

# Towards the Professionalism Excellence of Teachers: Curriculum Management Transformation

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## Abstract:

This study aims to analyze curriculum management in improving teacher professional competence in madrasahs. The research method used is a qualitative case study type, where data is obtained through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. The results of the study indicate that effective curriculum management, which is reflected in the active involvement of teachers in constructive planning and supervision, has a substantial impact on improving teacher professional competence. However, this study also shows that there are weaknesses in the sense of creativity in the development of teaching materials and the use of learning media. Teacher competence can be improved through structured and inclusive curriculum management with technology integration in the learning process. This will provide new insights into formulating education policies for other madrasah. This study provides important implications for the development of curriculum management in madrasahs. With structured, inclusive curriculum management and the active involvement of teachers in every stage of planning, teacher professional competence can increase significantly.

**Keywords:** *Curriculum Management, Professional Competence, Technology Integration*

## Abstrak:

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis tentang manajemen kurikulum dalam meningkatkan kompetensi profesional guru di madrasah. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah kualitatif jenis studi kasus, di mana data diperoleh melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa manajemen kurikulum yang efektif, yang tercermin dalam keterlibatan aktif guru dalam perencanaan dan pengawasan yang konstruktif, memiliki dampak substansial pada peningkatan kompetensi profesional guru. Namun demikian, penelitian ini juga menunjukkan bahwa terdapat kelemahan dalam rasa kreativitas dalam pengembangan bahan ajar dan penggunaan media pembelajaran. Kompetensi guru dapat ditingkatkan melalui pengelolaan kurikulum yang terstruktur dan inklusif dengan integrasi teknologi dalam proses pembelajaran. Ini akan memberikan wawasan baru untuk digunakan dalam perumusan kebijakan pendidikan di madrasah lain. Penelitian ini memberikan implikasi penting bagi pengembangan manajemen kurikulum di madrasah. Dengan pengelolaan kurikulum yang terstruktur, inklusif, dan melibatkan guru secara aktif dalam setiap tahap perencanaannya, kompetensi profesional guru dapat meningkat secara signifikan.

**Kata Kunci:** *Manajemen Kurikulum, Kompetensi Profesional, Integrasi Teknologi*

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## INTRODUCTION

Education is thought to be the cornerstone of the caliber of human resources that will shape a country's destiny (Shaturaev, 2021; Shaturaev, 2021). Education plays a significant role in Indonesia, particularly in Islamic educational institutions like madrasahs. These institutions are not only focused on developing students' academic skills but also on instilling strong religious values in them (Biesta, 2020; Raghupathi & Raghupathi, 2020; Mhlanga, 2023; Rusdi et al., 2022; Wijaya & Khoir, 2022). However, there are still a number of challenges affecting the quality of education offered in the majority of madrasahs, one of which is the professionalism of the teachers – problems that have an immediate impact on the learning of the students (Toquero, 2021; Zare et al., 2022; Chuanchen, 2023). According to the Ministry of Religion (2021), a significant number of teachers in madrasahs still face constraints in terms of accessing sufficient training and educational resources. This issue will be exacerbated by the disparity between urban and rural madrasahs, as well as the fact that teachers in rural areas lack the same access to possibilities for self-improvement through various professional training programs (Alam, 2024; Norman & Paramansyah, 2024).

This social fact is made even more complicated by the advent of the digital era that calls for the technology integration in the pedagogical process (Ifinedo & Kankaanranta, 2021; Bui, 2022; Alenezi et al., 2023; Susilawati & Astuti, 2022). Although there are progresses taking place in public schools with the infusion of new technology, most madrasahs remain far behind. The use of interactive learning media is yet to be fully tapped, thus the lack of student engagement in teaching and learning (Al-Bogami & Elyas, 2020; Ray et al., 2020; Wright, 2020; Hasanah & Hefniy, 2023). Of course, this also raises the critical question: how to optimize the curriculum management of madrasahs in order to enhance teacher competence and more widely integrate the use of technology? This study has academic importance against the backdrop of such problems because it aims at solving those problems by investigating into curriculum management practice in-depth at MAN 1 Bandar Lampung. It does not rest its purpose on the theoretical dimensions alone, as it also argues to present practical implications in regard to the development of educational policy in madrasahs (Ansori et al., 2023; Maulidah et al., 2023; Hamidah, 2023).

Thus, the main problem that becomes the focus of this research is how curriculum management influences teacher professional competence improvement. As a matter of fact, many teachers face constraints in creating teaching materials that are interesting and creative and relatively innovative, and this frequently results from training and support management limitations. Besides, limited learning media are also an obstacle to make an interesting and interactive learning process for the students. This problem becomes even more pertinent due to the importance of the role played by teachers in determining the success of curriculum implementation. In the end, the potential of the teachers in teaching cannot be realized without an effective management system, and this subsequently affects the quality of education directly.

This paper will therefore try to make a critical analysis of how the current curriculum management can be improved to be more supportive for the

development of teacher competence. Several studies have targeted different aspects of educational management in relation to teacher competence. Constructive supervision by the principal can significantly boost teachers' motivation and performance, as noted by Ozcan, (2020). Thurn et al. (2022) investigated how the effect of overly stern supervision hampers teacher innovation in teaching. On the other hand, Averill & Major. (2020) emphasized the need for support and autonomy in supervision, which has an impact on the quality of teaching being enhanced.

These studies, despite giving crucial insights, have not explored how well curriculum management in madrasahs, especially in Indonesia, could be developed for teachers' professional competence. It is therefore relevant to this study as it introduces a new dimension that has not been discussed much in the existing literature. While prior research has put forward that the quality of teaching cannot be enhanced without proper supervision and management, a gap exists in the available literature on curriculum management in madrasahs, particularly in MAN 1 Bandar Lampung and Islamic education across Indonesia.

The purpose of this paper is to attempt to fill this void by focusing on how curriculum management at MAN 1 Bandar Lampung influences the quality of the teachers and how this can be optimized. The importance of filling this gap is practical because it can fill the gap for other madrasah managers who want to apply a better strategy of curriculum management. Thus, the significance of the research lies not only in its relevance but in the potential contribution to the enhancement of development in education policy of Indonesia. The study is unique in that it takes an overall approach to curriculum management in a madrasah, especially in terms of developing teacher professional competence. This is unlike previous studies, which are more general in the context of education in general.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study takes a qualitative approach through a case study method to analyze the implementation of curriculum management to improve teachers' professional competence at MAN 1 Bandar Lampung. The qualitative approach was chosen for this work because it gives a researcher the opportunity to fully explore in depth the views and experiences of the individuals who participate in the educational process, which can neither be gauged nor expressed in full quantitatively (Ataro, 2020; Tomaszewski et al., 2020; Ataro, 2020). A case study has been utilized simply because it allows the researchers to closely examine a specific instance (Farquhar et al., 2020; Welch et al., 2020; Priya, 2021), in this case, MAN 1 Bandar Lampung, so as to thereby provide a more detailed and contextual perspective on the phenomenon being studied. This case study deems more appropriate than other methods since it emphasizes gaining an in-depth understanding of curriculum management practices in a specific educational setting.

In this study, the data are collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and document analysis. In-depth interviews were administered to the head of the madrasah, deputy head of the madrasah, teachers,

and students. It is a location reputed for the effective implementation of the curriculum and professional development of teachers. There were 10 people participating in the interview, comprising 2 madrasah heads, 5 teachers, and 3 students. The selection of the respondents was purposive based on their contribution to the diversity of perspectives in the research topic. Participatory observation was done within two weeks to directly observe the interaction and the learning process taking place in the classroom. By getting documents that relate to the curriculum, supervision reports, as well as teaching materials and any other related document that can offer enough information on the topic of research, the collected data is enriched.

The obtained data are analyzed by the data analysis techniques from Miles and Huberman (Asipi et al., 2022), and it undergoes three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing or verification. Data reduction is the process of sorting out the most relevant data relevant to the focus of the study, grouping it, summarizing it, and categorizing it into the major themes that appear from interviews and observations. In data presentation, these reduced data are further processed into a more organized form, such as a matrix or narrative, to help in the identification of patterns of relationships between themes. The third level of conclusion drawing and verification is the interpretation of what the data analysis might mean, looking for links between the themes and confirming findings with other sources of data to ensure the research results are reliable and valid. The reason for selecting this technique is that it can handle qualitative data systematically and in detail, eventually providing rich and meaningful findings.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

This study will attempt to understand how curriculum management can contribute to improving the professional competence of teachers by documenting the practices that are in use at MAN 1 Bandar Lampung. The research focuses on the planning, distribution of tasks, and control implemented by the madrasah head to improve the quality of teaching as well as teacher performance. Insights into internal dynamics within this school – that produced a deep understanding of the effectiveness of the strategies implemented in management – were obtained. The findings described what was obtained in practice and recommended areas of improvement to obtain quality education in the future.

### **Curriculum Planning Implementation**

At the planning stage, it was found out that the teachers at MAN 1 Bandar Lampung had mostly carried out learning planning activities well. Such teachers prepare learning tools such as syllabuses and Learning Implementation Plans (RPP) that are tailored to student characteristics and needs. This will engage students in activities that enable exploration and in-depth understanding, hence it requires a lot of media and resources (Heilporn et al., 2021). Increasing teacher competency in developing and using varied learning media should have a positive effect on student learning outcomes.

One of the teachers stated, "In designing the lesson plan, I always consider the abilities and needs of students. This helps me in determining the right

methods and media to use in learning" (Teacher Interview 1, 2023).

However, there are also findings that creativity in the development of teaching materials still needs to be improved. One teacher admitted, "Sometimes I find it difficult to develop teaching materials on my own, so I still rely on existing textbooks" (Teacher Interview 2, 2023).

In the observations made, the researcher noted that even though teachers have prepared the lesson plan well, the use of learning media is still not optimal. For example, on some occasions, teachers only use whiteboards and textbooks without any media variety that can increase student engagement. This was admitted by one of the teachers who said, "I am aware that my learning medium is still simple, and this may affect students' interest in learning" (Teacher Interview 3, 2023).

The data shows that teachers at MAN 1 Bandar Lampung had a high awareness of the importance of making an RPP in accordance with the ability and needs of students. This portrays a high commitment toward making learning responsive and relevant. However, it also becomes a problem in developing teaching materials due to a lack of creativity where teachers rely very much on textbooks. This tends to limit varieties and innovativeness in the learning process. Besides, simple learning media, such as whiteboard and textbooks, are considered less optimal which lead to a decrease in student interest. Teachers who are aware of these limitations also raise the importance of technology integration that involves more interactive media to increase student interest, as well as their involvement. These findings raise issues about the importance of more intense training and support to sustain more innovative and effective learning.

These findings indicate that, in general, curriculum planning at MAN 1 Bandar Lampung has been running well, especially for the preparation of lesson plans relevant to student characteristics. However, the lack of creativity in the manufacturing of the teaching materials and a small portion of use of the learning media suggest that the teachers need to increase their professional competence in this respect.

### **Implementation of Curriculum Organization and Division of Tasks**

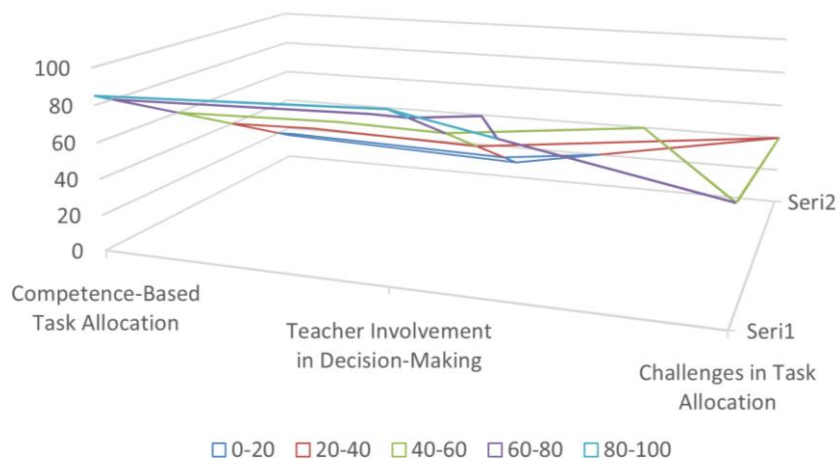
At the stage of implementing the curriculum organization, it was found that the division of tasks at MAN 1 Bandar Lampung was carried out by considering the competence and educational background of each teacher. This division was carried out through a teacher council meeting, where the head of the madrasah led a discussion about the assignment. One of the keys to success in education is the placement of the right human resources according to their expertise (Stofkova & Sukalova, 2020). Effective division of tasks not only improves work efficiency but also increases teachers' motivation and professional competence. However, assignments that are not in accordance with competencies can be an obstacle in the implementation of tasks and can reduce the quality of learning.

One teacher said, "We are always involved in discussions about the division of duties. This gives us the opportunity to choose tasks that match our competence, so we can work more effectively" (Teacher Interview 4, 2023).



However, there are also challenges faced in curriculum organization, especially related to the adjustment of teachers' duties that sometimes do not match individual abilities. "Sometimes I feel that the tasks given are not completely in accordance with my competence, but I still try to do it well" (Teacher Interview 5, 2023).

The data show that a process of dividing tasks is through an open discussion where a teacher is at liberty to pick any task, they feel competent to perform. This strategy is seen by the teachers as a way of empowering and inclusion that would enable them to work more effectively and have a feeling of being part of the decision-making process. Yet problems still persist, particularly if the person assigned to the task is not in the best fit of his or her ability. Yet teachers do their best to continue with the task even if they feel that it is not appropriate in a particular aspect. Within this study, much more specific modification of the task division should be sought regarding the extent in which each teacher can work in accordance with their most competent.



**Figure 2. Effectiveness and Challenges in the Curriculum Organization and Task Allocation Process at MAN 1 Bandar Lampung**

The graph describes that most of the effectiveness in the division of competency-based tasks and teacher involvement in decision-making at MAN 1 Bandar Lampung lies at a high level, considering the majority of them scoring between 60 and 100. This shows that teachers feel the given task is in line with their expertise and are actively involved in the decision-making process. However, some challenges are evident in assignment; it depicts from several values that drop to the range of 20-40, that is to say, some challenges are encountered with the process. On an overall basis also, although curriculum organization is good with most schools and the assignment division is also well done, improvement still needs to get registered, especially in the difficulties in presenting assignments that could be made after adjustment to better suit the ability of the individual teacher. These findings point out the importance of good curriculum organization to support the implementation of effective learning.

## Implementation of Learning and Media Use

In the implementation of learning, it was found that most teachers at MAN 1 Bandar Lampung tried to create a pleasant learning atmosphere using various learning methods. However, the use of learning media still needs to be improved. Using varied media can improve students' understanding and retention by presenting information through various channels (visual, auditory, etc.). Therefore, investments in teacher training and the improvement of technological facilities in schools can significantly impact the quality of learning.

One student said, "I feel good when teachers use videos or presentations in learning, but that rarely happens" (Student Interview 1, 2023).

One teacher also admitted, "I sometimes find it difficult to use technology in learning because of my own limited facilities and knowledge" (Teacher Interview 6, 2023).

This supported it, as the findings of the observations show that in some classes, learning media is still whiteboards and textbooks, but in classes using media like videos or presentations, the learning atmosphere seems more active and interactive. To give a more vivid portrayal of using varied learning media at MAN 1 Bandar Lampung, the frequency and percentage of how often teachers use each type of media during the learning process are presented below. Here, again, this data reveals the most frequently used media preference which, in consequence, may indirectly indicate the need for alternative media such as video and interactive media. Detailed information on this is presented in Table 1 below:

**Table 1. Frequency of Use of Learning Media at MAN 1 Bandar Lampung**

Media Type	Usage Frequency (per week)	Percentage (%)
Blackboard	18	82%
Textbooks	20	91%
Learning Videos	5	23%
Presentation (PowerPoint)	7	32%

The interpretation of the data in Table 1 shows that in MAN 1 Bandar Lampung, traditional learning media such as whiteboards and textbooks still dominate the use in the learning process, with a frequency of use of 18 and 20 times per week, respectively, which is equivalent to 82% and 91%. In contrast, more modern and interactive media such as learning videos, PowerPoint presentations, and interactive media are used much less frequently, with frequencies of only 5, 7, and 3 times per week, or 23%, 32%, and 14%, respectively. These data indicate that despite efforts to use various learning media, the integration of technology in the learning process is still limited, indicating an opportunity to increase the use of more interactive media to increase student engagement and interest. These findings underscore the importance of improving teacher competence in the use of innovative learning media.

## Curriculum Supervision and Control

At the supervision stage, it was found that the head of the madrasah at MAN 1 Bandar Lampung actively supervised the implementation of curriculum

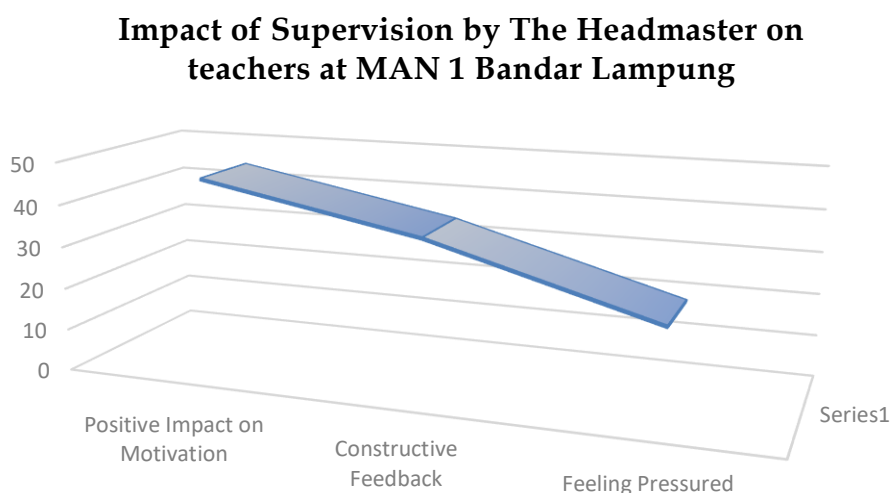
activities, both in learning and extracurricular activities. This supervision is carried out through direct observation and periodic evaluation meetings. Supervision done well can provide constructive feedback for teachers and improve the quality of learning. Collaborative and supportive supervision is more effective in improving teacher competence than an overly authoritative approach (Lorensius et al., 2022). Therefore, madrasah heads need to balance between providing guidance and providing space for teachers to innovate in teaching.

The head of the madrasah stated, "I always try to be directly involved in the supervision of learning activities in order to provide constructive input to teachers" (Interview with the Head of Madrasah, 2023).

Teachers also feel the positive impact of this supervision, as expressed by one of the teachers, "With the supervision from the head of the madrasah, I feel motivated to continue to improve my teaching style" (Teacher Interview 7, 2023).

However, there are some teachers who feel that the supervision is sometimes too stressful. "Sometimes I feel that supervision is too strict, so it makes me feel less free in teaching" (Teacher Interview 8, 2023).

The results of the interview showed that the direct involvement of the head of the madrasah in supervising learning activities had a significant positive impact on teacher motivation and performance. Teachers feel encouraged to continue to improve their teaching methods thanks to the constructive feedback provided. However, some teachers also revealed that too strict supervision can cause pressure and reduce the sense of freedom in teaching. This shows the need for a balance between supportive supervision and providing space for teachers to innovate in the teaching process.



**Figure 3. Impact of Supervision by The Headmaster on teachers at MAN 1 Bandar Lampung**

Figure 3. depicts the results of the supervision done by madrasah heads over the teachers working in MAN 1 Bandar Lampung. The aspects of mental motivation, provision of constructive feedback, and negative affective feelings, if



any, are all taken into consideration. This graph depicts that the supervision carried out in most cases has been effective in raising the motivation increase with the feedback provided. However, there are also some suggestions that excessive supervisions may contribute to certain teachers feeling overworked. This shows how essential it is for the madrasah heads to find that middle ground in the supervision where support and directions are given without restricting the teachers. It has been noted that this also leads to a conducive working environment thereby aiding in the improvement of the quality of education given.

The outcomes of this study are consistent with some earlier research and show that such supervision by madrasah heads is likely to benefit the teachers in terms of motivation and even performance. The well-done supervision has been shown to aid in constructive feedback, which in return motivates the teachers towards redefining their ways of teaching as reported by Lorensius et al. (2022) Despite the above positive findings, these findings also point out to some problems whereby when too much control in terms of supervision is maintained, teachers feel over-pressured this in turn will lead to rigidity and limited creativity in their teaching practices. These findings are consistent with those of Day. (2020) who found that teachers' autonomy is compromised under excessive supervision, hence the lack of innovativeness in teaching. Moreover, Buchanan. (2020) also emphasize the need for an equilibrium of supervision that offers explicit guidance while allowing teachers the scope to experiment with different methods of instruction. Hence, the findings of this study also suggest that the heads of madhabs must seek to derive a model of supervision which encourages teachers to make pedagogical innovations so as to enhance the quality of teaching and learning processes.

This is an important contribution to the curriculum management and the supervision practices in the context of education, particularly in madrasahs, the area where the study is conducted. This study serves to not only strengthen the concepts as regards the need for teachers to participate in the planning and implementation of curriculum, but also suggests how the teacher's performance and subsequently motivation may be improved through effective teacher management. So, this new approach can be of use in the development of education policy in Islamic school by providing insight of how to effectively administer and manage the curriculum. Besides, the results of this study encourage further studies that will explore broader and more inclusive strategies in other educational settings.

## CONCLUSION

The above study underlines the significance of curriculum management strategies for MAN 1 Bandar Lampung to enhance professional skills among its teachers. When teachers actively participate in planning and organizing the curriculum, it significantly enhances their effectiveness in teaching. However, in this case, challenges exist because there is limited creativity in developing teaching materials with restricted use of educational media. Generally, the headmasters' approaches to supervision which involve giving supportive feedback have increased the motivation and performance of teachers. A few teachers think it is at

some point over-demanding. These results show that a balanced supervision approach is needed, offering support but also giving adequate room to teachers. At the same time, the use of more interactive teaching media would likely engage the students much more in the learning process.

The result of this study is, therefore, significant in various implications on the field of educational management, especially in an Islamic education setup in Indonesia. It demonstrates how curriculum management and supportive supervision are effective strategies for professional development among teachers. The findings might be important for other educational settings besides the one under investigation. However, the fact that the focus of the study is on a single institution limit how widely the conclusions reached can be drawn. Although the qualitative method reflects in-depth insights, it does not contribute to broader factors, such as gender or age differences among teachers. As a matter of fact, future research on more institutions and with an even more varied methodological approach would permit validating these results and making the development of educational policies more efficient and inclusive.

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