

BUILDING A QUALITY CURRICULUM: OPTIMIZING THE CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT PROCESS IN MADRASAH ALIYAH

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Abstract

Optimizing curriculum management is a strategic step in supporting the success of superior education programs at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Pekanbaru. This study is motivated by the importance of implementing effective curriculum management to improve the quality of education, especially in the aspects of planning, development, implementation, and evaluation. This study aims to analyze the optimization of the curriculum management process at the madrasah. The approach used is qualitative with a case study design. Data collection techniques through direct observation and in-depth interviews. Data were collected from 2 people, namely the head of curriculum and teachers, then analyzed using data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results of the study indicate that curriculum planning is carried out collaboratively by involving various stakeholders to ensure alignment with student needs and the vision of the madrasah. Program implementation is closely monitored through routine supervision, with significant improvements in curriculum implementation based on the results of this supervision. Curriculum evaluation is carried out comprehensively, using learning outcome data and input from various parties, such as supervisors and senior teachers, who make important contributions to program improvement. The development of superior education programs focuses on the integration of religious values, academic enrichment, and the addition of relevant extracurricular activities to support student development holistically. This study concludes that optimal curriculum management plays a significant role in supporting the success of the curriculum and superior education programs. The implications of this study are the need for increased training for teachers and curriculum staff, as well as strengthening data-based evaluation systems to maintain the sustainability of superior education programs.

Keywords: Quality Curriculum, Optimization, Curriculum Management, Madrasah Aliyah

Abstrak

Optimalisasi manajemen kurikulum menjadi langkah strategis dalam mendukung keberhasilan program pendidikan unggulan di Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Pekanbaru. Penelitian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh pentingnya penerapan manajemen kurikulum yang efektif untuk meningkatkan kualitas pendidikan, khususnya dalam aspek perencanaan, pengembangan, implementasi, dan evaluasi. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis optimalisasi proses manajemen kurikulum di madrasah tersebut. Pendekatan yang digunakan adalah kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus. Teknik pengumpulan data melalui observasi langsung dan wawancara mendalam. Data dikumpulkan dari 2 orang yaitu kepala kurikulum dan guru, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perencanaan kurikulum dilakukan secara kolaboratif dengan melibatkan berbagai pemangku kepentingan untuk memastikan keselarasan dengan kebutuhan siswa dan visi madrasah. Implementasi program diawasi secara ketat melalui supervisi rutin, dengan perbaikan yang signifikan dalam pelaksanaan kurikulum berdasarkan hasil pengawasan tersebut. Evaluasi kurikulum dilakukan secara komprehensif, menggunakan data hasil belajar dan masukan dari berbagai pihak, seperti supervisor dan guru-guru senior, yang memberikan kontribusi penting dalam penyempurnaan program. Pengembangan program pendidikan unggulan terfokus pada integrasi nilai-nilai agama, pengayaan akademik, dan penambahan kegiatan ekstrakurikuler yang relevan untuk mendukung perkembangan siswa secara holistik. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa manajemen kurikulum yang optimal berperan signifikan dalam mendukung keberhasilan kurikulum dan program pendidikan unggulan. Implikasi penelitian ini adalah perlunya peningkatan pelatihan bagi guru dan staf kurikulum, serta penguatan sistem evaluasi berbasis data untuk menjaga keberlanjutan program pendidikan unggulan.

Kata Kunci: Kurikulum Berkualitas, Optimalisasi, Manajemen Kurikulum, Madrasah Aliyah

A. Introduction

Education has a very important role in building quality human resources, and curriculum management is a key factor in achieving educational goals (Riyadi et al., 2023). At MAN 1 Pekanbaru, optimal curriculum management is one of the main strategies in supporting the success of the superior education programs they run. A good curriculum not only prioritizes planning and implementing learning, but must also be able to adapt to student needs, developments in the era, and global demands (Rochaendi, 2022). This is in line with the view of (Rolan, 2022), which emphasizes the importance of structured and adaptive curriculum management in creating a learning ecosystem that supports the development of student potential to the maximum. Therefore, good curriculum management includes four main aspects, namely planning, development, implementation, and evaluation (Triwiyanto, 2021).

Obstacles in curriculum management in Indonesia, including at MAN 1 Pekanbaru, often include limited resources, lack of training for teachers, and minimal supervision of the implementation of superior programs. (Aminah & Sya'bani, 2023). In addition, (Arifai, 2018) found a gap between the planned curriculum and that

implemented in the field, which can affect the quality of education. This shows a gap between theory and practice in curriculum management, especially in educational institutions that integrate local and religious values. Therefore, it is important to evaluate the extent to which curriculum management at MAN 1 Pekanbaru has been optimized to achieve holistic educational goals.

However, most of the existing studies emphasize more on general curriculum management and do not focus on the relationship between educational policies and their implementation in the field, especially in educational institutions that combine local and religious values, such as those found in MAN 1 Pekanbaru. This study aims to fill this gap by providing deeper insights into curriculum management that is not only effective from an academic perspective, but also in accordance with the local social and cultural context.

This study aims to analyze the process of curriculum planning, implementation, evaluation and development at MAN 1 Pekanbaru in the hope of providing recommendations to improve the quality of education at the madrasah. By using observation and interview methods, this study not only explores curriculum management practices but also identifies the obstacles faced and relevant solutions, as suggested (Susilawati, 2021), which emphasizes the importance of planning involving collaboration between stakeholders and comprehensive evaluation to address these problems.

Furthermore, the optimization of curriculum management not only serves as a foundation in improving the quality of education, but also as an instrument in building a competent generation at the national and global levels (Nurmayani, 2024). In this era of globalization, educational institutions such as MAN 1 Pekanbaru are required to be able to design superior educational programs that are not only relevant to the development of science but also in line with moral and religious values. The curriculum management model that is successfully implemented in one institution can be an inspiration for other institutions, especially in the context of education based on local and religious values (Andriyan & Yoenanto 2022).

This research is expected to contribute to a deeper understanding of the importance of synergy between policy, human resources, and technology in supporting curriculum management. In addition, the results of this study can be a basis for developing curriculum management theory and practical applications that can be applied in various other educational institutions.

The practical contribution of this research will provide concrete recommendations for other educational institutions in designing a curriculum that is more relevant to students' needs, by considering the role of technology and local values. In addition, this research is expected to be a model that can be applied in various educational institutions that have similar characteristics to MAN 1 Pekanbaru.

The main objective of this study is to provide a deeper understanding of the strategy for optimizing curriculum management at MAN 1 Pekanbaru and provide relevant recommendations to support the success of superior education. In addition, this study aims to identify factors that influence the effectiveness of curriculum management, both internally (such as teacher capacity and facilities) and externally (such as national education policies). Thus, the results of this study are expected to be a reference for improving curriculum management in other educational institutions with similar characteristics.

B. Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design. Data collection techniques through direct observation and in-depth interviews to understand the optimization of curriculum management at the research location at MAN 1 Pekanbaru. Observations were conducted to directly observe various processes related to curriculum management, such as planning through program preparation meetings, development of superior education programs integrated into learning activities, implementation of the class curriculum, and evaluation of superior education programs through evaluation meetings and analysis of student learning outcomes. In-depth interviews were conducted with 2 participants involved in curriculum management, including teachers and curriculum heads, who were selected based on their roles in curriculum planning, implementation, evaluation and development.

The data obtained were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques, which include three stages: (1) data reduction to filter relevant information, (2) data presentation in the form of thematic narratives, and (3) drawing conclusions and verification to find patterns and main findings. In addition, to increase the validity of the data, this study used data triangulation, by comparing the results of observations and interviews, as well as member-checking, where initial findings were validated with the participants involved. This method was chosen because of its ability to provide an in-depth understanding of the curriculum management optimization process and the dynamics that occur at MAN 1 Pekanbaru.

C. Results and Discussion

1. Curriculum Management

The term management comes from Latin, namely "*manus*" which means hand, and "*agere*" which means to do. The combination of these two words forms "*managere*", which means to regulate or control. Etymologically, the word curriculum comes from Greek. The word *curir* means "runner," while *curere* means "race place." In Ancient Roman times, the term curriculum referred to the distance that a runner had to travel from the starting line to the finish line (Hidayati, et. al, 2021) ; (Pratama & Harun, 2025). According to Law No. 20 of

2003 concerning the National Education System, the curriculum is defined as a series of plans and arrangements that include objectives, learning materials, content, and methods used as guidelines in implementing learning activities to achieve the desired educational goals (Hikmah, 2020) .

Curriculum management is a curriculum management system that is carried out cooperatively, comprehensively, structured, and systematically to achieve predetermined goals. In its implementation, this management refers to the school-based approach (MBS) and the Education Unit Level Curriculum (KTSP) (Rusdiana & Ratnawulan, 2021) . Therefore, although educational institutions are given autonomy to manage the curriculum independently, they must still consider the needs and achievement of targets in accordance with the vision and mission of the institution, without ignoring applicable national policies. For this reason, in the education process, curriculum management must be implemented so that curriculum planning, development, implementation, and evaluation can take place effectively, efficiently, and optimally. This aims to maximize the use of various learning resources, learning experiences, and curriculum components (Nasbi, 2017) .

Curriculum management at MAN 1 Pekanbaru combines the national curriculum with a special curriculum from the Ministry of Religion for madrasas. In addition, this madrasa also innovates its curriculum to meet the special needs of madrasas. MAN 1 Pekanbaru designs a curriculum that is flexible, innovative, and based on the needs of madrasas. Collaboration between P2M (madrasah quality assurance center) and the curriculum team is the key to success in curriculum planning and development, which is designed to provide a richer and more relevant learning experience for students, as stated by the head of curriculum staff "Curriculum development at this madrasa involves P2M collaborating with the curriculum team. P2M is not regulated in a formal structure, but we create it ourselves to meet our needs. Collaboration between P2M and the curriculum plays a very important role in designing programs that are in accordance with the needs of the madrasa". This madrasa pays close attention to curriculum planning, development, and implementation so that it runs well and can meet all the needs of its students. After all the planned curriculum is running, this madrasa also conducts an evaluation involving supervision, so that by holding this evaluation, the madrasa can further improve its curriculum program.

Previous research (Shidiq, 2023) in the journal "*Optimization of Curriculum Management in Improving the Quality of Learning in Senior High Schools (SMA) Bengkulu*" shows that curriculum management in SMA Bengkulu focuses more on implementing the existing curriculum, with little innovation and development carried out. Although there are efforts to improve the quality of learning,

innovation in curriculum management is still limited, and there is great room for further development in this aspect.

Meanwhile, the results of this study revealed that in MAN 1 Pekanbaru, the curriculum not only follows the national curriculum but is also developed more flexibly and innovatively, involving the Madrasah Quality Assurance Center (P2M) to adjust the curriculum to the specific needs of the madrasah. Collaboration between P2M and the curriculum team at MAN 1 Pekanbaru is a key factor in creating curriculum innovations that are more focused and relevant to student needs and the madrasah context. This finding indicates a more significant application of innovation in curriculum management compared to the findings in Shidiq's (2023) study, which has not emphasized much on the development of local innovation in its curriculum system. The curriculum management process at MAN 1 Pekanbaru can be seen in the following figure:

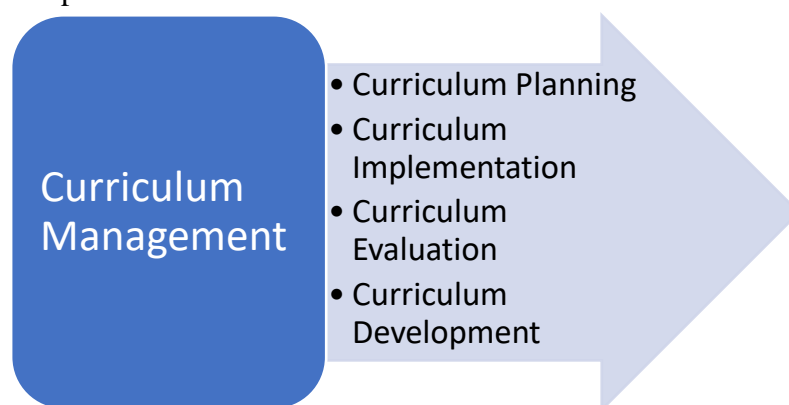


Figure 1. Curriculum Management Process

a. Curriculum planning

Curriculum planning is the initial step in compiling or formulating various curriculum concepts, which will then become educational programs in schools or madrasahs (Maharani & Pratama, 2021) . Curriculum planning at MAN 1 Pekanbaru is designed to meet students' learning needs comprehensively and innovatively. This madrasah implements a combination of the national curriculum, the curriculum from the Ministry of Religion, and an innovative curriculum designed according to local needs. The education curriculum must be adjusted to the needs and characteristics of students. Therefore, its preparation needs to consider various relevant factors (Imani, Wakhid, & Mamlukhah, 2024) . The planning process involves collaboration between various parties, including the Madrasah Quality Assurance Center (P2M), deputy principal of madrasah, curriculum staff, principal, and a team appointed through a Decree (SK).

This process begins with the preparation of Document 1, which contains technical guidelines and curriculum rules, and is equipped with innovations in the form of additional study time outside the standard allocation of 52 hours per week. In addition, this madrasah offers 10 superior programs, such as the tahfiz program that completes memorization of the Qur'an in 1.5 years, international classes, research classes, multimedia classes, and entrepreneurship classes. In determining learning objectives, the criteria used include relevance to student needs, achievement of standards stated in Document 1, and evaluation of learning effectiveness based on the results of the designed program. One of the uniqueness of MAN 1 Pekanbaru is the existence of P2M, a special unit formed to focus on curriculum development according to the needs of the madrasah, although it is not regulated in formal regulations. With this approach, MAN 1 Pekanbaru is able to create education that is focused, holistic, and relevant to the development of the times, making it a pioneer in curriculum management innovation at the madrasah level.

Curriculum planning at MAN 1 Pekanbaru shows a commitment to providing innovative and relevant education to the needs of the times. By involving various parties and offering superior programs, this madrasah is able to create a learning experience that is not only focused on academics, but also on developing students' life skills. This approach is expected to be a model for other madrasahs to develop adaptive and progressive curricula (Abidin, Rokhmatulloh, & Wardi, 2021). Effective curriculum planning has a significant positive impact on the quality of education at MAN 1 Pekanbaru. This includes achieving more focused learning objectives, improving teaching quality, developing student potential, and using more efficient resources. Good curriculum planning also encourages collaboration between teachers, increases student engagement, and allows for more accurate evaluation. Thus, good curriculum planning is a major factor in creating an effective, consistent learning environment that supports the achievement of educational goals (Andini, 2019).

b. Implementation of the curriculum

According to the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, implementation means "to bring something into reality" or the application of something that produces an effect (Susilowati, 2022). In the context of the curriculum, implementation can be interpreted as the application of a written curriculum to learning activities. This is in line with Miller and Seller's view that "in some cases, implementation is identical to teaching" (Harahap, Lubis, Syafaruddin, & Syukri, 2022). Furthermore, curriculum implementation refers to the application of curriculum concepts, ideas, or structures to

learning practices, which can include various new creativity, with the aim of changing the group of people involved in the learning process (Hidayati et al., 2021) .

The implementation of the curriculum at MAN 1 Pekanbaru school is carried out through careful planning and flexible implementation, focusing on the needs and potential of students. The curriculum is designed for one academic year but is implemented per semester, with special programs such as Olympiad classes that allow students to focus on one field of study to achieve achievements at national and international levels. For example, students who take part in OSN only study material that is relevant to their competition, and after the competition is over, learning refocuses on other material. The curriculum is also designed for flexibility, allowing adjustments to the dynamics of student needs and changing situations, such as online learning or special projects. Effective implementation of this curriculum not only helps students achieve academic achievement, but also develops practical and social skills, preparing them for the challenges of life outside of school (Sugianto, 2024) .

Implementation The new curriculum, as stipulated by the Independent Curriculum, presents various challenges, especially in changing the learning paradigm from conventional methods that focus more on delivering material and tests to an approach that places students at the center of learning with teachers acting as facilitators. (Solikhah & Wahyuni, 2023) . The main challenge lies in the readiness and competence of teachers in adapting this new method, because many teachers are accustomed to traditional teaching methods and need time to understand and implement a more interactive curriculum, as conveyed by the head of curriculum staff " for example, the first challenge may be something new that we don't understand, then in the end in class it goes back to being competitive", a teacher also said "sometimes we find it a little difficult when there is a new curriculum implemented in this school" . To overcome this, madrasas such as MAN 1 hold workshops, technical guidance, and intensive training, as well as train teachers in creating learning modules that replace RPP. In addition, teachers are required to be able to develop skills in exploring the class more creatively and actively, and have strong self-motivation in order to implement the new curriculum effectively, so that the learning process can run according to the demands of a more dynamic curriculum.

c. Curriculum evaluation

Curriculum evaluation is an important step to ensure that the curriculum implemented is effective and in accordance with learning objectives (Julaen,

Supardi, & Lubna, 2024) . Evaluation at MAN 1 begins with supervision carried out by supervisors, senior teachers, or madrasah principals to monitor whether the results of training such as workshops and technical guidance are being implemented properly by teachers in class, as stated by the head of curriculum staff "evaluation needs to be carried out to ensure whether the results of technical guidance or workshops are applied in class, there must be supervision to carry out the evaluation, then if something is found that is not appropriate, coaching must be carried out".

Evaluation of learning outcomes not only measures student achievement through exams, but also active student involvement and application of knowledge in real situations (Laksono & Izzulka, 2022) . If problems or discrepancies are found in implementation, coaching is needed through additional training or mentoring to help teachers improve their teaching methods. Continuous evaluation and supervision allow for continuous improvement of the curriculum, ensuring that the curriculum remains relevant to current developments and student needs, and improving the quality of learning in schools. (Muaripin & Muaripin, 2024) .

Indicators in curriculum evaluation at MAN 1 Pekanbaru include several important aspects, such as achievement of learning objectives, completeness of learning administration, implementation of appropriate learning steps, and assessment of student attitudes and character. Achievement of learning objectives is measured through students' understanding of the material and its application in real situations, while completeness of administration includes the Learning Implementation Plan (RPP) and modules used as guidelines (Addaraini & Mufidah, 2022) . Teachers must also ensure that learning steps are implemented in accordance with the established curriculum, prioritizing active student involvement. In addition, assessment of student attitudes and character is very important to ensure that the curriculum does not only focus on academic achievement, but also on the formation of student character (Taufik, 2022) . This evaluation allows schools to identify areas that need improvement and ensure that the learning process runs according to the expected goals, both in terms of academics and student character (Saputra & Note, 2024) .

d. Curriculum development

School-Based Curriculum Development or Madrasah can be interpreted as an effort to develop a curriculum with a *bottom-up approach* or school-based curriculum, which provides full opportunity for schools or madrasahs to play an active role in the curriculum development process (Rahmawati, Apriliani, & Diantara, 2021) . This approach is in contrast to the central or

top-down approach , which tends to minimally involve schools or madrasahs in decision-making related to curriculum development (Arifai, 2018) .

Curriculum development at MAN 1 Pekanbaru focuses on innovation based on student needs , interests, and potential, while maintaining the basic elements of national curriculum standards. Some of the leading programs implemented include tahfiz classes that allow students to complete the memorization of the Qur'an in one year with full focus, Olympiad classes designed to prepare students for academic competitions without burdening them with full compulsory material. In addition, MAN 1 Pekanbaru eliminates traditional major groupings (science/social science) and replaces them with interest-based classes such as robotics, multimedia, research, and entrepreneurship, ensuring that students get a learning experience that suits their talents. Each student goes through a selection process to ensure proper placement according to their potential and learning style. This program not only supports students' academic and non-academic achievements, but also equips them with relevant 21st-century skills, such as critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and leadership, which are important capital to face future challenges.

MAN 1 Pekanbaru also ensures that the curriculum developed is in accordance with the needs of students, such as by holding an acceleration class. The acceleration class at MAN 1 Pekanbaru is an educational innovation designed to meet the needs of students with high academic potential, allowing them to complete their education in 2 years without reducing the quality of learning. This program begins with a strict selection that includes academic ability tests and student potential assessments, ensuring that only students who are mentally and academically ready can take part in this intensive learning. The curriculum in the acceleration class is designed flexibly to support students' fast learning styles, one proof of the success of this program is the presence of students who became the youngest students at Padjadjaran University at the age of 16, as stated by the head of the curriculum staff "At MAN 1 Pekanbaru and last year one of our children became the youngest student at Unpad, still 16 years old, meaning that the school has provided opportunities for children who have that potential according to their needs and abilities". With this program, MAN 1 provides opportunities for students to save time, optimize potential, and achieve achievements at national and international levels, making it a real step in meeting relevant and personal educational needs.

2. MAN 1 Pekanbaru's Leading Education Program

The flagship program in schools is an integral part of the curriculum designed to improve students' skills, knowledge, and character in various fields (Aziz & Widodo, 2023) . The flagship programs implemented in this school focus on developing students' competencies holistically, including academic aspects, life skills, and strengthening religion. Each program has a clear goal and contributes to achieving the established curriculum (Qomarudin, 2020) . MAN 1 Pekanbaru has 10 flagship programs, namely the Middle East, Cambridge, information technology, robotics, tahfiz, multimedia, acceleration, research, entrepreneurship, and science olympiad which are designed to meet students' needs.

This flagship program has contributed to the achievement of curriculum objectives (Masduqi, 2021) . For example, the tahfiz program, the Qur'an tahfiz program is an effort made consciously and planned to create a learning process to memorize the Qur'an in memory, so that it can be pronounced or pronounced correctly orally, using certain methods continuously (Ismael, Muazza, & Sulistiyo, 2023) . The tahfiz program aims to produce hafiz and hafizah who are able to memorize the Al-Qur'an with a target of 30 juz in one year. Students who take part in this program do not study other subjects for a year, their main focus is memorization. This program makes a major contribution to the achievement of the curriculum, especially in developing character, student spirituality and also having good memorization (Fitriani, Ilmi, & Zakir, 2024) . By producing qualified hafiz-hafizah, schools can prove their commitment to religious education (Rustiana & Ma`arif, 2022) . Then the robotic program, in today's digital and technological era, robotics skills are very important. The robotics program in this school aims to teach students practical skills in assembling and programming robots. This gives students an edge in technology, which is very relevant to the needs of the global job market. This program contributes to curriculum development by providing technical skills that are in line with current developments (Sanam, Veronika, Prassetiawan, & Iman, 2022) .

The leading programs at MAN 1 have characteristics that distinguish them from other schools. One of them is a strong focus on religious education, which is the foundation of all programs offered. While many other high schools only implement the national curriculum without any specialization or additional expertise. In teaching and learning activities, it is very important to design a learning model that can simultaneously develop two aspects of life skills, namely hard skills (academic and vocational skills) and soft skills (social and personality competencies) (Faifatur R., 2022) . MAN 1 combines the national curriculum with the need for life skills *that* are relevant to the times, as stated by the head of the curriculum staff "we are a public school based on religion, but that's what we implemented the leading program by differentiating it by providing each of the

program's *life skills* ". Programs such as robotics and multimedia not only provide students with practical knowledge and skills, but also ensure that students are ready to face future challenges by having advantages that distinguish them from other students (Supriyanta, 2021) . Thus, MAN 1 not only prepares students to continue their education, but also equips them with the skills and character needed in the professional world.

The flagship programs at MAN 1 are designed to be integrated with the curriculum implemented in the school, both the national curriculum and additional curriculum that is tailored to the needs and abilities of students. Each flagship program, such as robotics, tahfiz, and entrepreneurship, has a specific focus that prioritizes learning in subjects that support student participation in competitions or the development of specific skills. For example, robotics classes focus more on relevant robotics and physics materials, while general subjects such as PPKN or arts are only taught for a limited time, with assessments based on practice. This program ensures that each student gets the opportunity to develop their maximum potential according to their chosen field of expertise. The school also has the authority to adjust the curriculum to meet student needs and contribute to curriculum development, providing flexibility in determining learning priorities according to the flagship programs being run, as stated by the head of curriculum staff "our program does contribute well to the development of the curriculum that we do because we get the achievements we expect."

To support the development of the curriculum and flagship programs, the school routinely holds workshops and training to improve teacher competency, as well as innovate the curriculum that is implemented. In collecting feedback from students and parents, MAN 1 pays close attention to the importance of transparent and open communication. The school actively involves parents in every decision and program change, considering that many parents have critical thinking and high levels of education. Feedback from parents is used as evaluation material to ensure that the programs implemented in the school are in accordance with the expectations and needs of students. Thus, the school strives to maintain the quality of education and ensure that every step taken has been carefully planned and well understood by parents and students.

In addition, evaluation is also carried out by monitoring the achievement of each program in a year. If deficiencies or discrepancies with expectations are found, the school immediately communicates with parents to find solutions. In this case, input from parents is very important to improve the program to suit their needs and expectations. (Hakim, 2019) . For example, multimedia classes that were originally intended for students with abilities in social studies, have now been improved by calling them multimedia classes, so that there is no longer discrimination between majors and students can develop according to their

interests and potential. Through evaluation, open communication, and program adjustments, schools strive to continuously improve and develop existing programs to make them more relevant and beneficial to students .

3. Supporting Factors and Challenges to Optimizing Curriculum Management

Supporting factors for optimizing curriculum management at MAN 1 Pekanbaru:

a. Flexible and Responsive Curriculum Innovation

MAN 1 Pekanbaru offers classes with special programs (such as tahfiz, robotics, olympiad, multimedia) that suit the interests and abilities of students. The curriculum is adjusted to provide space for maximum exploration of student potential, such as in the tahfiz class program that focuses on memorizing the Qur'an.

b. Collaboration of Curriculum Team and P2M

Collaboration between the curriculum team and the Madrasah Quality Assurance Center (P2M) ensures curriculum development that is appropriate to student needs, based on the results of analysis and evaluation from P2M that focus on the contextual needs of the madrasah.

c. Compliance with National and Local Standards

Although following the national curriculum, MAN 1 Pekanbaru adapts to local innovations, such as extending class hours to add special programs according to student needs, providing a richer and more relevant learning experience.

d. Various Featured Programs

A variety of excellent programs, such as robotics, entrepreneurship, multimedia, and international classes, are provided to provide a variety of choices that suit students' interests. This also includes a faster tahfiz program, as well as research and olympiad classes that develop students' life skills.

Although there are many factors that support the success of curriculum management at MAN 1 Pekanbaru, there are also challenges faced in its implementation:

a. Limitations of Teachers' Ability in Adopting New Curriculum

Many teachers still use traditional methods in teaching, while the new curriculum requires a more interactive and student-based approach. Schools address this with intensive training for teachers.

b. Paradigm Change in Independent Curriculum Teaching

Adaptation to the Merdeka Curriculum, which focuses more on project-based learning and character development, requires a change in teaching methods from material to active student engagement. Schools conduct training and module development to support this transition.

- c. **Changes in Parental Perceptions of School Programs**
Some parents were initially skeptical about certain programs, such as language classes. However, after being transformed into international classes with a greater emphasis on foreign languages and global careers, the program was well received. This shows the importance of effective communication with parents.
- d. **Facilities and Resources**
Limited facilities to support technology-based programs such as robotics and multimedia are a challenge, because these programs require adequate equipment.
- e. **Curriculum Effectiveness Assessment and Evaluation**
Curriculum evaluation, especially for non-academic programs, such as students' character and life skills, requires a more holistic and observation-based approach, not just exams or competitions.

D. Closing

Curriculum management at MAN 1 Pekanbaru has demonstrated an innovative approach by combining the national curriculum, the curriculum from the Ministry of Religion, and superior programs based on local needs. Planning, implementation, evaluation and development of the curriculum are carried out collaboratively with various stakeholders to ensure suitability with student needs and the vision of the madrasah. The superior programs implemented, such as tahfiz, robotics, and research, provide opportunities for students to develop academic and non-academic skills more optimally.

However, to improve the effectiveness of curriculum management, madrasahs need to strengthen several key aspects. First, increasing teacher capacity through gradual practice-based training, with evaluation of implementation results in the classroom and ongoing guidance by expert mentors. Second, optimizing data-based evaluation by utilizing technology in analyzing student learning outcomes, such as the use of a learning management system (LMS) to collect and analyze student academic performance and skills. Third, in the implementation mechanism of the flagship program, madrasahs need to form a special team responsible for periodic management and monitoring, with evaluation reports used as the basis for program improvement. In addition, parental and community involvement must be strengthened through regular discussion forums that ensure the program remains relevant to student needs. Fourth, strengthening infrastructure and resources is essential, such as the provision of adequate robotics and multimedia laboratories, as well as strategic collaboration with higher education institutions and industry to provide broader practical experience for students.

The results of this study also have implications for educational policy, where the curriculum management approach applied in MAN 1 Pekanbaru can be a model for other madrasahs or a reference in formulating more flexible and local needs-based educational policies. With the implementation of this strategy, MAN 1 Pekanbaru can continue to improve the effectiveness of its curriculum management, maintain the sustainability of superior programs, and produce graduates who are better prepared to face academic and professional challenges in the future.

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