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The Role of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) Curriculum Management in Improving the Quality of Islamic Educational Institutions

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Abstract

Curriculum management in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) plays a strategic role in aligning academic achievement with students' religious and moral development. This study examined its contribution to the quality of Islamic educational institutions through four management functions: planning, organization, implementation, and evaluation. A qualitative literature review was conducted, with relevant sources examined and analyzed descriptively to identify relationships between curriculum management functions and educational quality indicators. The synthesis indicated that planning aligned with students' needs and institutional vision establishes clear instructional direction. Effective organization facilitates resource utilization and collaboration among educators, while innovative and contextualized instruction supports student engagement and the understanding and application of Islamic values. Systematic evaluation informs instructional improvement and continuous quality development. Together, these findings emphasize that curriculum management requires coordinated implementation across all four functions. The study contributes a synthesis of their complementary roles and provides a basis for strengthening instructional quality, cultivating students' moral character, and developing adaptive Islamic educational institutions committed to continuous improvement.

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Keywords: Curriculum Management; Islamic Religious Education; Educational Quality; Islamic Educational Institutions; Continuous Quality Improvement

INTRODUCTION

Islamic education plays a strategic role in shaping a generation that possesses not only intellectual competence but also faith, piety, noble character, and the ability to respond to the dynamics of modern life. Amid globalization, digitalization, and increasingly rapid social change, Islamic educational institutions are required to produce graduates who maintain a balance between scientific knowledge, skills, and the practice of Islamic values (Ismail et al., 2026). These challenges have become increasingly complex because educational success cannot be measured solely by academic achievement, but must also be assessed in terms of character development, discipline, responsibility, social awareness, and students' ability to apply religious teachings in their daily lives. In this context, Islamic Religious Education (Pendidikan Agama Islam [PAI]) plays an important role as an instrument for shaping students' personalities through strengthening their understanding of the Qur'an and Hadith, Islamic creed (*aqidah*), moral conduct (*akhlak*), Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), and Islamic cultural history. However, these educational goals cannot be optimally achieved if PAI instruction focuses solely on delivering subject matter and attaining academic scores without systematic planning, implementation, and evaluation. Research (Ningsih et al., 2025) explain that the implementation of PAI under the Merdeka Curriculum provides opportunities for contextualized, creative, and meaningful learning to strengthen students' religious character. Therefore, improving the quality of Islamic educational institutions should be situated within a comprehensive educational management framework, with the curriculum serving as a primary instrument for connecting educational objectives, learning processes, and the expected graduate competencies.

The curriculum is a fundamental component of educational provision because it serves as a guideline for determining learning objectives, organizing subject matter, selecting instructional strategies, allocating instructional time, and establishing student assessment systems. In Islamic educational institutions, the PAI curriculum requires systematic management to ensure that all instructional components operate in an integrated manner and contribute to the achievement of educational objectives. PAI curriculum management involves more than preparing administrative documents, such as academic calendars,

teaching materials, and lesson schedules. It also encompasses the continuous processes of curriculum planning, organizing, implementation, supervision, and evaluation (Siahaan et al., 2023). Such management requires coordination among school or madrasah principals, vice principals responsible for curriculum affairs, PAI teachers, educational staff, students, and parents to ensure that educational activities align with the needs and characteristics of each educational institution. Research (Yusuf et al., 2026) identify curriculum management based on the Plan–Do–Check–Act (PDCA) cycle as an approach to strengthening the systematic organization of learning processes and promoting continuous improvements in educational quality. This approach indicates that curriculum success depends not only on the quality of planning but also on consistent implementation, appropriate evaluation, and follow-up actions to address identified problems.

Changes in national education policy through the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum have further reinforced the need for adaptive, innovative, and student-centered management of the PAI curriculum. The Merdeka Curriculum provides schools and teachers with opportunities to develop more flexible and contextualized learning experiences that accommodate differences in students' abilities, interests, and characteristics. In practice, PAI instruction should be designed not merely to promote the acquisition of religious knowledge but also to encourage the internalization of Islamic values through regular worship practices, exemplary conduct, discussions, religious activities, and student participation in social initiatives. Research (Aulia et al., 2024) highlight the importance of integrating the values of the *Profil Pelajar Pancasila* (Pancasila Student Profile) into PAI and Character Education textbooks, particularly in supporting the development of religious character, noble morals, and harmonious social relationships. Meanwhile, (Muthoharoh, 2024) explains that the Pancasila Student Profile and the *Profil Pelajar Rahmatan lil Alamin* (Rahmatan lil Alamin Student Profile) can be strengthened through intr curricular, extracurricular, co-curricular, and madrasah culture activities. These studies demonstrate that successful character education requires integration among curriculum content, instructional strategies, and the culture of educational institutions. Accordingly, PAI curriculum management must ensure that Islamic values, national identity, tolerance, responsibility, and social awareness are incorporated into both instructional planning and educational practices, while taking into account the policy framework and graduate profiles applicable to each educational institution.

Despite its strategic importance, the implementation of PAI curriculum management continues to face various challenges that may hinder efforts to improve the quality of Islamic educational institutions. These challenges include teachers' limited competence in developing innovative learning experiences, inadequate coordination among educational stakeholders, insufficient facilities and infrastructure, and difficulties in designing assessment instruments capable of measuring students' development in religious knowledge, attitudes, and skills in a balanced manner. Furthermore, discrepancies between curriculum planning and classroom practice may prevent the values articulated in curriculum documents from being fully internalized in students' behavior. Research (Ningsih et al., 2025) also identify challenges in implementing PAI under the Merdeka Curriculum, including low levels of interest among some students and teachers' difficulties in designing projects that align with learning objectives. These findings suggest that curriculum reform must be accompanied by efforts to strengthen teacher capacity, institutional support, and continuous evaluation systems to ensure that instructional innovations extend beyond administrative requirements. Moreover, improving the quality of Islamic educational institutions should be examined through the interrelationship among learning processes, graduate competencies, religious culture, and institutional capacity for continuous improvement. In light of these conditions, this study aims to analyze the role of PAI curriculum management in improving the quality of Islamic educational institutions through four principal management functions: planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach using a literature review method (*library research*) to analyze the role of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum management in improving the quality of Islamic educational institutions. A literature review was selected because the study focuses on examining concepts, theories, and findings from previous research related to the planning, organization, implementation, and evaluation of the PAI curriculum, as well as their contributions to educational quality improvement. The data consist of secondary sources obtained from five key journal articles relevant to Islamic education management, PAI curriculum management, institutional quality improvement strategies, and the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in Islamic schools and madrasahs. The sources were selected purposively based on their thematic suitability,

relevance to the research focus, publisher credibility, and the extent to which their findings corresponded to the objectives of this study. Data were collected through documentation by identifying, reading, recording, and categorizing important information from each article, particularly regarding curriculum management concepts, supporting and inhibiting factors, implementation strategies, and indicators of the quality of Islamic educational institutions. The use of documents as sources of qualitative data enables researchers to examine information systematically and develop an in-depth understanding of the issues under investigation (Bowen, 2009). Accordingly, the collected data were expected to provide an adequate conceptual foundation for explaining the relationship between PAI curriculum management and improvements in the quality of Islamic educational institutions.

Data were analyzed using a descriptive-analytical method through content analysis, which involved identifying, interpreting, and comparing the substance of the articles according to themes relevant to the research focus. The analysis process consisted of three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. During data reduction, information from the five journal articles was selected and focused on PAI curriculum planning, the organization of educational resources, instructional implementation, curriculum evaluation, and their implications for the quality of Islamic educational institutions. Subsequently, the data were presented in a comparative matrix containing each article's bibliographic information, research focus, methodology, principal findings, and relevance to the role of PAI curriculum management. This matrix was used to identify similarities, differences, recurring patterns, and interrelationships among the sources. Consequently, the resulting synthesis went beyond summarizing individual articles to provide a comprehensive overview of the contribution of curriculum management to educational quality. In the final stage, conclusions were drawn inductively based on the patterns and relationships identified in the analysis, and their consistency with the original sources was re-examined to ensure accurate interpretation. This procedure is consistent with qualitative data analysis approaches that emphasize data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification (Miles et al., 2022). The findings were subsequently used to formulate a conceptual understanding of PAI curriculum management strategies that can support continuous improvements in instructional quality, graduate competencies, the development of religious character, and the sustainable advancement of Islamic educational institutions.

RESULTS

PAI Curriculum Planning as the Foundation for Educational Quality Improvement

PAI curriculum planning is the initial stage that determines the direction, objectives, and standards of instructional implementation in Islamic educational institutions. Effective planning enables schools and madrasahs to establish the competencies students are expected to achieve, organize learning materials, determine instructional strategies, and develop assessment systems aligned with educational objectives. In practice, curriculum planning includes analyzing students' needs, reviewing learning outcomes, developing learning objective sequences, preparing teaching modules, determining time allocations, and selecting relevant instructional methods. In madrasahs, planning needs to consider the characteristics of the subjects of Qur'an and Hadith, Islamic Creed and Ethics (*Aqidah Akhlak*), Islamic Jurisprudence (*Fiqh*), and Islamic Cultural History (*Sejarah Kebudayaan Islam* or SKI). In general schools, meanwhile, the organization of PAI content is adjusted to the applicable curriculum structure. Accordingly, curriculum planning cannot be implemented uniformly without considering the characteristics of each educational institution and the needs of its students.

From the perspective of quality improvement, PAI curriculum planning ensures that learning objectives, instructional materials, teaching methods, and assessment are clearly aligned. Teachers need to design learning activities that not only emphasize the acquisition of religious knowledge but also provide students with opportunities to apply Islamic values in their daily lives. For example, lessons on honesty can be developed through case discussions, behavioral reflection, and the cultivation of responsibility in completing assignments. Such planning makes PAI learning more contextual and helps students understand the relationship between religious teachings and the real-life issues they encounter. In addition, digital technology can be incorporated to enrich learning resources, provide interactive instructional media, and facilitate learning that responds to students' needs.

Effective curriculum planning also requires the involvement of school or madrasah principals, vice principals responsible for curriculum affairs, PAI teachers, and other relevant stakeholders. Such collaboration ensures that instructional planning is not solely an individual teacher's responsibility but forms part of the institution's overall quality development strategy. School or madrasah principals play a role in establishing policy directions and

providing institutional support, while teachers are responsible for developing instructional plans that correspond to students' competencies and needs. The resulting plans can subsequently serve as a basis for identifying teacher training needs, procuring instructional facilities, and developing programs to strengthen religious culture. Therefore, the more systematically the PAI curriculum is planned, the clearer the direction of instructional implementation and the institution's efforts to achieve educational quality standards.

Curriculum Organization and the Empowerment of PAI Teachers

PAI curriculum organization is the process of arranging human resources, allocating responsibilities, managing instructional facilities, and establishing coordination mechanisms to ensure that all curriculum programs can be implemented effectively. Organization is essential because instructional success depends not only on the quality of curriculum design but also on the institution's ability to allocate resources appropriately. School or madrasah principals are responsible for coordinating curriculum implementation, assigning teaching responsibilities, facilitating communication among educators, and ensuring the availability of facilities that support learning activities. In madrasahs, curriculum organization needs to account for the distribution of teaching responsibilities in accordance with the structure of PAI subjects. In general schools, organization is adjusted to the position of PAI teachers within the applicable instructional structure. These arrangements aim to prevent overlapping responsibilities, improve work efficiency, and maintain the continuity of educational programs.

Teacher empowerment is an essential component of curriculum organization because teachers are the primary implementers of the learning process. PAI teachers are expected not only to master religious subject matter but also to possess pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies that support educational implementation. Therefore, educational institutions need to provide teachers with opportunities to participate in training programs, workshops, teacher working groups, Subject Teacher Deliberation Forums (*Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran* or MGMP), as appropriate to their educational level and institutional context, and activities for sharing good practices. Through these activities, teachers can improve their ability to prepare teaching materials, select innovative instructional methods, develop digital learning media, and design assessment instruments aligned with learning objectives. Teacher empowerment can also be achieved through

developmental academic supervision, in which classroom observations are used to improve teaching practices and strengthen teacher professionalism.

In addition to human resource management, PAI curriculum organization includes the arrangement of facilities and infrastructure that support instruction. These resources may include textbooks, libraries, information technology equipment, instructional media, spaces for religious practice, and facilities supporting religious activities. The availability of these resources needs to be aligned with instructional requirements and the institution's capacity to ensure that their use genuinely contributes to educational quality. For example, prayer facilities can be used for practical instruction in ablution (*wudu*) and prayer (*salat*), while digital media can help students learn Qur'anic recitation and understand Islamic subject matter through relevant learning resources. Through systematic organization, institutional resources can be utilized optimally to support the achievement of PAI curriculum objectives.

Effective organization ultimately fosters a collaborative work culture within Islamic educational institutions. Clearly defined working relationships among school principals, curriculum coordinators, PAI teachers, and educational staff facilitate problem-solving and improve the consistency of program implementation. Effective coordination also enables institutions to identify teacher competency development needs and establish priorities for providing instructional facilities. Thus, PAI curriculum organization contributes to educational quality improvement by strengthening teacher capacity, enhancing resource utilization efficiency, and creating a working environment that supports continuous educational development.

PAI Curriculum Implementation through Innovative and Contextualized Learning

PAI curriculum implementation is the stage at which instructional plans are translated into educational activities involving direct interaction between teachers and students. This stage is important because the plans that have been developed must be realized through meaningful learning experiences. Curriculum implementation should not merely fulfill content delivery targets; it must also ensure that students understand, internalize, and apply religious values in their daily lives. Therefore, teachers need to develop instructional strategies that integrate knowledge, attitudes, and skills in a balanced manner. Effective PAI instruction is expected to help students understand Islamic teachings comprehensively while cultivating behaviors that reflect honesty, discipline, responsibility, care for others, and respect for fellow human beings.

Under the Merdeka Curriculum, PAI instruction needs to accommodate instructional flexibility, students' characteristics, and the established learning outcomes. Teachers can employ group discussions, problem-based learning, demonstrations, religious practice activities, relevant project-based learning, and digital media according to the objectives of each topic. For example, lessons on social responsibility can be developed through activities that identify issues within the school environment, discussions of relevant Islamic values, and the formulation of simple actions to help others. Meanwhile, *fiqh* topics can be reinforced through demonstrations and practical activities so that students not only understand religious practices theoretically but can also perform them correctly. The use of varied instructional methods can increase student engagement, provide more concrete learning experiences, and accommodate differences in learning needs.

The role of PAI teachers in curriculum implementation also includes creating an inclusive, dialogic, and supportive learning environment. Teachers need to provide students with opportunities to ask questions, express opinions, participate in discussions, and reflect on the material they have studied. This approach helps students develop a deeper understanding of religious teachings while fostering critical thinking and a sense of responsibility.

Curriculum Evaluation and Continuous Quality Assurance

PAI curriculum evaluation is a systematic process for determining the extent to which curriculum planning, implementation, and learning outcomes align with established educational objectives. Evaluation is intended not only to measure students' mastery of subject matter but also to assess the effectiveness of instructional strategies, teacher preparedness, the utilization of facilities, and the achievement of curriculum program objectives. In the context of improving the quality of Islamic educational institutions, evaluation serves as an essential instrument for identifying achievements, detecting weaknesses, and determining corrective measures. Planned evaluation enables school or madrasah principals to obtain relevant information as a basis for decision-making. Therefore, curriculum evaluation should be positioned as an integral component of educational management rather than merely an administrative activity conducted at the end of a semester.

PAI learning outcomes can be evaluated through formative and summative assessments tailored to instructional objectives. Formative assessment is used to monitor students' progress throughout the learning process and provide feedback on the difficulties

they encounter. Summative assessment, meanwhile, is used to determine competency achievement at the end of a particular content unit or instructional period. In addition to written tests, teachers can employ observation, practical assessment of religious practices, assignments, portfolios, and student reflection, depending on the characteristics of the competencies being assessed. The use of multiple assessment techniques is necessary because PAI learning encompasses knowledge acquisition, practical religious skills, and attitude development, all of which require continuous observation. Appropriate assessment enables teachers to obtain a more comprehensive picture of students' learning progress.

Beyond evaluating learning outcomes, educational institutions need to assess curriculum implementation and instructional performance. School or madrasah principals can conduct academic supervision, review teaching materials, observe classroom instruction, and hold evaluation meetings with PAI teachers. Evaluation results can be used to identify various obstacles, such as mismatches between instructional methods and students' needs, limited instructional media, insufficient assessment variety, or ineffective use of instructional time. These findings subsequently provide a basis for follow-up programs, including revising teaching materials, providing teacher mentoring, developing instructional methods, and supplying necessary facilities. Collaborative evaluation also enables teachers to participate actively in formulating solutions to instructional problems.

Continuous quality assurance can be achieved through a cycle of planning, implementation, evaluation, and follow-up carried out consistently. Educational institutions need to establish performance indicators, collect data on curriculum implementation, compare actual outcomes with predetermined targets, and formulate improvement programs based on evaluation findings. These indicators may include the achievement of learning objectives, students' competency development, instructional quality, teacher competence, and the effectiveness of religious habituation programs. Educational quality improvement cannot be assessed solely through higher academic scores or the completeness of curriculum documentation; it must also take into account the quality of educational processes and the development of students' character. Concrete follow-up actions based on evaluation results help Islamic educational institutions improve curriculum management effectiveness, maintain the relevance of instruction, and foster a sustained culture of quality improvement.

Relationship between PAI Curriculum Management Functions and Quality Indicators in Islamic Educational Institutions

PAI curriculum management involves four principal functions: planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating. Each function involves different activities and contributions, yet all are interconnected in supporting improvements in the quality of Islamic educational institutions. Planning establishes the direction and objectives of instruction, organizing ensures resource readiness, implementation translates plans into learning activities, and evaluation measures the achievement of objectives and determines necessary improvements. The relationship among these functions demonstrates that educational quality cannot be improved through a single managerial activity alone.

Table 1. Relationship between PAI Curriculum Management Functions and Quality Indicators in Islamic Educational Institutions

Management function	Focus of PAI curriculum activities	Indicators of institutional quality improvement
Planning	Analyzing students' needs, establishing learning objectives, developing learning objective sequences and teaching modules, allocating instructional time, and selecting instructional strategies and media.	Clear instructional direction, alignment of teaching materials with learning outcomes, teacher preparedness, and measurable educational objectives.
Organizing	Allocating teaching responsibilities, coordinating curriculum administrators, developing teacher competencies, arranging instructional facilities, and facilitating teacher working groups or MGMP activities according to the institutional context.	Improved teacher competence, clearly defined responsibilities, efficient resource utilization, and the development of a collaborative work culture.
Implementation	Interactive and contextualized learning, religious practice activities, technology integration, habituation of noble character, and the cultivation of mutual respect.	Increased student participation, achievement of learning objectives, mastery of subject matter and religious practices, and strengthened student character.
Evaluation	Formative and summative assessment, classroom observation, academic supervision, learning outcome analysis, and follow-up curriculum improvement.	Availability of information on learning achievement, identification of problems, improved instructional effectiveness, and continuous implementation of quality improvement measures.

Source: Authors' synthesis based on the literature review.

As shown in Table 1, each PAI curriculum management function makes a complementary contribution to improving the quality of Islamic educational institutions. Planning provides direction and standards for instructional implementation, while organizing

ensures that the required human resources and facilities are available and appropriately utilized. Implementation directly connects curriculum design with students' learning experiences. Evaluation, meanwhile, provides information about the extent to which objectives have been achieved and identifies areas requiring improvement. These relationships indicate that successful curriculum management depends not only on the quality of planning documents but also on consistent implementation and effective follow-up based on evaluation results.

The quality indicators presented in the table can serve as a basis for monitoring the effectiveness of PAI curriculum management. These indicators need to be translated into more specific measures according to each institution's characteristics, such as the achievement of learning objectives, results of practical religious assessments, student engagement in learning, teacher participation in professional development activities, and implementation of follow-up actions arising from supervision. The use of clearly defined indicators helps school or madrasah principals identify progress and establish development priorities. However, these indicators do not automatically demonstrate an improvement in educational quality unless they are supported by adequate implementation and evaluation data. Therefore, this matrix can be used as an analytical framework for designing targeted monitoring and quality improvement programs for PAI curriculum management.

DISCUSSION

The management of the Islamic Religious Education (IRE) curriculum plays a strategic role in improving the quality of Islamic educational institutions because it serves as a link between educational objectives, the learning process, character development, and students' competency achievement. Based on the findings of this review, improving educational quality cannot be achieved merely by preparing curriculum documents for administrative purposes. Rather, it requires systematic planning, effective coordination, consistent implementation, and continuous evaluation. This is consistent with the studies by (Faizah, 2023; Anam, 2021), which indicate that curriculum management in integrated Islamic primary schools encompasses planning, implementation, and the reinforcement of religious values through classroom instruction and school-based habituation. Accordingly, IRE curriculum management should be understood as a process that integrates academic development and religious formation to achieve educational objectives comprehensively.

In terms of planning, the IRE curriculum should be developed based on educational objectives, students' needs, institutional characteristics, resource availability, and developments in the social and technological environment. Effective planning provides clear guidance for teachers in determining learning objectives, instructional materials, teaching methods, learning media, time allocation, and assessment procedures. This finding is consistent with (Rodliyah et al., 2024; Murtafiah, 2023), who explain that curriculum management in Islamic senior secondary schools affiliated with pesantren encompasses curriculum design, implementation, and evaluation while taking government policies and environmental needs into account. These studies reinforce the view that curriculum planning should not be conducted uniformly without considering the institutional context. Therefore, IRE curriculum planning needs to accommodate the applicable curriculum standards while allowing opportunities to develop religious programs that are relevant to students' needs and the vision of Islamic educational institutions.

The organizing function ensures that curriculum plans can be implemented through clear task allocation, effective coordination, and appropriate resource utilization. School or madrasah principals, vice principals responsible for curriculum affairs, IRE teachers, classroom teachers, and educational support staff should have clearly defined responsibilities in supporting program implementation. Such collaboration is important because the success of learning is determined not only by the competence of IRE teachers but also by school policies, the availability of facilities, institutional culture, and the involvement of the school community. In line with this perspective, (Faizah, 2023; Jazuli et al., 2023) identify the involvement of various stakeholders as an integral component of curriculum management in integrated Islamic primary schools. This indicates that effective organization can minimize overlapping responsibilities, strengthen coordination, and create conditions conducive to improving the quality of IRE learning.

The implementation of the IRE curriculum should focus on active, contextual, and student-centered learning. Religious materials should not be presented merely as knowledge to be memorized but should also be connected to religious practices, everyday behavior, social awareness, responsibility, and mutual respect. Research (Suhayiba & Ansyari, 2023) emphasize the importance of aligning objectives, curriculum components, and contextual factors in Islamic Religious Education design. This alignment suggests that learning becomes more meaningful when instructional materials, teaching methods, objectives, and students' life situations are designed coherently. Therefore, IRE teachers should employ varied

instructional strategies, including discussions, demonstrations, religious practice, problem-based learning, and the use of digital media, while ensuring that the selected methods are appropriate to the learning objectives and students' characteristics.

The quality of IRE learning should also be assessed in terms of its ability to shape students' attitudes and behavior, rather than solely through academic achievement. Religious character development occurs through formal instruction, teachers' role modeling, social interactions, and habituation embedded in school culture. In this context, (Solichin et al., 2026) demonstrate that the hidden curriculum in Islamic Religious Education contributes to the development of social values, including honesty, concern for others, shared responsibility, and empathy. This finding broadens the understanding of how the IRE curriculum operates, indicating that its influence extends beyond the content explicitly stated in instructional documents to include classroom atmosphere, teacher–student relationships, and everyday practices within the school environment. Accordingly, Islamic educational institutions need to ensure consistency among IRE learning materials, educators' role modeling, and school culture so that the values taught can be translated into actual behavior.

Evaluation is an essential management function for determining whether the IRE curriculum has been implemented as planned and has produced the intended outcomes. Evaluation should cover learning achievement, the instructional process, teacher performance, the utilization of facilities, and the implementation of religious habituation programs. Written tests alone are insufficient to assess the full range of IRE competencies because religious practice skills and behavioral development require appropriate assessment techniques, such as demonstrations, observations, portfolios, and reflective activities. In their study of curriculum management based on the Plan–Do–Check–Act (PDCA) cycle, (Yusuf et al., 2026) emphasize the importance of linking planning, implementation, checking, and corrective action to improve educational quality. From this perspective, evaluation results should not be limited to recording grades or preparing reports. Instead, they should inform concrete measures to improve teaching methods, develop teachers' professional competencies, and refine subsequent curriculum planning.

The relationship among the four management functions—planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating demonstrates that improving the quality of Islamic educational institutions requires an integrated management system. Planning establishes the direction, organizing prepares the necessary resources, implementation translates plans into learning

experiences, and evaluation identifies achievements and areas requiring improvement. This finding is consistent with (Gunawan & Usman, 2022; Adilla et al., 2023), who explain that curriculum management involves interrelated stages of planning, implementation, and evaluation that influence curriculum effectiveness and educational quality. The review by (Setiawan & Yuliana, 2026) further highlights the relevance of curriculum management as a strategy for improving educational quality based on a synthesis of research on curriculum management in Indonesia. Accordingly, institutional quality depends not only on the existence of a well-designed curriculum but also on the ability of school leaders and teachers to manage all stages consistently, use evaluation results as a basis for decision-making, and ensure that follow-up actions are effectively implemented.

Overall, this discussion indicates that IRE curriculum management has the potential to improve the quality of Islamic educational institutions through needs-based planning, effective resource organization, contextual learning, and evaluation oriented toward continuous improvement. However, improvements in educational quality cannot be established solely by the completeness of curriculum documents or the implementation of religious programs; they require indicators and data demonstrating developments in educational processes and outcomes. Therefore, educational institutions need to establish measurable indicators that can be monitored, including the achievement of learning objectives, the quality of religious practices, student engagement, teachers' professional development, and follow-up actions based on supervision results. This direction is consistent with (Rodliyah et al., 2024), who examine curriculum management in Islamic educational institutions, and (Yusuf et al., 2026), who discuss the PDCA-based quality improvement cycle. The implication is that school and madrasah principals should position IRE curriculum management as a sustainable institutional development strategy rather than merely an administrative requirement. In this way, academic quality, moral development, and the Islamic identity of educational institutions can be developed in a balanced and integrated manner.

CONCLUSION

Islamic Religious Education (IRE) curriculum management plays a strategic role in improving the quality of Islamic educational institutions through the integrated and continuous implementation of planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating functions.

Curriculum planning that aligns with students' needs and institutional vision, effective resource organization, innovative and contextual learning implementation, and evaluation oriented toward improvement are essential factors in supporting educational quality. IRE curriculum management focuses not only on the achievement of academic competencies but also on the development of religious character, the cultivation of noble moral values, practical religious skills, and students' social awareness. Therefore, the success of IRE curriculum management depends on the consistent implementation of each management function, the involvement of the entire school community, and the use of evaluation results as a basis for continuously improving the quality of Islamic educational institutions.

This study makes a conceptual contribution by strengthening the understanding of the relationship between IRE curriculum management functions and the improvement of the quality of Islamic educational institutions. It also presents an analytical framework that connects curriculum planning, organizing, implementation, and evaluation with quality indicators, including instructional quality, teacher competence, the achievement of learning objectives, religious character development, and the sustainability of improvement programs. In practical terms, this framework can serve as a reference for school and madrasah principals, curriculum managers, and IRE teachers in designing instructional programs, optimizing resource utilization, and developing more systematic evaluation systems. Thus, this study broadens the perspective on IRE curriculum management, shifting its role from merely fulfilling administrative requirements to serving as a strategy for educational quality development that integrates academic, religious, social, and institutional dimensions.

Future research is recommended to empirically examine the relationship between the implementation of IRE curriculum management and improvements in the quality of Islamic educational institutions through field studies conducted in Islamic primary schools, madrasahs, and pesantren with diverse characteristics. Researchers may employ qualitative approaches involving interviews, observations, and document analysis to identify factors that support or hinder curriculum management implementation. Alternatively, quantitative approaches may be used to measure the relationships among planning quality, teacher competence, instructional implementation, curriculum evaluation, and educational quality outcomes. Comparative studies across institutions are also necessary to identify differences in curriculum management strategies based on resource availability, leadership, and organizational culture. Furthermore, future research should develop measurable quality indicators and evaluate the long-term effects of curriculum implementation, particularly on

the development of religious competencies, religious character, and students' social behavior. The resulting evidence could provide a foundation for policy-making and the development of more effective IRE curriculum management practices.

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