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Improving Madrasah Teachers' Competence in Managing Learning Modules through Workshops at MI Arrasyidin and MI Al-Islam Magelang

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ABSTRACT

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Educators at MI Arrosyidin dan MI Al Islam Magelang must possess the ability to plan creatively inspiring and motivating learning experiences for students. Initial observations at the school have indicated that the implementation of the Self-Curriculum Teaching Module does not meet the expectations of many stakeholders. Therefore, MI Arrosyidin dan MI Al Islam Magelang, both in the context of online and offline learning, has decided to conduct research in 2024, between July and August. In this study, 16 teachers from MI Arrosyidin dan MI Al Islam Magelang are participating. This research takes the form of a school action research, a form of self-reflection commonly carried out by educational practitioners within the educational environment to improve the quality of education, gain a deeper understanding of teaching practices, and seek improvements in educational implementation. Data are collected through interviews, observations, and documentation. Based on the results of this research, it can be concluded that the training provided by the workshop facilitators has the potential to enhance teachers' ability to design Self-Curriculum Teaching Modules. One of the success indicators measurable in this school action research is that 95% of the teachers have successfully created Self-Curriculum Teaching Modules with a high level of creativity and innovation.

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Introduction

MI Al-Islam Arrasyidin and MI Al-Islam Magelang currently do not have a Self-Directed Curriculum Management Module. Therefore, training is needed for the madrasah teachers so that they can create the Self-Directed Curriculum Teaching Module (Novita et al., 2022). This step is taken with the aim of providing the best service to students, in line with the school's responsibility as an official educational institution in the new normal era.

The learning process in schools is considered an effective tool of public policy in expanding knowledge and skills. (Aji, dkk 2022). Determining the appropriate approach to learning has a significant impact on teaching effectiveness, which also determines the success of learning (Sarwadi; Nashihin, 2023). In the learning process, an approach is needed to understand the competencies possessed by the learners (Ratnawatiningsih & Hastuti, 2022).

According to Anas et al. (2023), the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum based on Minister of Religious Affairs Decree (KMA) No. 347 has received significant



support through the Merdeka Belajar platform and various teaching tools available to educators and learners in the Merdeka Curriculum application. In Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, this curriculum provides greater opportunities for learners to develop competencies and character (Aji et al., 2022). This is reinforced by interactive learning approaches that focus on the development of noble morals, nationalism, independence, critical thinking, and creativity.

Therefore, schools always refer to education policies formulated by central and regional authorities to fulfill their duties and responsibilities. Additionally, schools also have educational curricula as internal guidelines (Kholish, 2022). The Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia issued Circular Letter Number 4 of 2020 regarding the Implementation of Education Policies During the Spread of COVID-19. This circular letter regulates that online and distance learning are used to provide significant learning experiences for students, with homeschooling as its main focus (Dewi, 2020).

One of the main distinctive features of the Merdeka Curriculum is that classroom learning is tailored to the individual achievements of each learner, making the learning process more flexible as it is adapted to their abilities (Marlina, 2022). The Merdeka Curriculum is an initiative capable of presenting three main aspects: character formation (Nashihin, 2017) in accordance with the Pancasila student profile, skill development, and a focus on project-based learning. The Merdeka Curriculum is an initiative capable of presenting three main aspects: character formation in accordance with the Pancasila student profile, skill development, and a focus on project-based learning (Jojor & Sihotang, 2022).

The Merdeka Curriculum is introduced and implemented in all educational institutions with the aim of modernizing the learning process affected by the pandemic. The government provides options for implementing the Merdeka Curriculum in schools, which include: (1) independent learning, (2) collaboration in learning, and (3) adaptation to change. The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum is expected to bring significant impacts and changes related to learning administration, teaching strategies and approaches, teaching methods, and learning evaluation for teachers and educational staff in schools (Uswatiyah, 2021).

The Merdeka Belajar Curriculum is a new policy introduced and ratified by the Minister of Education in 2019 (Marisa; 2021). This applies not only to students but also to teachers. Therefore, educational institutions such as universities or schools need to quickly adapt to the ongoing curriculum changes (Baharuddin; 2021).

Learning can be defined as the interaction between learners, teachers or instructors, and learning resources that occur in a learning environment to achieve specific learning goals. Therefore, learning is an integral part of the educational or training process. According to the views of M. Irham and Novan Ardy, the term learning is almost synonymous with teaching and instruction (Ratnawatiningsih & Hastuti, 2022). The concept of learning is related to the teacher's or educator's efforts to deliver material to students by designing material, managing students, and creating a learning environment, which generally takes place in the classroom (M. Irham, 2019). Included in the Merdeka Curriculum learning, the core of the independent learning concept is to deepen the skills of teachers and students in innovation and independently improving the quality of learning (Merta, 2022).

Therefore, the role of teachers in enhancing students' abilities in problem-solving, analytical thinking, and gathering information from various sources is crucial because the quality of students is influenced by the quality of teachers. One important tool in teacher preparation for teaching is the Lesson Implementation Plan (RPP). The RPP is a plan for face-to-face learning activities developed in accordance with the syllabus to guide student learning activities on Basic Competencies (KD) (Muspawi, 2019). Learning modules are

learning tools or plans based on the curriculum, used with the intention of achieving predetermined competency standards (Nurdyansyah, 2018). As educators, teachers provide facilities that are tailored to the needs of individual learners. This is due to the variation in needs and characteristics among each learner, making it impossible to treat them in the same way (Nasution, 2022).

Education is a process aimed at shaping individuals to contribute significantly to society and the nation. This educational process does not yield instant impacts, as education is considered a long-term investment that will show its results when educated individuals are able to fulfill their roles in the future (Armanila, 2022). This will then contribute to the progress of the nation and the state in various fields. Education plays a very important role in the preparation and development of Human Resources (HR) with skills and competitiveness at the global level (Andri, 2020: 9). In implementing the Merdeka Curriculum, educational institutions such as schools or madrasahs must begin by developing the School Operational Curriculum. The school operational curriculum is a plan for the learning process within the educational institution (Basori, 2022).

In the development of teaching materials, teachers play a key role, and teachers need to develop their thinking abilities to innovate in creating teaching modules. Therefore, the ability of teachers to create teaching modules is an aspect of pedagogical competence that needs to be enhanced. This aims to make teaching methods in the classroom more effective, efficient, and in line with the set achievement indicators (Nesri, et al.; 2020).

To create interactive learning, education that encourages active student participation, and provides space for initiative, creativity, and independence, every educator is required to develop comprehensive and methodical Lesson Implementation Plans (RPP). One important component of RPP is the Self-Directed Curriculum Teaching Module, which teaches students skills and knowledge relevant to the current world, such as critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, collaboration, creativity, and information and communication technology literacy (Saputri, 2019). However, currently the Self-Directed Curriculum Teaching Module is not available at MI Arrasyidin and MI Al-Islam Magelang, although both have RPPs for the academic year 2023/2024. Therefore, in 2023, it is expected that there will be the addition of Self-Directed Curriculum Teaching Modules in the school curriculum. During the first semester of the academic year 2023/2024, educators will undergo training to create Self-Directed Curriculum Teaching Modules. In accordance with Circular Letter Number 14 of 2019 on Restructuring Lesson Implementation Plans, the main principles in the preparation of RPP are efficiency, effectiveness, and student orientation. One of the main components of RPP is learning objectives, learning activity steps, and learning assessment, while other components are complementary (Minister of Education and Culture Regulation Number 22 of 2016 concerning Basic and Secondary Education Process Standards).

Learning essentially involves interaction between teachers and students, either through direct communication such as face-to-face learning or through various other learning media (Soim, 2021).

Schools and individual educators have the authority to adapt and develop teaching module formats to maximize student learning achievements (Purnomo, 2022). In the development of Self-Directed Curriculum Teaching Modules, the evaluation of educator performance in managing learning is an integral part that cannot be separated from the training provided by school supervisors. Academic supervision aims primarily to assist teachers in improving their professional skills. Evaluating educator performance is a crucial aspect of learning management, allowing educators to continue to develop themselves. Facilitators at Madrasahs provide training with the aim of helping teachers develop skills in managing the learning process and designing Self-Directed Curriculum Teaching

Modules. In this context, academic supervision also plays an important role in assisting teachers in planning, implementing, and evaluating learning that is appropriate to student development. Therefore, academic supervision can be a means of assistance to help teachers create effective Self-Directed Curriculum Teaching Modules that meet student needs.

The basis of learning in the Merdeka Curriculum (Nadiem, 2022) is as follows:

- a. Learning is organized taking into account the developmental stages and current levels of achievement of learners, according to their learning needs, and reflecting diverse characteristics and developments. This is aimed at making learning significant and engaging
- b. Learning is planned and implemented to develop the capacity of learners so that they can become lifelong learners.
- c. The learning process supports the comprehensive development of learners' competencies and character.
- d. Relevant learning, meaning learning that is tailored to the context, environment, and culture of learners, and involves parents and communities as partners in the learning process.
- e. Learning is focused on a sustainable future. The core part of the curriculum structure becomes the most crucial element in the curriculum framework itself because it allows for the analysis of needs and the implementation of the curriculum, taking into account the situation in the field.

With these recent changes, the Minister of Education has high hopes for teaching that is not only confined to the classroom but also involves exploration outside the classroom. This approach is expected to make the learning process more engaging, enjoyable, and not solely dependent on the teacher's role. Such a learning system is desired to shape confident, independent individuals with good social intelligence and the ability to compete (Yusuf, et al.; 2021).

The Merdeka Curriculum prioritizes character formation through learning materials and student profiles based on Pancasila values. The character aspects that are the focus include key values in Pancasila, positive moral ethics, religious aspects, self-reliance, critical thinking skills, participation in cooperation, and creativity (Sholehudin, et al.; 2022).

Education involves not only the development of individual intellectual aspects but also the formation of character and the development of their skills. In this way, each individual can make a positive contribution to the nation's progress. By developing individuals, we can enhance the quality of each person in various fields, as well as shape a more focused attitude and skills in facing various problems and challenges that may arise (Eka Retnaningsih & Patilima, 2022).

The following is the curriculum structure for primary and secondary education (Andyani, 2023). Primary School/Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Curriculum Structure: The Primary School/Madrasah Ibtidaiyah curriculum is divided into 3 phases:

- a) Phase A for grades I and II.
- b) Phase B for grades III and IV.
- c) Phase C for grades V and VI.

Primary School/Madrasah Ibtidaiyah has the flexibility to organize the content of learning using either a subject-based approach or a thematic approach. The learning proportion in Primary School/Madrasah Ibtidaiyah is divided into 2 parts (Andyani, 2023):

- a) Intra-curricular learning
- b) Pancasila student profile strengthening projects, allocated approximately 20% of the total learning load per year. The implementation of this project is flexible, both in terms of content and scheduling.

Method

In this study, the PTS method was chosen because of its reflective nature, which reflects the strengthening activities of teachers' competencies in madrasahs. The research aims to provide reinforcement to educators when involved in the teaching and learning process, with a focus on improving teaching methods in their respective classrooms. Examples of reflection on actions include actions that educators must take, their understanding of these actions, and the context in which these actions are applied (Syaiful Anam, 2023). School supervisors provide school action research training as an effort to improve the learning environment. The research involves two stages of data collection, namely initial observation or observation, supplemented with interviews before the researcher teaches in the classroom, and the second stage after taking action.

This stage involves analyzing the results of observations by researchers and educators who are the objects of observation. Field data and findings about the effectiveness of training instruments are used as a basis for planning the next steps in the school action research cycle. This cycle begins anew after certain steps have been changed. Research instruments are used throughout the stages before, during, and after observation. Before the first meeting, steps involve creating a warm atmosphere with teachers, setting observation focus and discussing educator preparations, and determining instruments to measure perceptions. Learning observation includes focusing on agreed-upon aspects, using observation instruments, taking field notes, recording student and teacher behavior, and not disrupting the learning process.

After observation, an evaluation meeting is held, which includes improving teachers' opinions about the current learning process, giving instructors the opportunity to review instruments and notes that have been observed, discussing open observation results, especially those agreed upon in the contract, strengthening educator performance by identifying their own shortcomings, encouraging students by showing that teachers can overcome problems, and planning further training together (Nurudin, 2021). Data analysis steps involve data reduction, data presentation, conclusion drawing, and reflection verification. Data reduction begins by selecting and arranging significant points from the reduced interview and observation results. Recorded data is systematically and succinctly organized to emphasize key points that will sharpen observations and facilitate data rerecording if necessary. The reduced data is then presented in various ways to explain existing patterns.

Results and Discussion

Results of Cycle I Action

In 2024, the action was carried out from July to August. This action research took place throughout the learning period in the classes of MI Arrasyidin and MI Al-Islam Magelang, with observations conducted directly by the researchers and facilitators. They observed and recorded behaviors and incidents that occurred directly. These observations began from the early stages of the learning process. To collect data more effectively, observation instruments focused on facts, behaviors, and outcomes of informants' work in natural situations during this research process.

After the madrasah facilitators had finished, they used discussions as a means to provide guidance to educators in MI Arrasyidin and MI Al-Islam Magelang. Educators

were able to do this by considering the results of the facilitators' activities optimally, adjusting the achievement of performance indicators, and paying attention to the training outcomes provided by the school supervisors. Interviews with educators and information from the training provided by the madrasah facilitators served as the basis for further direction to ensure optimal performance.

To enhance the success of implementation, teacher presentations will be modified in the second cycle, which will take place over the next half year (Sulastri, 2021). The majority of educators, based on their individual reflections, felt that this training was very beneficial for their competencies. After attending the training, educators in MI Arrasyidin and MI Al-Islam Magelang sought to improve the quality of the Independent Curriculum Teaching Modules. Before this training, teachers often created Lesson Implementation Plans (RPP) in addition to using the Independent Curriculum Teaching Modules. The impact was that educators had to continuously strive to improve their teaching quality. Most of the time, the improvements needed were in crucial parts of the learning modules. This can be summarized as follows:

To demonstrate a good understanding, learning objectives must be evaluable with various types of tests and reflect the most important aspects of learning. Learning activities, resources used, suitability for diverse students, and assessment strategies will all be determined by the learning objectives (Ngabdul Shodikin et al., 2023). Learning objectives can also include factual, procedural, contextual knowledge, thinking skills, critical thinking skills, analytical thinking skills, collaboration skills, and other forms of knowledge.

Core learning activities that can be tailored to students' learning needs are included in instructional activities. Active learning method steps are divided into three stages according to the assigned time: core, introduction, and conclusion. Assessment plans include assessment instruments and methods. Clear criteria for objectives must be established according to the specified learning objectives. Both formative and summative assessments can be used, and the types of tests used should be tailored to the objectives and learning needs of the students.

This training activity was highly appreciated by the teachers and is expected to be conducted more frequently as it helps improve the quality of teaching. As much as 95% of these activities were deemed successful by the educators, indicating that this supervisory activity has the potential to enhance teacher quality. In an effort to achieve the expected results, Action activities continued in Cycle II.

Results of Cycle II Action

After evaluating the training outcomes by facilitators in MI Arrasyidin and MI Al-Islam Magelang and observing the performance of educators, the researchers examined the second cycle to ensure whether the performance indicators that had been set were achieved. If the performance indicators were still not met, then the research would proceed to the next cycle, and so on until reaching the desired performance indicators. Teachers can prepare Independent Curriculum Teaching Modules better after receiving training from facilitators. No teachers had poor learning processes, and all teachers worked well in preparing teaching modules before the learning process took place (Triana et al., 2023). The majority of educators felt that this training was very helpful, and they continued to strive to improve the quality of Independent Curriculum Teaching Modules after attending the training. The outcomes of the training by the facilitators had improved. This school action research has achieved the set performance indicators, thus the classroom actions are considered successful, and there is no need for further cycles. The facilitator's training has enhanced the ability to develop Independent Curriculum Teaching Modules for teachers at MI Arrasyidin and MI Al-Islam Magelang.

Updates have occurred in many schools, including in MI Arrasyidin and MI Al-Islam Magelang, which have improved the learning system by widely implementing the Independent Curriculum. One crucial component for the success of implementing the Independent Curriculum in schools is the learning module. These learning modules replace the role of the Lesson Implementation Plan (RPP) with significant differences in content. Several schools have developed School Operational Curricula (KOSP) before commencing learning, which includes learning objectives and Learning Objective Flow (ATP).

The purpose of developing learning modules, in accordance with learning and assessment guidelines, is to enrich learning tools that assist teachers in conducting learning both inside and outside the classroom. In this context, the Independent Curriculum provides freedom for teachers to enrich learning modules through two ways, namely by selecting or adapting modules prepared by the government and adjusting them to the characteristics of students, or by compiling modules individually according to the material and student characteristics.

Before creating learning modules, teachers must understand module development strategies and meet two minimum requirements, namely meeting the established criteria and ensuring (Jatmiko Wibisono, Hafidz, Iffat Abdul Ghalib, 2023) that learning activities in the module align with the principles of learning and assessment. The criteria for Independent Curriculum learning modules include: (1) Essential, meaning every subject is delivered through interdisciplinary learning experiences; (2) Engaging, meaningful, and challenging, with the goal of attracting student interest and actively engaging them in learning, with an appropriate level of difficulty; (3)

Criteria previously explained need to be used as guidelines when preparing learning modules (Muchamad Chairudin, 2023). After the principles of these criteria are established, teachers need to create learning modules that align with the predetermined components based on the needs. However, generally, learning modules have three main components: (a) General Information Component, (b) Core Component, and (c) Appendices.

In the General Information Component, there are several key points, namely:

- 1. Module author's identity, institution of origin, module creation year, school or madrasah level, class, and time allocation.
- 2. Initial competencies, which are statements about the knowledge and skills that students must have before learning the material.
- 3. Pancasila Student Profile, which is the ultimate goal of the learning process and relates to the formation of students' character. Teachers can integrate the Pancasila student profile into the content or teaching methods as needed by students.
- 4. Facilities and Infrastructure, which include facilities and media needed by teachers and students to support the learning process in the classroom, including the use of technology. 5. Student Targets, referring to the psychological characteristics of students before starting learning. Teachers can develop learning modules according to student categories, such as regular students, students with learning difficulties, or high-achieving students.
- 6. Learning Models, which can vary according to the material and class being taught. One example is the syntax 5 learning model, which can be used to make learning more meaningful.

Workshops improve their knowledge because of the information and exercises provided in module development. Such exercises need to be enhanced to improve their skill levels (Haryuni et al., 2022; Lestariningsih, 2020). Learning models aimed at making learning more meaningful. In the core part of the learning module, there are learning objectives, assessments, meaningful understanding, triggering questions, learning activities, and student and teacher reflections.

1. Learning Objectives: Learning objectives should reflect important aspects of learning and

can be tested through various types of assessments. Learning objectives include learning achievement content and the learning objectives themselves. This helps determine learning activities, resources to be used, relevance to students, and assessment techniques to be used. Learning objectives can cover various fields, including cognitive, procedural, conceptual, critical thinking, and communication skills.

- 2. Meaningful Understanding: Meaningful understanding is a learning process that goes beyond memorizing concepts or information. It involves connecting these concepts to form a deeper understanding so that students can apply them in action.
- 3. Triggering Questions: Teachers can create questions in learning modules to stimulate discussion, trigger curiosity, initiate discussion among students or with the teacher, and initiate observation. These questions are usually open-ended, such as questions starting with "what," "how," or "why.
- 4. Learning Activities: This section contains lesson plans in or out of the classroom. These activities are systematically arranged and can be customized with various learning options or alternatives according to students' learning needs. Learning activities include introductory, core material, and closing stages, based on active learning methods.
- 5. Assessment: Merdeka Belajar Curriculum has three types of assessments, namely diagnostic assessment, formative assessment, and summative assessment. Diagnostic assessment is used before learning to identify students' psychological and cognitive conditions. Formative assessment is conducted during the learning process. Summative assessment is done at the end of the learning process and can take the form of observation, self-assessment, peer assessment, student performance, and written tests.
- 6. Remedial and Enrichment: These two activities can be given to students with different achievement levels. Teachers can provide different worksheets for students who need enrichment and students who need remediation

At the end, there are appendices that include student worksheets, enrichment and remedial materials, reading materials for teachers and students, glossary, and bibliography. However, not all of these components need to be included in every learning module, as they are tailored to the school's conditions and students' needs.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this school action research, it can be concluded that madrasah administrators have the option to focus efforts on developing skills in designing independent educational plans, including the use of modules in the professional school environment they oversee, such as MI Arrasyidin and MI Al-Islam Magelang. This is evidenced by the improvement in the abilities of educators in designing Independent Curriculum Teaching Modules after undergoing training from School Facilitators, as seen from all educators successfully designing modules according to their needs. This success is considered a positive indicator of this school action research. The module development process in the context of the Merdeka Curriculum at MI Arrasyidin and MI Al-Islam Magelang involves at least ten steps, including: 1) Analyzing the conditions and needs of students, teachers, and educational units. Teachers can identify problems that arise during learning, analyze student situations, and identify their needs to design teaching modules accurately according to learning issues. Conducting diagnostic assessments on students to evaluate their conditions and needs in learning, 2) Teachers specifically conduct this assessment to identify students' competencies, strengths, and weaknesses before starting learning 3) Identification and determination of the Pancasila student profile to be achieved. Teachers can identify student needs and refer to character education, achieving the Pancasila student profile through projects, 4) Development of teaching modules referring to the Learning Objective Flow, based on Learning Achievement, similar to the material development process in the Learning Implementation Plan (RPP)., 5) Designing the types, techniques, and assessment instruments, where teachers determine instruments appropriate to three types of national assessments: minimum competency assessment, character survey, and learning environment survey, 6) Preparation of teaching modules based on planned components, 7) Teachers can select important components according to learning needs, 8) Important components can be explained in more detail in learning

activities, 9) After going through the previous stages, teaching modules are ready to be

used, 10) Teaching modules are evaluated to ensure their effectiveness in learning.

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