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Managing the KIR LIBA Program for Enhancing Writing Skills in State Madrasah Aliyah Students: A Case Study

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ABSTRACT. This study focuses on assessing the administration of the KIR LIBA program's impact on enhancing students' writing abilities at MAN 1 Yogyakarta. It employs a qualitative research approach and data collection methods such as observation, interviews, and documentation. Data analysis involves data reduction and the presentation of findings in a narrative format. The research is framed within the context of the POAC management objectives theory. The research findings reveal the following aspects of the KIR LIBA program's management: (1) Planning: The KIR LIBA program initiates its planning phase by setting objectives and preparing program-related matters for the upcoming year. It includes creating work programs and budget estimates for the period; (2) Organizing: Organizational management structures are established to facilitate the division of responsibilities and tasks among different divisions, ensuring that each division fulfills its designated responsibilities and work programs; (3) Implementation: The program puts the prepared work programs into action for the year. KIR LIBA involves eight types of work programs and activities carried out throughout the year, with each program executed on a weekly, monthly, and yearly basis; (4) Monitoring and Evaluation: Continuous monitoring occurs during every activity, and an annual evaluation takes place during the handover process and the submission of management accountability reports. The madrasah head conducts the evaluation, the head of student affairs, and the KIR LIBA coaching staff. The management strategies employed by the KIR LIBA team have contributed to notable improvements in students' writing skills at MAN 1 Yogyakarta. This improvement is exemplified by the increased number of students successfully participating in international writing competitions during the study period. However, it is worth noting that this research provides a broad overview of program management without delving into specific details. Therefore, it is recommended that future researchers explore these aspects in more depth. It could include sharing specific examples of recent evaluation outcomes conducted by relevant institutions to further assist in achieving the program's implementation objectives.

Keywords: KIR LIBA Program, Management, Writing skills



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INTRODUCTION

Writing is considered one of the fundamental skills for individuals in the realm of education (Fitriyani & Utama, 2019). It holds a pivotal role as one of the most crucial academic competencies throughout a student's educational journey, from primary education to adulthood (Vasileiou, 2023). The capacity to write goes beyond its significance to students and educators; it encompasses the analysis of scientific data, which is essential for creating written works and research findings within educational institutions (Tshotsho & Cekiso, 2017). In higher education, articles and journals are



pivotal for upholding the quality of departments and faculties. However, it is a prevalent reality that writing is a skill that eludes some population segments (Zhang, 2015). For most, writing is often perceived as a daunting task, typically undertaken in response to academic demands, such as exams or end-of-term assignments.

To date, specific data quantifying the level of writing proficiency in Indonesia still needs to be discovered. While the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) has assessed literacy skills in Indonesia, it has yet to provide a focused analysis of writing skills. However, informal observations in educational settings suggest that out of a class of 30 students, only 2-3 students display a genuine interest and capability for writing, and sometimes even fewer (Kemendikbud Ristek, 2021). Developing writing skills typically commences with a passion for reading, as reading provides the ideas and themes that can be transformed into written content. However, statistics compiled by UNESCO indicate that the interest in reading in Indonesia stands at a mere 0.001%, signifying that just one person out of a thousand can be considered an enthusiastic reader (Devega, 2017).

Moreover, according to the World's Most Literate Nations Ranking, a study conducted by Central Connecticut State University in March 2016, Indonesia was ranked 60th out of 61 countries in terms of interest in reading (Devega, 2017). These data points collectively illustrate that the low levels of interest and proficiency in writing are intrinsically linked to the dearth of interest in reading, as reading serves as the foundation for effective writing. It is important to note that this challenge is expected in Indonesia; several other countries also grapple with low writing ability and interest in writing.

Research findings reveal that 65% of undergraduate students in Turkey have demonstrated that difficulties in writing not only impact their writing skills but also affect their academic performance, emotional well-being, and social lives (Ceymi et al., 2023). Given the overarching significance of writing skills in various life domains, this study aims to examine the strategies employed by universities to stimulate students' interest in writing. A parallel situation can be observed among postgraduate students in Saudi Arabia, who often grapple with challenges related to composing sentences, paragraphs, and essays (Rahman, 2023). This research, therefore, concentrates on unraveling the impediments and hurdles encountered by students during the academic writing process.

Similar issues are encountered by students in Australia, where many struggle with unintentional plagiarism and a deficiency in paraphrasing and citing scholarly works to produce high-quality writing (Davila et al., 2015). This study delves into the initiatives undertaken by universities to enhance student's skills through the implementation of academic integrity modules. In contrast, this research centers on the administration of literacy programs, elucidating the planning, execution, and evaluation processes employed to nurture students' writing capabilities.

Literacy, defined as an individual's competence in comprehending and processing information during reading, writing, viewing, listening, or engaging in dialogue, is a fundamental skill (Wiedarti, 2018). Acquiring literacy skills is paramount for students as it directly relates to their ability to comprehend information with depth, analytical acumen, reflection, and critical thinking. In Indonesia, the younger generation must cultivate a sense of literary culture to confront contemporary challenges and prepare for national and international career opportunities (Ramadhan, 2019). The imperative role of literacy skills, particularly in academia, cannot be overstated.

The training for composing scientific papers has gained widespread recognition and has become an everyday extracurricular activity from high school to university. This program aspires to educate individuals in Indonesia about effective research and scientific paper composition. Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Yogyakarta is no exception to this trend. Interviews with the institution have revealed that they have been offering extracurricular scientific writing training since 1991,

recognizing the paramount importance of writing skills. They have even incorporated scientific writing training into their curriculum as a research subject due to its high demand.

In 2021, MAN 1 Yogyakarta received an accolade as the best research madrasah from the Directorate General of Islamic Education, a department under the Indonesian Minister of Religion's purview. This recognition has further galvanized their Scientific Writing Training Program, KIR LIBA. The program's notable achievements and awards can be attributed to effective management practices, from providing essential infrastructure to facilitating a team of skilled human resources dedicated to students' learning. The primary objectives of this research are to scrutinize the management of KIR LIBA in enhancing students' writing skills, assess the program's contribution to students' writing proficiency, and evaluate how KIR LIBA managers oversee the program's evolution for the benefit of students at MAN 1 Yogyakarta.

METHOD

This research falls within qualitative research, a methodology dedicated to comprehending and investigating social phenomena and issues. In this approach, the researcher assembles a comprehensive perspective, scrutinizes language, and provides detailed reports from respondents' viewpoints, all within natural settings. Qualitative research is designed to gain insight into reality through an inductive thought process (Sukardi, 2014). Using this approach, researchers aim to depict and analyze the management of the KIR LIBA program at MAN 1 Yogyakarta. The research subjects in this study encompass sources, informants, and other individuals well-acquainted with and connected to the information sources relevant to the research problem under examination. Notably, the research subjects include the school principal, the KIR LIBA supervisor, and several members of the extracurricular scientific writing team.

Data collection in this research hinges on a triad of techniques, namely interviews, observation, and documentation. Interviews serve as the preliminary investigation to unearth the issues and glean in-depth information from the respondents (Ramadhan, 2021). Observation, on the other hand, entails the researcher's systematic effort to gather data and insights from primary data sources. This technique engages all five human senses. Documentation, as the third method, involves obtaining data and information in various forms, such as books, archives, written records, and visual materials, which substantiate the research. The data analysis techniques applied in this research encompass data reduction, data presentation, conclusions, and verification. Data validation is ensured through both source triangulation and method triangulation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Based on the findings from interviews and observations, it has been ascertained that several research outcomes indicate the effective management of the KIR LIBA program in enhancing students' writing skills. This success is attributed to the well-structured and competent management of the program. The research was executed with a foundation in the theory of the four management functions: planning, organizing, implementing, and supervising. Observations have affirmed that all these components have been efficiently executed and contribute to enhancing students' writing abilities.

The initial phase is planning, and the KIR LIBA program demonstrates proficient planning. It begins with establishing clear program objectives. The overarching goal is to assist students in improving their writing skills across scientific and non-scientific domains. In addition to defining objectives, the planning phase includes outlining both long-term and short-term activities, along with formulating various aspects related to program execution. Subsequently, in the organizing phase, the KIR LIBA program adopts a structured and well-organized approach. The program is

meticulously structured with a management hierarchy that assigns specific roles to individuals with demonstrated competence in program management. Moving forward, the program will be carried out effectively following the planning and organizing stages. Implementation adheres closely to the previously devised plans, including various initiatives to enhance students' writing skills.

The final step in program management is supervision, characterized by ongoing monitoring and evaluation. Monitoring is conducted each time a program is implemented to ensure that the guidance program runs smoothly. Typically, KIR LIBA supervisors, serving as program managers, oversee the execution of various activities. Program evaluation occurs annually, coinciding with changes in the program's organizational management. This evaluation involves critical stakeholders, including the head of the madrasah, the head of student affairs, KIR LIBA supervisors, and KIR LIBA administrators, who report on their respective responsibilities.

Discussion

The term "management" is the practice of overseeing an activity, program, or institution that involves a variety of functions. Ricky W. Griffin, in his book (Maisah, 2013), defines management as a series of activities, including planning, decision-making, organizing, directing, and monitoring. These activities are executed using an organization's resources, which include people, finances, physical assets, and information (Susanti, 2022). Management is the efficient and effective utilization of human resources, facilities, infrastructure, and available potentials to achieve an organization's or institution's goals (Sista & Sodiqin, 2022). It is carried out by one or more managers or administrators, often working in collaboration with other individuals, both individually and in groups. These collective efforts aim to accomplish organizational objectives (Romlah, 2016).

In the implementation of management, adherence to guiding principles is crucial. Douglas (Kritiawan, 2017) has outlined these principles, which include prioritizing goals over personal interests and work mechanisms, coordinating authority and responsibility, assigning responsibilities to school personnel based on their characteristics and abilities, understanding human psychological factors, and recognizing the relativity of values. These principles underscore the importance of considering goals, people, tasks, and values in the science and practice of management (Kuntoro, 2022). Beyond principles, the management process involves planning, organizing, leadership, and evaluation or control. According to Mustari (2014), management functions can be categorized into ten parts, which include planning, organizing, staff placement, directing, coordinating, motivating, controlling, reporting, and forecasting. Meanwhile, according to Hartati et al. (2020), management functions encompass planning, organizing, directing, and monitoring. It highlights that management is an activity that harnesses available resources through various management elements to achieve organizational goals (Djabidi, 2017).

In the context of the KIR LIBA program for enhancing students' writing skills, four distinct steps are involved based on field observations: (1) Planning, (2) Organizing, (3) Leading, and (4) Monitoring. These steps are essential in managing the KIR LIBA program to improve students' writing abilities.

Planning is a systematic endeavor aimed at organizing various aspects within an organization, encompassing the arrangement of activities necessary to achieve the organization's objectives (Saputra & Ali, 2022). Additionally, planning can be construed as a method of optimizing the utilization of existing resources to ensure the effective and efficient execution of organizational programs (Angelliza Chantica et al., 2022). Based on the insights gathered from interviews, it becomes evident that the initial step in crafting a program plan involves the articulation of its objectives. The overarching goal is to enable the KIR LIBA program to enhance students' writing skills in both scientific and non-scientific domains. The formation of the KIR LIBA program transcends the sole emphasis on enhancing writing skills; it also places a strong focus on nurturing students' literacy capabilities. This emphasis on improving literacy skills is driven by the noble

aspiration to cultivate character virtues through a culture of reading and writing in the school environment, which, in turn, lays the foundation for lifelong learning and proficiency across various fields within the educational milieu (Malawi, 2017). Beyond objective-setting, the planning process encompasses the preparation of both long-term and short-term activities, as well as the formulation of various aspects tied to program implementation. Effective planning serves a dual purpose: 1) Protective benefits, which involve ensuring that the objectives, resources, techniques, and methods align closely with future demands, thereby reducing decision-making risks. 2) Positive benefits, where the comprehensively and precisely formulated plans can enhance productivity (Arifudin et al., 2021).

The KIR LIBA management's planning efforts encompass several key components, such as preparing work program-related materials, compiling a comprehensive list of work programs, creating a budget list for the upcoming year, and documenting various aspects pertinent to the forthcoming period's work programs. The work program is meticulously tailored to meet the specific needs aimed at enhancing students' writing skills. Furthermore, an outline budget list is collectively developed by all organizers of the KIR LIBA program, drawing from references from prior periods. This process is intended to ensure the availability of program implementation facilities and to offer robust support to students in their writing skill development journey.

Organizing involves connecting individuals within a specific organization and aligning their roles and functions to achieve its objectives (Saputro & Arikunto, 2018). Within this organizing process, tasks, authority, and responsibilities are meticulously delineated within various fields and sections to foster collaborative relationships and cooperation, ultimately advancing the organization's goals (Huda, 2017). In the context of the KIR LIBA program, aimed at enhancing students' writing skills at MAN 1 Yogyakarta, the need for capable resources becomes evident. It necessitates the development of an organizational structure that empowers designated positions to oversee the KIR LIBA program effectively, ensuring that each responsibility is executed efficiently. The results of this research illustrate that the KIR LIBA writing training program has been effectively organized by establishing this management structure, ensuring that the respective administrators account for each task and responsibility.

Implementation. As per Terry (1968), the actuating phase involves the managerial activities aimed at instigating and sustaining actions defined during the planning and organizing stages, with the ultimate goal of achieving program objectives (Prayoga, 2019). In executing the KIR LIBA program, various work programs have been designed to manifest KIR LIBA's contributions to enhancing students' writing skills. These programs encompass: LARUT, Ex with Ex, LIBA Talks, Plesir, PAB and Srtijab, Comparative Studies, LKTI, and FGD. LARUT is a regular coaching and research material distribution activity aimed at enhancing members' skills and knowledge in writing. Qualified experts in research and writing lead this week-long program, involving two meetings. Exwith Ex is an informal knowledge-sharing event between program participants and residents, fostering knowledge exchange and experiences. This monthly activity invites residents from diverse backgrounds and professionals. LIBA Talks is a program disseminating information via internet media in podcast form, covering topics related to writing, research, and other pertinent scientific subjects. Plesir is a field research activity designed to train members in critical thinking and problemsolving with an emotional approach. It also hones their proposal-writing skills, culminating in developing research proposals. PAB and Sertijab are activities for inducting new members and handing over management roles, boosting enthusiasm among new members and administrators at KIR LIBA. Comparative Studies is discussion sessions with related organizations from madrasas and other schools aimed at broadening insights and knowledge for future program development. LKTI is a scientific writing competition held concurrently with the madrasah's anniversary, targeting students at the SMP/MTs level to nurture their potential in paper writing. FGD is focused discussions on specific problems, following a mechanism similar to the Model United Nations (MUN) or PBB (United Nations) model. MUN involves simulating UN conference sessions and

fosters students' public speaking and critical thinking skills. These programs, together with other initiatives, contribute to student potential development in writing and research. Notably, while some activities serve as refreshing interludes, such as *plesir*, they yield valuable student-written work in research proposals.

In interviews with KIR LIBA supervisors, it was found that the funding for these activities came from various sources, including institutions, committee funds, and budget implementation documents (DIPA). In some cases, students' funds were used for specific activities, especially those that were not directly sponsored by the madrasah or required a higher fee. The Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Yogyakarta Institute highly supports its students' involvement in writing competitions. Students intending to participate in such competitions are often guided by teachers with expertise in writing, focusing on themes researched by the students.

Monitoring and evaluating. The final use of management is controlling, according to (Djabidi, 2017), who states that controlling is reporting activities to see a performance by the report structure, developing standards of behavior, measuring performance results based on objectives, as well as evaluating for improvement (Pakpahan & Habibah, 2021). Monitoring and evaluation is one way of controlling the implementation of a program (Fauzi et al., 2021). Each program is monitored while the activity is taking place, such as routine writing practice activities, which are usually monitored during every activity that takes place, and there are always school administration officers who monitor every extracurricular activity that takes place. The aspects that are looked at during the monitoring process are whether the guidance program is being implemented well or not. KIR LIBA supervisors usually monitor the implementation of other activities as program managers. The implementation evaluation program is carried out once a year at the change of each management, and the evaluation is attended by the head of the madrasah, head of student affairs, KIR LIBA supervisors and KIR LIBA administrators to report their answers.

The results of the evaluation and monitoring from the previous period show that the KIR LIBA program can help students develop their writing skills. It is proven by several achievements made by MAN 1 Yogyakarta students. Based on the facts in the field this year, of the 15 teams sent to the OPSI (Indonesian Student Research Olympiad), 14 teams passed the preliminary round and are currently conducting research. Furthermore, in the MYRES (Madrasah Young Researcher Super Camp) event, of the 15 teams sent, 4 teams managed to survive in the preliminary round. These two competitions are the best writing events at the madrasah level.

CONCLUSION

The KIR LIBA program successfully manages students' writing skills through planning, organizing, implementation, and monitoring. The program consists of eight types of work programs, each with its own objectives and work programs. The organization structure helps divide tasks and place competent individuals for easier achievement. Regular evaluations are conducted with the headmaster of MAN 1 Yogyakarta, head of student affairs, KIR LIBA supervisor, and internal administrators, including at the time of position handover during a government period.

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