

The Importance of Curriculum Management in ECE Institutions

Edi Waluyo*, Eko Suprpto, Agus Hermanto, Fakhruddin Fakhruddin

Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia
*Corresponding Author: waluyowulan@gmail.com

Abstract. This research aimed to describe curriculum management in ECE institutions systematically. A survey research design was used in this research. The research samples were principals and teachers from the state, private, and religious-based ECE institutions in Semarang. The data collection technique was carried out through questionnaires, observations, and interviews. Based on the findings, curriculum management in ECE institutions gives good contributions to the development of curriculum documents, annual programs, semester programs, weekly programs, and daily programs. Curriculum management creates effective work steps in designing, organizing, implementing, and evaluating a curriculum..

Key words: management; curriculum ece institutions.

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INTRODUCTION

At this moment, curriculum development needs various adjustments. It is especially because the lesson is taught using both online and offline learning programs. Curriculum and pedagogy are long-standing concepts in early childhood education and care (ECEC) on the teaching and learning of young children (Edwards, 2021 p.11). c Thus, in any condition, the teacher strives to give the best learning to the children.

Based on Hizli Alkan & Priestley (2019 p.15), the individual is still an important factor in successful curriculum-making. The curriculum development process can be done simultaneously with the development of the institution to provide the best learning service for early childhood. Curriculum development is performed by the principal and teacher with the objective that an institution can provide various programs to stimulate children with all development aspects. Meanwhile, a better curriculum supported by good teachers who believe in it remains to be the highest priority. (Young, 2013 p.115)

According to Azhari (Waluyo et al., 2021), a curriculum management study is an integral part of a curriculum study. Through curriculum management, the development process of a curriculum that will be used as learning guidelines in an institution can be done by accommodating various needs. In the implementation of curriculum management, principal and teacher's roles are very important to make sure that the curriculum developed is according to the vision, mission, and objectives of

the institution. Of course, a good curriculum is developed according to the institution's needs through more systematic ways in its management and operation.

Curriculum development in an ECE institution is a professional job that has to be done to provide the best service in the learning process developed by the institution. In developing a curriculum, various changes in society should be considered. It has to be able to give enough provision to children. The wider the material developed, the more options the children have to play and learn according to their interests.

Based on the background above, this article examines teacher's roles in a curriculum management process from designing, organizing, implementing, and evaluating. Through good curriculum management, it is expected to provide convenience for teachers in developing a curriculum that provides the best service according to children's needs as well as the supporting capacity in developing competencies of a professional teacher.

LITERATURE REVIEW

ECE Institution

Early childhood education has an important role in improving human resources. Early age is a special period in children's development. Parents must fulfill the essential needs of their children well and thoroughly. Here, ECE and its professional teacher play roles to stimulate early children so that they can optimally grow according to their development stages.

It is clearly defined in the law (Undang

Undang Nomor 20, 2003) about National Education System that ECE is an educational effort from birth to six years of age by giving stimulus for children's physical and emotional growth and development to prepare them for further education. The law advises that early childhood education must be well prepared and holistic as the basis for children to enter further education.

ECE service program is a government's effort to realize access expansion with the target that one village has at least one ECE education unit. The development of ECE institutions is very interesting to be done to anticipate globalization by stimulating early children with various development aspects. With a lot of policies' support, it is expected to bring up various ECE services so that the children can be an asset to the nation's development.

In line with this program, the family role is very important and needed because the early process of children's development starts from the family environment. Thus, ECE institutions must include parents in educating the children. Parents' participation holds important functions and roles in the continuity of early childhood education.

The cooperation of ECE institutions, the education authorities, and society are very much expected. It becomes a realization of the involvement of all components in ECE development. The lack of participation of all parties creates an impact on the late ECE's development. The development of ECE institutions needs a synergy from all parties to make children development stimulation programs as early human resources investments run well. The awareness in educating children with various programs designed in the curriculum is a valuable investment and an effort to create heroes for future development.

Curriculum Management

The curriculum has a very important role and can be a determinant of the educational institution's success and failure. Thus, every educational institution attempts to design and implement a curriculum in the best ways. The definition of curriculum is always developed along with the development of educational theories and practices (Ruhimat et al., 2015).

Every level of education starts from early childhood education, primary school, middle school, and high school must have a curriculum document. A curriculum in the educational institution has a strategic position. If an

educational institution does not implement curriculum management well, it will create impacts on the implementation and achievement of learning objectives. The role of curriculum management is needed to implement and achieve the institution's objectives.

There are various suggestions related to the definition of curriculum management. Rusman (Rusman, 2009) stated that curriculum management is a curriculum management system that is cooperative, comprehensive, systemic, and systematic to realize the achievement of the curriculum. Meanwhile, according to (Hamalik, 2006), a management-based curriculum development means implementing curriculum development activities based on the management mindset or based on the management process according to the management functions.

As a process, curriculum management tries to focus on its field of work that is how to develop the best curriculum for every educational institution. This is in line with the findings from (Sista, 2017), which stated that understanding the curriculum management concept is an important thing for the principal. It later becomes a basis to make decisions in the curriculum implementation that will be done by the teacher.

Other than the educational institution, society also becomes the key to success for the education process. Their involvement is needed in curriculum management so that society can understand, help, and control curriculum implementation. In this way, the educational institution can be cooperative and independent in identifying the needs, designing, controlling, and reporting the source and result of the curriculum both to the society and related parties (Nasbi, 2017).

Curriculum development must be seen as a process to fulfill students' needs that lead to the improvement of students' learning and cannot be stagnant. A curriculum has to become a live document that is always changing so it must be able to adapt to the changes in the educational community and society (Alsubaie, 2016). To make a curriculum become a live document, teachers must understand the curriculum deeply. Teachers also play a role as the curriculum developer for their classes (Syam, 2017)

According to (Djafar et al., 2014), a curriculum design done by an educational institution is started with the coordination of the principal, teachers, and all parties involved in the development. The scope of curriculum management according to (Wahyudin, 2014)

covers designing, organizing, implementing, and evaluating a curriculum. According to the Government Regulation No. 32/2013, the Curriculum structure in early childhood education contains various development programs such as the development of moral and religious, motoric, cognitive, language, social-emotional, and art values (Peraturan Pemerintah Republik Indonesia Nomor 32 Tahun 2013 Perubahan Atas Peraturan Pemerintah Nomor 19 Tahun 2005 Tentang Standar Pendidikan Nasional, 2013).

Meanwhile, according to (Yoshida, 2016), promoting effective curriculum management is performed by balancing the process of curriculum design, implementation, assessment, and improvement. According to many theories and research findings, curriculum management is a study that specifically examines the design, organization, implementation, and evaluation of a curriculum so that it reaches the objectives expected. Curriculum management also examines various supporting factors and obstacles in the process of curriculum implementation. Thus, curriculum management is the institution's effort to manage its learning curriculum to obtain good appreciation from society and to make the curriculum runs effectively and efficiently.

METHOD

Research Objectives

This research used a survey research design to describe a trend in a big population (Creswell, 2015). This survey was performed to find out teacher practices in the curriculum management of early childhood educational institutions. This research was conducted according to a quantitative mindset, but technically, the analysis of this research used qualitative ways to obtain good research findings. The objectives of this research were to analyze the ideas concerning principal and teacher practices in curriculum management that have been done so far and to find the best solution in giving convenience through a constructive approach in the development of a curriculum.

Sample and Data Collection

The data collection technique was done through questionnaires and interviews. The population in this research was ECE principals

and teachers while the samples were principals and teachers of ECE institutions in Semarang with the amount of 36 that represented the state, private, and religious-based ECE institution. Specifically, this research chose Semarang as the setting because of its role as the education center in Central Java. Also, according to the Statistics Department of Central Java, Semarang has the second largest number of ECE institutions, in this case, kindergarten, after Grobogan Regency (Badan Pusat Statistik Provinsi Jawa Tengah, 2020).

Analyzing of Data

Furthermore, the findings were descriptively analyzed and explained by fully describing the data and information, both quantitative and qualitative, obtained in this research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The curriculum management process in early childhood educational institutions starts from the design, organization, implementation, and evaluation. From the process of designing to organizing, it is expected to obtain a curriculum document that can be used as a reference for further programs such as annual, semester, weekly, and daily programs. Principals and teachers develop these learning programs with some considerations, such as the institution's needs, children's development, and other various supporting factors so that the learning process can run well.

The findings of this research, about curriculum management in ECE institutions, were obtained through questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaires were then used as a basis to find the data regarding curriculum management. Furthermore, interviews were performed to find additional data and to confirm information about various data collected.

The questionnaires of curriculum management in early childhood educational institutions were filled by principals and teachers with the criteria 1= very less; 2= less; 3= average; 4= good and 5= excellent. Furthermore, the questionnaires were filled in to obtain data about the design, organization, implementation, and evaluation of the curriculum. Based on the questionnaires distributed to the research samples, the data obtained were as follows:

Table 1. The Questionnaires Result of Curriculum Management in ECE Institution

No	Aspect/ Indicator/Statement	Score
I	Curriculum Management	
A	Curriculum Design	
1	The curriculum is designed well	4.6
2	The curriculum is designed according to the national curriculum	4.6
3	Information Technology plays important role in curriculum design	4.6
4	Curriculum design using information technology makes the achievement of vision and mission easier	4.5
5	Curriculum design using information technology makes the management of curriculum input easier	4.5
B	Curriculum Organization	
6	Curriculum organization is an important part of curriculum management	4.6
7	Document organization using information technology is easier	4.6
8	Information technology provides convenience in organizing Core and Basic Competencies	4.6
9	Information technology provides convenience in organizing annual and semester programs	4.6
10	Information technology provides convenience in organizing weekly and daily programs	4.7
11	Information technology provides convenience in organizing curriculum according to the characteristics of the institution	4.8
C	Curriculum Implementation	
12	Management with the help of information technology allows the institution to be ready to implement a curriculum	4.6
13	Curriculum implementation with the help of information technology provides convenience to classroom learning	4.8
14	Curriculum implementation with the help of information technology makes the learning interactions easier	4.6
D	Curriculum Evaluation	
15	Provides obvious steps in curriculum	4.7
16	Provides obvious result in the development	4.8
17	Provides convenience in evaluating curriculum document	4.8
18	Provides convenience in evaluating learning program	4.8
19	Provides convenience in evaluating curriculum implementation	4.8

Based on the table above, in detail, the data obtained from each indicator of curriculum management with the help of information technology in ECE institutions can be seen in the following table:

Table 2. The Average Result of Curriculum Management Indicator

No	Indicator	Result
	Curriculum Management	
A	Curriculum Design	4.6
B	Curriculum Organization	4.7
C	Curriculum Implementation	4.7
D	Curriculum Evaluation	4.8
	Average	4.7

According to table 2, the result on the curriculum management with the indicator of curriculum design, organization, implementation, and evaluation obtained the average score of 4.7 from the highest score of 5. The score obtained from each aspect and indicator showed that curriculum management contributes to providing convenience for teachers in developing a curriculum. Thus, according to the findings, curriculum management gives good contributions to the principals and teachers in supporting their performances in the development of the ECE curriculum.

Based on the findings from the indicators in the curriculum management process, the average score of 4.7 from the highest score of 5 was obtained. According to the survey, the curriculum management process is in a good category. It provides convenience in curriculum design, organization, implementation, and evaluation to give the best service for the children in ECE institutions.

It can be seen from the four indicators in the curriculum management that curriculum design obtained the lowest score of 4.6. This process determines the next process. If at this stage, it is not that successful, it will have an unfavorable impact on the results developed. The curriculum development process has to be in line with the vision and mission, designed to facilitate various children's needs well and accommodate various inputs from various parties including predictive things in the future.

Furthermore, the highest score is in the indicator of curriculum evaluation which obtained a score of 4.8. Based on the confirmation result through the interviews, curriculum evaluation becomes easier if the steps in curriculum management run well. Thus, curriculum management provides convenience to evaluate curriculum documents, learning programs, and curriculum implementation.

According to Maspupah (2018 p.142), a curriculum can be seen as all educational designs that will be implemented to achieve a certain

number of goals. While according to Mughniati & Waluyo (2015 p.5), practices in ECE curriculum management involves curriculum design, organization, implementation, and evaluation. Thus, teacher practices in the development of the curriculum are performed so that the design can be implemented in the learning process and the goals can be achieved.

According to (Adipratama et al., 2018), the curriculum development in an educational institution must begin with determining vision and mission. In line with this opinion, (Syafaruddin & Amiruddin, 2017) stated that a curriculum should always be updated along with the reality, changes, and challenges in the education world. Curriculum development must be comprehensive, responsive to the social dynamics, relevant, and able to accommodate diversity and development of technology. While according to (Ita, 2018), a good curriculum will result in a high-quality generation. It can be understood according to the opinion above that a good curriculum is developed using good curriculum management by considering various things including the development of technology.

In its practice, curriculum management in the educational institution, according to (Fathurrochman, 2017), follows these steps: (a) increase the efficiency of the use of curriculum resources; (b) increase fairness and opportunities to students to achieve an optimal result; (c) increase the relevance and effectiveness of learning according to the students and their environment's needs; (d) improve the effectiveness of teacher performance and students activities in achieving learning objectives; (e) improve the effectiveness and efficiency of teaching and learning process; and (f) improve society's participation to help in developing a curriculum.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussions, curriculum management in ECE institutions gives a good contribution in supporting principals' and teachers' performances. Through this curriculum management, the curriculum document can be developed easily and various learning devices can be developed with effective steps.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Suggestions: further research is needed to develop innovations in curriculum management that provide convenience to support professional teachers' works in every level of education.

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