



Exploring Growth Mindset to Enhance the Skills of Designing Learning Planning Tools among Islamic Elementary School Teacher Education Students

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Abstract

This research aims to explore how third semester students who are part of the Zoomers generation apply a growth mindset in preparing learning planning tools. With the unique characteristics possessed by Generation Z, such as openness to educational materials and tools, creativity, and adaptability, this research identifies the positive impact of a growth mindset on their skills in compiling and developing learning planning tools. The method used is a qualitative approach with observation, in-depth interviews and documentation. Data analysis uses 4 stages developed by Miles and Huberman. The research results show that students believe that intelligence can be developed through effort, see challenges as opportunities to grow, and consider failure to be an important part of the learning process. They also demonstrate an open attitude to feedback and use the success of others as a source of inspiration. These findings confirm that the application of a growth mindset can improve the quality of learning planning tools prepared by students, as well as prepare them to face challenges in the world of education. This research provides important implications for the development of teacher education curricula, with an emphasis on developing a growth mindset as a key component in the learning process.

Keywords:

Growth Mindset; Planning Tools; Student

A. INTRODUCTION

The preparation of learning planning tools within the Merdeka Belajar curriculum is considered a challenging activity in educational administration (Mesta Limbong & Asnah Mn Limbong, 2023). Learning planning requires a deep understanding and careful attention to align with the established standards. Based on observations conducted in elementary schools, nearly 78% of teachers experience difficulties in preparing learning planning documents. From these observations, and considering the challenges posed by the evolving educational landscape that must adapt to students' conditions supported by various technologies, it becomes essential for

university students as prospective educators to possess not only theoretical knowledge but also practical skills in developing learning planning tools.

The quality of the learning process greatly depends on well-prepared, effective, and innovative planning (Munna & Kalam, 2021). One of the key factors influencing the success of learning is the planning tools developed by educators (Asad Juma, 2024). However, observations in three schools revealed that many teachers still face difficulties in creating high-quality learning planning tools. They struggle to adapt to curriculum changes, which makes it even more challenging to apply these changes in their lesson plans. Additionally, their awareness of the need for continuous improvement remains low, resulting in a lack of agility and initiative in developing learning plans that meet current educational needs.

Several factors contribute to the low ability of educators in developing learning planning tools, including the lack of adequate training and professional development, as many perceive the available training as merely a formality (Ramli et al., 2024). Pendidikan Educators, particularly those in remote areas, often have limited access to training programs that focus on the latest approaches to developing learning plans and effective planning techniques (Ghimire, 2022). As a result, they tend to rely on outdated or irrelevant approaches that do not align with the current curriculum developments.

In addition, a heavy workload also poses a significant challenge. Educators are often burdened with administrative tasks that consume much of their time and energy, leaving little room for innovation in developing lesson plans. Furthermore, the lack of support from schools and limited collaboration among teachers in preparing learning materials worsen the situation. This condition directly impacts the quality of classroom learning. When learning tools are not well-prepared, learning objectives become unclear, and instructional activities become unstructured. Consequently, students may lose motivation, leading to lower academic achievement. Therefore, it is essential to further explore the challenges educators face in developing learning planning tools and to seek solutions to enhance their ability to design effective and student-centered learning experiences.

The role of university students as prospective educators is crucial in shaping the next generation of the nation. In the context of an ever-evolving education system, the ability to design effective learning plans is one of the core competencies that future educators must possess. A well-structured learning plan not only serves as a guide for teaching and learning activities but also acts as a tool to create meaningful learning experiences for students. In the era of Education 5.0, the challenges faced by educators are becoming increasingly complex. Therefore, prospective teachers need to master various aspects of lesson planning, including knowledge of the curriculum, innovative teaching methods, and appropriate assessment techniques. These skills not only influence the quality of classroom learning but also have a significant impact on students' character development and motivation.

One important approach to developing this capability is the application of a growth mindset, as prospective educators with a growth mindset tend to be more open to feedback, willing to learn from mistakes, and committed to continuous self-improvement. With this mindset, they are more motivated to explore and apply various strategies in designing learning plans, thereby creating a more engaging and effective learning environment (Yang & Sanchez, 2022). Moreover, a growth mindset enables future educators to adapt to changes in the educational landscape, such as the integration of technology in teaching and shifts in the curriculum. With the ability to learn and grow, prospective teachers can overcome various challenges they encounter in the field and make positive contributions to improving the quality of education in Indonesia (Hermayawati & Zakiyah, 2024). It is essential for Madrasah Ibtidaiyah teacher education programs to emphasize the mastery of lesson plan development skills while also fostering a growth mindset among students. This approach ensures that future educators are not only academically prepared but also possess the attitudes and skills necessary to become competent and inspiring teachers.

The application of the growth mindset concept has become increasingly relevant. The growth mindset, popularized by Carol Dweck (Deimeke et al., n.d.), suggests that individuals with

this mindset believe intelligence and abilities can be developed through effort, effective strategies, and feedback from others. In the context of teacher education, indicators of a growth mindset include several key aspects: a. *belief in malleable intelligence*, b. *persistence and resilience*, c. *emphasis on effort*, d. *openness to feedback*, e. *positive attitude toward learning*, f. *reflective thinking*, g. *valuing challenge* (Jacovidis et al., 2020). These seven indicators form an essential foundation for shaping adaptive and self-developing future teachers. Students often face difficulties in designing complex learning plans, such as understanding curriculum updates, creating effective learning activities, and evaluating learning outcomes. Challenges in preparing lesson plans often arise from limited knowledge, skills, and unsupportive mindsets. Students with a fixed mindset tend to feel pressured and give up easily when encountering obstacles in lesson planning. In contrast, those who adopt a growth mindset are more likely to adapt, seek solutions, and continuously learn from experience. This mindset helps them enhance their ability to design comprehensive learning plans especially in developing effective weekly plans, annual programs, semester programs, and teaching modules which require strategic precision to facilitate implementation and achieve learning objectives effectively.

The importance of developing a growth mindset goes beyond merely creating lesson plans without considering the alignment between learning outcomes and objectives, which serve as benchmarks for educational success (Limeri et al., 2020). It also plays a crucial role in preparing students to become future educators capable of navigating the dynamic landscape of education. By cultivating this mindset, students are expected to become more confident in facing challenges that arise in various learning situations, aiming to realize learning experiences that are ideal, effective, efficient, and innovative. They are also encouraged to be more open to feedback and more creative in designing innovative learning strategies. Through the exploration and application of a growth mindset, students can enhance their skills in developing well-structured, effective, and innovative lesson plans (Limeri et al., 2020). This will have a positive impact not only on their own learning process but also on the quality of education they will design and implement in the future. Therefore, it is essential to integrate this approach into higher education practices to help students develop the habit of creating thoughtful lesson plans, ensuring that they are well-prepared to become adaptive and competent educators. Ultimately, this greatly influences the effectiveness of learning implementation in achieving standardized educational goals.

Overall, the explanation above highlights a clear gap between the demands of the Merdeka Curriculum and the current abilities of pre-service teachers in developing comprehensive lesson-planning documents. Although the concept of *growth mindset* has been widely discussed in the context of learning motivation, there is still a limited number of studies that specifically examine its role in strengthening students' ability to construct complex instructional planning tools such as effective-week plans, annual programs, semester programs, teaching modules, and assessment instruments.

Based on this gap, the present study explicitly aims to:

1. Identify the various challenges faced by students in the process of developing instructional planning documents.
2. Explain the contribution of a growth mindset in enhancing the quality of instructional planning produced by pre-service MI/SD teachers.

Thus, the novelty of this research lies in its integration of an analysis of instructional planning competencies with the concept of growth mindset within the framework of the Merdeka Curriculum and the emerging paradigm of Education 5.0. This integration has rarely been explored in previous studies, offering a new perspective on how a growth-oriented mindset can serve as a crucial factor in shaping future educators who are adaptive, creative, and competent in navigating the evolving landscape of contemporary education.

B. METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach (Creswell, 2013) aimed at exploring in depth how growth mindset influences the ability of PGMI students to develop instructional planning documents. The research was conducted with third-semester PGMI students at UIN Maulana

Malik Ibrahim Malang using purposive sampling, involving 24 students as the primary informants and one lecturer of the Learning Planning course for MI/SD as a supporting informant.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions (FGD), classroom observations, and document analysis of students' instructional planning products, including the effective-week plan, annual program, semester program, teaching module, and assessment instruments. All data were analyzed using the interactive analysis model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014). which consists of data collection, data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. These steps were carried out repeatedly until the data reached saturation. The analysis was further strengthened through content analysis, which included transcription, repeated reading to understand context, coding, category development, and synthesis of findings that ultimately led to the formulation of core themes related to students' challenges, the role of growth mindset, and the quality of instructional planning documents they produced.

The credibility of the data was ensured through source and method triangulation, member checking, and continuous verification processes to guarantee that the research findings were trustworthy, accountable, and aligned with the actual conditions in the field. Through this comprehensive procedure, the study provides a holistic understanding of how growth mindset serves as a crucial factor in developing the competencies of pre-service teachers, enabling them to become adaptive educators prepared to meet the demands of the Kurikulum Merdeka and the dynamics of Education 5.0.

C. RESULT & DISCUSSION

The exploration of growth mindset among odd-semester students aged approximately 18 to 22 years, who belong to Generation Z (Zoomers), focuses on how lecturers emphasize the application of a growth mindset approach in the process of developing lesson planning devices. With their unique characteristics, Generation Z students have the potential to cultivate a positive attitude toward learning and instructional planning, which can significantly influence the quality of their teaching in the future (Md Khalid et al., 2023) (Helaluddin et al., 2023). In this section, the results of the qualitative research will be presented and analyzed.

1. Research Findings

a. Implementation of Growth Mindset

Most students 21 out of 24 (87.5%) reported that they understood the concept of a growth mindset. They stated that applying a growth mindset helped them throughout the learning process and in preparing instructional planning documents. Interviews revealed that students felt more confident in implementing this approach when designing the *Rencana Pekan Efektif (RPE)*, *Program Tahunan (PROTA)*, *Program Semester (PROSEM)*, *Tujuan Pembelajaran (TP)*, *Alur Tujuan Pembelajaran (ATP)*, and *Modul Ajar*, as well as in developing learning outcomes and instructional modules.

Students who adopted a growth mindset demonstrated increased confidence in preparing their learning plans. This finding aligns with Dweck (2006), who explains that individuals with a growth mindset are more likely to take risks and explore new strategies (Deimeke et al., n.d.). This was evident as the students were willing to adjust their learning strategies based on reflective feedback

b. Indicator Growth Mindset

In developing students' thinking skills in the Learning Planning course, growth mindset indicators have a very important role, including:

1) Belief in Malleable Intelligence

Based on the interview results, it was evident that students held a strong belief that their ability to develop instructional planning materials could be improved through practice and experience. One respondent stated, "At first, I found it difficult to understand how to create the ATP and teaching modules, but after several attempts and guidance from my lecturer, I began to understand better and felt that my ability had improved."

This finding indicates that students possess a belief in malleable intelligence, namely the conviction that intelligence and ability are not fixed traits but can be developed through effort and appropriate strategies. This belief serves as an essential foundation for the implementation of a growth mindset, as it encourages students to continuously learn and adapt when facing academic challenges.

2) *Persistence and Resilience*

The research findings indicate that students demonstrate a high level of persistence in facing challenges throughout the learning process and the preparation of instructional planning documents. This persistence is reflected in their commitment to completing each stage of design starting from the *Rencana Pekan Efektif (RPE)*, *Program Tahunan (PROTA)*, *Program Semester (PROSEM)*, to the *Modul Ajar* despite encountering various difficulties and suboptimal results.

Meanwhile, the aspect of resilience is evident in the students' ability to maintain motivation and adapt when confronted with changes or failures. They exhibit a proactive attitude in correcting mistakes, show openness to constructive feedback, and use it as a means of self-improvement. Such behavior reflects a strong fighting spirit, as the students are able to recover and find alternative solutions when facing obstacles.

3) *Emphasis on effort*

The students demonstrated a strong ability to adapt to various learning methods. Interview results revealed that they were not afraid to modify their plans when the outcomes did not meet expectations. One respondent stated, "*If something goes wrong, I will find another way to make it better, guided by the motivation and discipline of our lecturer.*"

This tendency to innovate in developing instructional plans reflects one of the key advantages of having a growth mindset. Students who believe that their abilities can be improved tend to be more creative in finding new solutions. They utilized diverse technologies and instructional strategies in designing the *Rencana Pekan Efektif (RPE)*, *Program Tahunan (PROTA)*, *Program Semester (PROSEM)*, *Tujuan Pembelajaran (TP)*, *Alur Tujuan Pembelajaran (ATP)*, and *Modul Ajar*, as well as in developing learning outcomes and teaching modules that are not only informative but also engaging for students.

4) *Openness to feedback*

Openness to feedback was also clearly evident among the students. They tended to seek constructive criticism from lecturers and peers to improve their instructional planning documents. A total of 19 students, or approximately 79.2% of respondents, stated that they valued feedback as an essential part of the learning process.

The students' openness to feedback indicates a high level of resilience. They perceived criticism as an opportunity for growth rather than as a negative judgment. This attitude is crucial in the educational context, where feedback serves as an important tool for enhancing the quality of learning.

5) *Positive Attitude toward Learning.*

In developing instructional planning documents, Generation Z students demonstrated a high level of creativity. They experimented with various innovative approaches in designing the *Rencana Pekan Efektif (RPE)*, *Program Tahunan (PROTA)*, *Program Semester (PROSEM)*, and *Modul Ajar*, as well as in developing learning outcomes and teaching

modules. Their creativity was also reflected in the use of technology and active learning methods.

One interview participant stated, *"I enjoy using big books when designing and preparing the RPE, PROTA, PROSEM, and teaching modules because it helps me better understand the process and gain direct experience in creating them, making it easier to remember in the long term."*

6) Reflective Thinking

The process of self-reflection became an essential part of the students' learning experience. They recognized that making mistakes is a natural part of the process and used those experiences to improve their instructional plans. The analysis revealed that 79.2% of respondents engaged in reflection after completing their planning tasks.

The students' reflective practices demonstrated their ability to learn from experience. By accepting mistakes as an integral part of learning, they were able to make necessary improvements in designing and developing the *Rencana Pekan Efektif (RPE)*, *Program Tahunan (PROTA)*, *Program Semester (PROSEM)*, and *Modul Ajar*, as well as in refining learning outcomes and teaching modules. This indicates that the adoption of a growth mindset facilitates deeper and more meaningful learning.

7) Valuing Challenge

Students demonstrated the ability to value challenges in the process of developing instructional planning documents. Based on the interview results, several students expressed that the difficulties encountered in aligning lesson designs with students' needs actually motivated them to explore new approaches. One respondent stated, *"When it's difficult, I become even more motivated, because that's when I realize what needs to be improved and retried to achieve better results."*

This finding indicates that students do not avoid challenges; instead, they view them as opportunities for growth and as a means to deepen their understanding of instructional planning concepts.

2. Challenges in Exploring the Growth Mindset

Although the research findings highlight many positive aspects, several challenges were also identified among students in adopting a growth mindset (Namaskar, 2024) (Rikroses, 2023).

a. Limited Resources

Students reported experiencing limitations in resources, such as inadequate learning materials or insufficient access to appropriate tools in the field. These constraints sometimes hindered their ability to fully apply the principles of a growth mindset in developing instructional planning documents.

b. Pressure to Succeed

The pressure to achieve high academic results also emerged as a barrier. Some students expressed feelings of anxiety about producing perfect instructional plans, which made them afraid to make mistakes. This finding suggests the need for additional support from lecturers and a more positive learning environment to reduce performance pressure.

c. Lack of Knowledge of Innovative Methods

Several students admitted that they were not yet familiar with innovative teaching methods that could be integrated into lesson planning. Consequently, they require further training and access to relevant resources to enhance their competence in applying creative and effective instructional strategies.

3. Implications for Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Teacher Education

This study provides several important implications for the development of teacher education programs, particularly in the context of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (Islamic elementary school) teacher preparation.

a. Integration of Growth Mindset into the Curriculum

Teacher education programs at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah should integrate the development of a growth mindset as part of the educational transformation movement toward *Deep Learning*. A deeper understanding that focuses on the application of growth mindset principles in lesson planning can better prepare pre-service teachers to face challenges in real classroom settings (Bergado et al., 2025).

b. Fostering a Positive Learning Environment

It is essential to create a supportive learning environment where students feel safe to share ideas, receive feedback, and learn from mistakes. Lecturers can act as facilitators who encourage students to explore their creativity and innovative potential (Kattoum & Baillie, 2025).

The findings revealed that most students possess a relatively good understanding of the growth mindset concept. They recognize that abilities can be developed through effort, practice, and persistence. Some students admitted to experiencing failures in designing instructional plans but viewed those experiences as opportunities for learning and improvement.

In terms of its impact, students who applied growth mindset principles tended to be more willing to experiment with new approaches in developing instructional plans. They actively sought feedback from lecturers and peers and were open to making revisions based on that feedback. Conversely, students with a limited understanding of growth mindset tended to give up more easily when encountering difficulties.

However, challenges were also identified. Some students reported facing academic pressure and a lack of environmental support in developing a growth mindset (Chen et al., 2023). They felt that the campus culture often emphasized final results rather than the learning process, which hindered the cultivation of a growth-oriented attitude.

Strategies for growth mindset development, Students who successfully adopted a growth mindset employed several strategies, such as effective time management, collaboration with peers, and seeking additional learning resources. They also participated actively in class discussions to enhance their understanding and skills in instructional planning.

Students' understanding of the growth mindset plays a crucial role in improving their ability to design instructional plans. Those who embrace a growth mindset are not only more capable of overcoming challenges but also more open to constructive feedback (Ramadhona et al., 2024) This aligns with the theory that individuals with a growth mindset tend to view failure as a natural part of the learning process, making them more resilient in facing obstacles (Ramadhona et al., 2024).

Nevertheless, the academic pressure and results-oriented culture faced by students highlight the need for stronger institutional support. Efforts to foster an environment that encourages growth mindset development such as mentoring programs, training, and workshops are essential to help students overcome these barriers.

Moreover, integrating the principles of a growth mindset into courses on lesson planning for Madrasah Ibtidaiyah or elementary education can enhance students' awareness of the importance of believing that intelligence can be developed through sufficient effort, viewing challenges as opportunities for growth, understanding failure as part of learning and reflection, valuing effort as

the path to success, maintaining openness to feedback and constructive criticism, and using others' success as a source of inspiration and motivation.

With strong support from lecturers and a positive learning environment, students are expected to become more motivated to improve their instructional planning skills. Overall, this study emphasizes that fostering a growth mindset benefits not only individuals but also contributes to improving the overall quality of education in higher institutions.

Future research is recommended to explore specific interventions that can be implemented to facilitate the development of a growth mindset among university students.

D. CONCLUSION

An exploration of growth mindset among third-semester students aged 18–22 who belong to Generation Z reveals that they have been able to internalize a developing mindset when designing and developing learning-planning documents. Growing up in a fully digital environment makes Generation Z highly familiar with technology and various modern learning resources. Their habit of independently searching for information further strengthens the development of a growth mindset, as they tend to adapt more easily to challenges and changes in their learning processes. These students also understand that intelligence and skills are not fixed traits, but can be continuously improved through effort, experience, and consistent practice. This understanding motivates them to innovate when designing instructional planning tools.

The findings demonstrate several key indicators of growth mindset among the students, including: (1) a positive attitude toward challenges, where obstacles are viewed as opportunities to improve the quality of learning-planning documents; (2) the ability to reflect on previous weaknesses or failures; (3) a strong commitment to sustained effort and consistent work; (4) openness to receiving feedback from lecturers and peers; and (5) a tendency to view others' success as inspiration to enhance their own abilities. Overall, these results highlight the significant role of growth mindset in helping Generation Z students develop their competence in designing instructional materials that are relevant and professionally structured.

Furthermore, this study opens opportunities for future research. Specifically, Future studies can further explore how the implementation of a growth mindset can be more effectively integrated into the process of developing lesson planning documents for prospective MI/SD teachers. This integration may be supported through the use of learning media that are engaging, interactive, and aligned with the characteristics of today's digital-native learners. Various media such as educational videos, digital learning platforms, simulations, and gamification-based tools have the potential to help students apply growth mindset principles in a more concrete and meaningful way throughout the learning process.

In addition, further research is needed to examine more deeply the processes, experiences, and dynamics that students undergo when applying a growth mindset through these creative media. The focus is not only on the final product but also on understanding how such implementation contributes to improving the quality of the lesson planning documents they produce.

In conclusion, enhancing growth mindset in combination with engaging learning media that align with the characteristics of Generation Z is expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how a developing mindset can be optimized to prepare future educators who are creative, adaptive, and competent in meeting the demands of the Kurikulum Merdeka and the advancement of Education 5.0.

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