



Curriculum management through the Mangunwijaya Curriculum Tree in primary education

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ABSTRACT

Curriculum management plays a crucial role in ensuring that primary education provides children with meaningful learning experiences. In Indonesia, challenges in curriculum governance often arise from top-down approaches and limited teacher participation, which reduce the relevance of learning to students' real-life contexts. This study aims to analyze how curriculum management at Mangunan Experimental Primary School addresses these issues by applying Y.B. Mangunwijaya's humanistic philosophy through the *Pohon Kurikulum Mangunwijaya* (PKM) or Mangunwijaya Curriculum Tree. The research employed a qualitative case study design to gain a comprehensive understanding of curriculum planning, implementation, and evaluation. Data were collected from principals, teachers, curriculum coordinators, and the Educational Development Laboratory through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis, with triangulation of sources and methods to ensure validity. The findings indicate that curriculum planning is participatory, conducted through foundation and school-level workshops guided by the Understanding by Design framework and the integration of seven child capacities. Implementation emphasizes inquiry-based and contextual learning supported by distinctive programs, while evaluation combines narrative classroom assessments with systematic supervision. PKM thus illustrates curriculum management as a participatory and humanistic process that fosters holistic student development.

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ABSTRAK

Manajemen kurikulum memiliki peran penting dalam memastikan pendidikan dasar mampu memberikan pengalaman belajar yang bermakna bagi anak. Di Indonesia, tata kelola kurikulum kerap menghadapi kendala akibat pendekatan yang bersifat top-down dan keterlibatan guru yang terbatas, sehingga mengurangi relevansi pembelajaran dengan konteks kehidupan nyata peserta didik. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis bagaimana manajemen kurikulum di SD Eksperimental Mangunan mengatasi permasalahan tersebut melalui penerapan filosofi humanistik Y.B. Mangunwijaya yang diwujudkan dalam *Pohon Kurikulum Mangunwijaya* (PKM). Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus untuk memperoleh pemahaman mendalam mengenai perencanaan, pelaksanaan, dan evaluasi kurikulum. Data dikumpulkan dari kepala sekolah, guru, koordinator kurikulum, dan tim Laboratorium Pendidikan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi partisipatif, dan analisis dokumen, dengan triangulasi sumber dan teknik untuk menjaga validitas. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perencanaan dilakukan secara partisipatif melalui lokakarya di tingkat yayasan dan sekolah dengan pendekatan *Understanding by Design* serta integrasi tujuh modal dasar anak. Pelaksanaan menekankan pembelajaran kontekstual dan berbasis inkuiri melalui program khas, sementara evaluasi menggabungkan asesmen naratif di kelas dengan supervisi sistematis. PKM mencerminkan manajemen kurikulum sebagai proses partisipatif dan humanistik yang mendorong perkembangan murid secara holistik.

Kata Kunci: kurikulum humanis; manajemen kurikulum; pendidikan sekolah dasar; PKM; Pohon Kurikulum Mangunwijaya

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INTRODUCTION

The primary education curriculum plays a decisive role in shaping children's cognitive, emotional, and social outcomes (Mira-Galvañ & Gilar-Cobi, 2021; Veldman et al., 2025). Effective curriculum management, therefore, requires deliberate planning and strategic leadership to ensure both relevance and quality (Assalihee & Boonsuk, 2023). In Indonesia, however, curriculum governance continues to face persistent challenges in both content development and administrative implementation (Ediyanto & Kawai, 2023). The curriculum is not only a technical document but also the backbone of the education system, defining principles, objectives, and strategies that must respond to learners' needs and the demands of a rapidly changing society (Cakrawati et al., 2024).

A well-managed and contextually responsive curriculum is essential for aligning national standards with meaningful learning experiences (Assalihee & Boonsuk, 2023). School-level curriculum management often remains insufficient, constrained by weak coordination among stakeholders, limited teacher involvement in decision-making, and managerial approaches that prioritize administrative compliance over educational progress (Buleque et al., 2020). Curriculum planning in Indonesian schools often employs top-down models that overlook local contexts and undervalue teachers' experiential knowledge, resulting in a gap between intended designs and actual classroom practices (Safitri & Rokhimawan, 2024). Implementation is similarly hindered by teacher-centered pedagogies emphasizing rote learning and test performance, leaving little room for creativity, exploration, or value-oriented instruction (Heng, 2024).

Assessment practices remain heavily focused on cognitive outcomes, with limited attention to social and affective dimensions of learning, thus misaligning classroom evaluation with the broader goals of holistic education (Chand & Pillay, 2024). To address these limitations, scholars have advocated for a value-based and context-oriented curriculum that links school learning with real-life experiences, fosters reflective thinking, and nurtures collaboration among teachers, administrators, and the broader community (Adawiah et al., 2024; Choudhary & Bakshi, 2025). In this regard, Mangunan Experimental Primary School offers a distinctive model through the Pohon Kurikulum Mangunwijaya (PKM), also known as the Mangunwijaya Curriculum Tree, inspired by Y.B. Mangunwijaya's philosophy of humanistic and liberating education. Previous research on Mangunan schools has focused on specific practices, such as the Kurikulum Merdeka in vocational contexts, or inquiry-based classroom strategies, like the *Kotak Pertanyaan* model (Nursianda et al., 2025; Wahyuni et al., 2023).

While these studies provide valuable insights, they have yet to explore how curriculum management can be organized as a comprehensive, participatory, and value-driven process. This study seeks to fill that gap by examining how participatory curriculum management at Mangunan Experimental Primary School integrates planning, implementation, and evaluation with cultural, moral, and emotional dimensions. The novelty of this research lies in framing curriculum management not as a static administrative mechanism but as a reflective and collaborative practice that cultivates humanistic education. By analyzing the school's approach, this study aims to generate practical insights into the development of holistic and democratic learning environments within Indonesian primary schools.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Curriculum

The curriculum is widely recognized as the foundation of education, serving as both a blueprint for instruction and a reflection of broader social and cultural developments (Ngulube, 2020). In Indonesia, curriculum is formally defined as a structured plan of objectives, content, and learning methods designed to achieve national education goals. Academically, it comprises four core components: objectives, content, methods, and evaluation, which together determine its effectiveness in shaping learning outcomes (Zuhdi et al., 2025). Scholars have conceptualized the curriculum from multiple perspectives. Curriculum serves as a formal document, a learning experience, a tool for character development, and a benchmark for educational quality.

The curriculum is classified as an instructional blueprint, a systemic component of education, and a dynamic academic discipline (Zhao et al., 2023). It is also categorized into five models—academic subject, humanistic, social reconstruction, technological, and hidden (Sukmadinata, 2004). This illustration shows that the curriculum is not merely technical but also philosophical and value-laden. This multiplicity of perspectives suggests that curriculum cannot be understood solely as a static document; instead, it must be viewed as a dynamic construct that adapts to evolving social, cultural, and institutional needs (Kusmawan et al., 2025). Its success relies not only on design but also on how it is managed and enacted in schools. Therefore, the effectiveness of any curriculum is inseparable from curriculum management, which determines how principles are translated into classroom realities (Bajarias et al., 2023).

Curriculum Management

Curriculum management is a systematic process that integrates planning, implementation, and evaluation to align educational objectives with institutional missions and learners' needs (Siregar & Mashudi, 2024). These stages are not limited to administrative routines but serve as strategic mechanisms that connect policy frameworks with meaningful learning practices (Fatoni et al., 2024). Effective curriculum management requires principles of collaboration, productivity, democracy, and contextual responsiveness (David & Maroma, 2025). In practice, however, schools often face limited teacher participation, resource constraints, and a managerial orientation that prioritizes compliance over innovation, thereby reducing curriculum management to bureaucratic control rather than reflective leadership (Syaharuddin, 2025).

The role of the principal as instructional leader is thus critical in ensuring that curriculum management supports teacher development, contextual adaptation, and holistic student growth (Nurlaeli et al., 2024; Sutarsih, 2025). As contemporary challenges demand adaptive and participatory approaches, curriculum management should move beyond procedures to foster environments where teachers, learners, and communities collaboratively shape meaningful education (Kusmawan et al., 2025; Mugabekazi et al., 2025). This is particularly vital in primary education, where management decisions directly influence children's comprehensive development.

Primary School Education

Primary education is the foundation of formal learning, shaping cognitive, emotional, and social development while preparing children for lifelong learning (Almukhanbet et al., 2025). While the national curriculum emphasizes holistic competencies covering intellectual, moral, physical, and social development, challenges such as unequal teacher preparation, limited infrastructure, and resource gaps still hinder its equitable implementation. Pedagogical approaches in primary schools are shifting from teacher-centered to learner-centered models, inspired by sociocultural and constructivist theories that emphasize interactive and developmentally appropriate learning (Dewi & Elisa, 2025; Nithideechaiwarachok & Chano, 2024).

Many Indonesian teachers struggle to adopt student-centered practices due to insufficient training and support, while professional development programs remain unevenly distributed, especially in rural areas (Arrasyid et al., 2025; Kristiyuana et al., 2025). School leadership and assessment practices further shape the quality of primary education (Karatas et al., 2024). Effective principals foster collaboration and innovation, but often face structural constraints. Meanwhile, evaluation systems are gradually shifting toward authentic and formative approaches, despite systemic challenges (Nurlaeli et al., 2024; Utaminingsih, 2023). Collectively, these dynamics show that curriculum, pedagogy, teacher competence, leadership, and assessment must be managed holistically. This underscores the need for participatory and value-driven models such as PKM, which integrates humanistic values into curriculum management.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of curriculum management practices at Mangunan Experimental Primary School in Yogyakarta. The research focused on three key components of curriculum management: planning, implementation, and evaluation. The study was conducted from August 2024 to February 2025 and involved purposefully selected participants, including the school principal, classroom teachers, the curriculum coordinator, and members of the educational laboratory team. These informants were directly involved in curriculum management and possessed contextual knowledge relevant to the research.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. Interviews were conducted to capture participants' experiences and perspectives on curriculum planning, implementation, and evaluation. Observations were carried out during workshops, classroom sessions, and other school activities related to curriculum administration. The document analysis included reviewing lesson plans, instructional materials, teacher reflection notes, and evaluation reports. The details of data, instruments, and collection techniques are presented in **Table 1**.

Table 1. Data, Instruments, and Collection Techniques

Data Collected	Instruments Used	Collection Techniques
Perspectives of principals, teachers, curriculum coordinators, and laboratory teams on curriculum planning, implementation, and evaluation	Semi-structured interview guide	In-depth interviews (40-60 minutes, audio-recorded and transcribed)
School practices in curriculum implementation and classroom dynamics	Observation sheets and field notes	Participant observation during workshops, classroom sessions, and school activities
Documents related to curriculum design and evaluation	Document analysis checklist	Review of lesson plans, instructional materials, teacher reflection notes, and evaluation reports

Source: Research Data, 2024

The collected data were analyzed using the interactive model developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, which encompasses data collection, condensation, display, and conclusion drawing. This iterative process allowed emerging themes and patterns related to curriculum management to be refined progressively. To ensure trustworthiness, triangulation of sources and methods was applied, and member checking was conducted to validate the findings with participants. Data from interviews, observations, and documents were cross-referenced to establish consistency and credibility.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Curriculum Design at Mangunan Experimental Primary School

The curriculum of Mangunan Experimental Primary School reflects a distinctive educational identity shaped by the humanistic philosophy of Y.B. Mangunwijaya, which emphasizes the emancipation of students through holistic and contextual learning (Pradana & Mulyanto, 2022). To bring this vision into practice, the school developed the Pohon Kurikulum Mangunwijaya (PKM), also known as the Mangunwijaya Curriculum Tree. This framework integrates national mandates, including Kurikulum Merdeka and the Profil Pelajar Pancasila, with local values and the lived realities of students.

PKM structures learning around seven developmental capacities: character, language, self-orientation, numeric reasoning, tool use, collaboration, and physical development. These capacities guide objectives, pedagogy, and assessment, and are embedded in integrated themes and daily practices. This ensures that learning not only develops intellectual ability but also strengthens moral, emotional, social, and physical growth. As noted by the curriculum coordinator,

"From the roots to the trunk and then to the leaves, we translate it into weekly learning objectives and project modules, so teachers are not only working technically but also living the values," (Prayogo, V. B., personal communication, September 30, 2024).

The participatory nature of curriculum design was evident during school workshops, where teachers collaborated with the Educational Development Laboratory team to align lesson

planning with the principles of PKM. Analysis of weekly learning objectives (*Alur Tujuan Pembelajaran* or ATP) and project modules showed that competencies were systematically connected to cultural and ecological values rather than being limited to academic achievement.

The PKM is visually conceptualized as a tree, symbolizing its philosophical roots, curricular framework, and pathways of learning (Manu, 2023; Natalie & Markus Budiraharjo, 2024). The roots represent contextual values, the trunk reflects continuity in learning and mentoring, and the branches and foliage illustrate classroom and community practices such as literacy festivals, ecological projects, and collaborative learning climates. The school principal highlighted this symbolic function by stating,

"This tree is not only a picture, but a way of ensuring that every teacher, student, and parent walks together with the same vision," (Carol, Y. K. A. V. J., personal communication, October 18, 2024).

By integrating cultural, moral, and ecological dimensions into the curriculum, PKM provides a comprehensive alternative to conventional models. It cultivates learners who are independent, socially engaged, and environmentally conscious, demonstrating how curriculum design can be simultaneously value-based and responsive to local contexts (Pradana & Mulyanto, 2022).

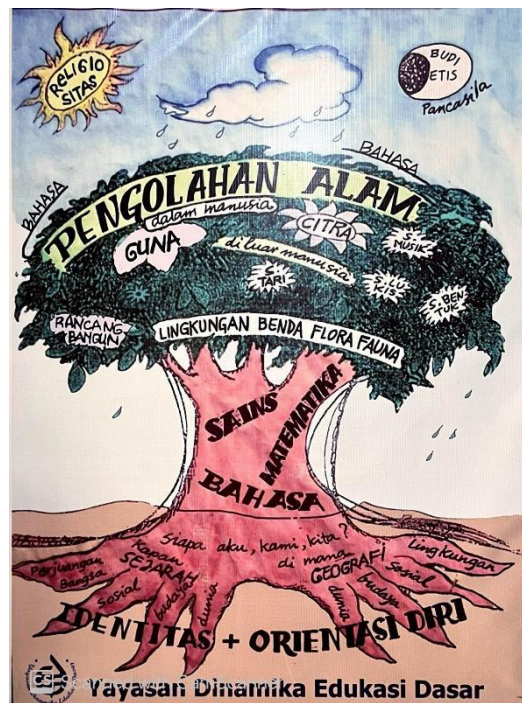


Figure 1. Pohon Kurikulum Mangunwijaya (PKM) or Mangunwijaya Curriculum Tree
Source: Author's Documentation, 2024

Pohon Kurikulum Mangunwijaya (PKM) symbolizes education as an organic and holistic process (see **Figure 1**). The roots represent identity and self-orientation, the trunk reflects core disciplines such as language, mathematics, and science, and the branches illustrate creative and practical learning through the concepts of *citra* and *guna*. Surrounded by religiosity and ethical values, the tree conveys that all learning elements are interconnected to nurture students' intellectual, social, emotional, and spiritual growth.

Curriculum Planning

Curriculum planning at Mangunan Experimental Primary School is grounded in the school's vision and mission as well as the philosophy of Y.B. Mangunwijaya. The official vision describes "*the realization of a learning community that is explorative, creative, and integral*" based on the School Curriculum Document, 2024/2025. In an interview, the principal elaborated,

*"Our mission is to embody the value of *iso urip* through critical exploration, independence, and solidarity among children, to position teachers as lateral-thinking facilitators, and to create a collaborative and creative school community,"* (Carol, Y. K. A. V. J., personal communication, October 18, 2024).

Document analysis of the *Kurikulum Operasional Satuan Pendidikan* (KOSP) confirmed that these values are systematically embedded through the development of seven basic capacities (*modal dasar*), which ensure that planning is not only technical but also rooted in humanistic principles.

An essential stage in planning is the Directorate Workshop facilitated by the Yayasan Dinamika Edukasi Dasar (YDED). The principal emphasized its importance by stating,

"Our strength lies in having an Educational Development Laboratory that helps us design the curriculum holistically, starting from the foundation's vision down to technical classroom practices," (Carol, Y. K. A. V. J., personal communication, October 18, 2024).

Observation of the Directorate Workshop, conducted from 28 to 30 November 2024 at Hotel Wijaya 2, Kaliurang, revealed a structured three-day process. The first day was dedicated to reviewing the previous semester's programs, the second day to collective reflection and alignment with the vision, and the third day to collaborative planning of new initiatives. Documents produced during the workshop confirmed that the outcomes were formalized as directives for all school units based on document review. These findings demonstrate that curriculum planning at Mangunan integrates evaluation, reflection, and innovation in a balanced manner.

The directives from the foundation are then contextualized through the Unit Workshop at the school level. A member of the laboratory team explained,

"The curriculum is designed in two stages: first at the directorate level to establish the main concepts, and then at the unit level to adapt them for each educational stage," (Pamungkas, F. P., personal communication, September 1, 2024).

The observation of the Unit Workshop, held from 16 to 20 December 2024, demonstrated how principals, teachers, and the laboratory team collaborated to translate directives into grade-specific plans. Field notes from these sessions indicate that the discussions prioritized alignment with the psychological and social development of children in each phase of development. This two-tier structure illustrates how the PKM framework combines centralized vision with localized adaptation, making the planning process responsive to classroom realities.

The planning process applies the *Understanding by Design* (UbD) approach. As the vice principal for curriculum explained,

"We begin by formulating the ultimate goals, namely the seven basic capacities, then design clear indicators of achievement before translating them into learning goals for each unit," (Prayogo, V. B., personal communication, September 30, 2024).

Planning documents and observed design sessions confirmed that teachers consistently worked backward from desired outcomes to select instructional strategies and assessment methods based on observation notes. This approach provides coherence across themes and grade levels while maintaining flexibility to address students' contextual needs.

PKM also demonstrates adaptability in responding to national curriculum reforms while maintaining its humanistic orientation. The principal explained,

"PKM has always adjusted to the national curriculum. In 2014, when the K13 emphasized cognition, affection, and psychomotor development, PKM integrated those values. In 2022, with the Kurikulum Merdeka, the focus shifted to character and competence, and PKM adapted accordingly," (Carol, Y. K. A. V. J., personal communication, October 18, 2024).

A review of school curriculum documents supported this account by showing how national directives were integrated within the PKM framework based on document review. This adaptability strengthens the relevance of PKM as both a curriculum aligned with government standards and an alternative model shaped by Mangunwijaya's philosophy.

The KOSP document organizes the curriculum into three developmental phases: Phase A (Grades 1-2), Phase B (Grades 3-4), and Phase C (Grades 5-6). Each phase employs pedagogical methods tailored to the psychological and social maturation of students, with learning themes and outcome indicators designed to promote progressive academic and personal growth. Weekly and annual instructional time is allocated to balance academic learning with character development, totaling 1,152 hours annually. This includes 900 hours for in-curricular learning and 252 hours for project-based learning within the *Proyek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila* (P5). Each week consists of 32 hours of study, with 25 hours dedicated to core subjects and 7 hours allocated to project-based activities.

Alongside the required national subjects, including Religious and Character Education, Pancasila Education, Indonesian Language, Mathematics, Physical Education, Arts and Culture, and Local Content (Javanese Language), Mangunan incorporates distinctive practices that reflect its humanistic model. These include *Membaca Buku Bagus* (Reading Good Books), a reflective literacy activity designed to foster empathy and imagination; *Kotak Pertanyaan* (Question Box), which encourages curiosity and collaborative inquiry; and *Komunikasi Iman* (Faith Communication), a structured forum for students to share spiritual and emotional reflections. Observations of classroom practices confirmed that these activities are embedded in weekly routines. At the same time, lesson plans documented them as integral features of the curriculum based on observation notes and lesson plans. The school's weekly and annual subject structure is outlined below.

Table 2. Weekly and Annual Subject Structure at Mangunan Experimental Primary School (2024/2025)

No.	Subject	Weekly Hours	Annual Hours	Intra-Curricular	P5 Project	Total
1	Religious and Character Education	3	108	3	7	144
2	Pancasila Education	4	144	4	0	144
3	Indonesian Language	6	216	6	0	216
4	Mathematics	4-5	144-180	4-5	0	144-180
5	Physical, Sports, and Health Education	3	108	3	0	108
6	Arts and Culture	3	108	3	0	108
7	Local Content (Javanese Language)	2	72	2	0	72

Source: School Curriculum Document, 2024/2025

Table 2 illustrates how the school balances academic learning with the development of character and contextual competencies. Planning is therefore not limited to achieving national learning targets but also reflects the uniqueness of each learner. In line with Mangunwijaya in their book *"Sekolah Merdeka: Pendidikan Pemerdekaan"*, education is not for answering questions, but for answering life. By positioning students at the center and promoting collaborative, reflective, and meaningful engagement, curriculum planning serves as a cornerstone of the school's broader mission to foster a liberating and humanistic education.

Curriculum Implementation

The implementation of the curriculum at Mangunan Experimental Primary School is guided by the principle that every child is an active participant in the learning process. Learning is understood not as rote memorization or preparation for tests but as a dynamic process that encourages inquiry, exploration, and comprehension through meaningful experiences. Teachers act as companions and facilitators who nurture the intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual growth of children. The principal explained,

"Our role is not to stand in front of the class as the sole source of knowledge, but to accompany children so that they grow and find meaning in what they do,"
(Carol, Y. K. A. V. J., personal communication, October 18, 2024).

Classroom observation confirmed that learning activities were organized to engage students in reflection, curiosity, and creativity. Programs such as *Membaca Buku Bagus* (Reading Good Books), *Kotak Pertanyaan* (Question Box), and *Komunikasi Iman* (Faith Communication) were integrated into the weekly routines, creating opportunities for students to develop empathy, imagination, and critical thinking through observation notes. Document analysis of

weekly plans and teacher reflections supported this finding, as lesson notes explicitly described these practices as essential components of daily learning, based on a review of documents, ATP, and lesson plans.

The school also emphasizes contextual learning that connects students to their environment and community. Kampung-based projects, scouting activities, and ecological programs such as *Gugur Gunung* and *Nyumur* were designed to promote social participation and environmental awareness. A teacher described these initiatives as follows,

"When children join in Gugur Gunung, they not only learn about nature but also about solidarity and working together with the community," (Sudarto, A. L., personal communication, September 8, 2024).

Observations of outdoor learning activities confirmed that students actively participated in waste management and gardening as part of the school's ecological curriculum. Co-curricular and extra-curricular activities are not treated as separate from academic learning but as integral components of the school's holistic curriculum. Students engage in arts, sports, and cultural programs that are explicitly connected to classroom themes and project modules. This integration reflects the PKM philosophy, in which all activities contribute to the cultivation of the seven basic capacities.

Assessment practices further demonstrate the school's emphasis on holistic development. Teachers employ daily observations, portfolios, process documentation, and narrative reports to capture the full range of student growth. The curriculum coordinator explained,

"We use ATP as a shared planning tool so that teachers can work together to ensure that children's development is coherent and appropriate to their phase," (Prayogo, V. B., personal communication, September 30, 2024).

Document analysis of ATP and project reports confirmed the systematic alignment of objectives, strategies, and assessment indicators. The effectiveness of curriculum implementation is supported by a collaborative organizational framework that encourages interdisciplinary cooperation. The following **Table 3** outlines the leading roles and responsibilities.

Table 3. Organizational Support for Curriculum Implementation at Mangunan Experimental Primary School

Role	Responsibility
Principal	Provides overall leadership of instructional strategies and ensures alignment with the school's philosophy.
Vice Principal for Curriculum	Designs technical policies for teaching and assessment, and supervises curriculum planning.
Curriculum Coordinator	Assists teachers in developing ATPs and project modules.
Homeroom Teachers	Serve as the primary implementers of value-based and project-based learning in classrooms.
Subject Teachers (e.g., Javanese, IT, PE, Music)	Collaborate to integrate subject content and values into the learning process.
Extracurricular Teachers	Facilitate enrichment activities in arts, culture, and practical skills.

Role	Responsibility
Laboratory Team (DED Foundation)	Act as reflective partners in planning and mentoring based on the PKM model.
Parents	Participate as active partners in community-based educational programs.

Source: Analysis conducted by the author, 2024

Field observations and interviews demonstrated that this organizational structure fosters collaboration among all stakeholders, including teachers, the laboratory team, and parents. The laboratory team, in particular, plays a mentoring role by guiding teachers in reflective practice and by ensuring that the values of PKM remain at the core of classroom activities. Parents also contribute by participating in school events and community-based projects, reinforcing the idea of the school as a community of learners. With this participatory and collaborative approach, curriculum implementation at Mangunan Experimental Primary School integrates academic, character, and community dimensions. It evolves continuously in response to contemporary challenges, transforming the school into a meaningful learning environment that embodies the vision of PKM.

Curriculum Evaluation

Curriculum evaluation at Mangunan Experimental Primary School is conducted systematically, scheduled across the academic year, and designed to ensure that learning processes remain aligned with the school's vision and support the holistic development of students. The evaluation process is coordinated by the principal, the curriculum team, and the Educational Development Laboratory of the Yayasan Dinamika Edukasi Dasar (YDED). Evaluation occurs at two levels: the classroom level and the school level. At the classroom level, teachers carry out daily formative assessments through observations, project-based evaluations, student reflections, and narrative reports. During interviews, one homeroom teacher explained,

"Our daily assessment is not only about whether children finish tasks, but also about how they collaborate, respond to challenges, and express their ideas,"
(Suseto, M. S. M., personal communication, October 18, 2024).

Observation notes from lesson activities confirmed that teachers consistently recorded aspects such as participation, curiosity, and peer interaction as part of the evaluation process. Document analysis of teacher journals and weekly reports demonstrated that narrative notes captured each child's progress, challenges, and suggested strategies for further development.

A distinctive feature of the evaluation process is the practice of communal reflection sessions at the end of each lesson. Teachers and students engage in joint reflection, after which educators document student progress according to the school's seven developmental capacities. These reflections are then compiled into weekly reports that inform future lesson design and curriculum adjustments. This recursive process ensures that learning remains student-centered and responsive to classroom dynamics. At the school level, evaluation takes the form of structured supervision across different domains of learning. The principal emphasized,

"Evaluation here is not punitive. It is a mentoring process, supported by the laboratory team, to help teachers grow and to make sure our practices reflect PKM values," (Carol, Y. K. A. V. J., personal communication, October 18, 2024).

Observations of a supervision session in November 2024 revealed that the process involved classroom visits, feedback dialogues, and collaborative discussions rather than formal inspections. Document reviews of supervision reports confirmed that feedback was oriented toward professional development, with recommendations tailored to the specific needs of each teacher.

The framework of school-level evaluation includes intra-curricular activities, P5, extracurricular programs, and diversification initiatives. External monitoring by the District Education Office also contributes to accountability and alignment with national standards. The following **Table 4** outlines the evaluation structure at Mangunan Experimental Primary School.

Table 4. Curriculum Evaluation Structure at Mangunan Experimental Primary School

No.	Evaluation Type	Responsible Party	Schedule	Objective
1	Supervision of Intra-Curricular Learning	Principal, DED Laboratory	Sept 2024, May 2025	Assess core instruction and provide feedback to teachers.
2	Supervision of Pancasila Student Profile (P5) Projects	Principal, P5 Facilitation Team	Oct 2024, Apr 2025	Evaluate project goals and alignment with student profile dimensions.
3	Supervision of Extracurricular Learning	Principal, Extracurricular Coordinator	Nov 2024, May 2025	Ensure extracurricular activities support student talents.
4	Supervision of Diversification Program	Principal	Dec 2024, Jun 2025	Assess the effectiveness of student-selected learning programs.
5	Curriculum Monitoring and Evaluation	District Education Office	Feb 2025	Conduct an external review of curriculum implementation.

Source: Author's field observation, 2024

Triangulation across interviews, observations, and documents indicates that evaluation at Mangunan is both reflective and developmental. Teachers consistently use daily assessments to capture student learning processes, while school-wide supervision provides structured opportunities for feedback and professional growth. The combination of formative classroom assessments and summative institutional evaluations creates coherence between intended learning objectives and actual instructional practices.

This approach transforms curriculum evaluation into a dynamic instrument for improving relevance, student engagement, and educational quality. By combining internal reflection with external oversight, the school can adapt to emerging challenges, refine pedagogical approaches, and strengthen the developmental capacities that form the foundation of PKM.

Ultimately, this continuous cycle of evaluation demonstrates the school's commitment to delivering education that is culturally rooted, reflective, and transformative for its students.

Discussion

The curriculum management at Mangunan Experimental Primary School illustrates how a school can intentionally design its curriculum not only as an administrative requirement but also as a vehicle for value-based and humanistic education. Rather than treating the curriculum as a fixed set of policies to be executed, Mangunan approaches it as a dynamic process that adapts to the real needs of students and the changing social context. This confirms findings from previous literature that emphasize curriculum as a living practice shaped by human interaction and reflection (Faella et al., 2025).

From the design stage, the curriculum is developed through a participatory process that involves the principal, teachers, the Educational Development Laboratory, and the school committee. This participatory orientation reflects Terry's framework of participatory management, which positions planning as a platform for shared meaning-making rather than a top-down implementation of predetermined content (Dedding et al., 2023). Data from interviews and observations confirmed that workshops and collaborative meetings function not only to draft technical documents but also to deliberate on the meaning of education in the Mangunan context. Curriculum documents, therefore, emerge from internal dialogue and collective reflection, aligning with the principle of education as a communal project.

The school applies the Understanding by Design (UbD) model, which begins with long-term goals rooted in the Pancasila Student Profile and the seven fundamental capacities of children (McTighe & Brown, 2021). From these goals, teachers design learning experiences and assessments that align with the intended outcomes. Observations of lesson design sessions revealed that this backward design approach provided coherence across different phases of the curriculum, while still allowing for flexibility to adapt to students' contexts. This demonstrates that curriculum planning at Mangunan is both systematic and responsive.

Distinctive programs, such as *Membaca Buku Bagus* (Reading Good Books), *Kotak Pertanyaan* (Question Box), and *Komunikasi Iman* (Faith Communication), are embedded in weekly routines, not as additional activities, but as central elements of learning. Document reviews and classroom observations showed that these practices cultivated empathy, imagination, critical thinking, and reflective spirituality. This resonates with Y.B. Mangunwijaya's vision of education as a liberating and value-driven pursuit, aligning with research that highlights the role of contextual and dialogical pedagogy in fostering holistic development (Mindaudah & Ningrum, 2023; Ucan & Özmen, 2023).

During the implementation stage, teachers are encouraged to contextualize learning in accordance with children's lived realities and the surrounding environment. Observations of ecological and community-based projects confirmed that learning extended beyond classrooms, fostering solidarity, collaboration, and ecological awareness. This reflects Dewey's assertion in his book *Experience and Education* that meaningful education arises from direct engagement with experience. Teachers were observed facilitating projects rather than delivering content, embodying the role of architects of learning experiences. The

absence of school bells was also interpreted as a symbolic rejection of rigid institutional time in favor of natural learning rhythms.

Curriculum evaluation is carried out through a continuous and multi-layered process. At the classroom level, teachers use observations, project assessments, reflections, and narrative notes to capture children's progress comprehensively. This avoids reductionist forms of evaluation that measure only final results, instead emphasizing growth and process. Weekly reflection sessions documented by teachers provided feedback that directly informed subsequent lesson design. At the school level, supervision of intra-curricular learning, P5 projects, extracurricular activities, and diversification programs is conducted systematically, with support from the DED laboratory. Interviews with school leaders highlighted that this evaluation is developmental and mentoring in nature, rather than punitive, which resonates with Carter's emphasis that authentic assessment should integrate cognitive, affective, and social domains (Carter, 2024).

The most significant contribution of Mangunan's curriculum management is its integration of values, processes, and structures into a continuous cycle of planning, implementation, and evaluation. Rather than fragmenting these stages into separate technical functions, the school treats them as interconnected practices that mutually reinforce each other. This integrated approach aligns with the view that curriculum is a space for collaborative meaning-making in which teachers, students, parents, and external partners continually redefine the purposes of education (Natalie & Markus Budiraharjo, 2024).

Overall, the findings contribute to the broader discourse on curriculum management and leadership in primary schools by showing that curriculum can transcend bureaucratic and technocratic frameworks. The Mangunan experience demonstrates that participatory and reflective curriculum development can support academic achievement while also promoting deep human growth. This perspective advocates for schools to reposition education as a transformative and socially relevant endeavor, aligning with the broader educational philosophy of Mangunwijaya and reaffirming the importance of values-based curriculum leadership in Indonesia's evolving educational landscape.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that curriculum management at Mangunan Experimental Primary School operates as an integrated and value-based system that unites design, planning, implementation, and evaluation into a coherent cycle. The curriculum is grounded in Y.B. Mangunwijaya's humanistic philosophy articulated through the *Pohon Kurikulum Mangunwijaya* (PKM), which combines national standards with local values and the lived realities of children. Planning is participatory, involving school leaders, teachers, the Educational Development Laboratory, and parents, with the *Understanding by Design* framework ensuring alignment between long-term capacities and classroom practices. Implementation emphasizes contextual, inquiry-based, and community-oriented learning through distinctive programs such as *Membaca Buku Bagus*, *Kotak Pertanyaan*, and ecological projects that foster empathy, critical thinking, and social responsibility. Evaluation occurs continuously at both classroom and institutional levels, employing narrative assessments, reflective practices, and systematic supervision to ensure coherence between goals and practices. The findings highlight that curriculum management, when participatory

and reflective, transcends administrative compliance to become a transformative educational practice. Mangunan demonstrates that a curriculum rooted in values can foster both academic achievement and holistic development, offering a model for primary schools seeking to balance national directives with humanistic and context-sensitive approaches.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

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