

A Pesantren-Based Strategic Management Model for Sustaining Students' Competitive Success in Musabaqah Tilawatil Qur'an

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ABSTRACT

Sustaining students' achievement in Musabaqah Tilawatil Qur'an (MTQ) competitions is a strategic challenge for Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) seeking to maintain educational excellence and institutional competitiveness. Although previous studies have examined strategic management in Islamic educational institutions, limited attention has been given to how pesantren systematically develop and sustain Qur'anic achievement through an integrated management approach. This study aims to develop a pesantren-based strategic management model for sustaining students' success in MTQ competitions at Pondok Pesantren Walisongo Cukir, Jombang, Indonesia. Employing a qualitative case study design, data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis involving pesantren leaders, MTQ coaches, administrators, and students. Data were analyzed using an interactive model of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, with trustworthiness ensured through source and method triangulation. The findings indicate that sustainable MTQ achievement is shaped by four interrelated strategic processes: environmental analysis, strategic formulation, strategy implementation, and continuous evaluation. These processes are operationalized through systematic talent identification, value-based program design, intensive Qur'anic coaching, collaborative leadership, and continuous performance monitoring. The study proposes a pesantren-based strategic management model integrating institutional values, leadership commitment, talent development, and continuous improvement. This model extends strategic management theory into pesantren-based excellence development and provides practical guidance for sustaining student achievement in religious competitions

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1. Introduction

Educational institutions worldwide are increasingly required to develop sustainable excellence through effective strategic management practices. In an era characterized by globalization, institutional competition, and rapid social transformation, educational organizations are expected not only to deliver academic outcomes but also to cultivate specialized competencies that distinguish them from others. Strategic management has therefore become an essential framework for enabling educational institutions to achieve long-term goals, strengthen organizational performance, and maintain competitive advantages in dynamic environments (David & David, 2017; Hitt et al., 2020). Within the broader landscape of faith-based education, strategic management is particularly important because institutional success is often measured not only by academic performance but also by the ability to preserve values, traditions, and distinctive educational missions (Bush, 2020).

Islamic boarding schools, commonly known as *pesantren*, represent one of the most influential educational institutions in Indonesia. Traditionally recognized for transmitting Islamic knowledge and fostering religious character, *pesantren* have undergone significant transformation in response to contemporary educational demands (Azra, 2019). Today, many *pesantren* seek to demonstrate educational excellence through measurable achievements in various academic and religious competitions. Among these, *Musabaqah Tilawatil Qur'an* (MTQ) has emerged as one of the most prestigious platforms for assessing Qur'anic competence, encompassing recitation, memorization, interpretation, and other branches of Qur'anic scholarship (LPTQ, 2024). Success in MTQ competitions has increasingly become an indicator of institutional quality, reflecting the effectiveness of educational programs and the capacity of *pesantren* to develop highly competent students. (Mustajib; Patoni & Maunah, 2023)

Despite the growing importance of MTQ achievements, sustaining competitive success remains a significant challenge for many Islamic educational institutions. In numerous cases, students' accomplishments in MTQ competitions are highly dependent on individual talent, temporary coaching programs, or the personal expertise of specific trainers. Such approaches often produce short-term achievements but fail to establish sustainable systems capable of maintaining excellence across generations of students (Fathullah et al., 2025). Consequently, substantial variations can be observed among *pesantren* in terms of their ability to consistently produce high-achieving MTQ participants at regional, national, and international levels. This condition raises important questions regarding how strategic management practices can be institutionalized to ensure sustained Qur'anic achievement.

The relationship between strategic management and educational performance has attracted considerable scholarly attention. Previous studies have demonstrated that strategic management contributes significantly to organizational effectiveness, educational quality, and institutional competitiveness (Zakaria et al., 2025). Comparable evidence from *madrasah* and *pesantren* settings shows that SWOT-based strategic analysis (Norman et al., 2022) and alternative frameworks such as the balanced scorecard and blue ocean strategy (Anwar, 2022) enable Islamic educational institutions to identify competitive positioning and formulate context-specific development strategies. Research in Islamic educational contexts has further highlighted the importance of leadership, organizational culture, and strategic planning in improving educational outcomes (Kusumaningrum et al., 2025). Leadership has also been shown to directly optimize students' academic achievement through principals' instructional and managerial practices (Falah et al., 2023), to strengthen managerial accountability in Islamic higher education (Noorhayati & Fahyuni, 2024), and to integrate ethical and cultural values into *pesantren* governance through holistic, values-based leadership models (Muslimah & Arliansyah, 2026). Other studies have explored the role of MTQ and Qur'anic development programs in enhancing students' religious competencies and academic performance (Fathullah et al., 2025; Effendi et al., 2025). In a related vein, structured *Tahfiz Al-Qur'an* learning-management systems in Islamic higher education (Thontawi et al., 2022) and talent-management practices organized around the mentorship of *pesantren* foster guardians (Abdullah & Ula, 2023) further illustrate how systematic program management underpins sustained Qur'anic competence. These findings indicate that strategic management and Qur'anic achievement are important areas of inquiry within Islamic education.

However, existing studies exhibit several important limitations. First, most strategic management studies in Islamic education focus on institutional quality improvement, leadership effectiveness, curriculum management, or organizational development rather than on the sustainability of students'

achievement in MTQ competitions (Zakaria et al., 2025). Similarly, governance-focused studies emphasize institutional competitiveness (Cholid et al., 2024) and comprehensive quality-management systems (Ismail et al., 2023) without specifically addressing the sustainability of competition-based student achievement. Second, studies examining MTQ achievement generally emphasize technical coaching, memorization strategies, or competition outcomes without investigating the broader strategic management processes that support long-term success (Farohah et al., 2026). Third, limited research has examined how strategic management principles are operationalized within pesantren to systematically develop, maintain, and reproduce Qur'anic excellence over time. As a result, the strategic mechanisms underlying sustainable MTQ achievement remain insufficiently understood.

Addressing these gaps, the present study offers a novel perspective by examining MTQ achievement as a strategic organizational outcome rather than merely an educational or extracurricular activity. Unlike previous studies that focus on isolated aspects of coaching or educational quality, this research develops a pesantren-based strategic management model that explains how environmental analysis, strategic formulation, implementation processes, and continuous evaluation interact to sustain students' success in MTQ competitions. The study also contributes to the contextualization of strategic management theory within Islamic educational institutions by integrating organizational strategy with religious values, Qur'anic excellence, and pesantren traditions.

This study aims to explore and formulate a pesantren-based strategic management model for sustaining students' success in Musabaqah Tilawatil Qur'an competitions at Pondok Pesantren Walisongo Cukir Jombang, Indonesia. Specifically, the study investigates how the pesantren conducts environmental analysis, formulates strategic programs, implements development initiatives, and evaluates performance in order to maintain sustainable achievement in MTQ competitions. By doing so, the study seeks to enrich the literature on Islamic educational management and provide practical insights for educational institutions striving to strengthen sustainable excellence in Qur'anic education.

2. Research Method

This study employed a qualitative case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of strategic management practices in sustaining students' achievement in Musabaqah Tilawatil Qur'an (MTQ) competitions at Pondok Pesantren Walisongo Cukir Jombang, Indonesia. A qualitative case study is particularly appropriate for investigating complex social and organizational phenomena within their real-life contexts, enabling researchers to explore processes, interactions, and meanings from the perspectives of participants (Yin, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The research was conducted at Pondok Pesantren Walisongo Cukir Jombang, one of the prominent pesantren recognized for its consistent achievements in MTQ competitions at regional and national levels. Data collection was carried out over a six-month period from January to June 2025, allowing sufficient engagement with the research setting and participants to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

The participants were selected through purposive sampling, a technique widely used in qualitative research to identify information-rich cases relevant to the research objectives (Patton, 2015). The study involved pesantren leaders, MTQ program coordinators, Qur'anic coaches, senior administrators, and students who had participated in MTQ competitions. These participants were chosen because of their direct involvement in planning, implementing, and evaluating MTQ development programs within the pesantren. The primary research instrument was the researcher, who functioned as the key instrument in collecting, interpreting, and analyzing qualitative data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). To support data collection, semi-structured interview guides, observation protocols, and document review checklists were developed to ensure consistency and alignment with the study's research questions.

Data were collected through three complementary techniques: in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore participants' experiences, perceptions, and strategic practices related to MTQ achievement development. Participant observation enabled the researcher to examine coaching activities, leadership interactions, training processes, and organizational routines within the pesantren. Documentary evidence, including institutional reports, training schedules, competition records, strategic planning documents, and achievement archives, was analyzed to corroborate and enrich the findings obtained from interviews and

observations. The integration of multiple data sources facilitated a comprehensive understanding of the strategic management processes operating within the institution (Bowen, 2009; Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Data analysis followed the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2020), consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The analysis was conducted iteratively throughout the research process to identify patterns, themes, and relationships associated with strategic management practices and sustainable MTQ achievement. To ensure trustworthiness, the study adopted Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria of qualitative rigor, including credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility was established through triangulation of data sources and methods, member checking, and prolonged engagement in the field. Transferability was enhanced through thick description of the research context, while dependability and confirmability were ensured through audit trails, peer debriefing, and systematic documentation of research procedures and analytical decisions.

3. Research Results

3.1 Strategic Environmental Analysis in Developing MTQ Achievement

The findings indicate that Pondok Pesantren Walisongo Cukir Jombang places environmental analysis as the foundation of its MTQ achievement development strategy. The pesantren continuously examines both internal and external conditions to identify opportunities, challenges, and resources that influence students' performance in Qur'anic competitions. Internal analysis focuses on students' talents, the availability of qualified coaches, institutional support, training facilities, and the pesantren's long-standing tradition of Qur'anic education. Participants emphasized that identifying students with strong potential in tilawah, tahfidz, tafsir, and other MTQ categories constitutes the initial step in the development process.

External environmental analysis is conducted through continuous monitoring of MTQ regulations, competition standards, judging criteria, and emerging trends at regional and national levels. The pesantren actively collects information from previous competitions, professional networks, alumni, and Qur'anic institutions to ensure that coaching programs remain aligned with current expectations. This process enables the institution to anticipate changes and adjust its development strategies accordingly.

The findings further reveal that community expectations and institutional reputation significantly influence strategic decision-making. As one of the recognized Qur'anic educational institutions in Jombang, the pesantren experiences strong social expectations to maintain its competitive achievements. Consequently, MTQ development is not treated merely as an extracurricular activity but as a strategic institutional agenda directly linked to organizational credibility and public trust.

Another important finding concerns the role of leadership in environmental scanning. Pesantren leaders actively participate in identifying strategic opportunities, mobilizing resources, and evaluating institutional readiness. This leadership involvement facilitates the integration of environmental information into organizational planning and ensures that MTQ development remains a priority within the broader educational mission of the pesantren.

3.2 Strategy Formulation for Sustaining MTQ Excellence

The study found that strategy formulation at Pondok Pesantren Walisongo Cukir Jombang is conducted through a systematic planning process involving pesantren leaders, coaches, and program coordinators. Strategic planning begins with the establishment of long-term objectives focused on sustaining competitive achievement while preserving the institution's Qur'anic values. Rather than emphasizing short-term competition outcomes, the pesantren seeks to develop a continuous pipeline of talented students capable of maintaining achievement across generations.

A distinctive aspect of the strategy formulation process is the integration of religious values and organizational objectives. Participants explained that MTQ achievement is perceived not only as competitive success but also as a manifestation of the pesantren's mission to cultivate Qur'anic character and scholarship. Consequently, development programs are designed to balance technical competence with spiritual formation.

The study found that strategic formulation begins with systematic talent identification and mapping. Students demonstrating potential in specific MTQ categories are grouped into specialized

development programs. Long-term achievement targets are subsequently translated into annual coaching plans and training schedules.

Table 1. Strategic Formulation Components

Component	Strategic Action
Vision Alignment	Integrating MTQ achievement with pesantren mission
Talent Mapping	Identifying students according to competition categories
Goal Setting	Establishing annual and long-term achievement targets
Resource Allocation	Assigning coaches, facilities, and funding
Program Planning	Designing intensive coaching schedules

The findings also show that talent mapping constitutes a central component of strategic planning. Students undergo a systematic identification process to determine their strengths and suitability for specific MTQ categories. Based on these assessments, individualized development pathways are established to maximize students' potential and optimize institutional resources.

Furthermore, strategic formulation includes the allocation of financial, human, and organizational resources necessary for program implementation. The pesantren invests in specialized coaching, intensive training schedules, and competition preparation programs. Such planning enables the institution to maintain consistency in program delivery and achievement outcomes.

3.3 Strategy Implementation through Intensive Coaching and Leadership Support

The implementation phase is characterized by intensive coaching, structured mentoring, and continuous performance development. The pesantren establishes regular training programs that combine technical instruction, practical simulations, and spiritual guidance. Coaching activities are conducted systematically and adapted to the specific requirements of different MTQ categories.

Participants reported that the mentoring system plays a crucial role in sustaining student motivation and performance. Coaches not only provide technical guidance but also offer psychological support, discipline reinforcement, and character development. This holistic approach contributes to students' readiness to compete under challenging conditions and strengthens their commitment to continuous improvement.

The findings further demonstrate that leadership support significantly enhances implementation effectiveness. Pesantren leaders facilitate program execution by providing organizational resources, creating a supportive learning environment, and encouraging collaboration among coaches, students, and administrators. Leadership commitment is consistently reflected in institutional policies and resource allocation decisions.

In addition, alumni and external experts contribute to implementation processes through training sessions, consultation, and experience sharing. Their involvement broadens students' perspectives and strengthens the pesantren's capacity to respond to increasingly competitive MTQ environments. The collaborative nature of implementation creates a supportive ecosystem that reinforces sustainable achievement.

3.4 Continuous Evaluation and Performance Sustainability

The study reveals that continuous evaluation serves as a critical mechanism for maintaining MTQ achievement. Evaluation activities are conducted regularly to assess students' progress, coaching effectiveness, and program outcomes. Performance indicators include technical competence, competition readiness, psychological preparedness, and overall achievement results.

Evaluation is not limited to post-competition assessment. Instead, monitoring occurs throughout the development process through periodic reviews, mock competitions, and coaching reflections. These activities enable coaches and administrators to identify weaknesses early and implement corrective measures before major competitions take place.

The findings also indicate that evaluation outcomes directly inform strategic decision-making. Feedback generated from assessments is used to refine training methods, improve resource allocation, and

strengthen future planning processes. This cyclical relationship between evaluation and strategic action contributes to organizational learning and continuous improvement.

Table 2. Evaluation and Sustainability Mechanisms

Evaluation Activity	Purpose
Weekly Monitoring	Tracking students' progress
Simulation Assessment	Measuring competition readiness
Post-Competition Review	Identifying strengths and weaknesses
Coach Reflection Meetings	Improving coaching effectiveness
Program Revision	Refining future strategic plans

Ultimately, the sustainability of MTQ achievement at Pondok Pesantren Walisongo Cukir Jombang is supported by an integrated management system that combines environmental awareness, strategic planning, intensive implementation, and continuous evaluation. These interconnected processes create a sustainable institutional framework capable of producing consistent achievement while preserving the pesantren's commitment to Qur'anic excellence.

4. Discussion

4.1 Strategic Environmental Analysis as the Foundation of Sustainable MTQ Achievement

The findings demonstrate that strategic environmental analysis constitutes the foundation of sustainable MTQ achievement development at Pondok Pesantren Walisongo Cukir Jombang. The pesantren systematically analyzes both internal resources and external opportunities before designing achievement-oriented programs. This finding suggests that successful MTQ development is not merely a result of individual talent but emerges from an institution's ability to understand its strategic environment and align organizational resources with competitive demands. The integration of talent identification, institutional culture, leadership commitment, and external environmental scanning enables the pesantren to anticipate challenges while maintaining adaptability in an increasingly competitive MTQ landscape.

This finding is consistent with previous studies emphasizing the importance of environmental analysis in educational strategic management. Zakaria et al. (2025) argued that educational institutions achieving sustainable excellence generally possess the capacity to identify and respond to environmental changes proactively. Similarly, Bush (2020) highlighted that strategic decision-making in educational organizations requires continuous assessment of internal capacities and external expectations. This is consistent with SWOT-based strategic analyses of madrasah leadership, which similarly identify environmental scanning as a prerequisite for realizing institutional excellence (Norman et al., 2022), and with resource-based strategic approaches in pesantren, where local potential and institutional assets are systematically leveraged to sustain competitive advantage (Abdi & Sabran, 2025). However, the present study extends previous findings by demonstrating how environmental analysis is specifically applied within a pesantren context to support Qur'anic achievement development rather than general educational quality improvement.

From a theoretical perspective, the findings support the strategic management framework proposed by Wheelen and Hunger (2012), which positions environmental scanning as the initial stage of strategic management. The results also align with Ansoff's (1965) environment-strategy fit perspective, which argues that organizational success depends on the alignment between organizational capabilities and environmental conditions. However, this study reveals that environmental analysis in pesantren extends beyond technical and competitive considerations to include religious values, community trust, and institutional reputation. Such findings indicate that environmental analysis within faith-based educational institutions involves both strategic and normative dimensions.

The strong emphasis on environmental analysis can be explained by the unique position of pesantren as value-based organizations operating within highly dynamic educational and religious environments. Institutional leaders recognize that maintaining MTQ achievement requires continuous adaptation to changing competition standards while preserving the pesantren's Qur'anic identity. Theoretically, this finding contributes to the contextualization of strategic management theory within Islamic educational settings by demonstrating that environmental analysis incorporates both organizational competitiveness and religious legitimacy. Practically, the findings suggest that pesantren

seeking sustainable achievement should establish systematic mechanisms for environmental scanning, talent mapping, and stakeholder engagement.

4.2 Strategic Formulation Through Talent Mapping and Long-Term Planning

The findings indicate that strategic formulation at Pondok Pesantren Walisongo Cukir Jombang is characterized by systematic talent mapping, long-term planning, and the integration of institutional values into achievement development programs. Rather than focusing exclusively on short-term competition outcomes, the pesantren formulates strategies aimed at creating a sustainable pipeline of MTQ participants capable of maintaining achievement across generations. This approach reflects a long-term orientation that prioritizes organizational continuity and institutional excellence.

The findings support earlier studies that identified strategic planning as a critical determinant of educational effectiveness. David and David (2017) emphasized that strategic formulation enables organizations to establish clear objectives and allocate resources effectively. Likewise, Hitt et al. (2020) argued that long-term planning enhances organizational competitiveness through the strategic utilization of human and institutional resources. While previous studies in Islamic education have discussed strategic planning in relation to educational quality and institutional development (Zakaria et al., 2025), they have rarely examined strategic formulation specifically within the context of MTQ achievement development. These findings align with studies showing that strategic formulation in pesantren-based institutions is most effective when explicitly grounded in Islamic values rather than adopting secular strategic models wholesale (Purnomo et al., 2024), and that alternative strategic frameworks such as the balanced scorecard and blue ocean strategy can likewise be adapted to Islamic educational settings (Anwar, 2022).

The findings reinforce Wheelen and Hunger's (2012) proposition that strategy formulation involves the development of organizational objectives, policies, and resource allocation mechanisms. Nevertheless, the study reveals an additional dimension not sufficiently emphasized in conventional strategic management literature, namely the integration of religious values into strategic planning processes. Within the pesantren context, strategic objectives are not solely achievement-oriented but are also closely connected to the mission of nurturing Qur'anic character and preserving religious traditions.

This distinctive characteristic explains why strategy formulation in the pesantren differs from approaches commonly found in secular educational organizations. The development of MTQ achievement is viewed not merely as a competitive endeavor but as a manifestation of the pesantren's commitment to producing Qur'anic generations. Consequently, strategic decisions are shaped by both performance considerations and religious aspirations. Theoretically, this finding enriches strategic management literature by illustrating the role of value-based planning in educational organizations. Practically, it highlights the importance of aligning institutional vision, talent development systems, and long-term achievement goals to ensure sustainability.

4.3 Strategy Implementation Through Intensive Coaching and Collaborative Leadership

The findings reveal that strategy implementation is operationalized through intensive coaching, personalized mentoring, collaborative leadership, and broad stakeholder involvement. The effectiveness of implementation depends not only on the availability of training programs but also on the capacity of leaders, coaches, alumni, and students to work collaboratively within a supportive learning environment. This finding indicates that sustainable achievement emerges from collective organizational efforts rather than isolated individual performance.

These results are consistent with previous research emphasizing the significance of leadership and human resource development in educational organizations. Bush and Coleman (2000) argued that successful strategy implementation requires strong leadership support and effective coordination among organizational members. Similarly, Kusumaningrum et al. (2025) found that leadership significantly shapes school culture and teachers' teaching performance in pesantren education settings. This finding parallels evidence from extracurricular achievement programs, where structured coaching management, covering planning, qualified instructors, and scheduled implementation, directly enhances students' non-academic achievement (Sundari, 2021). It is further reinforced by studies showing that a supportive organizational climate significantly determines coaches' and teachers' motivation and performance

(Nasar et al., 2025), by evidence that systematic strategy implementation sustains institutional distinctiveness in Islamic boarding schools (Syafuruddin et al., 2022), and by findings that religious-based talent management through the mentorship of foster guardians sustains long-term skill development within pesantren (Abdullah & Ula, 2023). However, the present study extends these findings by demonstrating how collaborative leadership structures facilitate the development of MTQ achievement through intensive mentoring and continuous capacity building.

The findings also support the implementation stage proposed by Wheelen and Hunger (2012), which emphasizes translating strategic plans into organizational actions. Nevertheless, the study highlights the importance of social and cultural dimensions that are often underrepresented in mainstream strategic management theories. In the pesantren context, implementation is reinforced through close interpersonal relationships, moral guidance, and the transmission of institutional values. These elements create a learning environment that strengthens students' motivation and commitment.

The success of implementation can be explained by the integration of technical training with character formation and spiritual development. Students are not only prepared to master competition skills but are also encouraged to internalize discipline, perseverance, and religious commitment. This combination contributes to the sustainability of achievement by fostering intrinsic motivation rather than relying solely on external rewards. Theoretically, the findings extend strategic implementation literature by emphasizing the role of value-driven leadership and community-based learning systems. Practically, they suggest that educational institutions should develop holistic coaching models that integrate technical competence, mentoring, and character development.

4.4 Continuous Evaluation and the Sustainability of MTQ Achievement

The findings indicate that continuous evaluation functions as a strategic mechanism for sustaining MTQ achievement over time. Evaluation is conducted not merely as a post-competition activity but as an ongoing process involving performance monitoring, simulation assessments, coaching reflections, and program improvement initiatives. Such practices enable the pesantren to identify weaknesses, implement corrective actions, and continuously refine its development strategies.

This finding aligns with prior studies highlighting the importance of evaluation in organizational learning and performance improvement. Hitt et al. (2020) emphasized that strategic control and evaluation are essential for maintaining organizational effectiveness in dynamic environments. Similarly, David and David (2017) argued that evaluation enables organizations to assess whether strategic objectives are being achieved and to make necessary adjustments. While previous studies have discussed evaluation in educational management contexts, few have explored its role in sustaining competitive Qur'anic achievement within pesantren. These findings are consistent with broader evidence that systematic program evaluation, encompassing effectiveness review and structured feedback mechanisms, strengthens institutional decision-making in educational settings (Rahmawati, 2023), and with studies showing that pesantren sustain organizational resilience by continuously adapting their strategic routines to evolving social and religious expectations (Wafa et al., 2026).

The findings strongly support the evaluation and control stage of Wheelen and Hunger's (2012) strategic management model. However, the study reveals that evaluation in pesantren extends beyond performance measurement to include reflective learning and value reinforcement. Evaluation serves not only to assess outcomes but also to strengthen institutional commitment to continuous improvement and Qur'anic excellence. This broader interpretation reflects the unique characteristics of educational organizations whose goals encompass both performance and character development.

The effectiveness of continuous evaluation can be attributed to the pesantren's commitment to organizational learning. Feedback generated from assessments is systematically incorporated into future planning and implementation processes, creating a cycle of continuous improvement. Theoretically, this finding contributes to strategic management literature by demonstrating how evaluation functions as a mechanism for sustaining excellence within faith-based educational institutions. Practically, the findings underscore the necessity of establishing comprehensive monitoring and feedback systems capable of supporting long-term achievement and institutional adaptability.

4.5 Toward a Pesantren-Based Strategic Management Model for Sustaining MTQ Achievement

Taken together, the findings suggest that sustainable MTQ achievement is best understood as the outcome of an integrated strategic management system encompassing environmental analysis, strategic formulation, implementation, and continuous evaluation. These processes operate not as isolated stages but as interconnected mechanisms reinforced by leadership commitment, talent development, religious values, and organizational learning. The study therefore proposes a Pesantren-Based Strategic Management Model for Sustaining MTQ Achievement that extends conventional strategic management frameworks into the context of Islamic educational institutions.

The model contributes theoretically by contextualizing the strategic management framework of Wheelen and Hunger (2012) within a faith-based educational environment. Unlike conventional models that primarily emphasize organizational performance and competitiveness, the proposed model incorporates religious values, Qur'anic excellence, and institutional legitimacy as integral strategic components. This adaptation expands the applicability of strategic management theory to non-profit and religious educational organizations. This integrated perspective is consistent with international evidence that pesantren-based institutions achieve organizational sustainability by aligning multiple strategic domains, human resources, cooperation, marketing, and finance, within a coherent institutional strategy (Harjawati et al., 2025).

From a practical perspective, the model provides a systematic framework for pesantren and other Islamic educational institutions seeking to develop sustainable achievement programs. The findings suggest that long-term success in MTQ competitions requires strategic planning, institutional commitment, collaborative leadership, continuous evaluation, and the integration of educational excellence with religious values. These elements collectively form the foundation of a sustainable system capable of producing consistent achievement while preserving the distinctive identity of pesantren.

5. Conclusion

This study aimed to develop a pesantren-based strategic management model for sustaining students' success in Musabaqah Tilawatil Qur'an (MTQ) competitions at Pondok Pesantren Walisongo Cukir Jombang. The findings demonstrate that sustainable MTQ achievement is achieved through an integrated strategic management process consisting of environmental analysis, strategic formulation, strategy implementation, and continuous evaluation. Environmental analysis enables the pesantren to identify internal strengths and external opportunities, while strategic formulation facilitates systematic talent mapping and long-term planning. The implementation process is strengthened through intensive coaching, collaborative leadership, and stakeholder involvement, whereas continuous evaluation ensures organizational learning and ongoing improvement.

The study further reveals that sustainable MTQ achievement is not solely determined by students' individual abilities but is shaped by a comprehensive institutional system that integrates leadership commitment, talent development, organizational culture, and religious values. Based on these findings, the study proposes a Pesantren-Based Strategic Management Model for Sustaining MTQ Achievement, which extends conventional strategic management frameworks by incorporating Qur'anic values, institutional legitimacy, and faith-based educational objectives. This model contributes to the literature on strategic management and Islamic educational management by demonstrating how strategic processes can be adapted to support excellence and sustainability within religious educational institutions.

Practically, the findings suggest that pesantren and other Islamic educational institutions should establish systematic mechanisms for talent identification, strategic planning, intensive coaching, and continuous evaluation to sustain student achievement in religious competitions. Future research may expand this study by conducting comparative investigations across multiple pesantren, examining different forms of student achievement beyond MTQ competitions, or employing mixed-methods approaches to evaluate the effectiveness of strategic management practices quantitatively. Such studies would contribute to a broader understanding of sustainable excellence in Islamic educational institutions and further refine the proposed strategic management model.

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