

## **Analysis of Curriculum and Resource Management in Mandiri Bakti Playgroup (KB)**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Early Childhood Education (ECE) is paramount for developing quality human resources for the future. KB Mandiri Bakti is an ECE institution responsible for implementing effective curriculum management to ensure learning is enjoyable, contextual, and aligned with child development. The purpose of this study was to examine how KB Mandiri Bakti manages its resources and curriculum. This research adopted a qualitative descriptive approach, with data collected through participant observation, documentation, and in-depth interviews. The analysis aimed to understand the processes of curriculum planning, implementation, and evaluation within the institution. The findings indicate that curriculum management at KB Mandiri Bakti is functioning adequately. However, several constraints exist, notably in planning a curriculum truly based on individual child needs, facility shortages, and limited teacher competency development. Parental support and strong collaboration are highlighted as crucial factors for successful synchronization. Overall, curriculum management at KB Mandiri Bakti relies heavily on the cooperation among teachers, the principal, infrastructure management, and parental participation.

**Keywords:** *ECE curriculum-management; Resources; KB Mandiri-Bakti.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Early Childhood Education (ECE) constitutes the foundation for future human capital, and improving its quality is vital for national educational progress. Educating children from an early age is based on the recognition of this period as the "Golden Age," during which physical, motor, and language-linguistic development progresses rapidly (typically from 0 to 6 years). Furthermore, children, particularly those aged two to six years, are inherently inclined toward play. In ECE, the concept of "learning while playing and playing while learning" serves as a pedagogical cornerstone that aids children in developing diverse skills. ECE is fundamentally a form of education designed to support the child's complete development by building the foundations for motor coordination, emotional intelligence, multiple intelligences, and spiritual intelligence. Juridically, ECE is defined by Article 1, Paragraph 14 of Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System as a training program for children from birth up to six years old, which promotes the growth and development of both physical and spiritual aspects, preparing them for entry into basic education.

The Competency-Based Curriculum (2004, cited in Suryadi & Ulfah, 2015) defined ECE as an effort to encourage, guide, nurture, and provide learning activities aimed at helping children acquire necessary skills and abilities. Education plays a crucial role in forming high character and morality in citizens. Thus, the curriculum must adhere to sound pedagogical principles. According to Sukmadinata (2008), the curriculum is a comprehensive system encompassing educational types, management, and educational levels, yet it remains distinct from other systems like student management and facilities/infrastructure management. The curriculum document serves as the general guide for teaching and learning activities, implemented according to prevailing curriculum regulations.

The management of educational facilities and infrastructure is an essential component of an effective educational process. Schools with adequate facilities possess the capability to enhance educational quality (Adilah & Suryana, 2021). The availability of good facilities is likely to improve student abilities (Anggraeni & Joko, 2023; Adinda & Retno W, 2023). Due to the advancements in science and technology, curriculum change is inevitable. A curriculum that fails to adapt to these changes risks becoming obsolete and irrelevant, ultimately being abandoned by the community. Therefore, educational institutions like ECE must be capable of producing and preparing the next generation with diverse capabilities. Furthermore, higher education must continually revise its teaching methods to produce graduates capable of meeting future challenges and societal needs (Suwandi, 2020).

KB Mandiri Bakti holds a strategic role as an ECE institution. It is not only a place for playing and learning but also an institution responsible for managing criteria to fulfill the needs of early childhood. Consequently, for ECE goals to be met, curriculum management is paramount. Curriculum management involves the four core functions: planning, organizing, implementing, and controlling/evaluating the curriculum document, learning activities, teacher development, and the utilization of supporting facilities. With sound and adaptive curriculum management, KB Mandiri Bakti can provide learning that is enjoyable, relevant to child development, and adaptable to contemporary changes, ensuring children receive optimal experiences of "playing while learning and learning while playing." As Robbins and Coulter (2010) asserted, management is universally required in all organizations. Educational management specifically involves the study and practice related to educational operations.

The integration of the holistic ECE concept, KB Mandiri Bakti as the implementation site, and effective curriculum management forms a crucial framework for enhancing ECE quality. Therefore, research examining curriculum management at KB Mandiri Bakti is necessary to understand how the planning,

implementation, control, and evaluation of the curriculum are executed within the institution. In this context, effective educational management is essential to ensure that children receive high-quality and well-organized education, which includes planning effective learning, managing facilities and infrastructure, and providing professional development for ECE teachers (Purwoko, 2018).

## **METHODS**

### **Subjects of Research**

This research employed a descriptive qualitative approach, which is frequently utilized in educational studies to place human experiences at the core of understanding social phenomena. Consequently, the study is humanistic in nature, focusing on achieving an in-depth understanding of the experiences, processes, and meanings related to curriculum management occurring in the field.

This approach is particularly suitable for research on curriculum management in Early Childhood Education (ECE) institutions, as highlighted by Patria & Zulkarnaen (2023), because it allows researchers to contextualize and understand the roles of the principal, teachers, and managers in administering the curriculum and resources tailored to the specific characteristics of the institution. The subject of this research is the curriculum management process itself at KB Mandiri Bakti. The study's informants, selected for their direct involvement and contextual knowledge, included the Head of KB Mandiri Bakti, teachers, and educational staff.

### **Instruments and Interview Questions**

The study utilized two primary data collection techniques, ensuring an integration of perspectives and observed realities: (1) In-depth Interviews: This instrument was used to elicit the experiences, perspectives, and understanding of the informants—the Head, teachers, and staff—regarding the comprehensive process of curriculum planning, implementation, and evaluation. As noted by Suhardi et al. (2024), qualitative interviews focusing on management metrics are essential for uncovering the internal supporting and constraining elements of curriculum execution in the field. And (2) Participant Observation: The researchers employed participant observation to gain direct, firsthand insight into the learning process and actual curriculum implementation at KB Mandiri Bakti. Consistent with the views of Hamidi, Irwansyah, and Herawati (2023), this technique allowed the researchers to understand the practical execution of curriculum management in ECE classrooms, specifically observing how teachers apply the key principle of "learning through play".

### **Data Collection**

The data analysis strategy was designed to discover the contextual meaning embedded within each stage of curriculum management, recognizing that in

qualitative research, the process itself holds significant meaning (Isnawati, 2021). The analysis involved an inductive process of interpreting the collected data.

To ensure the scientific accountability, validity, and credibility of the findings, the research emphasized data validation through triangulation. This crucial step involved systematically comparing the results obtained from interviews, observation, and documentation to ensure that the final conclusions were robust, well-supported, and accurately reflected the comprehensive picture of curriculum administration at KB Mandiri Bakti. This holistic approach provided a comprehensive depiction of the curriculum's real-world execution within the ECE institution rather than simply quantifying outcomes..

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The findings of this research at KB Mandiri Bakti concerning the implementation of curriculum management and resource administration are consistent with several previous national studies on Early Childhood Education (ECE). These studies assert that curriculum execution in ECE institutions critically depends on sound planning, implementation, and evaluation, supported by adequate human resources and facilities.

This aligns with the research by Rosita and Kurniawati (2021), who found that curriculum management in ECE must involve mature planning, contextual implementation, and continuous evaluation to align learning with the characteristics and needs of children. A key challenge identified in this research—the difficulty faced by KB Mandiri Bakti in developing learning plans based on child assessment—underscores the need to enhance teacher capacity to effectively implement a child-centered curriculum approach, as stipulated in the literature.

Furthermore, these findings relate to the work of Hasanah and Mulyadi (2022), who highlighted the importance of teacher creativity in designing thematic activities to promote various aspects of child development, crucial for successfully applying the principle of "learning through play." ECE management is defined as the effort to organize, oversee, and direct the interactive and educational interaction between students and educators in a systematic manner (Ulfah 2015). ECE is the phase of early childhood growth and development, both physical and non-physical, which has seen rapid growth in Indonesia (Suharni 2019). The results confirm the effectiveness of the play-based approach used at KB Mandiri Bakti. However, the study noted a deficiency in implementing project-based learning, which necessitates teachers creating activities that foster critical and creative thinking.

Suryana (2023) posits that curriculum success depends on educator competency, and continuous professional development must be achieved through training, workshops, and teacher learning communities. The condition at KB

Mandiri Bakti, characterized by limited funding and diverse teacher backgrounds, highlights the crucial need for the targeted and sustainable Human Resource Management (HRM) strategies recommended in the literature. A study by Lestari & Puspitasari (2024) established that facilities and infrastructure are vital for optimizing children's play and learning activities. The scarcity and outdated condition of Educational Play Tools (APE) at KB Mandiri Bakti, due to funding constraints, underscore the necessity of integrating facility management with deliberate planning and budgeting.

Management, in a broader sense, involves the planning, organizing, and integrating various educational resources to effectively and efficiently achieve educational goals (Mulyasa, 2013). This includes the implementation and supervision of activities aimed at improving the quality of students, educators, curriculum, facilities, and more. Effective management is systematic and organized to ensure optimal resource utilization.

Parental involvement is also a significant factor at KB Mandiri Bakti. Nurfadilah (2022) indicated that collaboration between the school and parents enhances children's academic achievement by creating a consistent learning atmosphere between school and home. This supports the findings at KB Mandiri Bakti, where active parental support and involvement emerged as a key component of program implementation success.

Thus, the findings at KB Mandiri Bakti align with empirical evidence in scholarly literature, which demonstrates that successful ECE curriculum management depends not only on the curriculum design itself but also on the quality of teachers, support facilities, and collaboration between the educational institution and the family. Combining these elements is essential for realizing an ECE institution that is independent, adaptive, and focused on enhancing the overall quality of early childhood learning.

#### Analysis of Curriculum Management Implementation

Based on observations and interviews conducted at KB Mandiri Bakti, Sungai Kunjang District, Samarinda City, the study found that teachers still face difficulties in structuring learning plans according to the current Kurikulum Merdeka (Independent Curriculum).

Consequently, the curriculum implemented still largely adheres to the former 2013 Curriculum structure, as detailed below: (1) Semester Program (Prosem): Observations showed that the annual and semester programs are divided into two semesters, following a conventional structure. (2) Weekly Learning Implementation Plan (RPPM): The RPPM is derived from the semester program and outlines the learning activities for one week. It includes the program identity, core competencies from the pre-designed curriculum, learning materials based on themes and sub-

themes, and a weekly activity plan. (3) Daily Learning Implementation Plan (RPPH): The RPPH manages the daily learning and play activities. It consists of the program identity, theme, sub-theme, materials used, opening activities, core activities, closing activities, and the plan for assessment. And (4) Child Development Assessment: Based on observations, the assessment of child development is conducted on both individual and group levels.

### **Resource Management at Mandiri Bakti Playgroup (KB)**

KB Mandiri Bakti faces significant challenges concerning funding and the inadequacy of facilities and infrastructure. These aspects are interconnected, as limited funds are the primary constraint for the institution to provide and update Educational Play Tools (APE). Despite the critical role of facilities in organizing play and learning activities, the current APE inventory is insufficient and outdated.

In terms of Human Resources (HR), KB Mandiri Bakti primarily employs teachers with a high school background who are striving to enhance their competencies. Teachers encounter substantial difficulties in developing learning plans based on child assessment and implementing a child-centered curriculum approach, particularly project-based learning, which demands creativity and critical thinking. Consequently, curriculum success heavily relies on the sustained capacity building of teachers. This underscores the vital importance of implementing targeted Human Resource Management strategies, such as training and workshops, given the teacher's role as the key to successful curriculum synchronization.

Despite the constraints in funding and teacher competency, KB Mandiri Bakti possesses a strong social resource: the active support and involvement of parents. This engagement has been identified as a critical component of successful program implementation, aligning with research showing that collaboration between the school and family enhances child achievement and creates a consistent learning environment. Therefore, KB Mandiri Bakti must focus on leveraging this family collaboration to realize an independent and adaptive ECE institution while simultaneously addressing resource deficiencies and professional development needs.

### **CONCLUSION**

The research findings at KB Mandiri Bakti demonstrate that the success of the ECE curriculum is largely determined by the effective and consistent planning, implementation, and evaluation of the curriculum, supported by human resources, facilities and infrastructure, and parental participation. Effective curriculum management enables the institution to create learning that is contextual, enjoyable, and tailored to the children's characteristics. To enhance the school's ability to implement a curriculum relevant to contemporary development, a targeted

management approach, collaboration between the school and parents, and support from policy stakeholders are necessary. By combining effective curriculum management, efficient resource utilization, and strong environmental support, KB Mandiri Bakti can achieve its optimal goal of fostering the next generation of early childhood learners.

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