



## **THE ROLE OF TEACHERS AS CURRICULUM DEVELOPERS IN IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LEARNING**

### ***PERAN GURU SEBAGAI PENGEMBANG KURIKULUM DALAM MENINGKATKAN KUALITAS PEMBELAJARAN***

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#### Abstrak

Makalah ini mengkaji secara detail pentingnya keterlibatan guru dalam perancangan kurikulum (CDC) dan menilai dampaknya terhadap peningkatan kualitas pengajaran dan pembelajaran. Kurikulum didefinisikan sebagai komponen fundamental pendidikan, yang memberikan panduan dan struktur yang diperlukan untuk kemajuan siswa. Peran guru, yang dulunya hanya dianggap sebagai pelaksana, telah berkembang menjadi perancang pembelajaran, dengan pengetahuan dan keterampilan penting untuk memengaruhi pengalaman belajar siswa dan implementasi kurikulum di berbagai konteks kelas. Analisis ini didasarkan pada tinjauan literatur kritis dan sintesis konseptual penelitian tentang peran profesional guru dan proses Pengembangan Kurikulum Partisipatif (PCD). Penelitian ini menekankan bahwa keterlibatan guru, khususnya selama implementasi dan evaluasi, sangat penting untuk mendorong peningkatan berkelanjutan dan fleksibilitas dalam sistem pendidikan. Keterlibatan yang efektif, yang sering didukung oleh pembelajaran profesional yang berfokus pada kurikulum, secara signifikan meningkatkan kemampuan guru, memungkinkan keberhasilan implementasi praktik pengajaran berkualitas tinggi, seperti diskusi sains yang efektif. Terlepas dari tantangan yang terus berlanjut, termasuk kebutuhan untuk mengintegrasikan konsep-konsep modern seperti teknologi digital dan Tujuan Pembangunan Berkelanjutan (SDGs), partisipasi guru yang strategis memastikan kurikulum tetap relevan dan responsif, yang pada akhirnya meningkatkan hasil belajar siswa secara keseluruhan.

**Kata kunci: Pengembangan Kurikulum, Kualitas Pembelajaran, Peran Guru**

#### Abstract

This paper examines in detail the importance of teacher involvement in curriculum design (CDC) and assesses its impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning. Curriculum is defined as a fundamental component of education, providing the guidance and structure necessary for student progress. The role of teachers, once considered merely implementers, has evolved into that of instructional designers, with crucial knowledge and skills to influence students' learning experiences and curriculum implementation across diverse classroom contexts. This analysis draws on a critical literature review and conceptual synthesis of research on teachers' professional roles and the Participatory Curriculum Development (PCD) process. The research emphasizes that teacher involvement, particularly during implementation and evaluation, is crucial for fostering continuous improvement and flexibility in education systems. Effective involvement, often supported by curriculum-focused professional learning, significantly enhances teacher capabilities, enabling the successful implementation of high-quality teaching practices, such as effective science discussions. Despite ongoing challenges, including the need to integrate modern concepts such as digital technologies and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), strategic teacher participation ensures the curriculum remains relevant and responsive, ultimately improving overall student learning outcomes.

**Keywords: Curriculum Development, Learning Quality, Teacher Roles**



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## **INTRODUCTION**

Education holds a central role in national development efforts, making educational quality a critical factor to be realized (Studies, 2022). To achieve this goal, the curriculum plays a very important (essential) role in education (*Examine the Importance of Teachers' Participation in Curriculum Development, Romana Bano, 2022*). The curriculum is considered the most fundamental component of an individual's educational and learning process. It also plays a vital role in shaping students' knowledge, attitudes, and skills in line with modern developments. Given its importance, good educational quality requires an accurate description of all components to comprehensively assess their realization and evaluation plan (Studies, 2022).

Within the educational ecosystem, the human resource factor, especially educators (teachers), has a tremendous influence on the quality of student learning outcomes (Studies, 2022). Teacher participation in the curriculum planning process itself is considered essential because they are at the forefront of implementation (Ben-Peretz et al., 2016). Although teachers are often viewed merely as implementers, they actually assume a dual role as developers and autonomous implementers of the curriculum (Ben-Peretz et al., 2016). Through this role, teachers can act as organizers, creators, supervisors, and programmers of the curriculum.

This active role of teachers as curriculum developers has direct implications for improving the quality of learning. Teachers have the authority to modify lessons and adapt curriculum materials into real-life teaching situations. This flexibility is crucial, especially when implementing new curricula, which can raise concerns among teachers about learning outcomes (Purnomo et al., 2023). Effective teacher involvement is the focus of critical analysis because the success or failure of the curriculum heavily depends on their participation. Therefore, this article aims to deeply analyze the role of teachers as curriculum developers and their fundamental contribution to improving the quality of learning in a sustained manner (*Examine the Importance of Teachers' Participation in Curriculum Development, Romana Bano, 2022*).

### **The Evolution of the Teacher's Role**

Conventionally, educators are often seen as mere implementers of curricula designed by professionals or external administrators. However, a significant shift has occurred, further emphasizing the importance of teachers' roles, particularly in the implementation and evaluation phases of curriculum development. This new approach to curriculum development recognizes that teachers are the primary actors who transform educational documents into concrete learning experiences in everyday life.

This shift elevates teachers to "learning experience designers" professionals whose pedagogical knowledge and expertise are crucial to creating learning experiences for students. They are expected not only to master the subject matter but also to design relevant and engaging activities that align with the specific needs, abilities, and contexts of their classrooms. This recognition highlights that the challenges of curriculum implementation in the classroom are directly related to the depth of teacher involvement.

### **Participatory Processes and Quality Improvement**

Teacher involvement in the curriculum development process, known as Participatory Curriculum Development (PKP), is fundamentally linked to improving the quality of teaching and



learning. PKP transforms curriculum development into a form of continuous professional learning for educators.

**The impact of educator participation on quality can be analyzed through several approaches:**

1. Improving Educator Capability: Research, particularly related to competency-based learning management training, shows that educator participation in curriculum-related professional development significantly improves their professional capabilities.
2. High-Quality Learning Practices: An integrated support system—where educational curriculum materials are integrated with targeted professional development—is key to helping educators implement quality learning practices. For example, specially designed training and materials support educators in implementing complex techniques, such as constructive science discussions among elementary students.
3. Adjusting to Contemporary Challenges: Curricula need to adapt to meet current demands, such as integrating digital technology-based skills, themes, and concepts, and linking them to initiatives like the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The role of educators is crucial to the successful implementation of these elements, as they provide the practical insights needed to apply new concepts effectively.

The role of educators in curriculum development extends beyond immediate classroom impact, fostering continuous improvement and adaptability across the education system. Thus, close collaboration among educators, curriculum managers, and other stakeholders is necessary to ensure an effective, responsive curriculum that improves student learning outcomes across the board. This paper aims to gather evidence supporting educators' roles as curriculum developers and to outline their impact.

## **METHOD**

This study adopts a critical conceptual analysis approach and an organized literature review. The primary objective of this approach is to synthesize information from various academic studies on teachers' dual role as both implementers and developers of curriculum. This review emphasizes key ideas, including: (1) the evolution of teachers' professional roles; (2) the effects of Participatory Curriculum Development (PKP); (3) the effectiveness of professional development in supporting curriculum implementation; and (4) challenges arising from the demands of today's education, such as the implementation of technology. The data collected from this literature review provides a foundation for discussing the importance of teachers' roles in improving the quality of the learning process.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This section presents the main takeaways from the critical conceptual analysis and structured literature review. Our primary focus here is to synthesize data on the teacher's dual capacity not just as curriculum implementers, but as vital developers, and to assess how this dual role impacts the overall quality of student learning.



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**Finding 1: Teachers as the Essential Architects of Learning**

The literature reviewed clearly shows a fundamental shift in the teacher's function. They are no longer viewed merely as personnel who carry out a curriculum designed by external administrators or specialists. Instead, the modern teacher is seen as a proactive "learning experience designer". This shift underscores a critical point: the curriculum is a dynamic entity, not a static instructional document. Teachers are expected to do more than simply master their subject matter; they must also design relevant, dynamic, and engaging learning activities. In essence, teachers hold a dual role as both developers and autonomous implementers of the curriculum. In this capacity, they organize, create, supervise, and program the learning content. The Importance of Local Context and Flexibility. A teacher's deep, practical knowledge of their classroom context is indispensable. This includes understanding students' backgrounds, existing knowledge, and individual needs. Lacking this real-world understanding, the curriculum risks becoming disconnected from reality, inevitably leading to ongoing implementation difficulties across various educational settings. Teachers are given the authority to modify lessons and adapt curriculum materials directly into real-life teaching situations. This flexibility is particularly vital when introducing new curricula, which can often generate concerns among educators regarding potential learning outcomes. Therefore, effective teacher participation is the core focus of this analysis, as the curriculum's ultimate success or failure hinges heavily on their involvement.

**Finding 2: Direct Correlation Between Participation, Professionalism, and Quality**

Active involvement in the curriculum development process, often termed Participatory Curriculum Development (PCD) or PKP, is intrinsically linked to enhancing the quality of teaching and learning. PCD effectively transforms the curriculum development cycle into a form of continuous professional learning for educators. Research consistently indicates that when teachers participate in designing, adapting, and evaluating curriculum materials, their ability to manage the teaching and learning process significantly improves. This professional enhancement directly translates to better teaching quality.

The positive influence of educator involvement on quality manifests in several key areas:

1. **Elevated Educator Capability:** Studies, especially those focused on competency based learning management training, confirm that educator participation in curriculum focused professional development substantially improves their professional capabilities.
2. **High-Quality Learning Practices:** An integrated support system where curriculum materials are harmonized with targeted professional development is viewed as a powerful mechanism. This support allows teachers to confidently implement more challenging and complex teaching methods. For example, such an integrated system is crucial for enabling teachers to effectively lead high quality practices, like constructive science discussions among elementary students.
3. **Fostering Continuous Improvement:** Teacher involvement, particularly during the critical implementation and evaluation phases, is key to nurturing continuous improvement and flexibility within the entire education system. Curricula backed by systems that carefully align professional development with the educational content are significantly more effective in producing optimal student learning outcomes.



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**Finding 3: Addressing Modern Challenges through Teacher Agency**

Curricula must constantly be updated to meet contemporary societal demands. This includes seamlessly integrating digital technology skills and concepts and linking educational content to global initiatives such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The requirement to embed these current issues poses considerable challenges. Research suggests that relying solely on top-down instructions from leaders is inadequate. Instead, successful strategies involve empowering teacher agency through focused training programs and internal quality control mechanisms. This inclusive, bottom-up approach enables educators to determine the most effective and culturally sensitive methods for addressing complex, interdisciplinary topics.

The teacher's role is indispensable for the successful practical application of these elements, as they provide the real-world insights necessary to effectively implement new concepts. This strategy is essential for ensuring the curriculum remains relevant to the demands of the 21st century and successfully prioritizes student sustainability.

Ultimately, educators' role in curriculum development extends beyond the immediate impact in their classrooms, promoting system-wide adaptability and continuous improvement. Consequently, close collaboration among educators, curriculum managers, and other stakeholders is required to ensure an effective, responsive curriculum that enhances student learning outcomes across the board.

**Finding 4: Teacher Involvement Increases Curriculum Relevance**

Analysis shows that when teachers contribute to curriculum development, learning content becomes more relevant and easier to apply in the classroom. Educators gain a deeper understanding of students' characteristics, learning gaps, and the school's social and cultural context. This knowledge enables curriculum adjustments that better align with learners' needs and realities.

**Finding 5: Participatory Curriculum Development Strengthens Collaboration**

The participatory curriculum development process encourages teachers to collaborate with colleagues, educational institutions, and other stakeholders. This collaboration creates a more comprehensive and consistent curriculum. Collectively developed curricula are more widely accepted because all parties feel a sense of responsibility for their implementation.

**Finding 6: Professional Growth as a Natural Outcome of Involvement**

Participation in curriculum development enables teachers to enhance their professional skills. Through the process of designing, modifying, and assessing the curriculum, teachers gain better skills in selecting strategies, managing the teaching and learning process, and creating a more active and meaningful learning environment. This directly contributes to better quality learning in the classroom.

**Finding 7: Curriculum Flexibility Supports Modern Learning Needs**

Curriculum created collaboratively by teachers tend to be more adaptive and able to meet various new demands, such as the application of technology, project-based learning, and global issues. Teachers involved in the development can adjust the content to be more relevant, contextual, and aligned with current educational needs.





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## **DISCUSSION**

Educator participation is a crucial element in optimal curriculum implementation, as their involvement from the planning phase helps create a more efficient classroom execution process. When educators participate from the beginning, they develop a deeper sense of ownership of the curriculum, which in turn increases their readiness, motivation, and dedication to implementing learning activities. This sense of responsibility not only supports effective teaching but also ensures that the approaches and activities implemented align with classroom conditions. Active involvement by educators ensures that the curriculum becomes more relevant and meaningful. By adapting materials to the school environment, resource availability, and local characteristics, educators help transform theoretical content into learning experiences that are close to students' daily lives. This contextualization process reinforces the importance of learning and plays a significant role in creating a more engaging learning experience that meets students' diverse needs.

Furthermore, the curriculum development process provides valuable opportunities for teachers to continuously improve their professional skills. Through reflection, revision, and collaboration, educators can refine their pedagogical skills, enhance their creativity, and deepen their understanding of impactful teaching strategies. Thus, involvement in curriculum development not only enhances the quality of educational materials but also contributes to educators' professional advancement, enabling them to implement more effective teaching methods. While educator participation offers many benefits, productive involvement still requires solid support from educational institutions and systems. Training, dedicated time, and adequate facilities are still needed for teachers to contribute significantly to curriculum development.

## **CONCLUSION**

The data presented confirms the vital role of teachers as curriculum developers in improving the overall quality of learning. By going beyond mere implementers, teachers transform into educational designers, ensuring the curriculum remains relevant, responsive, and applicable in real-world contexts. The mechanism supporting the quality of this role lies in the power of participatory processes. Active teacher involvement in curriculum development serves as a continuous professional learning process, which is crucial for improving teacher skills and enabling the implementation of high-quality teaching methodologies. Curricula supported by systems that align professional development with educational content are far more effective in creating optimal student learning outcomes.

To maintain and improve educational standards, policies need to be oriented toward strengthening the capabilities of educators through

1. Establishing a framework for Participatory Curriculum Development (PCD).
2. Ensuring that all professional learning activities are closely linked to the established curriculum.
3. Providing the necessary resources to assist teachers in adopting contemporary issues, such as digital technology and sustainability concepts, in their daily practice.

Ultimately, by valuing and maximizing teachers' expertise throughout the curriculum cycle, education systems can foster continuous improvement and the adaptability needed to meet students' changing needs in a rapidly evolving world.



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