

Analysis of Teacher Responses to Curriculum Changes and Its Implications in the Learning Process

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to evaluate teachers' responses to curriculum changes and their impact on the teaching and learning activities at SMA Negeri 7 Prabumulih. Curriculum change is one aspect of the dynamics of the educational system that requires readiness and adjustment from educators who play an active role in the field. This study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive qualitative method. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis involving several teachers from various subject areas at the school. The findings show that teachers' responses to curriculum changes are diverse, ranging from positive responses such as enthusiasm and readiness to adapt to negative responses such as confusion and rejection, caused by a lack of socialization and training. Some teachers faced challenges in understanding the content of the new curriculum and in applying a competency-based approach to learning. The consequences of these responses are apparent in the pedagogical approaches employed, the attainment of educational goals, and the students' motivation to learn. This study suggests the necessity for ongoing training, rigorous mentoring, and efficient communication between policymakers and curriculum implementers in educational institutions to guarantee effective curriculum implementation and a beneficial influence on the quality of learning.

Keywords: Curriculum Change, Learning Implementation, Teacher Response

A. Introduction

Education is an activity carried out with awareness and planning to develop human resources (Tanjung, 2020). As a guideline in the educational process to direct effective learning, the curriculum is the most important part of the world of education. We can liken it to a well-organized program plan for students, as explained by (Hamalik, 2011). In his study of curriculum development management, the definition of curriculum is understood as a teaching program designed specifically for students and a crucial part of learning activities. The primary goal of this curriculum is to encourage student progress and self-improvement by linking it to established educational goals. Curriculum development is a comprehensive series of activities closely related to national education policy, designed to align with

established goals, objectives, and strategies. This series of processes includes thorough planning, field implementation, ongoing monitoring, and comprehensive evaluation.

Since Indonesia gained independence, the education system has undergone numerous changes and improvements in curriculum policy. Throughout its history, the Indonesian curriculum has undergone at least eleven dynamic changes. Beginning in the pre-independence era with a very simple form, it was followed by the independence era with continuous improvements in 1947, 1952, 1964, 1968, 1975, 1984, 1994, 2004, 2006, 2013, and 2020 (Hidayat et al., 2025). These decisions regarding curriculum changes are based on analysis of results, evaluations, forecasts, and challenges faced, both internally and externally, which are constantly evolving (Hidayat et al., 2025; Laila et al., 2025). In this regard, the curriculum, as a result of policy, is dynamic, contextual, and relative. The curriculum is dynamic due to its constant evolution, adaptation to changing times, and openness to criticism (Law, 2022). Contextual because it is essential and based on the context of its time. Relative because a curriculum policy considered good or ideal at one time may become inappropriate in the next. Therefore, the basic principles of curriculum policy are change and continuity, namely, continuous change.

Appropriate and relevant curriculum development will be key, especially if it can boost efficiency in meeting future needs, in line with the information and knowledge age (Tan et al., 2021). This will also contribute to efforts to develop students' abilities and skills to meet the challenges of the times. The interconnectedness of all stages of student development within their increasingly expansive environment in the knowledge age also requires efficient and effective educational and training planning, all of which must be incorporated into the curriculum provided to students. In this regard, developing a curriculum that aligns with the challenges of the times is a necessity, in line with the determination and effort to further enhance students' skills. Therefore, education plays a significant role in developing individuals who are skilled, relevant, and possess both soft and hard skills, especially in facing the 21st century (Caeiro-Rodríguez et al., 2021; González-Pérez & Ramírez-Montoya, 2022).

The curriculum, as one element of the overall components of the education system, is comprehensively connected according to the National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003, Article 1, paragraph 3. It is a series of activities aimed at consciously preparing students to face life in the future through mentoring activities, learning materials, and the teaching and learning process (Herman et al., 2023). Therefore, the curriculum becomes a reference for assessing the success of education. In this way, the curriculum needs to be managed effectively and professionally. The implementation of the curriculum in teaching programs, both directly and indirectly, requires responsibility from teachers, especially in the context of educational services (Florencia Ananda Gulo, 2024; Manzano-Sánchez et al., 2021). This is because

teachers have an obligation to carry out their responsibilities well and with a professional work attitude during the curriculum development process. The problem is how teachers can compile a curriculum in accordance with the provisions of the Minister of National Education Regulation No. 35 of 2010 concerning teacher responsibilities, which includes planning a learning curriculum in educational institutions and conveying it to students so that they can become part of a quality society, able to adapt and adjust to the progress of the times. In response to this challenge, teachers as educators are expected to understand issues related to the curriculum, from the development and change process to its implementation in teaching.

Curriculum changes sometimes have a clear reason and impetus to improve and develop the quality of teaching (Ali et al., 2025). Changes in the curriculum not only require a review of documents and policies but also require readiness from various components of education, especially teachers who play a role as directors of the learning process and in management (Hadisaputra et al., 2024). The learning process is aligned with the predetermined curriculum objectives. Teachers' abilities, especially in terms of pedagogical competence, the ability to use technology, and skills in managing project-based learning, are the main factors that determine the success of the implementation of this new curriculum (Martinez, 2022). Teachers as the main foundation in the education system in implementing the curriculum are expected to understand and implement it as well as possible and with sincerity according to their capacity and enthusiasm. Teachers play a very vital role in the implementation of the curriculum in educational institutions and are often role models for students (Alek et al., 2021; Fithriani et al., 2021). Therefore, an educator must have attitudes and skills that support comprehensive student growth. Various responses emerged from teachers regarding the implementation of the changed curriculum, especially due to differences with the previous curriculum. There is also a view that states that the curriculum is truly in the hands of teachers, because in the learning process, teachers must adapt methods to the applicable curriculum.

Previous studies have revealed that curriculum implementation often encounters several obstacles, including resistance and lack of resources (Fasinro, 2024). Therefore, it is important to understand teachers' responses to curriculum changes to identify factors that influence their successful implementation. This study will use a qualitative approach to gain richer insights into teachers' responses. Through interviews, observations, and content analysis, the collected data will describe teachers' views, attitudes, and experiences in implementing the curriculum they face. This research is expected to provide input and recommendations to relevant parties, such as schools and the government, to improve curriculum implementation at SMA Negeri 7 Prabumulih. A learning plan is a document compiled based on a systematic analysis of student development, with the aim of making learning more effective and efficient, according to the needs of students and the community. Good learning implementation requires careful planning. This shows that student success

is greatly influenced by the planning made by teachers or instructors. Teachers must develop a learning plan before carrying out their duties in the learning process. This means that teachers will not be able to teach optimally without thorough preparation, which is reflected in the learning plan. Based on the above problems, the author proposes a thesis entitled "Analysis of Teacher Responses to Curriculum Changes and Their Implications in the Learning Process at SMA Negeri 7 Prabumulih."

B. Methods

This type of research uses a qualitative approach. The analysis applied is descriptive fieldwork, which includes direct observation of the research object and data collection based on fieldwork results. The collected data are aligned with the facts discovered during the research. The qualitative approach in this study emphasizes the analysis of inductive thought processes and patterns related to dynamics. Qualitative research has the following characteristics: using scientific methods, humans as the primary instrument, using qualitative methods, inductive data analysis, grounded theory, descriptiveness, prioritizing process over results, having defined focus boundaries, having criteria for data validity, the research design is tentative, and the research results are discussed and mutually agreed upon (Moleong, 2016).

This research using a descriptive qualitative approach aims to describe, elaborate, or illustrate teacher responses to curriculum changes and their implications in the learning process at SMA Negeri 7 Prabumulih. This research describes data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation, which are then analyzed to provide clarity. The location of this research was at SMAN 7, located in Gunung Ibul sub-district, East Prabumulih district, Prabumulih city, South Sumatra province. The research was conducted from March to May 2025. This study focused on teacher responses to curriculum changes and their implications for the learning process at SMAN 7 Prabumulih. The type of data used in this study was qualitative, meaning data in the form of words, not numbers. The data source is the subject from whom the data is obtained. If the research uses interviews to collect data, then the data source is the respondent, the person who responds to or answers the researcher's questions, both written and oral.

Based on their nature, data sources are divided into two: primary data and secondary data. Primary data is data obtained directly by the researcher from the source without any intermediaries, such as conducting in-depth interviews. In other words, primary data is obtained from individuals or groups in the form of opinions. The primary data obtained by the researcher came from educators at SMAN 7 Prabumulih. Secondary data is data obtained indirectly from its source or data obtained from other people, which is supporting data that can be used to strengthen primary data in the form of theoretical studies, journals, library documents, relevant

scientific works, and information obtained from surrounding people who support the problem being studied. Data collection techniques use interview and documentation techniques. For this research study, a qualitative descriptive analysis technique was used with the Miles & Huberman (1984) data analysis model approach, namely data reduction, data display, and data conclusions drawing/verification. Data validity tests in this study include credibility tests (internal validity), transferability (external validity), dependability (reliability), and confirmability (objectivity).

C. Results and Discussion

Based on the results of data analysis, this study presents data regarding the responses of teachers at SMAN 7 Prabumulih to curriculum changes and their implications for the learning process. This study describes three things; 1) How teachers understand and behave toward the curriculum changes implemented at SMAN 7 Prabumulih, and the factors that influence them; 2) How teachers adapt to and implement the new curriculum, the challenges they face during the process, and their strategies for dealing with curriculum changes; 3) What efforts has school management made to improve teacher competency, and to what extent has this support been effective in helping teachers cope with curriculum changes?.

Teachers' Understanding and Attitudes Towards Curriculum Changes Implemented at SMA Negeri 7 Prabumulih

Based on data analysis from teachers at SMA Negeri 7 Prabumulih, researchers found that the curriculum changes from the KTSP (Standardized Curriculum) and the 2013 Curriculum to the Merdeka Curriculum have had a significant impact on teaching strategies and teachers' roles in the classroom. Informants demonstrated an open and reflective attitude toward change, despite varying levels of understanding and readiness. Several senior teachers at SMAN 7 Prabumulih demonstrated a mature and in-depth understanding and readiness to develop learning materials under all three curricula. They also demonstrated an awareness of the strategic role of teachers as curriculum developers capable of adapting student needs to national policies.

Meanwhile, teachers with less teaching experience admitted they did not yet fully understand the content and implementation of each curriculum, demonstrating an enthusiastic attitude to continue learning and developing. This reflects a professional commitment to following the direction of education policy, even though it is still in the process of being adjusted. Overall, it can be concluded that the factors influencing teachers' understanding and attitudes toward curriculum change include: 1) Teaching experience; 2) Access to training and mentoring; 3) Institutional/school support; and 4) Personal commitment to learning and development.

Thus, teacher readiness to face curriculum change is greatly influenced by a combination of professional experience and a supportive ecosystem, both internal and external to the school. Continuous efforts in the form of training, collaboration between teachers, and space for reflection are key to the successful and effective implementation of the new curriculum at SMA Negeri 7 Prabumulih.

The Adaptation Process Undertaken by Teachers in Facing and Implementing the New Curriculum

Based on data obtained through interviews with teachers and school management at SMAN 7 Prabumulih, it can be concluded that the curriculum change from the KTSP (Standardized Curriculum) to the 2013 Curriculum (K13), and then to the Independent Curriculum, had a significant impact on learning practices in the school. This change was not only administrative in nature but also touched upon fundamental aspects of education, such as teachers' perspectives on learning, teacher-student relationships, and the dynamics of the overall learning ecosystem. Teachers have full responsibility for implementing the curriculum, both comprehensively and in terms of delivering subjects in accordance with the program designed in the curriculum. Curriculum changes place teachers as the primary actors in translating policies into concrete learning practices in the classroom (Lambert et al., 2021). Teachers are not only required to understand the curriculum structure but also to adapt learning methods, approaches, and strategies to meet the demands of the times and the needs of students (Ajani, 2024; Sharma, 2024).

Based on the results of research analysis conducted at SMAN 7 Prabumulih, it was discovered that the curriculum changes from the KTSP (Standardized Curriculum) and the 2013 Curriculum to the Merdeka Curriculum encouraged teachers to make various adaptations, both in planning, implementing, and evaluating learning. This adaptation occurred because each curriculum change brought different approaches and demands, requiring teachers to adapt to ensure the learning process remained effective and aligned with educational goals. During the KTSP era, teachers had considerable flexibility in designing learning, but this also presented challenges because not all teachers had the ability to independently develop teaching materials. The approach used was still largely teacher-centered, resulting in less active student involvement. Entering the 2013 curriculum, there was a shift towards learning that emphasized authentic assessment, character building, and a scientific approach. Teachers were required to be more systematic in designing learning activities, although they initially faced challenges in terms of administration and adjusting assessment models.

With the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, teachers are again faced with significant changes. This curriculum gives them the flexibility to adapt teaching materials to local contexts and student needs. Based on interviews, teachers are beginning to act as facilitators, not only delivering material but also guiding students

to be more active, creative, and independent in their learning. This encourages teachers to implement project-based learning, group discussions, and other more varied methods. In the lesson planning process, teachers are beginning to develop lesson plans and teaching modules in a more focused manner. They consider student characteristics, learning objectives, and strategies that best suit the material. Planning is not only focused on academic achievement but also on developing attitudes and skills. These changes indicate that teachers are beginning to recognize the importance of a holistic learning process. Furthermore, teachers are making adjustments in classroom management and lesson implementation. They are creating a more open learning environment and supporting student engagement. Teachers are beginning to use digital media and technology as part of the learning process. The use of more varied methods, such as problem-based learning and collaborative projects, has been shown to increase student interest and participation.

In terms of assessment, teachers have begun implementing authentic assessments that comprehensively assess the learning process and outcomes. Assessments are no longer limited to written tests but also include observations, portfolios, and student reflections. This allows teachers to understand student development more deeply and design appropriate follow-up learning. Other adaptations are evident in teachers' efforts to develop themselves. They participate in training, webinars, and MGMP activities to improve competencies and share good practices. Teachers have also become active in discussions and collaborations with colleagues as part of the professional learning process. This demonstrates that teachers are beginning to build a reflective and collaborative culture in the face of change. Overall, teachers' adaptation to the curriculum changes at SMAN 7 Prabumulih shows positive progress. Although they experienced initial difficulties, particularly in administration and adapting methods, teachers have gradually been able to adapt and implement learning approaches that are more appropriate to the demands of the times. This adaptation demonstrates that the success of the curriculum is largely determined by teachers' readiness to develop themselves and their openness to change. With adequate support, teachers can fulfill their roles optimally and provide meaningful learning experiences for students.

Challenges for Teachers at SMAN 7 Prabumulih

Based on interviews with several teachers at SMAN 7 Prabumulih, researchers found that teachers' adaptation to the curriculum changes from the KTSP (Standardized Curriculum) to the 2013 Curriculum, and finally to the Independent Curriculum, was not always smooth. Although most teachers made efforts to adapt, they still faced a number of challenges during the process.

- a. Each curriculum change brings new regulations, terminology, and approaches. Teachers admitted they often struggled to fully understand the expectations of the new curriculum. For example, when the 2013 curriculum was first implemented, many teachers were confused by authentic assessment

and the scientific approach. Similarly, when the Independent Curriculum was implemented, they had to understand new concepts such as the P5 project and independent learning modules. Not all teachers immediately understood or were ready to implement these.

- b. Many teachers felt that the curriculum changes also brought increased administrative tasks. They had to develop more detailed teaching materials and adapt documents to the latest formats. This was quite time-consuming and sometimes burdensome, especially for teachers unfamiliar with the new system.
- c. Lack of targeted training. The training or workshops provided are sometimes too general and do not directly address teachers' needs. Several teachers reported that the training was often theoretical and lacked concrete examples or hands-on practice that they could apply in the classroom. This slowed down the adaptation process.
- d. Limited technological proficiency. Teachers also face challenges in using technology. Although 21st-century learning demands the integration of technology, not all teachers feel confident or accustomed to using it. However, the latest curriculum encourages interactive, digital-based learning.
- e. Adapting the teacher's role to become a facilitator. Curriculum changes also require teachers to shift from being dominant instructors to facilitators who guide students' independent learning. This is not easy for some teachers, especially those accustomed to lecture methods or teacher-centered approaches.

Teacher Strategy of SMAN 7 Prabumulih

The biggest challenge teachers face is adapting to new ways of working. Interviews with researchers revealed that each curriculum change brings changes in teaching methods, assessments, and character-based learning, requiring new understanding and skills from teachers. This results in longer preparation times for teaching materials and other learning materials. To address this challenge, teachers at SMAN 7 Prabumulih have taken several effective strategic steps. One of these is continually updating their understanding through collaborative learning with fellow teachers. Group discussions and sharing experiences among teachers are effective ways to strengthen each other. Each teacher can share their experiences regarding what they have implemented, the challenges they have encountered, and the solutions they have found in implementing the new curriculum. This not only enriches teachers' understanding of the curriculum but also enables them to discover new, more relevant, and more effective approaches for classroom implementation.

Furthermore, teachers actively participate in various training programs organized by the government and other relevant institutions. This training is crucial because it not only provides theoretical knowledge about the new curriculum but also provides teachers with the opportunity to practice directly with various techniques and

methods that can be implemented in the classroom. This training often includes learning about educational technology, which is a crucial aspect of the new curriculum. By mastering technology, teachers can more easily deliver interactive and engaging lessons and facilitate students' access to learning materials. Furthermore, some teachers also collaborate with teachers from other schools or participate in Subject Teacher Meetings (MGMP) to exchange ideas and information on effective ways to implement the curriculum. In these forums, teachers can discuss the challenges they face and find solutions together. This collaboration, in addition to improving understanding of the new curriculum, also builds solidarity among teachers, helping to create better and more meaningful learning for students.

Efforts By School Management to Improve Teacher Competency in Facing Curriculum Changes

From the results of the analysis of interviews with the principal and the vice principal of curriculum, a concrete form of school management's commitment to improving teacher competency at SMAN 7 Prabumulih is by holding internal training or in-house training twice in one academic year. According to Fadil & Aryani (2021), in-house training is a training program held at one's own place as an effort to improve teacher competency in carrying out their work by optimizing existing potentials. Meanwhile, according to Haeriah et al. (2025), In-House Training (IHT) is a training program carried out internally by teacher work groups, schools, or other places designated as organizers of the training. In-House Training is carried out through three phases, namely the planning phase, the implementation process phase, and the evaluation phase.

1. Planning Phase

Planning serves to determine the objectives or framework of actions needed to achieve specific goals (Terry, 2019). Things that must be done in this phase include setting training targets, formulating training objectives, identifying training topics or materials, selecting training approaches and methods, organizing participants and trainers, determining the training time and location, preparing all necessary training materials, establishing an evaluation model for the training, and determining the necessary funding sources for financing.

2. Implementation Process Phase

The training implementation procedure is essentially the implementation of the plan that has been developed. This phase is divided into two parts: the preparation phase and the implementation phase. In the preparation phase, the training process includes preparing complete training materials (invitations, materials, schedules, media, attendance lists, and evaluation instruments) and the readiness of infrastructure (venue, facilities, catering, participants, and trainers).

3. Training Evaluation Phase

The evaluation phase reviews the training activities that have been carried out. This phase is not intended to assess the learning outcomes of training participants, but rather to assess the activities conducted during and after the training. The evaluation phase is the final phase of the entire training process and is intended to assess the training activities that have been implemented, both during and after the training.

The principal demonstrated a strong awareness of the importance of creating a collaborative climate. Teachers were empowered to serve as resource persons in training forums, which not only saved costs but also strengthened their confidence and professional solidarity. This approach reflects the values of collaborative leadership, where the principal does not monopolize knowledge but instead creates space for the exchange of experiences among teachers. This also provides a horizontal nuance to the competency improvement process, which is typically vertical or top-down.

From the data collected, we also observed that the principal's role in facilitating teachers was not reactive but rather proactive and reflective. This was evident in the evaluation process and the collection of feedback from teachers after each training session. This evaluation served as the basis for determining the theme of subsequent training sessions, ensuring that the training was truly based on the real needs faced by teachers in the classroom. This strategy demonstrated openness in school management and a long-term orientation in developing the quality of teacher human resources. In addition to training, another form of facilitation identified by researchers was the provision of moral and emotional support. Interviewed teachers stated that they felt supported and valued during the curriculum transition process. The principal and the vice-curriculum director actively listened to teachers' concerns and challenges and provided contextual solutions. This leadership style is crucial, especially amidst the demands of rapid and complex change, such as the implementation of the Independent Curriculum.

We also noted that the principal did not act alone. The vice-curriculum director, as an extension of the academic field, played a significant role in developing and implementing the training program. This synergy between the principal and the management team strengthened the effectiveness of policies at the educational unit level. Based on these findings, the researchers concluded that the principal at SMAN 7 Prabumulih successfully played a strategic role in facilitating teachers in facing curriculum changes. The approach used was systematic, collaborative, and needs-based. This aligns with educational management theories, which emphasize that successful curriculum implementation depends not only on teacher competence but also on the managerial support provided by the principal. Thus, the role of the principal in curriculum changes at SMAN 7 Prabumulih is a real example of how responsive and adaptive school management can be a catalyst in creating quality learning that is relevant to current developments.

D. Conclusions

This study concludes that teachers at SMA Negeri 7 Prabumulih have generally adapted positively to recent curriculum changes. The key findings indicate that while understanding and readiness vary with teaching experience, the overall teacher response is characterized by a good grasp of the new content, a constructive attitude, and progressive adaptation in teaching methods. Senior teachers demonstrated deeper comprehension, whereas less experienced colleagues showed strong enthusiasm for learning despite initial administrative and methodological challenges. Crucially, the effectiveness of this transition was heavily supported by collaborative strategies among staff such as sharing best practices—and by structured institutional efforts. School management played a pivotal role through active mentoring, regular In-House Training (IHT), and by fostering a supportive, solution-oriented climate, which significantly boosted teacher confidence and engagement. The practical implication is clear: successful curriculum implementation relies on continuous, needs-based professional development and the cultivation of a collaborative school environment. Management should therefore sustain investment in targeted training, peer mentorship programs, and emotional support systems to bridge experience gaps and ensure uniform adaptation. For future research, it is recommended to investigate the long-term impact of such adaptation strategies on student learning outcomes. Studies could also explore this phenomenon across a broader range of schools, including those in rural areas or with fewer resources, to develop a more comprehensive model of effective curriculum change management. Additionally, examining the specific role of digital tools in supporting teachers through such transitions would be valuable.

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