ICAIS — FAI UNISMUH MAKASSAR —	International Conference on Actual Islamic Studies		
	Vol. 4 No. 1	April 2026	ISSN: 2988-7925

Tantangan dan Inovasi dalam Perencanaan Pendidikan di Era Kurikulum Merdeka: Perspektif Manajemen Pendidikan (Studi Kasus SMPIT Nurul Fikri Bekasi)

Challenges and Innovations in Educational Planning in the Merdeka Curriculum Era: An Educational Management Perspective (A Case Study at SMPIT Nurul Fikri Bekasi)

Jeesssy Isjtidla1, Ibnu Muthi2

Universitas Islam 45 Bekasi, Indonesia1 | email : jeesssy.isjtidla@unisma.ac.id
Universitas Islam 45 Bekasi, Indonesia2 | email : ibnumuthi@unismabekasi.ac.id

Kata Kunci: Kurikulum Merdeka; Perencanaan Pendidikan; Manajemen Pendidikan; Manajemen Berbasis Data; Inovasi Digital

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji tantangan dan inovasi dalam perencanaan pendidikan pada era Kurikulum Merdeka di SMPIT Nurul Fikri Bekasi dari perspektif manajemen pendidikan. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus. Data dalam naskah sumber diperoleh melalui wawancara mendalam terhadap lima kelompok pemangku kepentingan, yaitu kepala sekolah, wakil kepala sekolah bidang kurikulum, operator sekolah, guru, dan siswa; observasi proses perencanaan; serta dokumentasi berupa KTSP, dokumen perencanaan sekolah, Rapor Pendidikan, hasil ANBK, catatan evaluasi belajar, dan sistem informasi manajemen sekolah. Temuan kasus menunjukkan bahwa perencanaan pendidikan ditopang oleh pemanfaatan data asesmen diagnostik, Rapor Pendidikan dan ANBK, kolaborasi tim kurikulum, komunitas belajar guru, integrasi teknologi digital, serta proyek P5 yang dikontekstualisasikan dengan nilai-nilai Islam. Tantangan utama meliputi perbedaan pemahaman guru terhadap Kurikulum Merdeka, kebutuhan penguatan kompetensi teknologi, kesulitan menerjemahkan CP ke TP/ATP dan modul ajar, serta kebutuhan pelibatan pemangku kepentingan yang lebih konsisten. Naskah sumber tidak mencantumkan jumlah pasti informan dan kutipan verbatim wawancara; karena itu, hasil disajikan sebagai deskripsi kasus yang ditriangulasi melalui jenis sumber yang tersedia dan tidak digeneralisasi ke semua sekolah.

Keywords: Merdeka Curriculum; Educational Planning; Educational

Abstract

This study examines challenges and innovations in educational planning during the Merdeka Curriculum era at SMPIT Nurul Fikri Bekasi from an educational management perspective. A qualitative case-study design was used. According to the source manuscript, data were collected through in-depth interviews

Management; Data-Driven Management; Digital Innovation

with five stakeholder groups—the principal, vice principal for curriculum, school operator, teachers, and students—along with observation of planning processes and document review covering the school curriculum, planning documents, Education Report data, ANBK results, learning-evaluation records, and the school management information system. The case indicates that planning is supported by diagnostic-assessment data, Education Report and ANBK data, curriculum-team collaboration, a teacher learning community, digital technology, and P5 projects contextualized through Islamic values. Major challenges concern uneven teacher understanding of the Merdeka Curriculum, the need to strengthen digital competence, difficulties translating learning outcomes into objectives, learning pathways, and teaching modules, and the need for more consistent stakeholder involvement. Because the source manuscript does not report an exact number of informants or preserve verbatim interview excerpts, the findings are presented as a bounded case description triangulated across the available source types rather than as findings that can be generalized to all schools.

INTRODUCTION

The Merdeka Curriculum has shifted educational planning in Indonesia from predominantly administrative compliance toward a more flexible, differentiated, competency-oriented, and context-sensitive model. At the school level, this shift requires management to translate national policy into operational learning plans, resource allocation, teacher development, assessment systems, and collaborative decision making. Educational planning therefore becomes a managerial process rather than merely the preparation of documents (Kemendikbudristek, 2022; Mulyasa, 2023).

The transition is not simple. Schools must align learning outcomes with student characteristics, strengthen teachers' capacity to design differentiated learning, use evidence from assessment and school data, and integrate digital tools into planning and evaluation. The source manuscript identifies recurring challenges such as uneven teacher understanding, limited training, resistance to change, technology skills, and coordination among stakeholders. These challenges are consistent with the view that educational management must integrate strategic planning, leadership, resource management, and participatory governance (Tilaar, 2015).

At the same time, the Merdeka Curriculum creates room for innovation. The literature cited in the manuscript highlights teacher learning communities, digital platforms, and differentiated planning as important innovations (Wahyudi, 2023). However, broad discussions of the Merdeka Curriculum often remain at the policy or conceptual level. Less attention is given to how a

particular school combines data, management functions, technology, collaboration, and institutional values in day-to-day planning.

SMPIT Nurul Fikri Bekasi provides a relevant bounded case. The school is described in the source manuscript as a Sekolah Penggerak located on Jl. Jampang No. 72, Jatimulya, Bekasi. Its planning practices include diagnostic assessment, the Education Report, ANBK results, an internal learning management system, a teacher learning community, P5 projects, and structured collaboration with parents. As an Islamic integrated school, it also contextualizes projects and learning activities through Islamic values. This combination makes the case useful for examining educational planning as an interaction between policy, management, technology, and school culture.

Research Gap and Questions

The gap addressed in this study is therefore not whether the Merdeka Curriculum requires flexibility and innovation—this is already well established—but how those principles are operationalized within one school management system, what obstacles appear in the process, and what forms of innovation are used to respond. The study asks: (1) What managerial challenges arise in educational planning at SMPIT Nurul Fikri Bekasi under the Merdeka Curriculum? (2) What innovations are used to make planning more adaptive, collaborative, and data-driven? and (3) How do digital infrastructure, stakeholder participation, and Islamic school values shape the planning process?

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative case-study approach to examine educational planning at SMPIT Nurul Fikri Bekasi. The case-study design is appropriate because the object of analysis is a bounded organizational setting and the research focuses on processes, meanings, and interactions occurring within that setting rather than on statistical generalization.

The source manuscript reports five stakeholder groups as interview sources: the principal, vice principal for curriculum, school operator, teachers, and students. Interviews were semi-structured and focused on challenges, innovations, and the management of educational planning. The manuscript does not record the exact number of individuals interviewed, their interview dates, or a participant profile table. To avoid creating unsupported data, this revised report identifies the stakeholder categories but does not invent a numerical sample size.

Observation was directed at school planning processes and interactions between the management team and the teacher community. Documentary sources included the school-level curriculum, school planning documents, data-based planning policies, Education Report information, ANBK results, learning-evaluation records, and the school management information system. These sources provide concrete

evidence for examining how planning decisions are connected to student needs, teacher development, assessment, and institutional priorities.

The available material was organized through thematic analysis. Evidence was grouped into seven themes: management functions, data-driven planning, planning-success indicators, human-resource challenges, operational barriers, digital innovation, and collaborative best practices. Credibility was strengthened by comparing information across stakeholder categories and by technique triangulation among interview descriptions, observation, and documentation. Because the manuscript does not preserve verbatim interview excerpts, this article does not fabricate quotations or attribute unsupported statements to individual informants; interview-derived material is used only when it is consistent with the documented case practices.

The study is interpretive and case-specific. Statements in the original manuscript about national infrastructure inequality or conditions in remote 3T areas are treated here as contextual discussion rather than empirical findings from SMPIT Nurul Fikri Bekasi.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Empirical Profile of Educational Planning at SMPIT Nurul Fikri

The case evidence shows that educational planning at SMPIT Nurul Fikri is not limited to annual document preparation. The school uses diagnostic assessment at the beginning of the academic year to map student learning profiles, then connects those data to differentiated content, processes, and learning products. Education Report and ANBK data are used to identify priorities such as literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional competence. Attendance data, participation in P5 projects, and teacher and student reflection are also described as inputs for formative evaluation.

This pattern is significant because it provides the empirical link that was previously missing between the methodology and the results. Rather than merely stating that management should be data-driven, the case describes specific data sources and planning decisions. In management terms, the data function as feedback for the planning-evaluation cycle: needs are identified, programs are designed, implementation is monitored, and subsequent plans are adjusted. This is consistent with the Merdeka Curriculum emphasis on assessment as a basis for responsive learning (Kemendikbudristek, 2022).

B. Management Functions in the Merdeka Curriculum

Four management functions are visible in the case. Planning includes setting curriculum goals, mapping needs, and formulating annual and instructional programs. Organizing appears in the role of curriculum teams and teacher collaboration. Implementation is reflected in differentiated learning, P5 projects,

digital assessment, and professional-development activities. Evaluation uses learning outcomes, school data, reflection, and program review to determine corrective action. The important point is that these functions are interdependent rather than sequential administrative tasks.

Tilaar (2015) emphasizes the importance of educational governance that is responsive to institutional needs. The case supports this perspective: planning becomes more adaptive when decision makers combine formal curriculum requirements with school-level evidence. Mulyasa (2023) similarly places school capacity and teacher understanding at the center of effective curriculum implementation. The SMPIT Nurul Fikri case illustrates both the potential and the pressure created by this managerial responsibility.

C. Indicators of Planning Success

The manuscript identifies five practical indicators used by the school. First, learning outcomes are monitored through formative and summative assessment rather than through written tests alone. Second, P5 implementation is evaluated through contextual projects such as “Qur'anic Leadership” and “Islamic Entrepreneurship.” Third, active involvement of teachers, students, parents, and the wider school community is treated as an indicator of planning quality. Fourth, teaching modules are expected to respond to varied student needs based on diagnostic assessment. Fifth, Education Report and ANBK data are used when revising learning and school programs.

These indicators show that planning quality is defined holistically. Academic achievement remains important, but it is combined with project participation, stakeholder engagement, differentiation, and evidence-based revision. This orientation corresponds with Abidin's (2022) emphasis on instructional design that connects curriculum objectives, student characteristics, and authentic learning activities.

D. Human-Resource and Operational Challenges

The strongest school-level challenges concern human resources and the translation of curriculum concepts into operational practice. The manuscript records difficulties in analyzing Learning Outcomes (CP), formulating Learning Objectives (TP), developing Learning Objective Sequences (ATP), preparing teaching modules, selecting appropriate assessment formats, and using technology effectively. These challenges are more specific and useful than generic statements about the difficulty of curriculum reform because they identify the exact points at which planning can break down.

A second challenge is uneven professional readiness. Training and mentoring are needed not only to explain policy terminology but also to help teachers transform curriculum principles into classroom decisions. Without sufficient competence, planning risks becoming procedural:

documents may be completed while differentiation, authentic assessment, and data use remain weak. This finding strengthens the argument that professional development should be embedded in the planning system rather than treated as an occasional activity (Mulyasa, 2023; Wahyudi, 2023).

The original manuscript also discussed limited infrastructure in remote and 3T areas. That issue is relevant nationally, but it is not evidence from SMPIT Nurul Fikri. In this case, the school is described as having comparatively adequate digital infrastructure. Therefore, infrastructure inequality is discussed as a comparative policy context, while the empirical case focuses on how the school manages readiness gaps among students and families.

E. Digital Innovation and Data Infrastructure

Digital integration is one of the most concrete innovations in the case. The school uses the Platform Merdeka Mengajar and Education Report data in planning, while Google Forms, Quizizz, and an internal Learning Management System/Computer-Based Test environment are used for formative and summative assessment. Digital feedback enables teachers to identify learning difficulties more quickly and adjust instruction. Reflection through digital platforms is also brought into teacher learning-community discussions.

Technology is therefore not presented merely as a collection of applications. Its managerial value lies in shortening the feedback loop between assessment, reflection, and planning. When data from assessment and reflection are systematically discussed, digitalization supports evidence-based decision making. Conversely, if technology is used only for administrative substitution, its contribution to planning remains limited. This distinction deepens the discussion beyond the original list of digital tools.

The school also responds to differences in digital access by assessing the readiness of students and parents, providing a computer laboratory and hotspot access when devices or connectivity become constraints, and encouraging teachers to design plans that remain inclusive. This practice is important because digital innovation can otherwise reproduce inequalities within the same school.

F. Collaborative Best Practices and Islamic School Context

A distinctive feature of the case is the combination of collaborative management and Islamic institutional values. The Nurul Fikri Teacher Learning Community functions as a regular forum for discussing teaching modules, differentiated strategies, Islamic-value integration, and reflection. Parent collaboration is supported through class-parent gatherings and Parents Meetings. These mechanisms turn planning into a shared organizational process rather than an exclusively managerial task.

The P5 projects also show contextual innovation. "Qur'anic Leadership" and "Islamic Entrepreneurship" connect national curriculum goals with the school's religious identity, while a project on producing beneficial content through the Nurul Fikri podcast combines digital literacy, communication skills, and value formation. This is a more specific contribution than simply stating that schools should integrate local wisdom: the case demonstrates how institutional values can become a design principle for projects, collaboration, and assessment.

This finding extends the discussion of educational planning in the cited literature. Wahyudi (2023) emphasizes innovation in planning, while Tilaar (2015) stresses participatory governance. The case suggests that innovation is strongest when planning simultaneously aligns policy requirements, evidence about learners, digital capacity, stakeholder participation, and the identity of the educational institution.

G. Synthesis: From Administrative Planning to Adaptive Management

The central analytical finding is that educational planning under the Merdeka Curriculum becomes effective when it operates as an adaptive management cycle. Data identify needs; management structures convert those needs into programs; teachers implement and reflect on the programs; digital systems accelerate feedback; and collaborative forums revise the next cycle of planning. Challenges arise when one link in this cycle is weak—for example, when teachers do not fully understand CP/TP/ATP, when technology competence is uneven, or when stakeholder involvement becomes symbolic rather than substantive.

The novelty of the SMPIT Nurul Fikri case lies in the integration of four dimensions that are often discussed separately: data-driven management, digital infrastructure, collaborative governance, and Islamic institutional values. The case indicates that these dimensions can reinforce one another. Data provide direction, technology supports speed and access, collaboration builds ownership, and institutional values provide coherence and meaning to projects and learning design.

CONCLUSION

Educational planning at SMPIT Nurul Fikri Bekasi during the Merdeka Curriculum era is best understood as an adaptive managerial process rather than a document-production exercise. The case shows concrete use of diagnostic assessment, Education Report and ANBK data, curriculum-team collaboration, digital assessment systems, P5 projects, teacher learning communities, and parent engagement. These practices support more responsive planning while also revealing persistent challenges in teacher understanding, technology competence, assessment design, and the translation of curriculum concepts into operational teaching plans.

The study contributes a case-based perspective showing that innovation in educational planning is not produced by technology alone. Effective innovation emerges from the interaction of evidence, leadership, professional learning, collaboration, infrastructure, and school values. In an integrated Islamic school, religious values can also function as a contextual design principle for projects and stakeholder engagement rather than as an additional subject disconnected from management.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

School management should institutionalize regular data-review meetings, strengthen mentoring on CP-TP-ATP and assessment design, maintain the teacher learning community as part of the formal planning cycle, and ensure that digital platforms generate actionable feedback rather than merely digitizing administration. Participation by teachers, students, and parents should be linked to identifiable planning decisions so that collaboration has a substantive effect on school programs.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study is limited by the reporting quality of the available research record. The source manuscript identifies stakeholder categories and data-collection techniques but does not specify the exact number of informants, interview dates, or verbatim excerpts. Consequently, the article cannot present quotation-based qualitative evidence and does not claim statistical or broad institutional generalizability. Future research should preserve an auditable participant profile, coded verbatim excerpts, observation logs, and document-triangulation records, and should compare schools with different levels of infrastructure and organizational readiness.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abidin, Y. (2022). Desain pembelajaran dalam Kurikulum Merdeka: Teori dan praktik. Refika Aditama.

Kemendikbudristek. (2022). Panduan pembelajaran dan asesmen Kurikulum Merdeka. Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi.

Mulyasa, E. (2023). Pengembangan dan implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka. Bumi Aksara.

Sukmadinata, N. S. (2016). Manajemen pendidikan. Remaja Rosdakarya.

Tilaar, H. A. R. (2015). Manajemen pendidikan nasional. Rineka Cipta.

Wahyudi. (2023). Inovasi perencanaan pembelajaran di sekolah dalam implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka. Jurnal Pendidikan dan Manajemen Sekolah, 10(2).