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ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

Curriculum Management in Improving the Quality of Graduates at PKBM Manarul Hidayah Batumarta OKU

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to describe curriculum management in improving the quality of graduates at the Manarul Hidayah Batumarta OKU Community Learning Center (PKBM). The study used a descriptive qualitative approach. Data collection was conducted through interviews, observations, and documentation involving the PKBM head, curriculum managers, tutors, and students. The research findings indicate that curriculum management is carried out through planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating an integrated curriculum that combines general and religious learning, as well as skills. The curriculum is designed flexibly to meet student needs, referring to the Independent Curriculum and the tahfidz program. Evaluation is implemented periodically to accumulate levels of academic growth and student character. This curriculum management contributes to improving the quality of graduates who are religious, have character, and possess balanced academic competencies.

Keywords: Curriculum Management, Graduate Quality, Community Learning Center, Independent Curriculum, Character Education.



ABSTRAK

Tujuan penelitian ini yakni mendeskripsikan terkait manajemen kurikulum dalam meningkatkan mutu lulusan di PKBM Manarul Hidayah Batumarta OKU. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui wawancara dan observasi serta dokumentasi yang melibatkan kepala PKBM dan pengelola kurikulum serta tutor hingga siswa. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwasannya manajemen kurikulum diimplementasikan melalui prosesi perencanaan dan pengorganisasian serta pelaksanaan hingga evaluasi kurikulum yang terintegrasi antara pembelajaran umum dan keagamaan serta keterampilan. Kurikulum disusun secara fleksibel sesuai kebutuhan siswa dengan mengacu pada Kurikulum Merdeka dan program tahfidz. Evaluasi diimplikasikan berkala untuk mengakumulasi tingkatan pertumbuhan akademik dan karakter siswa. Manajemen kurikulum tersebut berkontribusi dalam meningkatkan mutu lulusan yang religius, berkarakter, dan memiliki kompetensi akademik yang seimbang.

Keywords: Manajemen Kurikulum, Mutu Lulusan, PKBM, Kurikulum Merdeka, Pendidikan Karakter

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1. INTRODUCTION

Education is viewed as an urgent need for every individual and becomes a strategic facilitator in supporting the quality of human resources. Society not only acquires academic knowledge but also obtains character strengthening, skills, and social values needed in community life. In Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the implementation of the National Education System, it is explained that education is carried out with the aim of developing student potential so that they possess spiritual-religious domains, self-control, intelligence, noble character, and skills needed for themselves and society. Therefore, education does not function merely for knowledge transfer but also as a means of creating human beings who are intellectually and morally qualified.

The development of globalization and technological transformation has brought major shifts in the educational paradigm, including in non-formal education. Educational practitioner institutions are required to produce graduates who are adaptive, competitive, and possess optimal character values. This condition places the curriculum as one of the main components in determining educational success. The role of the curriculum is not limited to being a compilation of subjects but also as a system that regulates objectives, content, processes, and evaluation of teaching to effectively realize educational goals. According to Rusman (2019, p. 3), the curriculum is viewed as a compilation of learning experiences constructed by educational institutions in forming students' abilities comprehensively. Thus, educational success is greatly influenced by how the curriculum is designed, implemented, and evaluated systematically through good curriculum management.

Curriculum management becomes an important aspect in educational management because it is directly related to the processes of planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating learning. Mujhirul Imam et al. (2025, p. 18) state that curriculum management is a systematic effort to ensure that the curriculum can be realized optimally and sustainably according to the expected

teaching output. Good curriculum management enables educational institutions to adjust student needs to the development of the times and community needs. Conversely, weak curriculum management can result in low quality of the learning process and the quality of graduates produced. Graduate quality is an important indicator of the success of an educational institution. Quality graduates are not limited to the accumulation of academic potential, but also character, life skills, and the ability to adapt in the social environment. According to Fadhli (2017, p. 37), indicators of education quality include learning outcomes, institutional leadership, curriculum relevance, community support, and strengthening student character. In the context of non-formal education, graduate quality becomes a particular challenge because educational institutions must be able to meet community learning needs with diverse student conditions. Therefore, curriculum management with flexibility, contextuality, and orientation to student needs becomes an urgent necessity. One of the non-formal educational institutions with these characteristics is PKBM Manarul Hidayah Batumarta OKU. This PKBM organizes the Package A equivalency education program by combining general learning, religious education, and strengthening student skills and character. The curriculum applied refers to the Independent Curriculum with adjustments to student needs and religious values. Students not only acquire academic teaching but also participate in the tahfidz Al-Qur'an program and religious character development. This condition shows the integration between general education and religious education that characterizes the institution. The existence of PKBM as a non-formal educational institution plays an urgent role in providing access to education for the community. According to Septiani et al. (2023, p. 42), the Community Learning Center (PKBM) is a non-formal educational institution with the function of providing flexible educational services according to community needs. PKBM is not limited to its role in improving students' academic potential, but also empowers the community through skills-based education and character development. Thus, PKBM's success in managing the curriculum becomes an important factor in improving graduate quality.

However, curriculum management in non-formal educational institutions still faces various challenges. The survey results of the Ministry of Education and Culture show that approximately 60% of educators experience difficulties in integrating learning materials with the applied curriculum due to limited resources and training (Nurbaya et al., 2024, p. 14). In addition, several previous studies indicate that curriculum implementation in equivalency education still faces obstacles in aspects of planning, organizing human resources, and developing teaching materials. This condition can result in less than optimal quality of graduates produced by non-formal educational institutions.

Research conducted by Atika Mega Jingga (2025, p. 65) shows that curriculum management in the Package C equivalency program requires the involvement of various parties so that curriculum implementation runs effectively and can improve education quality. That research emphasizes the importance of learning flexibility, contextual approaches, and curriculum adjustment to student needs. Meanwhile, research by Maman Suherman et al. (2024, p. 88) found that structured learning management can create characters with religious values and student discipline at PKBM. The research findings illustrate that good curriculum management has an influence on improving student quality both academically and in character. Nevertheless, research on curriculum management in non-formal education that combines general learning, religious education, and skills is still relatively limited, especially in the Package A equivalency program. Most previous studies have focused more on education quality in general or student character formation. Research is needed that significantly examines how curriculum management is implemented to improve

graduate quality at PKBM which has the characteristics of integrated general and religious curriculum.

Another problem that arises at PKBM Manarul Hidayah Batumarta OKU is the not yet optimal involvement of various parties in curriculum planning, the organization of tutors that is not fully in accordance with qualifications, and tutors' constraints in developing learning modules. Limited facilities and infrastructure are also challenges in supporting the learning process. If these conditions are not managed properly, they can affect the effectiveness of curriculum implementation and the quality of graduates produced. As an alternative solution, educational institutions need to implement systematic, participatory, and sustainable curriculum management. Rusman (2022, p. 112) states that curriculum management must involve the processes of design, implementation, supervision, and evaluation in an integrated manner so that educational output can be realized optimally. Strengthening curriculum management can be done through involving all stakeholders, improving tutor competence, developing contextual learning modules, and periodic evaluation of curriculum implementation. This solution is considered sustainable because it can help institutions adjust learning to student needs while improving graduate quality comprehensively.

Referring to the above description, this research is urgent to conduct in examining in depth how curriculum management is implemented in improving graduate quality at PKBM Manarul Hidayah Batumarta OKU. This research is expected to contribute theoretically to the development process in the study of curriculum management at the non-formal education level, as well as become a reference for evaluation studies and practical recommendations for PKBM managers in developing graduate quality through effective, flexible, and student-need-oriented curriculum management..

2. RESEARCH METHODS

The research approach used in this study is the qualitative research category of the case study type. The selection of this type of approach is based on the visibility of the research focus in examining in depth the phenomenon of curriculum management in improving graduate quality at PKBM Manarul Hidayah Batumarta OKU. According to Nasution (2023, p. 24), qualitative research aims to gain an understanding of social phenomena through direct observation of natural situations so that researchers can explore the meaning of the experiences and activities of research subjects. The case study research is used because the research is focused on one non-formal educational institution with special characteristics, namely the integration of general and religious learning and skills in the Package A equivalency program.

The research was conducted at PKBM Manarul Hidayah Batumarta OKU located in Marta Jaya Village, Lubuk Raja District, Ogan Komering Ulu Regency, South Sumatra. The research was conducted in 2026 during the data collection process. The research focus was directed at curriculum management with the stages of planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating the curriculum in supporting graduate quality.

The target or subject of the research is all curriculum management activities related to improving graduate quality. The purposive sampling technique was carried out through the qualification of informant involvement in curriculum management and implementation chosen as the sampling technique in this research. The research informants consisted of the PKBM head, curriculum

program chair, tutors, administrative staff, and students of the Package A equivalency program. The procedural stages of the research were carried out in several stages, namely the preparation stage, then the implementation stage, then the data analysis stage, and finally the report writing stage. In the first stage, the researcher conducted a preliminary study and prepared research instruments and obtained research permits. The second stage, namely implementation, was carried out by collecting data through observation, interviews, and documentation. Until the final stage, the research findings data were analyzed systematically with the output of research conclusion data.

Data collection for this research was accommodated through the use of observation, interview, and documentation instruments. The accommodation of data from direct observation of the teaching process and curriculum activities in the PKBM environment was carried out in the observation process. Two-way dialogue conducted in a semi-structured manner to produce in-depth information data regarding curriculum management from informants was carried out through interviews. The use of documentation aims to complement data on learning tools and teaching modules, activity schedules, organizational structure, and learning evaluation documents.

The main instrument in this research is the researcher themselves as the data accommodator which is then analyzed and interpreted as the acquisition of main data. Supporting instruments in this research are interview guidelines, observation sheets, and documentation formats organized based on the research focus.

The Miles and Huberman interactive model was used as the data analysis technique with the analysis structure including data reduction, data tabulation, and conclusion generalization. The data reduction process was carried out through continuous identification of data according to the research focus. Data tabulation was carried out through narrative description to facilitate data interpretation. Conclusion drawing was processed gradually based on the analysis findings during the research. The use of source triangulation and technique triangulation through the process of considering observation, interview, and documentation results was carried out to maintain data validity so that the data acquisition can be guaranteed for its validity.

3. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

a. Curriculum Planning at PKBM Manarul Hidayah Batumarta OKU

The research results show that curriculum planning at PKBM Manarul Hidayah Batumarta OKU is carried out by integrating the Independent Curriculum, diniyah education, tahfidz Al-Qur'an, and skills learning. Planning is carried out before the school year begins through a joint meeting of the PKBM head, curriculum program chair, and tutors. Curriculum planning is not limited to the orientation of academic achievement but also in creating religious character values for students.

The PKBM head stated that curriculum preparation considers community needs and parents' expectations for the balance of teaching general knowledge with religion. This is in line with Rusman's opinion (2019, p. 42) with his statement that curriculum planning must be prepared based on student needs, social environment, and educational goals to be achieved.

Based on the interview results, it is known that the preparation of learning tools is done independently by tutors through a module preparation team. The team is divided into two groups,

namely the general subject team and the diniyah subject team. The modules are prepared to suit the characteristics of students, most of whom are Al-Qur'an memorizers.

Observation results show that learning planning is prepared in the form of annual programs, semester programs, learning schedules, and learning modules. The learning schedule is divided into morning diniyah activities, afternoon general learning, and skills classes on certain days. This time organization shows the flexibility of the curriculum adjusted to student needs. This research finding is in line with the research of Atika Mega Jingga (2025, p. 65) which states that equivalency education institutions need to implement flexible and contextual curriculum planning to be able to meet the needs of heterogeneous students. In the context of PKBM Manarul Hidayah, curriculum flexibility is visible in the integration of the tahfidz program with academic learning.

However, the research found several obstacles in the curriculum planning stage. One of the main obstacles is the not yet optimal involvement of all parties in curriculum preparation. Some tutors only act as learning implementers without being actively involved in curriculum decision-making. In addition, limited training on the development of the Independent Curriculum causes some tutors to still experience difficulties in preparing learning modules based on learning outcomes.

This condition is in accordance with the opinion of Nurbaya et al. (2024, p. 14) which states that many educators experience difficulties in integrating learning materials with the curriculum due to limited training and resources.

Referring to the research findings, it can be understood that curriculum planning at PKBM Manarul Hidayah has led to the principles of participatory and contextual curriculum management. The curriculum is designed not only as a fulfillment of national education standards but also to answer community needs for education that integrates knowledge and religious values.

b. Curriculum Organizing in Supporting Graduate Quality

Curriculum organizing at PKBM Manarul Hidayah Batumarta OKU is carried out through the division of tutor tasks, grouping of subjects, and arrangement of teaching activity schedules. This organizing aims so that curriculum implementation runs systematically and can support the improvement of graduate quality. The research results show that the curriculum organizational structure consists of the PKBM head, curriculum program chair, general subject tutors, diniyah tutors, and administrative staff. Each tutor has responsibility in preparing learning tools and implementing the teaching and learning process according to their respective fields.

Based on the interview results, curriculum organizing is carried out by considering tutor abilities and student needs. However, it was found that some tutors are responsible for subjects that are not fully in accordance with their educational backgrounds. This occurs due to the limited number of teaching staff at PKBM. This finding is in accordance with the research of Ahmad Saiful Ansori et al. (2022, p. 73) which shows that one of the obstacles to curriculum implementation in non-formal educational institutions is the limitation of teaching staff who are competent. The mismatch of tutor educational backgrounds can affect learning effectiveness if not balanced with training and competency development.

Despite these limitations, curriculum organizing at PKBM Manarul Hidayah still runs quite effectively because of cooperation between tutors. Tutors help each other in preparing learning tools and developing teaching materials. In addition, the PKBM head regularly coordinates to ensure the learning process runs according to institutional goals. Observation results show that learning organizing is carried out in an integrated manner between general and diniyah education.

Students receive religious teaching in the morning and general subjects in the afternoon. On Fridays, activities are focused on skills learning and empowerment as described in detail in Figure 2 below.

According to Mulyasa (2023, p. 56), curriculum organizing must be able to create integration between educational output, teaching materials, and student needs. In addition, curriculum organizing at PKBM Manarul Hidayah also pays attention to the formation of a religious learning culture. Before teaching begins, students perform dhuha prayer, morning dhikr, memorize prayers, and tahfidz Al-Qur'an. These activities become an urgent part of creating student character values. The research findings show that curriculum organizing is not limited to the function of regulating teaching administration but also builds a learning environment that supports the character and spiritual development of students. Ultimately, graduate quality is not only measured in academic aspects but also in the religious and moral abilities of students.

c. Curriculum Implementation in Improving Graduate Competence

Curriculum implementation at PKBM Manarul Hidayah Batumarta OKU is carried out through integrated learning between general subjects, religious education, and skills. The learning process is designed so that students obtain contextual and meaningful learning experiences. Based on observation results, learning activities begin in the morning with religious activities such as dhuha prayer, dhikr, and tahfidz Al-Qur'an. After that, students participate in general teaching such as Indonesian Language, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Pancasila Education.

Interview results show that learning implementation uses a flexible and contextual approach. Tutors try to adjust learning methods to student conditions so that they are more effective in absorbing material content. Some tutors use discussion, demonstration, and direct practice methods in learning activities. This finding is in accordance with the opinion of Lulu Yuliani (2016, p. 88) which states that learning at PKBM must be flexible, contextual, and based on community needs. This approach is important to support student motivation in non-formal education practices. In addition to academic learning, PKBM Manarul Hidayah also instills character education through daily activities. Students are accustomed to discipline, independence, and responsibility through worship activities and group work. Character learning is carried out in an integrated manner in all educational activities.

The research findings indicate that curriculum implementation provides positive output for student development. Students not only experience improvement in academic competence but also have the ability to read Al-Qur'an, memorize surahs, and good discipline attitudes.

However, the research found obstacles in the curriculum implementation process, namely limited teaching facilities and infrastructure. Learning spaces and teaching media that are still limited cause the learning process to not be fully optimal. In addition, some tutors still experience difficulties in developing learning modules based on the Independent Curriculum. This condition is in line with Fadhl's opinion (2017, p. 39) which states that education quality is influenced by the availability of facilities and infrastructure and the quality of teaching staff. Therefore, improving learning facilities and tutor competence becomes an important need for PKBM development.

On the other hand, the support of parents and the community is an urgent factor for the success of curriculum implementation. Parents provide support for educational programs that integrate general knowledge and religion because they are considered capable of shaping children's

character better. Community support is also seen through participation in skills and student empowerment activities. The research results show that curriculum implementation at PKBM Manarul Hidayah has different characteristics compared to formal education in general. The integration between academic learning, tahfidz, and skills becomes the main strength of the institution in forming graduate quality that is religious and competent.

d. Curriculum Evaluation in Ensuring Graduate Quality

Curriculum evaluation at PKBM Manarul Hidayah Batumarta OKU is carried out periodically to determine the effectiveness of learning implementation and student development. Evaluation is carried out through learning outcome assessment, tutor evaluation meetings, and monitoring of learning activities. Based on interview results, learning evaluation is carried out every two months through written tests, practice, and observation of student attitudes.

In addition to evaluating learning outcomes, the PKBM head also supervises tutors to ensure the teaching process runs according to curriculum objectives. Supervision is implemented through classroom observation and routine discussions regarding learning obstacles. This research finding is in line with Omar Hamalik's research (2021, p. 102) that curriculum evaluation must be carried out continuously so that educational institutions can make continuous program improvements. The function of evaluation is not limited to the accumulation of student learning output but also accommodates the quantity of curriculum implementation effectiveness.

The research findings reveal that curriculum evaluation supports the improvement of graduate quality. Through periodic evaluation, tutors can identify student weaknesses and improve learning strategies. Evaluation also helps institutions develop programs that are sustainable with student needs. However, the research found that curriculum evaluation has not been fully documented systematically. Some evaluations are still carried out simply through informal discussions among tutors.

Despite these limitations, curriculum evaluation at PKBM Manarul Hidayah still plays an important role in maintaining graduate quality. Evaluation is carried out not only in the academic domain but also on character development and religious abilities of students. Based on observation results, graduates of PKBM Manarul Hidayah show quite good academic abilities and have religious character and high discipline. Students are skilled in reading and memorizing Al-Qur'an, also understand the basics of general knowledge, and have polite and courteous attitudes in daily life. The research findings support the research of Maman Suherman et al. (2024, p. 90) which states that structured learning management at PKBM is able to shape character and improve student quality. Thus, curriculum evaluation becomes one of the important factors in ensuring the quality of non-formal education graduates.

Discussion

The research results show that curriculum management at PKBM Manarul Hidayah Batumarta OKU is implemented through four foundational stages of urgent management including planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating. These four functions are interrelated in supporting the improvement of graduate quality. Curriculum planning is carried out flexibly by integrating the Independent Curriculum, diniyah education, and life skills. Curriculum organizing is implemented by classifying tutor tasks and arranging integrated teaching schedules. Curriculum implementation emphasizes the balance between academics and religious character.

Participatory program evaluation can help improve the effectiveness of educational activities because it involves all elements with an interest, including the community and students. Therefore, curriculum management at PKBM Manarul Hidayah Batumarta OKU needs to be equipped with continuous evaluation to improve graduate quality (Hermawan et al., 2026, p. 31). Reviewing from a theoretical aspect, the research results strengthen the conceptual framework of curriculum management presented by Rusman (2022, p. 112) that educational success is influenced by the institution's potential in organizing the curriculum systematically and sustainably. In the context of non-formal education, flexibility and contextuality of the curriculum are important factors supporting the growth of graduate quality.

This research also views the integration of general and religious education as the main strength of PKBM Manarul Hidayah in forming graduates who are balanced between intellectual and spiritual. This is sustainable with the needs of modern society which not only requires academic potential but also moral character and strong religious values. Therefore, the utilization of local potential and the development of community needs-based programs can strengthen the sustainability of education and social empowerment. Therefore, curriculum management at PKBM Manarul Hidayah Batumarta OKU needs to be adjusted to the conditions and needs of the local community so that graduate quality increases further (Hermawan et al., 2025, p. 307). Thus, curriculum management at PKBM Manarul Hidayah Batumarta OKU can be said to have contributed positively to the growth of graduate quality although there are still several obstacles such as limited facilities, module development, and tutor competence that need to be continuously improved through training and sustainable evaluation.

5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Curriculum management at PKBM Manarul Hidayah Batumarta OKU was implemented through integrated planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating to improve graduate quality. It balances academic, religious, and life skills, shaping graduates with intellectual, spiritual, and social character. Planning was flexible, integrating the Independent Curriculum, diniyah, tahfidz, and skills. Organizing relied on cooperation between managers and tutors despite limitations. Implementation combined academic, religious, and skills learning contextually. Periodic evaluation supported continuous improvement of teaching and curriculum.

Suggestions include strengthening tutor and stakeholder participation in curriculum planning, providing continuous professional development in curriculum and module preparation, improving learning facilities and infrastructure, and documenting evaluation systematically with clear instruments and follow-up. Future researchers are encouraged to study curriculum management across PKBMs comparatively or with mixed methods, linking strategies to measurable graduate outcomes.

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