

Curriculum Management in *Pesantren*-Based Excellence Schools for Achieving School Effectiveness: A Study of SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT (*Badan Pengkajian dan Penerapan Teknologi*) Jombang

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Abstract

This study examines curriculum management in *pesantren*-based excellence schools and its contribution to school effectiveness. It aims to analyze how curriculum planning, implementation, and evaluation are managed integratively within the educational ecosystem of SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT Jombang. The research employs a qualitative case study approach. Data were collected through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis involving school leaders, teachers, dormitory mentors, and curriculum administrators. Data analysis used an interactive model consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, while validity was ensured through source and technique triangulation. The findings show that curriculum management operates through three interconnected processes: purpose-driven curriculum planning, integrated implementation within the boarding school ecosystem, and multidimensional evaluation through the PPEPP quality assurance cycle. Curriculum planning combines the national curriculum, *pesantren* curriculum, and flagship programs, including Qur'anic memorization, scientific research mentoring, and academic achievement coaching. Curriculum implementation extends beyond classroom instruction by integrating learning, dormitory mentoring, and religious routines that function as a hidden curriculum shaping students' discipline and moral commitment. Curriculum evaluation is conducted continuously through the monitoring of academic achievement, religious competence, and character development. Based on these findings, the study proposes the *Pesantren*-Based Integrated Curriculum Effectiveness Model (PICEM), which explains that school effectiveness emerges from the synergy between integrated planning, *pesantren* culture, boarding school learning, and continuous quality assurance.

Keywords: Curriculum Management, *Pesantren*-Based School, School Effectiveness, Hidden Curriculum, Quality Assurance.

INTRODUCTION

The discourse on school effectiveness in educational management studies has developed alongside growing global attention to the quality of educational institutions (Hasbi et al., 2025; Kanji et al., 1999; Manatos et al., 2017; Suriyati et al., 2023; Tarif & Dick, 2016). An international analysis of more than 6,800 schools across 28 countries shows that the average school efficiency level is around 70%, indicating that student learning outcomes could theoretically increase by up to 30% if school management were implemented more effectively (Agasisti & Zoido, 2019). This finding suggests that differences in learning outcomes between

schools are not determined solely by external factors, but also by the quality of internal institutional management. Moreover, cross-national studies analyzing data from more than 248,000 students in 35 OECD countries also confirm that practices and policies implemented at the school level significantly influence students' academic achievement and learning well-being (Govorova et al., 2020).

Within this context, the discourse on school effectiveness positions the curriculum as a central element in determining the quality of educational processes and outcomes (Prehanto et al., 2025). Some educational scholars emphasize that school success is primarily determined by institutional leadership and the effective management of educational resources (Fanani & Sulaeman, 2025; Schubert, 2025; Taylor & Richards, 2018). Meanwhile, another perspective argues that school effectiveness is more strongly determined by the quality of curriculum management that is capable of integrating educational goals, learning processes, and evaluation systems in a sustainable manner (Hotchkiss, 2026; Schubert, 2025; Wawire et al., 2025). This debate becomes more complex in the context of Islamic educational institutions, particularly *pesantren*-based schools, which carry not only academic educational functions but also responsibilities for religious character formation and the cultivation of *santri* culture (Musfah et al., 2020).

In recent decades, studies on curriculum management in Islamic educational institutions have shown significant development (Ali & Dian, 2024). Several studies indicate that the integration of the national curriculum with the *pesantren* curriculum can improve the quality of learning while simultaneously strengthening students' character formation (Humaisi et al., 2022; Thoyib, 2022). This educational model is increasingly evident in the emergence of *pesantren*-based excellence schools that successfully integrate modern educational systems with *pesantren* scholarly traditions. Several institutions frequently cited as references in the development of *pesantren*-based education include *SMA Unggulan Berbasis pesantren Amanatul Ummah Mojokerto* (Zakariyah, 2024), *SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT (Badan Pengkajian dan Penerapan Teknologi)* Jombang (Zainal et al., 2022), *SMA Trensains Tebuireng Jombang* (Hakim et al., 2025), and *MA Unggulan Nurul Jadid Probolinggo* (Setyo et al., 2021). These institutions are recognized for developing boarding school systems that integrate the national curriculum, the *pesantren* curriculum, and various academic and religious flagship programs, resulting in students' achievements at both national and international levels.

However, most previous studies still tend to examine curriculum management in a partial manner, for example focusing only on planning (Hidayati et al., 2025), implementation (Zakaria et al., 2025), or curriculum evaluation (Rodliyah et al., 2024). Research that comprehensively examines the entire cycle of curriculum management and directly links it to the concept of effective schools remains relatively limited, particularly in the context of *pesantren*-based excellence schools. In addition, many studies still focus on general educational institutions or *madrasah* so the study of curriculum management practices in *pesantren*-based excellence senior high schools has not yet been extensively explored (Ismail et al., 2021; Taj et al., 2024).

These limitations indicate the existence of a research gap in Islamic education management studies, particularly regarding how integrated curriculum management can contribute to the realization of effective schools within *pesantren* environments (Ansori, 2020; Huriyah et al., 2025; Sadiyah, 2022). *Pesantren*-based excellence schools face more complex challenges compared to general schools because they must integrate the national curriculum, the *pesantren* curriculum, and flagship programs that support the simultaneous development of students' academic competence and character (Abidin, 2020; Mawardi & Ruhayah, 2022; Rofiq et al., 2020). Therefore, empirical studies are needed to explain how the processes of curriculum planning, implementation, and evaluation are managed in an integrated manner within the context of *pesantren*-based schools.

SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT (Badan Pengkajian dan Penerapan Teknologi) is one of the excellence senior high schools operating under the Darul Ulum Islamic Boarding School in Rejoso, Jombang, and implements a boarding school-based educational system. The school integrates several curriculum systems simultaneously, including the national curriculum, the *pesantren* curriculum, and the Cambridge international curriculum, which are designed to produce graduates with global academic competence as well as strong religious character. This multilayer curriculum integration has become one of the institution's strategic approaches to improving educational quality and strengthening graduates' competitiveness at both national and international levels (Ghifari et al., 2025; Hakim & Winarto, 2025; Indana, 2018; Mubarak, 2025).

Based on this context, this study offers a novelty in the form of a comprehensive analysis of curriculum management in *pesantren*-based excellence schools from the perspective of school effectiveness. The research does not merely examine a single aspect of curriculum management but analyzes the entire curriculum management cycle, including planning, implementation, and evaluation within the context of *pesantren*-based schools. By taking a case study of *SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT (Badan Pengkajian dan Penerapan Teknologi) jombang*, this research is expected to contribute theoretically to the development of Islamic education management studies while also proposing a conceptual model of adaptive, integrative, and contextual curriculum management in realizing effective schools within *pesantren* environments.

METHOD

Research Design and Context

This study employed a qualitative case study design to obtain an in depth understanding of curriculum management practices in a *pesantren*-based excellence school within its real institutional context (Creswell, 1999; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Miles, 1990; cf. Moser & Korstjens, 2017; Lim, 2024). The research was conducted at *SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT Jombang*, which operates under the Darul Ulum Islamic Boarding School in Rejoso, Jombang, and implements a boarding school-based educational system that integrates the national curriculum, the *pesantren* curriculum, and the Cambridge international curriculum.

Participants and Sampling

The unit of analysis in this research is curriculum management practices, which include curriculum planning, implementation, and evaluation as a continuous cycle of educational management in realizing an effective school. The research involved twelve informants consisting of the school principal, vice principal for curriculum affairs, coordinator of flagship programs, subject teachers, *diniyah* teachers or *pesantren* mentors, dormitory administrators, and curriculum staff. These participants were selected using purposive sampling based on their direct involvement in curriculum management (Gubrium & Holstein, 2002; Malterud et al., 2016; Campbell et al., 2020; Nyimbili & Nyimbili, 2024)

Data Collection

Data were collected through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis (Ezzy, 2013). Observations were conducted over a two-month period with approximately one hundred and twenty hours of observation covering classroom learning activities, school academic programs, *pesantren* activities in the dormitory, and the implementation of flagship programs such as Qur'anic memorization (tahfidz) and academic achievement coaching. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with all informants, with an average duration of sixty to ninety minutes, to explore the processes of curriculum planning, implementation, and evaluation (Ciesielska et al., 2018). The data were further supported by the analysis of

fifteen institutional documents, including the school's vision and mission documents, school and *pesantren* curriculum documents, curriculum structure, curriculum work programs, syllabi and lesson plans, flagship program documents, curriculum evaluation reports, and records of student achievements. Data analysis followed the interactive model of Miles and Huberman (Huberman & Miles, 2002), which consists of data reduction, data display, and iterative conclusion drawing. Ensuring trustworthiness through data/source triangulation, method triangulation, and member checking with informants, which address credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Kakar et al., 2023; Ahmed, 2024; Zainal Abidin et al., 2024; Harrison, 2019).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results

The findings indicate that curriculum management at *SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT Jombang* is implemented through three interconnected processes: curriculum planning, curriculum implementation, and curriculum evaluation. This managerial cycle reflects the fundamental structure of curriculum management in educational institutions, which emphasizes systematic planning, effective implementation, and continuous evaluation as essential components of educational quality improvement (Hariyono et al., 2025; Ornstein & Hunkins, 2017).

In the planning stage, the curriculum is designed through a purpose-driven approach aligned with the institutional vision emphasizing academic excellence and religious character formation. Such an approach is consistent with the concept of strategic curriculum planning, which requires educational institutions to align curriculum design with institutional goals and graduate competencies (Scheerens, 2016). Curriculum planning at the school is conducted based on institutional needs analysis and the boarding school context, reflecting the adaptive nature of curriculum development in *pesantren*-based educational environments (Ansori, 2020).

This planning process results in a multilayer curriculum structure that integrates the national curriculum, the *pesantren* curriculum, and several flagship academic programs. The integration of these curriculum layers reflects a hybrid educational model that combines formal academic learning with Islamic religious education, which has been widely recognized as a distinctive feature of *pesantren*-based schooling systems (Sadiyah, 2022). These flagship programs include Qur'anic memorization, scientific research development, and academic achievement coaching, which function as strategic instruments for enhancing students' intellectual and religious competencies simultaneously (Thoyib, 2022). Institutional document analysis further indicates that the curriculum documents function as a dynamic reference guiding educational practices and institutional development within the school. Rather than serving merely as administrative records, these documents operate as "living documents" that continuously inform teaching practices, program implementation, and institutional quality improvement processes.

The findings reveal that curriculum management at *SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT Jombang* operates as an integrated managerial system linking curriculum planning, curriculum implementation, and curriculum evaluation within the broader ecosystem of *pesantren*-based education. Institutional curriculum documents indicate that the school organizes its educational programs through a structured management cycle integrating strategic planning, instructional implementation, and evaluation mechanisms embedded within the boarding school environment (Curriculum Document of SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT Jombang, 2023).

Qualitative analysis of interviews, field observations, and institutional documents further demonstrates that curriculum management in this institution functions not merely as an administrative

mechanism but as a strategic framework guiding institutional development. Observational data collected during classroom learning activities and dormitory mentoring sessions show that curriculum implementation extends beyond formal instructional settings and is reinforced through religious routines, structured mentoring, and academic coaching programs embedded within the *pesantren* system (Field Observation at SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT Jombang, 2024). These integrated practices indicate that curriculum management plays a central role in shaping the institutional trajectory of *SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT Jombang* toward becoming an effective school characterized by the integration of academic excellence and religious character formation (Interview with Vice Principal for Curriculum, SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT Jombang, 2024)

Through thematic analysis of the qualitative data, several conceptual patterns emerge that explain how the curriculum system operates within the *pesantren* educational environment. These patterns are identified through coding of interview narratives, observational records, and curriculum documents. The analysis reveals three central thematic categories that characterize curriculum management practices in the school: purpose-driven planning, integrated learning ecosystem, and hidden curriculum of *pesantren* culture. These themes demonstrate that curriculum management in the institution operates as a systemic process connecting institutional vision, educational practice, and organizational culture.

Table 1. Thematic Coding of Curriculum Management Practices

Data Source	Initial Codes	Thematic Category	Interpretation
Interview with school leaders	Vision alignment, graduate profile, flagship programs	Purpose-driven planning	Curriculum planning is guided by institutional vision and strategic goals
Curriculum documents	Integration of national curriculum, <i>pesantren</i> curriculum, research programs	Multilayer curriculum design	Curriculum structured as integrated academic-religious system
Classroom observation	Academic learning, research mentoring, structured study hours	Integrated learning ecosystem	Learning occurs both inside and outside classroom
Dormitory observation	Religious routines, discipline formation, collective learning	Hidden curriculum	<i>Pesantren</i> culture shapes moral and behavioral development
Evaluation reports	PPEPP cycle, academic monitoring, character assessment	Continuous quality assurance	Evaluation ensures institutional improvement

The thematic categories indicate that curriculum management in the institution reflects a deliberate institutional strategy aimed at aligning academic development with Islamic character formation.

The theme of purpose-driven planning appears prominently in the data obtained from interviews with school leaders and analysis of institutional curriculum documents. Curriculum planning at *SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT Jombang* is strongly anchored in the institutional vision of producing graduates who excel academically while maintaining strong Islamic character. Rather than merely following national curriculum requirements, the institution formulates curriculum strategies that integrate national standards with *pesantren* educational traditions (School Curriculum Development Document of SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT Jombang, 2023).

An interview with the vice principal for curriculum confirms this strategic orientation. He explained that curriculum planning always begins with the institutional vision and aims to integrate academic excellence with Islamic character development:

“Curriculum planning in this school always begins with the institutional vision. We do not simply follow the national curriculum; instead, we integrate it with the *pesantren* curriculum and flagship programs such as Qur’anic memorization and scientific research so that students can develop both academic excellence and strong Islamic character (Interview with Vice Principal for Curriculum, SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT Jombang, 2024).”

This statement indicates that curriculum planning in the institution functions not only as a technical administrative process but also as a strategic instrument guiding the integration of academic learning and religious character formation within the boarding school educational environment.

Document analysis further shows that the curriculum is structured through a multilayer integration combining the national curriculum, *pesantren* learning programs, and several flagship academic initiatives such as Qur’anic memorization, research mentoring, and academic competition preparation. This structure allows the institution to simultaneously maintain academic competitiveness and religious formation. Field observations indicate that these flagship programs are embedded within the formal academic structure rather than functioning as supplementary extracurricular activities. Consequently, curriculum planning functions as the institutional foundation guiding both educational practice and long-term institutional development.

Another significant theme emerging from the analysis is the integrated learning ecosystem. The implementation of the curriculum occurs within an educational environment that combines classroom instruction with the daily life of students in the boarding school system. Learning activities therefore take place across multiple institutional spaces, including classrooms, dormitories, religious study sessions, and structured mentoring programs.

Observational data reveal that students follow a structured daily schedule integrating academic learning, Qur’anic recitation sessions, religious instruction, and supervised study periods. Field observations conducted during classroom instruction and evening study activities indicate that students participate in a continuous cycle of academic and religious learning activities within the boarding school environment (Field Observation at SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT Jombang, 2024). Institutional program documents also show that the school organizes daily learning activities through a coordinated schedule combining classroom instruction, Qur’anic memorization sessions, and guided dormitory study hours (Student Development and Boarding Program Document, SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT Jombang, 2023).

Teachers, dormitory mentors, and school administrators collaborate closely in implementing the curriculum, ensuring continuity between formal academic learning and character education. This collaborative structure is also highlighted in interview data with teaching staff, which emphasize the importance of integrating classroom learning with the educational processes taking place in the dormitory environment.

This integrated structure is emphasized in an interview with a senior teacher, who explained the role of the dormitory environment in reinforcing students’ character formation:

“Classroom learning is only one part of the educational process. In the dormitory, students continue to be guided by *pesantren* mentors so that values such as discipline, responsibility, and proper conduct are internalized in their daily lives.” (Interview with Senior Teacher, SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT Jombang, 2024).

The boarding school environment therefore functions as an extension of the classroom, allowing learning processes to continue beyond formal instructional hours. The integration between academic

instruction and *pesantren* life creates a continuous learning ecosystem that supports both intellectual development and moral formation (Field Observation, SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT Jombang, 2024).

A third important theme identified in the analysis is the hidden curriculum of *pesantren* culture. Observational data demonstrate that everyday cultural practices within the *pesantren* environment play a crucial role in shaping students' behavior, discipline, and learning attitudes. Regular activities such as congregational prayers, Qur'anic recitation sessions, and moral guidance programs are systematically implemented as part of the students' daily routine within the boarding school system (Field Observation at SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT Jombang, 2024). Institutional documents related to student development and boarding programs also indicate that these religious activities are intentionally structured to reinforce Islamic values and moral discipline among students (Student Development and Boarding Program Document, SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT Jombang, 2023).

Although these activities are not formally categorized as academic instruction, they function as informal educational mechanisms that reinforce character formation. Interviews with dormitory mentors further highlight the role of *pesantren* culture in shaping students' moral orientation and discipline. One dormitory mentor explained:

“*Pesantren* culture naturally shapes students' character. Discipline, responsibility, and proper conduct grow through daily habits.” (Interview with Dormitory Mentor, SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT Jombang, 2024).

These findings suggest that the hidden curriculum embedded within *pesantren* culture strengthens the formal curriculum by creating an educational environment where ethical values are internalized through daily practice. Continuous interaction between religious routines, communal discipline, and supervised student life allows values such as responsibility, respect, and self-discipline to become part of students' lived educational experience (Field Observation at SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT Jombang, 2024). This cultural dimension therefore contributes significantly to the development of students' learning ethos and moral commitment.

Curriculum evaluation constitutes another critical component of the institutional management system. The evaluation framework applied by *SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT Jombang* reflects a multidimensional approach that includes context evaluation, input and process evaluation, and product evaluation. Institutional evaluation documents indicate that the school conducts systematic assessments not only of students' academic achievement but also of their religious competence and character development as part of the overall educational objectives (Curriculum Evaluation Report of SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT Jombang, 2023).

Field observations of academic evaluation meetings and student assessment activities further show that curriculum evaluation is implemented through periodic monitoring of learning outcomes, religious activities, and student discipline within the boarding school environment (Field Observation at SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT Jombang, 2024). These evaluation activities are conducted collaboratively by school leaders, teachers, and *pesantren* mentors to ensure that both academic and character education outcomes are achieved. A school leader described the evaluation system as an integral part of institutional quality assurance:

“Curriculum evaluation does not only examine students' academic scores, but also their character development and religious commitment. The results of this evaluation are then discussed in management meetings to determine program improvements for the following semester.” (Interview with School Principal, SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT Jombang, 2024).

Document analysis further confirms that the evaluation system follows the PPEPP cycle; planning, implementation, evaluation, control, and improvement; which functions as a continuous quality assurance

mechanism within the institution. This cycle enables the school to systematically monitor curriculum implementation and refine educational programs in response to evaluation outcomes (Quality Assurance and Institutional Evaluation Document, SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT Jombang, 2023).

The interaction between curriculum planning, integrated implementation, and systematic evaluation contributes to the institutional development of *SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT Jombang* as an effective school. Institutional effectiveness is reflected in the school's ability to sustain academic excellence while simultaneously fostering strong religious character among students.

Table 2. Institutional Development Toward Effective School Characteristics

Development Stage		Institutional Strategy		Outcome	
Curriculum Integration		Integration of national and <i>pesantren</i> curricula		Balanced academic and religious education	
Academic Programs	Excellence	Research mentoring, coaching	Olympic	High academic achievements	
Boarding Ecosystem	School	Integration of school and dormitory learning		Continuous learning environment	
Character Formation		Religious routines and moral discipline		Strong student character	
Quality Assurance System		PPEPP evaluation cycle		Continuous improvement	institutional

The institutional development process of *SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT Jombang* can be understood as a gradual transformation driven by the integration of curriculum planning, ecosystem-based implementation, and cultural value internalization. These elements collectively form a systemic framework that supports the realization of an effective school.

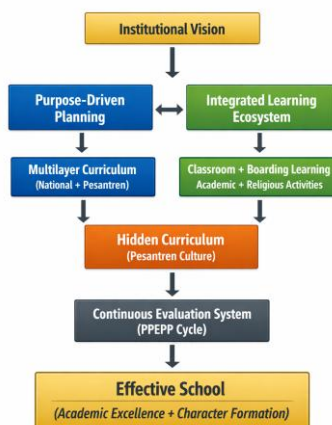


Figure 1. Institutional Development Model of SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT Jombang

The triangulation of interview data, observations, and document analysis indicates that the effectiveness of *SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT (Badan Pengkajian dan Penerapan Teknologi) Jombang* is rooted in its capacity to synchronize strategic curriculum planning, integrated educational practices, and *pesantren* cultural values within a unified institutional framework. Through this integration, curriculum management evolves beyond a technical administrative function and becomes a holistic system that simultaneously supports academic achievement, character formation, and sustainable institutional development.

Discussion

The findings of this study lead to the formulation of a conceptual framework referred to as the *pesantren*-Based Integrated Curriculum Effectiveness Model (PICEM). This model explains how curriculum effectiveness in *pesantren*-based excellence schools emerges from the interaction between strategic curriculum planning, an integrated boarding school ecosystem, institutional cultural values, and continuous quality assurance mechanisms. While conventional curriculum management frameworks typically emphasize curriculum planning, instructional implementation, and evaluation as technical managerial processes (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2017; Taylor & Richards, 2018), the findings of this study demonstrate that in *pesantren*-based schools these processes operate within a broader socio-cultural educational ecosystem.

At the first level, purpose-driven curriculum planning functions as the strategic foundation of the educational system. In this model, curriculum planning does not merely involve organizing learning objectives and subject content but also translating institutional vision into operational educational programs. This strategic alignment between curriculum design and institutional goals reflects the importance of curriculum management as a governance instrument for educational quality improvement (Hariyono et al., 2025). Earlier studies on *pesantren* curriculum management emphasize the structural integration between national and religious curricula (Ansori, 2020; Musfah et al., 2020), yet they often treat curriculum planning primarily as an administrative process. The findings of the present study extend this perspective by demonstrating that curriculum planning in *pesantren*-based excellence schools' functions as a strategic mechanism for institutional development and graduate quality formation (Ali & Dian, 2024; Rodliyah et al., 2024).

The second component of the model is the integrated boarding school ecosystem, which represents the operational environment where curriculum implementation occurs. The boarding school system creates a continuous learning environment in which academic instruction, religious practice, and character formation occur simultaneously. This finding confirms earlier research indicating that *pesantren*-based educational institutions possess a unique institutional structure that enables holistic student development (Humaisi et al., 2022; Zainal et al., 2022). However, the present study further shows that the effectiveness of this system depends on how the boarding environment functions as an integrated learning ecosystem connecting classroom instruction, dormitory mentoring, and communal religious practices. Such integration supports the argument that institutional culture and collaborative leadership structures play a crucial role in shaping school effectiveness (Ismail et al., 2021; Scheerens, 2016).

The third component of PICEM is the hidden curriculum of *pesantren* culture. The findings indicate that cultural practices embedded within *pesantren* life, such as congregational prayers, Qur'anic recitation sessions, and communal discipline, serve as powerful pedagogical mechanisms shaping students' attitudes and moral commitment. This observation supports previous research emphasizing the role of cultural values and religious traditions in character education (Setyo et al., 2021; Mawardi & Ruhayah, 2022). Nevertheless, this study extends earlier perspectives by demonstrating that *pesantren* culture functions not only as a moral environment but also as a structured pedagogical infrastructure reinforcing the formal curriculum. This interpretation resonates with the concept of "public pedagogy" and "outside curriculum" proposed by Schubert (2025), where educational values are transmitted through social practices beyond formal classroom instruction.

The fourth component of the model is continuous quality assurance through the PPEPP cycle, planning, implementation, evaluation, control, and improvement. In PICEM, curriculum evaluation functions as an adaptive feedback system ensuring institutional learning and continuous improvement. Earlier research on quality management in education highlights the importance of systematic evaluation processes for improving institutional effectiveness (Kanji et al., 1999; Tarí & Dick, 2016; Manatos et al., 2017). In Islamic educational institutions, integrated quality management systems have also been shown to support the

development of educational quality and institutional sustainability (Suriyati et al., 2023; Hasbi et al., 2025). The findings of this study indicate that the PPEPP cycle adopted by *SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT Jombang* operates as a reflective institutional process that allows educators to continuously refine curriculum implementation while maintaining alignment with *pesantren* values (Thoyib, 2022).

Taken together, these four components form an interconnected system explaining how curriculum effectiveness is achieved in *pesantren*-based excellence schools. The PICEM model therefore suggests that educational effectiveness in *pesantren* institutions is not determined solely by instructional quality or academic outcomes. Instead, it emerges from the synergy between strategic curriculum planning, holistic learning environments, cultural value internalization, and adaptive quality assurance mechanisms.

From a theoretical perspective, the PICEM model contributes to the literature on curriculum management and educational effectiveness by introducing a culturally embedded framework for understanding how Islamic boarding schools achieve educational excellence. Previous research on *pesantren* modernization often highlights the need to adapt traditional institutions to contemporary educational challenges (Abidin, 2020; Hakim et al., 2025). The present model suggests that such modernization does not necessarily require abandoning traditional educational values. Instead, educational transformation can occur through adaptive curriculum management that integrates modern quality management principles with *pesantren* cultural traditions.



Figure 2. Conceptual Framework of PICEM

Furthermore, the PICEM framework expands discussions on school effectiveness by demonstrating that cultural and religious environments can function as integral components of institutional educational systems. This insight complements global discussions on school effectiveness and student well-being, which emphasize the role of supportive school environments in shaping learning outcomes (Govorova et al., 2020). By integrating institutional culture, strategic management, and curriculum governance into a single framework, the PICEM model provides a conceptual bridge between curriculum management theory, effective school theory, and *pesantren* educational traditions.

Consequently, the model offers a new analytical perspective for understanding how Islamic educational institutions can achieve academic excellence while preserving their cultural and religious identity. Future research on Islamic education may therefore benefit from examining how institutional leadership, curriculum governance, and cultural traditions interact to produce sustainable educational effectiveness in *pesantren*-based schools.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that curriculum management at *SMA Darul Ulum 2 Unggulan BPPT (Badan Pengkajian dan Penerapan Teknologi) Jombang* functions as a strategic mechanism for achieving an effective *pesantren*-based school through the integration of three interconnected stages: curriculum planning, curriculum implementation, and curriculum evaluation. In the planning stage, the curriculum is developed through a purpose-driven planning approach aligned with the institutional vision of producing graduates who are academically excellent while maintaining strong Islamic character. This planning process results in a multilayer curriculum structure integrating the national curriculum, the *pesantren* curriculum, and several flagship programs such as Qur'anic memorization, scientific research mentoring, and academic achievement coaching. In the implementation stage, the boarding school system creates an integrated learning ecosystem where educational processes extend beyond classroom instruction into students' daily lives in the dormitory. Within this environment, *pesantren* culture operates as a hidden curriculum that reinforces discipline, responsibility, and ethical learning behavior through continuous religious and communal practices.

At the evaluation stage, curriculum management is conducted through a multidimensional assessment system that evaluates not only students' academic achievement but also their religious competence and character development through the continuous quality assurance cycle known as PPEPP (planning, implementation, evaluation, control, and improvement). Based on these findings, this study proposes the *pesantren*-Based Integrated Curriculum Effectiveness Model (PICEM), which explains that the effectiveness of *pesantren*-based schools emerges from the synergy between purpose-driven curriculum planning, an integrated boarding school ecosystem, the hidden curriculum of *pesantren* culture, and continuous quality assurance. The model suggests that the success of *pesantren*-based excellence schools is not solely determined by instructional quality, but by the integration of curriculum governance, institutional culture, and adaptive quality management in simultaneously fostering academic excellence and students' moral character.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

MZF, M, and MP contributed equally to the conceptualization of the study, research design, data analysis, and manuscript preparation. All authors reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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