just guessed what was important for students. We did have a chat about this subject but only once" [MAN B, II].

The teachers focused primarily on developing one English language skill to match their teaching to what was necessary for the students, based on their professional judgement. In order to support students' coherent acquisition of English, teachers need to develop all four language skills outlined in the curriculum: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Dahlia said that she tended to focus on building students' vocabularies which she derived from compulsory English subject learning content, "I give my students difficult words with interesting games. Vocabularies

are important to make students confident to use the language” [MAN B, II]. Anggrek chose to teach grammar which was also taken from compulsory English subject lesson, which were not delivered due to the lack of time, “I teach them more complex grammar derived from CES” [MAN B, II]. Mawar, a MAN A teacher, said that she mainly focused on teaching speaking skills in EaCIS, “I prefer teaching conversation as my students looked more interested in studying conversation” [II].

Mawar also commented that she was unaware of what her colleagues had taught in EaCIS, “I don’t really know what they teach. We never collaborate to talk about EaCIS so far.” [MAN A, II]. Similarly, Dahlia reported that the teachers in her school taught EaCIS based on each teacher’s preference, “I do not know exactly. We only talked about EaCIS once. Then, we determined what to teach individually based on students’ need” [MAN B, II].

As a result of a lack of collaboration and communication, the teachers indicated that they were concerned about the lack of coherence in EaCIS teaching among students' grade levels. Melati stated that because the school principal did not ask the teachers to prepare the teaching documents for EaCIS in her school, and she often relied on her colleague to tell her what the teacher had taught the students, "I worry to teach something that the students have learned in the previous grade, so I always asked my colleague who has taught them" [MAN B, II]. Although the teachers at MAN A were obliged to provide teaching documents for EaCIS, Asoka acknowledged, “teachers’ teaching is not always based on their teaching documents” [MAN A, II], revealing that the teaching documents were usually produced in order to satisfy the needs of administration and did not necessarily teach based on the documents submitted.

### **3.2 Teachers’ experience on EaCIS**

Two main themes emerged from the teacher experience: (a) lack of training and (b) a lack of school support. Each theme is described in further detail below. The first theme is lack of training. As EaCIS is a new subject, teachers need to learn how to use the new instructional content. However, all of the teachers in this study reported that they lacked government support when implementing EaCIS and none received any training, Asoka shared, "We do not receive a syllabus from the government, let alone a training" [MAN A, FGD]. Similarly, Dahlia said that until now, she did not have any training on EaCIS, “no training about EaCIS at all”, [MAN B, FGD]. Melati said that governments seemed to leave teachers free to decide what and how to teach the EaCIS, “looks like we are left to decide the teaching content and the way to teach” [MAN B, FGD]. Mawar also said that if teachers receive training on teaching EaCIS, teachers in their schools will have synchronous lesson to teach, “I do not know what other teachers teach in EaCIS” [MAN A, II]. Similarly, Melati reported that so far, teachers seem to teach the subject their way, “I am afraid that teachers will just teach based on what is easy and fun to teach” [MAN B, II].

In this circumstance, it appears that a lack of training and clear guidelines resulted in individual teachers interpreting EaCIS in different ways. As a result, the different interpretations led to inconsistent implementation of the curriculum, potentially impacting student competence and achievement.

The second theme related to teachers’ experiences in teaching EaCIS was lack of school support. Hall & Hord (2020) argue that a school is a key unit in making change successful, and

the change effort will cease if the school does not receive and engage in ongoing active support. However, all the teacher participants reported that they received no support from their respective schools to teach EaCIS and indicated that they had to learn to teach the subject by themselves, "The school principal and vice-principal regarding curriculum only announced that we must teach EaCIS. They wanted us to determine everything on EaCIS by ourselves as English language teachers" [Dahlia, MAN B, FGD].

Melati had a similar experience, stating that she once asked the vice principal for advice regarding the EaCIS curriculum. However, she did not obtain adequate information as the vice principal also lacked a good understanding on EaCIS, "I was not satisfied as he did not understand about Cross Interest Subjects very well" [MAN B, FGD]. As a result, Melati reported that they then looked for information on EaCIS from other teachers at senior secondary schools under MoEC, "I asked an English language teacher under MoEC on how to teach EaCIS as teachers under MoEC always have better information" [Melati, MAN B, II].

Angrek added that the lack of information that the school principal and vice-principal obtained about EaCIS had caused the absence of support for teachers, "both school principal and vice-principal lack of understanding have made them unable to support us" [MAN B, FGD]. MAN A and MAN B schools had adopted EaCIS for about six and three years, respectively, but it is clear that the school principal and vice principal's inability to define the elements of EaCIS teaching have contributed towards teacher's confusion and led to a perceived lack of support by teachers.

Moreover, the two schools had different provisions in terms of the teaching documents for EaCIS. The school principal of MAN A required teachers to provide EaCIS teaching documents, as Mawar said that she and her friends bought the syllabus sold online to make the teaching documents as required by the school principal. She said that she had no choice other than to buy the syllabus herself for EaCIS, "If we did not buy the syllabus, we could not make teaching documents. Our school principal instructed all teachers to prepare the teaching documents at the beginning of the school year" [MAN A, II].

In contrast to MAN A, the school principal of MAN B did not require teachers to provide teaching documents for EaCIS. Dahlia said that the school principal did not ask the EaCIS teachers to prepare teaching document, and provided relief by only requesting teaching documents for compulsory English subject, "maybe because all compulsory English subject teachers in my school also teach EaCIS so our school principal does not mind if we do not give teaching documents for EaCIS" [MAN B, FGD].

### **3.3 Discussion**

This qualitative study was aimed at understanding teachers' perceptions and experiences of teaching EaCIS. The findings suggest two conclusions. First, the majority of teachers (one from MAN A and three from MAN B) believed that the introduction of EaCIS had provided an opportunity for teachers to improve students' English competence. These findings align with those of Sumayani et al. (2018), who found that EaCIS is expanding compulsory English teaching and that teachers perceived EaCIS as a subject that had the potential to improve students' English proficiency.

Second, despite the potential positive aspects of the introduction of EaCIS, all the teachers reported they lacked support from their schools and the government when first adopting EaCIS as a new subject and implementing it in the classroom. Teachers reported that they were left alone to find the information on EaCIS, including the syllabus and textbooks, and as a result, the curriculum was unevenly implemented and aligned across grade levels. Retnawati et al. (2016), Riafadilah & Dewi (2018), and Nasifah & Purwasih (2021) made similar discoveries, concluding teachers were not adequately prepared to implement innovations made in k13 due to the lack of professional development and supporting facilities and resources (Giawa, 2024; Masduqi & Prihananto, 2021) from the government. In addition, there was lack of need analysis done by the curriculum developer proven by the reduced teaching hour for compulsory English subject which caused the teachers used EaCIS teaching hour to deliver the content of compulsory English subject. This is in line with Poedjiastutie et al. (2018, 2021), Adnan & Prihananto (2022), and Jon et al. (2021) who mentioned that reduced English language subject teaching time in K13 exacerbated the absence of the curriculum direction of students' learning and communication goals.

Whilst teachers in this study acknowledged the value of EaCIS, the reality of implementing the changes and accessing adequate information and guidance resulted in problems for teachers and inconsistencies in interpretation and delivery of the curriculum in classrooms. In this sense, it is evident that the curriculum change process was not adequately accompanied by supporting factors affecting each phase of the change process (i.e., initiation, implementation, and continuation) as outlined by Fullan (2016). As a result, several recommendations are made in light of the findings from this study. Whilst these have relevance primarily to the implementation of EaCIS, they are also broadly applicable to any future curriculum change initiative.

First, in the initiation stage of any educational change process, teachers need access to training and information to help them understand what changes have been made and what they are required to do before they begin implementation. The teachers in this study reported they did not have access to this, nor did they know who to ask for help, instead they gathered information from colleagues, from the internet or through hearsay. As a result, they became uncertain of what was required and relied primarily on their instincts and adapting materials they had used previously. Hall & Hord (2020) and Zein et al. (2020) suggest that professional learning for teachers should be ongoing to accommodate their developing expertise and emergent needs over time and that it should be based on teachers' concerns and focused on the strategic change vision. Providing professional learning for teachers designed to address their needs at different phases of the change process would provide a valuable and much needed support mechanism for teachers as they endeavour to implement EaCIS. This could take a variety of forms, from structured information-based workshop activities in the initiation stage of the change process, to developing teacher led professional learning communities and opportunities for peer coaching during the ongoing implementation stages (Hall & Hord, 2020). Funded and centrally administered, with access for all, professional learning of this kind would help ensure consistent implementation over time, and better support teachers.

Second, the provision of adequate teaching facilities and resources to teach EaCIS are needed, one solution for example, might be for the government to provide free access to EaCIS textbooks for teachers and students. In addition, clear guidelines are also needed for the smooth

implementation of the curriculum. The provision of consistent EaCIS guidelines, which include EaCIS rationales, instructional materials, and teaching strategies would enable teachers to develop a shared vision of successful EaCIS teaching implementation and equip them with the appropriate resources to achieve this.

Third, as Fullan (2016) reminds us, support from the wider district and school principals is an essential component of implementing successful system change. He stated that the district administrators or school superintendents need to build the internal capacity of school principals, teacher leaders, and other school members. School superintendents need to build networks with superintendents from other districts to learn from each other and share and to become stronger partners with the ministry of education (Fullan, 2016). He also suggests that the school principal should make teacher learning and his or her own learning of an innovation a priority to stimulate ongoing school improvement. External to the school, school principals should also seek to partner with universities, communities, and the wider community to increase the school resources to implement and support change and the teachers making it (Fullan, 2016). Building networks could help facilitate increased teacher collaboration and sharing of strategies and resources and in turn systemically build professional learning communities, thereby supporting the change process.

## 5. Conclusion

In light of the current research findings, teachers believed that EaCIS was an opportunity to improve students' English competence. However, the teachers needed support from the government and school to make EaCIS teaching more practical such as obtaining curriculum guidelines, the syllabus and training. Overall, although teachers at MAN A appeared slightly more prepared and supported because they have implemented EaCIS three years earlier, teachers at MAN B tended to have more positive perceptions towards EaCIS teaching compared to MAN A teachers. Findings from this study have the potential to inform government policy and the future design and implementation of EaCIS and other curriculum change initiatives more widely. In other words, this small-scale study can serve as a starting point for the endeavour.

There are several limitations of this study. Firstly, this study lacks previous research on the topic. Secondly, there was no classroom observation to check the correctness of what the participants reported, Thirdly, the number of participants were limited.

Whilst this study has provided a valuable insight into the views of six teachers implementing EaCIS in Islamic secondary schools, larger studies involving multiple cohorts, using a range of different methods (quantitative, qualitative, and mixed) would provide a broader and more comprehensive view of teacher's perceptions and experiences. It is also recommended for the future researchers to investigate the implementation of EaCIS teaching in the Merdeka curriculum as the latest curriculum in Indonesia which also offer EaCIS for students.

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