



## Analysis of Curriculum Change Management at *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah*

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose** - The transition from the 2013 Curriculum to the Independent Curriculum requires management preparedness at the Lima Puluh Kota State Islamic Elementary School in West Sumatra. However, its implementation still faces obstacles, particularly resistance from senior teachers and limited resources. This study aims to analyze curriculum change management strategies, identify supporting and inhibiting factors, describe the responses of teachers, students, and stakeholders, and formulate recommendations for an effective management model.

**Methodology** - The method used is qualitative with a case study approach. The data collection techniques in this study are interviews, observation, and documentation. The primary data in this study included the principal, teachers, the committee, and students. Meanwhile, secondary data was obtained from relevant literature discussing change management, curriculum, and madrasah ibtidaiyah.

**Findings** - The object of this study was the curriculum change from the 2013 Curriculum to the Merdeka Curriculum implemented at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri Lima Puluh Kota, West Sumatra. The data analysis technique in this study was triangulation, based on the Miles and Huberman model, which includes four main stages: data reduction, data presentation, conclusion drawing, and verification. The data showed that the success of the change was more determined by the collaboration and leadership of the madrasah principal than by administrative aspects.

**Contribution** - The study concluded that curriculum change management requires a participatory, humanistic approach, supported by organizational culture, the involvement of young teachers, and the active roles of parents and the madrasah committee.

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## INTRODUCTION

The change in curriculum from the 2013 Curriculum to the Merdeka Curriculum has had a major impact on the education sector (Resmiyati et al., 2024; Ridho et al., 2025; Wahyuni et al., 2025), including at the level of State Islamic Elementary Schools (MIN). This change requires madrasah management to be prepared in managing human resources, facilities, and learning strategies to align with the new curriculum direction. However, in several madrasahs, some teachers and students still struggle to understand the concepts of project-based learning and authentic assessment, which are characteristic of the Merdeka Curriculum (Ramdan, 2025; Rosidah, 2021; Wulandari, 2025). Madrasah principals, who act as change managers, also face resistance from some senior teachers who are still comfortable with the old ways. On the other hand, support facilities such as digital learning media, textbooks, and learning planning tools are not yet fully available and well integrated. This situation is further complicated by the fact that the successful implementation of the curriculum depends not only on teachers and madrasah principals but also on collaboration with the madrasah committee and parents (Ainullah et al., 2025; Junaidi et al., 2024; Riantofani & Fuady, 2025). Thus, curriculum change requires systematic, targeted change management that can accommodate the needs and challenges that arise in madrasahs.

The problems that arise in the curriculum change process have been widely studied in the educational management literature, but there remain gaps that have not been fully addressed. Change management theories, such as Kurt Lewin's model of unfreezing, changing, and refreezing, explain the need for stages in changing old habits towards a new system (Arpinal et al., 2023; Sulistio et al., 2024; Trijayanti et al., 2025). Meanwhile, educational policy implementation theory emphasizes the importance of resource readiness, structural support, and supervision in overseeing change (Samsu et al., 2025; Taali et al., 2024; Tuerah & Tuerah, 2023). Although these theories provide a strong conceptual framework, the field's reality shows that the madrasah context has its own unique dynamics. The characteristics of teachers, limited infrastructure, and cultural factors in the madrasah environment mean that general theories are not yet able to fully address the problems of implementing the Merdeka Curriculum.

This fact highlights the need for contextual research that explores how curriculum change management is actually carried out in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, particularly at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri Lima Puluh Kota, West Sumatra, thereby providing a more applicable and relevant understanding of the field's conditions. The problems that arise in the curriculum change process have been widely discussed in the educational management literature; however, empirical conditions at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri Lima Puluh Kota reveal more concrete, contextual realities that confirm that curriculum change is indeed taking place. Field data from interviews, observations, and documentation indicate that the Madrasah has officially begun transitioning from the 2013 Curriculum to the Merdeka Curriculum, as evidenced by the implementation of curriculum socialization meetings, the preparation of teaching modules based on the new curriculum structure, and the gradual adoption of project-based learning (PjBL) in several classes. Documentation, such as meeting minutes and curriculum planning files, shows that the Madrasah has introduced the Kurikulum Operasional Madrasah (KOM), although its implementation is not yet uniform across all teachers. Observational data further reveal visible changes in classroom practices: some teachers—particularly younger ones—have begun integrating digital media and student-centered learning approaches.

In contrast, others still rely on conventional lecture methods. In addition, training participation records indicate that several teachers have attended workshops on the Merdeka Curriculum, though attendance inconsistencies have led to varying levels of readiness and competence. Infrastructure data also confirms limitations in ICT facilities, which affect the optimal implementation of digital-based learning. These concrete findings demonstrate that curriculum change at the Madrasah is not merely a policy discourse, but a real and ongoing process characterized by partial adoption, adaptation challenges, and gradual transformation. Therefore, while theories such as Kurt Lewin's change model and policy implementation frameworks provide useful guidance, the case of this Madrasah highlights the importance of understanding curriculum change as a complex, context-bound process shaped by human, institutional, and infrastructural factors.

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze in depth the curriculum change management strategies implemented at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri Lima Puluh Kota, West Sumatra. More specifically, this study aims to identify the supporting and inhibiting factors that influence the implementation of the independent curriculum at the Madrasah. In addition, this study also seeks to describe the responses of various parties involved, including teachers, students, and madrasah stakeholders, to the curriculum change policy. Thus, the results of this study are expected to provide a realistic picture of the dynamics of implementing the independent curriculum at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri Lima Puluh Kota. Ultimately, this study also aims to provide recommendations for an effective, contextually grounded curriculum change management model that can serve as a reference for other madrasahs in addressing future changes in education policy.

As far as the researchers can ascertain, several studies are similar to the current study. Although they are similar, there are at least a few differences between the studies of previous researchers and the current study. Among them is Wiji Dewi Lestari's 2025 study entitled "Change Management in the Development of Pesantren-Based Curriculum Integration at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Tahfizh Al Furqon" (Lestari, 2025). This study examines change management in the development of curriculum integration at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Tahfizh Al Furqon, focusing on planning, implementation, and evaluation. The results of this study indicate that change management in curriculum integration development at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Tahfizh Al Furqon can improve the quality of students and teachers. The difference between Wiji Dewi Lestari's research and the current study is that the latter analyzes in depth the curriculum change management strategies implemented at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri Lima Puluh Kota, West Sumatra, and identifies the supporting and inhibiting factors that influence the implementation of the independent curriculum at the Madrasah.

Then there is Imran L's 2023 study entitled "Management of the Integrative Pesantren-Madrasah Curriculum in Improving the Competence of Pesantren Graduates (Case Study at Ar-Ridho Sentul Islamic Boarding School)" (Imran, 2023). This study examines the integrative pesantren-madrasah curriculum model, the planning of the integrative pesantren-madrasah curriculum, its implementation, and its evaluation. The results of the study on the integrated pesantren-madrasah curriculum model are an integration model within one discipline: a curriculum organization model that combines competencies from several subjects into a single subject. In the planning of the integrated pesantren-madrasah curriculum, the curriculum objectives are integrated by aligning the vision of general and religious knowledge development, followed by the creation of an annual program (prota), semester program (promes), and lesson plan (RPP), integrating the organization of curriculum content by combining the Ta'lim Dirasah Islamiyah material in Islamic boarding schools with the Islamic Religious Education subject in madrasahs. Then, in terms of implementing the integrated pesantren-madrasah curriculum to improve the competence of santri graduates, this is carried out by competent teachers, outstanding students, and madrasah principals by: a) integrating the curriculum implementation program, namely by combining the use of the educational calendar and academic activity plans of the pesantren and Madrasah, and b) integrating curriculum implementation supervision, through cooperation between pesantren leaders and madrasah principals in conducting supervision. Furthermore, the evaluation of the integrated pesantren-madrasah curriculum in improving the competence of santri graduates is carried out by evaluating the curriculum in a coordinated manner between madrasahs and pesantren, which includes: a) evaluation of the curriculum context, b) evaluation of curriculum input, c) evaluation of the curriculum process, and d) evaluation of curriculum products. The difference between Wiji Dewi Lestari's research and the current study is that the current study analyzes in depth the curriculum change management strategies applied at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri Lima Puluh Kota, West Sumatra, and identifies the supporting and inhibiting factors that influence the implementation process of the independent curriculum at the Madrasah.

Next is Imam Firdaos's 2021 study entitled "Curriculum Development Strategies at the Ummul Quro Al Islami Islamic Boarding School in Leuwiliang, Bogor Regency" (Firdaos, 2021). This study examines the curriculum development strategies implemented by the Ummul Quro Al Islami Islamic boarding school. The results of the study show that the curriculum development strategy combined the Salafi Islamic boarding school curriculum and the modern Islamic boarding school curriculum, with distinctive local content developed in its own modules. The planning of the curriculum development strategy carried out by the

Ummul Quro Al Islami Islamic Boarding School was based on its vision and mission, which served as guidelines for creating programs in the development of the existing curriculum at the Ummul Quro Al Islami Islamic Boarding School, while also considering the progress and opportunities for the advancement of the Ummul Quro Al Islami Islamic Boarding School. The basics of curriculum development at the Ummul Quro Al Islam Islamic Boarding School are, first, the components of the curriculum, namely objectives, material, methods, curriculum organization, and curriculum evaluation; second, the principles of curriculum development, namely the principle of goal orientation, the principles of relevance, efficiency and effectiveness, flexibility, continuity, balance, integration, and quality.

Furthermore, the curriculum development model is carried out by the education and research and development bureaus through a thorough study of the relationship between theory and practice, which is then tested and revised. Finally, the entire curriculum framework is developed. The strategy for implementing curriculum development at the Ummul Quro Al Islami Islamic Boarding School is carried out based on needs and conducted annually. This also takes into account the Islamic boarding school's existing internal and external conditions. The implementation of the curriculum involves the Education Bureau, the Islamic Boarding School Secretary, and the Head of the Madrasah. The obstacles to curriculum implementation that arise during technical implementation lie with the teachers, not the curriculum itself. Some of these obstacles occur because of a lack of human resources, or because students are unable to follow the curriculum used at the Ummul Quro Al-Islami Islamic Boarding School. The difference between Wiji Dewi Lestari's research and the current study is that the latter analyzes in depth the curriculum change management strategies implemented at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri Lima Puluh Kota, West Sumatra, and identifies the supporting and inhibiting factors that influence the implementation of the independent curriculum at the Madrasah.

The urgency of this research lies in understanding how curriculum change can be managed effectively in the context of madrasahs, which have unique characteristics. Findings in the field indicate that there are serious obstacles that could hinder the successful implementation of the curriculum if not properly managed. On the other hand, the formulated research objectives emphasize the need for a comprehensive analysis to develop an adaptive and sustainable change management model. This argument confirms that research on curriculum change management is not only academically relevant but also practically important for improving the quality of education in madrasahs. Thus, this research is expected to address empirical needs regarding strategies for implementing new or independent curricula and to enrich scientific knowledge in the field of Islamic education management, particularly regarding change management in madrasah ibtidaiyah.

This study provides both practical and theoretical contributions to the field of madrasah management and the development of Islamic educational management studies. In practice, the findings offer valuable insights for madrasah leaders, particularly principals and curriculum coordinators, on how to manage curriculum change more effectively by emphasizing not only administrative and structural aspects but also teachers' psychological and cultural readiness. The study highlights the importance of continuous professional development, collaborative leadership, and adaptive strategies in addressing teacher resistance and optimizing the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. In addition, it provides a reference for strengthening institutional support, improving the use of ICT facilities, and ensuring more consistent supervision and training programs within the madrasah environment.

Theoretically, this research enriches Islamic educational management studies by integrating change management theories with the unique context of madrasah education. It expands the academic discourse by demonstrating that curriculum change in madrasahs is a multidimensional process influenced by structural, cultural, and socio-psychological factors. Furthermore, this study offers a contextualized perspective that can serve as a foundation for future research, particularly in developing more applicable and culturally responsive models of change management in Islamic educational institutions. Thus, this research not only strengthens existing theories but also bridges the gap between conceptual frameworks and real practices in madrasah settings.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

This study uses a qualitative case study approach. This approach was chosen because it provides an in-depth understanding of curriculum change in the real-life context of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri Lima Puluh Kota, West Sumatra. This Madrasah was chosen as the research location because it is a state madrasah under the Ministry of Religious Affairs and is located in the Lima Puluh Kota Regency. This Madrasah has unique characteristics as a religious-based basic education institution, with a representative number of students and teachers, making it a suitable research object. Academically, this is important because state madrasahs reflect the implementation of official government policies (top-down policy), and the data obtained are more relevant for generalization to other similar madrasahs.

Furthermore, this Madrasah serves as a strategic location for studying curriculum change management and can analyze how the Madrasah develops the Madrasah Operational Curriculum, teaching modules, and strengthens student profiles. This study uses primary and secondary data as the main sources of analysis. Primary data was obtained through in-depth interviews with informants directly involved in the curriculum change process, including the principal, teachers, committee members, and students. These interviews focused on their experiences, challenges, and strategies in dealing with the change from the 2013 Curriculum to the Merdeka Curriculum. Meanwhile, secondary data was obtained from relevant literature discussing change management, curriculum, and madrasah ibtidaiyah. This literature was used to strengthen the study's conceptual framework and to compare field findings with existing theories. Thus, the use of qualitative case studies enabled this study to produce a comprehensive analysis relevant to the field context.

### Participant

The participants in this study included various parties directly or indirectly involved in implementing curriculum changes at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri Lima Puluh Kota, West Sumatra. First, the principal, who acts as the policy-maker and main driver of change. Second, the deputy principal for curriculum, who serves as the technical coordinator in the implementation and supervision of curriculum change. Third, 14 classroom teachers and subject teachers are the main implementers of the curriculum in the classroom. Fourth, two madrasah committee members who represent the voices of parents and the surrounding community and provide moral and material support for the Madrasah. Fifth, six students were selected from grades IV to VI as direct beneficiaries of the new curriculum. These participants were selected purposively because they were considered capable of providing rich and relevant information to the research focus. By involving diverse participants, this study is expected to provide a holistic perspective on the dynamics of curriculum change management.

**Table 1.** Research Participants and Their Roles in Curriculum Change Implementation

No.	Participants	Role	Total
1	Head of Madrasah	Policy makers and key drivers in managing change.	1
2	Deputy Head of Madrasah for Curriculum	Technical Coordinator for the Implementation and Oversight of Curriculum Changes	1
3	Class teachers and subject teachers	The main implementers of the curriculum in the classroom	9
4	Madrasah committee members	Represent the voices of parents and the surrounding community and provide moral and material support to the Madrasah.	2
5	Selected students from grades IV to VI	Direct beneficiaries of the new curriculum	6
	Total		19

## Data Collection

This research process was carried out through a series of systematic stages using several data collection techniques. The first technique was in-depth interviews with the principal, vice principal for curriculum, teachers, the committee, and students to explore their experiences and strategies for dealing with curriculum changes. The second technique was participant observation, which allowed researchers to directly observe the learning process, supervision, and interactions between teachers and students in the classroom. The third technique was documentation, which included collecting various official documents such as lesson plans, teaching modules, meeting minutes, photos of activities, and madrasah policy documents related to the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. These three data collection techniques were chosen to obtain comprehensive, complementary data, thereby enhancing the credibility of the research findings. By combining interviews, observation, and documentation, this study presented a realistic picture of how curriculum change management is carried out at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri Lima Puluh Kota, West Sumatra.

## Data Analysis

The data analysis technique used in this study was triangulation, which follows the Miles and Huberman model comprising four main stages: data reduction, data presentation, conclusion drawing, and verification (Hidayat et al., 2025; Qomaruddin & Sa'diyah, 2024; Thalib, 2022). Data reduction was carried out by selecting, simplifying, and focusing on data relevant to the research focus. Data presentation was carried out in the form of descriptive narratives, systematically organized to make the information easier to understand. Conclusions were drawn by identifying patterns, relationships, and meanings from the collected data.

## Data Validity

Data verification was carried out continuously to ensure the validity of the research findings. In addition, this study applied data validity testing using four criteria: credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability (Husnullail & Jailani, 2024; Muhammad Basarrudin, 2025; Wardani et al., 2024). By using structured data analysis techniques, this study is expected to produce valid, accountable findings that are useful for developing knowledge and Islamic education management practices.

## FINDINGS

### Leadership in Managing Curriculum Change

Based on data from interviews, observations, and documentation, change management at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri Lima Puluh Kota, West Sumatra, shows complex dynamics. The principal views curriculum change as both a challenge and an opportunity, but limited human resources and facilities remain obstacles. One informant stated:

*“Curriculum change is important to improve the quality of learning, but teachers still need intensive assistance so that implementation is not merely administrative.”* (Head of Madrasah)

The deputy principal in charge of the curriculum emphasizes the need for ongoing training so that teachers do not merely go through the motions when developing teaching modules.

*“Some teachers still find it difficult to prepare teaching modules independently because they are accustomed to the old curriculum format.”* (Deputy Head of Curriculum)

Senior teachers reported an increased administrative burden due to changes in learning tools, while younger teachers appeared more enthusiastic about utilizing digital media.

*“The administrative demands are heavier now. We have to adjust lesson plans and assessments, and sometimes we feel overwhelmed.”* (Senior Teacher)

*“I see this curriculum as an opportunity to be more creative. Using digital media and project-based learning makes students more active.”* (Young Teacher)

Observations showed that project-based learning had begun, although it was not yet well structured, with some teachers still using traditional lecture methods. To provide a clearer visualization of classroom practices observed during the curriculum transition, the observation findings are summarized in Table 2 below.

**Table 2.** Summary of Observation Results on Curriculum Change Management

Aspect	Observation Findings	Interpretation
Learning Process	Some teachers implemented project-based learning, while others still used lecture methods.	Curriculum implementation was not yet uniform
Use of Technology	Younger teachers used digital media more frequently	The teacher's technological readiness varied
Classroom Interaction	Students appeared more active during practice-based activities	Project-based learning increased student engagement
Supervision Activities	Monitoring by the principal focused more on administration	Academic supervision was not yet optimal
Learning Facilities	ICT facilities were limited in several classrooms	Infrastructure became an obstacle to curriculum implementation

Documentation confirmed this through meeting minutes, which showed that curriculum socialization had been carried out, but was not yet supported by comprehensive written technical guidelines.

The data on change management show that curriculum change in madrasahs was implemented gradually, with varying degrees of acceptance among teachers. Younger teachers, who are more familiar with technology, showed greater openness to implementing project-based learning, while senior teachers tended to have difficulty adapting to new administrative demands. Madrasah principals attempted to address this situation through classroom monitoring, though the supervision carried out was largely administrative. Documentation data show differences in teachers' consistency in attending training, with implications for the quality of curriculum implementation in the classroom. This is also supported by observations that found limitations in ICT facilities as one of the factors hindering the optimization of change. From a management perspective, change has begun but is not yet fully in line with the direction of the new curriculum policy.

The study's results show that implementing curriculum changes at MIN Lima Puluh Kota is quite complex. Change management strategies have been implemented through socialization, monitoring by the Madrasah head, and the application of project-based learning. However, limitations in facilities, variations in teacher readiness, and a lack of technical guidance remain significant obstacles. Young teachers show a positive attitude toward the use of digital media, while senior teachers tend to experience resistance due to administrative burdens. On the other hand, students find practice-based activities more interesting, but do not yet fully understand the new assessment patterns. This condition reveals a gap between the independent curriculum design and its classroom implementation.

Reflections on the results of this study show that curriculum change management in madrasah ibtidaiyah cannot be viewed solely as a technical process but also as a social process involving interactions among the madrasah principal, teachers, students, and parents. Thus, the research objective to analyze change management strategies while identifying supporting and inhibiting factors is relevant. The students' positive response and the committee's involvement indicate collaborative potential, though stronger systemic support is still needed. This reflection highlights the practical benefits of the research, namely demonstrating the need for a balance between curriculum innovation and implementers' readiness in the field.

### Teachers' Readiness and Resistance to Curriculum Change

The relationship between the descriptive data and explanations of change management, along with the realities of the research, shows that the problems that arise are indeed in line with the issues identified at the beginning of the research. Teachers experienced difficulties in understanding project-based learning, increased administrative burdens, and resistance from some senior teachers.

*“Training is helpful, but sometimes the material changes too quickly, making it difficult for us to follow.”* (Teacher Informant)

*“The Merdeka Curriculum requires creativity, but not all teachers are ready to leave old teaching habits.”* (Curriculum Coordinator)

This condition is reinforced by the fact that supporting facilities, especially learning technology, are still very limited, thereby hindering the acceleration of change. Nevertheless, there are positive initiatives from young teachers who are implementing innovative learning strategies using digital media. This situation shows that change management in madrasahs still needs to be strengthened, particularly in leadership strategies, facility support, and teacher training that align more closely with the direction of the Merdeka Curriculum. To strengthen the credibility of the findings, the documentation data were analyzed and summarized as presented in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Summary of Documentation Analysis Results

Documents Analyzed	Main Findings	Implications
Meeting Minutes	Curriculum socialization had been conducted regularly	Institutional support already existed
Teaching Modules	Formats were inconsistent between teachers	Curriculum understanding varied
Lesson Plans	Some still referred to the 2013 Curriculum	The transition process was still ongoing
Teacher Training Attendance List	Participation rates differed among teachers	Training consistency affected implementation quality
Madrasah Vision and Mission Documents	Emphasized character-based and Islamic learning	Institutional vision aligned with curriculum goals

An explanation of the data shows that the curriculum change has not been implemented uniformly across all classes. Some teachers are still in transition, so the new curriculum cannot be fully implemented. This is evident in variations in the learning tools used and in classroom methods. Teachers who actively participate in training tend to be better able to develop teaching modules aligned with the new curriculum requirements. In contrast, those who do not participate fully still rely on the old tools. Thus, the implementation of the curriculum in madrasahs appears to be progressing gradually. However, it requires strengthening in terms of support and the consistency of training to be more evenly distributed across all classes.

These findings are consistent with previous studies on curriculum change management that emphasize the importance of human resource readiness and infrastructure support (Fadilah, 2025; Langgai, 2025; Triarsuci et al., 2024). However, this study demonstrates its superiority by specifically showing how generational differences among teachers influence their responses to curriculum change. While other studies tend to focus solely on structural aspects, this study adds a socio-psychological dimension, enriching our understanding of the factors influencing teacher resistance and adaptation. This shows that change management is not only an administrative issue, but is also closely related to psychological and cultural dynamics in madrasahs.

### **Implementation of Project-Based Learning in the Classroom**

The results of research on the curriculum at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri Lima Puluh Kota also show significant variations. From interviews, teachers stated that preparing teaching modules remains a challenge, with some only adapting from the 2013 Curriculum. Observations show that project-based learning has been implemented, but many teachers still use traditional lecture-based methods. Documentation shows that learning tools such as lesson plans and teaching modules are not uniform, with some referring to the Merdeka Curriculum and others still based on the 2013 Curriculum.

The gap between the curriculum's description and explanation and the reality of research indicates that the objectives of the Merdeka Curriculum do not align with field practices. The Merdeka Curriculum requires collaborative, creative, and project-based learning, but some teachers still apply traditional lecture methods. This fact is reinforced by documentation showing inconsistencies in teaching tools and observations regarding

the limitations of ICT facilities in the classroom. This situation indicates that the curriculum implementation is not proceeding in accordance with the expected standards. However, there have been positive developments, with some teachers beginning to try out new approaches, albeit not yet to the fullest extent. This illustrates that curriculum change in madrasahs is still in the early stages of implementation. It requires further support to proceed in line with the objectives of the national education policy.

### **Infrastructure and ICT Limitations**

The results of research on Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri Lima Puluh Kota, an Islamic-based primary education institution, show that it plays a strategic role but also faces challenges. Interviews with the head of the Madrasah indicate that its vision and mission are focused on character-based learning and 21st-century competencies, in line with the new curriculum's requirements. Observations show that the Madrasah is trying to integrate general knowledge with Islamic values, although, in practice, there are still limitations in its learning facilities. Documentation shows that the madrasah meeting minutes have emphasized the importance of socializing the new curriculum, although technical guidelines do not yet provide clear support for it.

The relationship between the description and explanation of madrasahs and the reality of the research shows consistency between institutional objectives and the implementation of the curriculum. Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri Lima Puluh Kota strives to fulfill its role as an Islamic educational institution by integrating general knowledge and religious values. However, limited resources and human resource readiness remain major obstacles. This reality illustrates that madrasahs are in a transitional phase in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum, with some aspects going well but others still needing strengthening. Thus, the findings of this study show that the role of madrasahs as Islamic educational institutions remains relevant and important, but implementing the new curriculum requires more systematic and focused change management to achieve optimal results.

### **Institutional Support and Madrasah Vision**

The data show that Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri Lima Puluh Kota plays an important role in implementing a curriculum that is not only oriented towards academic aspects but also towards religious and moral aspects. Efforts to integrate 21st-century competencies with Islamic values have begun, though implementation gaps remain. This is evident in the differences in implementation quality across classes, which are influenced by teacher readiness and the availability of learning facilities. The Madrasah's documentation of its vision and mission, which emphasizes character-based learning, demonstrates institutional commitment, though classroom practices do not yet fully reflect this vision. Thus, the Madrasah is on the right track but still needs strengthening in curriculum management to ensure learning objectives are optimally achieved.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Interpretation of Main Findings**

The findings of this study indicate that curriculum change at MIN Lima Puluh Kota is a complex and multidimensional process, characterized by varying teacher responses, partial implementation of project-based learning, and limitations in infrastructure and institutional support. A key issue identified is the disparity in teacher readiness: senior teachers tend to struggle to adapt to new pedagogical and administrative demands, while younger teachers show greater flexibility due to their familiarity with digital tools. This condition suggests that curriculum change is not merely a technical transition, but a socio-psychological process influenced by experience, habits, and professional competence. In this context, teacher resistance should be interpreted not as opposition to policy but as an indication of readiness gaps that require systematic support.

### **Linkage with Change Management Theory and Previous Studies**

These findings are closely aligned with change management theories, particularly Kurt Lewin's model of unfreezing–changing–refreezing. The resistance observed among senior teachers reflects the "unfreezing" stage, in which individuals struggle to let go of established practices, such as the K-13 approach. The gradual

adoption of project-based learning and digital tools represents the "changing" phase, although it is not yet fully stabilized. The absence of consistent training and technical guidelines indicates that the "refreezing" stage has not been optimally achieved. Furthermore, this study supports previous research (e.g., Fadilah, 2025; Langgai, 2025; Triarsuci et al., 2024) that emphasizes the critical role of teacher readiness and infrastructure in successful curriculum implementation. However, this research extends prior studies by highlighting the importance of socio-psychological and generational factors, showing that differences in digital literacy and pedagogical mindset significantly shape teachers' responses to change. This reinforces the idea that change management in madrasahs must go beyond structural and administrative approaches and incorporate human-centered strategies.

### **Practical Implications and Strategies for Effective Change Management**

Based on these findings, effective change management strategies in madrasahs should be designed more concretely and systematically. First, at the unfreezing stage, madrasah leaders need to build awareness and shared understanding through intensive socialization, reflective discussions, and data-driven communication to reduce resistance and foster a sense of urgency for change. Second, during the changing stage, the focus should be on strengthening teacher capacity through continuous and needs-based professional development, such as differentiated training programs, peer mentoring between senior and junior teachers, and classroom-based coaching. Third, at the refreezing stage, madrasahs must ensure sustainability by establishing clear technical guidelines, standardizing teaching modules, and conducting consistent supervision that is not merely administrative but also pedagogical.

In addition, a collaborative-participatory approach is essential. Madrasah principals should act as transformational leaders who facilitate innovation, rather than simply monitoring compliance. The involvement of the madrasah committee and parents should be strengthened, particularly in supporting project-based learning activities that connect school and home environments. Equally important is improving infrastructure, especially ICT facilities, to enable effective integration of digital learning. Thus, an effective curriculum change management model for madrasahs should integrate structural (policies and systems), cultural (values and collaboration), and psychological (motivation and readiness) dimensions into a cohesive strategy, ensuring that curriculum reform is not only implemented but also sustained and meaningful in practice.

### **CONCLUSION**

This study concludes that the success of curriculum change implementation at MIN Lima Puluh Kota is not primarily determined by formal policies or curriculum documents, but is strongly influenced by psychological, social, and cultural dynamics within the Madrasah, particularly differences in perspectives between senior and junior teachers. Teacher resistance should be understood not as rejection, but as an indication of competency gaps that can foster innovation in change management. Therefore, effective curriculum reform requires a humanistic and multidimensional approach that integrates structural, cultural, and psychological aspects. While this study contributes both theoretically and practically—especially by proposing a collaborative-participatory model of change management—its findings are limited to a single context, thus opening opportunities for further research through comparative and broader methodological approaches.

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