



Curriculum Innovation through Master of Ceremony Workshops among Female Students at Modern Islamic Boarding Schools

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Article History:

Received: October 2025

Revised: November 2025

Accepted: November 2025

Published: December 2025

Keywords:

Curriculum innovation; Arabic Language Learning; Communicative Competence; Experiential Learning; Islamic Boarding School.

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Abstract:

This study examines the implementation of Arabic Master of Ceremony (MC) workshops as a form of curriculum innovation in enhancing communicative competence among female students at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor Putri Campus 1. The research employed a qualitative case study approach involving language coordinators, workshop instructors, teachers, and female students selected purposively based on their participation in the program. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation, and analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña. The findings reveal that Arabic MC workshops function not only as extracurricular activities but also as performance-based learning strategies integrated into the pesantren curriculum and institutional culture. The workshops contributed significantly to improving students' Arabic speaking fluency, public speaking confidence, leadership skills, and organizational participation through authentic communicative practices. Furthermore, the program operated as a hidden curriculum transmitting discipline, responsibility, communication ethics, and institutional values through mentoring and collective participation. The study concludes that Arabic MC workshops represent an innovative educational model integrating communicative language teaching, experiential learning, and character formation within Islamic boarding school education. This study contributes theoretically to curriculum innovation discourse and practically offers an alternative model for performance-based Arabic language learning in pesantren contexts.

INTRODUCTION

The development of Arabic language learning in modern Islamic boarding schools has increasingly emphasized communicative competence, public speaking ability, and authentic language use as essential components of curriculum innovation. In pesantren-based education, language learning is no longer limited to grammatical mastery and classroom instruction, but also involves creating meaningful linguistic environments that encourage students to actively practice Arabic in social and institutional settings. Recent studies demonstrate that communicative and performance-based approaches significantly contribute to improving students' speaking proficiency, confidence, and language interaction in Islamic boarding schools (Rahim & Hermawan, 2024;

How to Cite:

Subakir, F. A, et al. (2025) Curriculum Innovation through Master of Ceremony Workshops among Female Students at Modern Islamic Boarding Schools
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Yudiawan et al., 2026).

Within this context, modern pesantren have developed various extracurricular and language-intensive programs to strengthen students' maharah al-kalam (speaking skills), including muhadatsah activities, public speaking training, language environments, and bilingual communication practices. These programs function not only as pedagogical instruments but also as part of a broader institutional culture that supports language acquisition through continuous interaction and practical engagement. Previous studies indicate that the success of Arabic language learning in pesantren is strongly influenced by the consistency of linguistic environments, daily communication practices, and performance-oriented activities that encourage students to use Arabic authentically in real-life situations (Hamid et al., 2024; Muttaqin et al., 2024).

One of the emerging forms of curriculum innovation in modern Islamic boarding schools is the implementation of Master of Ceremony (MC) workshops conducted in Arabic. This program integrates public speaking, leadership training, linguistic performance, and self-development into a practical learning experience for female students and teachers. Through MC workshops, students are trained to organize formal events, deliver speeches, manage communication flow, and interact confidently using Arabic in institutional contexts. Such activities represent a form of experiential learning that enables students to internalize language skills through direct practice rather than theoretical instruction alone. Studies on communicative language teaching and speaking-oriented learning have shown that role-play, dialogue performance, and contextual speaking practices significantly improve students' communicative competence and speaking fluency (Hasibuan et al., 2024; Anwar et al., 2025).

Furthermore, MC workshops in pesantren settings also function as a medium for institutional legacy and organizational regeneration. Senior students and teachers transfer communication skills, linguistic styles, and event-management experiences to younger generations, creating sustainable patterns of leadership and language culture within the boarding school environment. This process reflects the hidden curriculum of pesantren education, where values, discipline, confidence, and communication ethics are cultivated through institutional traditions and collective participation. In female Islamic boarding schools, such activities become particularly important because they encourage female students to develop leadership capacity, public communication skills, and self-confidence within an Islamic educational framework.

Although numerous studies have explored Arabic language environments, communicative learning approaches, and speaking programs in pesantren, research specifically examining Arabic Master of Ceremony workshops as a form of curriculum innovation remains limited. Most previous studies focus primarily on classroom instruction, muhadatsah programs, or general language environments, while the integration of public speaking workshops into curriculum development and student self-development has received little scholarly attention. Therefore, this study seeks to investigate how Master of Ceremony workshops contribute to curriculum innovation and the enhancement of Arabic communicative competence among female students at modern Islamic boarding schools. This study is expected to contribute theoretically to Arabic language education discourse and practically to the development of performance-based curricula in pesantren education.

Figure 1. Research Framework of Arabic MC Workshop Implementation



RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to explore the implementation of Master of Ceremony (MC) workshops as a form of curriculum innovation in enhancing Arabic communicative competence among female students at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor Putri Kampus 1. A qualitative case study was considered appropriate because the research aimed to investigate educational practices, institutional culture, and experiential learning processes within their natural setting. Previous studies on curriculum innovation and language learning in Islamic boarding schools have similarly utilized qualitative case studies to examine educational transformation, communicative learning practices, and curriculum implementation in depth (Mustafidin et al., 2025; Abdillah & Inayati, 2025).

The research was conducted at PMDG Putri Campus 1, one of the modern Islamic boarding schools well known for its intensive Arabic language environment and performance-based learning culture. The participants of this study were selected purposively based on their direct involvement in the MC workshop program. They consisted of language coordinators, Arabic supervisors, workshop instructors, female students participating in the program, and several teachers involved in curriculum management. Purposive sampling was employed to ensure that the selected participants possessed relevant experiences and comprehensive understanding regarding the implementation of Arabic MC workshops in the pesantren context. Similar participant selection strategies have been widely applied in qualitative studies concerning curriculum innovation and language programs in Islamic boarding schools (Aziz et al., 2024; Nugraha et al., 2024).

Table 1. Research Participants and Their Roles

No.	Participants	Roles in the Arabic MC Workshop Program	Data Contribution
1	Language Coordinator	Supervising and managing the implementation of Arabic language programs and MC workshops	Information regarding curriculum policy, language environment, and program objectives
2	Arabic MC Workshop Instructor	Conducting workshop training sessions, simulations, and speaking evaluations	Information regarding instructional strategies, workshop materials, and students' speaking development
3	Female Student Committee Leaders	Organizing workshop activities and coordinating institutional events	Information regarding leadership practices, organizational participation, and workshop implementation
4	Female Students (Workshop Participants)	Participating in Arabic MC training, simulations, and public performances	Information regarding learning experiences, communicative challenges, and self-development
5	Ustadzah/Teachers	Mentoring and evaluating students during workshop activities and institutional performances	Information regarding students' progress, communicative competence, and character formation
6	Boarding School Administrators	Supporting institutional programs and language policy implementation	Information regarding institutional perspectives and curriculum innovation strategies
7	Senior Students/Mentors	Assisting junior students during training and performance preparation	Information regarding mentoring processes, organizational regeneration, and hidden

*Source: Research Data Processed by the Author (2024)

Data were collected through three primary techniques: observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Participant observation was conducted during MC workshop activities, including training sessions, simulations, mentoring processes, and public performances conducted in Arabic. The observations focused on instructional strategies, student participation, communicative interactions, and performance practices within the workshop activities. In-depth interviews were conducted semi-structurally with teachers, organizers, and students to obtain detailed information regarding curriculum objectives, learning experiences, challenges, and perceived impacts of the workshop program. Documentation analysis included institutional curriculum documents, workshop schedules, student performance records, language regulations, and photographs of activities. The combination of these techniques enabled data triangulation to enhance the credibility and validity of the findings. Qualitative studies in pesantren education frequently employ triangulated data collection methods to capture institutional culture and educational dynamics comprehensively (Mustaqiim & Azani, 2024; Dzattadini et al., 2025).

The collected data were analyzed using the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. First, the researcher organized and reduced raw data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation by categorizing information related to curriculum innovation, communicative learning, leadership development, and students' speaking competence. Second, the data were presented descriptively in thematic forms to identify patterns and relationships among findings. Finally, conclusions were drawn continuously throughout the research process while verifying the consistency of the data through triangulation and member checking. This analytical framework has been widely adopted in qualitative educational research due to its systematic and flexible procedures in interpreting complex social phenomena (Marzuki & Sudrajat, 2025).

To ensure the trustworthiness of the study, the researcher applied credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability procedures. Credibility was achieved through prolonged engagement, triangulation of data sources, and member checking with participants. Transferability was supported by providing detailed descriptions of the institutional setting and learning activities. Dependability was maintained through systematic documentation of the research process, while confirmability was strengthened by maintaining reflective field notes and ensuring that interpretations were grounded in empirical findings. These procedures are essential in qualitative educational research to maintain methodological rigor and research transparency.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Arabic MC Workshops as a Form of Curriculum Innovation

The findings revealed that the implementation of Arabic Master of Ceremony (MC) workshops at PMDG Putri Campus 1 functioned as a significant form of curriculum innovation in strengthening students' communicative competence and public speaking skills. The workshop was not positioned merely as an extracurricular activity, but rather as an integrated educational program embedded within the pesantren's language culture and institutional learning system. The program combined language learning, leadership training, event management, and performance-based education into one practical framework that encouraged students to actively use Arabic in authentic communicative contexts.

Based on observations and interviews, the workshop activities consisted of speech structuring, formal Arabic expression training, pronunciation correction, intonation exercises, public performance simulations, and real-event practices conducted in Arabic. Students were trained to organize institutional ceremonies, moderate official events, and deliver formal announcements using appropriate Arabic expressions and communicative styles. Such practices demonstrated that

the pesantren curriculum emphasized experiential and performance-based learning rather than relying solely on classroom-oriented instruction. This finding aligns with recent studies asserting that communicative language learning becomes more effective when students are directly involved in contextual speaking practices and authentic linguistic interactions (Mahsunah et al., 2023; Rahim & Hermawan, 2024).

Furthermore, the integration of Arabic MC workshops reflected curriculum flexibility in responding to the contemporary educational demand for communication and leadership skills. Modern Islamic boarding schools increasingly recognize that Arabic language mastery should encompass linguistic competence, confidence, and social communication abilities. Therefore, the workshop represented an innovative educational response aimed at bridging formal curriculum objectives with practical communication needs within institutional and social settings. Similar findings were identified by Silviyanti et al. (2024), who emphasized that bilingual and performance-based language activities significantly contribute to improving students' communicative competence and active language engagement in Islamic boarding school environments.

Table 2. Components of Arabic MC Workshop Activities

No.	Workshop Components	Learning Activities	Targeted Skills	Educational Functions
1	Pronunciation and Intonation Training	Practicing articulation, makhārij al-ḥurūf, stress, and intonation in formal Arabic speech	Pronunciation accuracy and speaking fluency	Strengthening students' oral communication competence
2	Arabic Script Preparation	Writing opening statements, transitions, formal greetings, and event-closing expressions in Arabic	Vocabulary enrichment and formal language structure	Developing formal Arabic communication skills
3	Public Speaking Simulation	Simulated moderation of ceremonies, seminars, and institutional events	Confidence, fluency, and spontaneous speaking ability	Enhancing communicative performance in authentic contexts
4	Event Management Practice	Organizing event flow, coordinating speakers, and managing audience interaction	Leadership and organizational competence	Integrating communication and managerial skills
5	Mentoring and Peer Evaluation	Receiving feedback from instructors, teachers, and senior students	Reflective learning and self-improvement	Supporting continuous communicative development
6	Real Institutional Performance	Acting as MCs in official pesantren events conducted in Arabic	Authentic communicative competence	Applying language skills in real institutional settings
7	Language Discipline Reinforcement	Daily Arabic communication practices during workshop preparation	Consistency in Arabic language use	Strengthening the pesantren language environment
8	Team Collaboration Activities	Collaborative preparation and group performance practices	Teamwork and interpersonal communication	Building collective participation and social interaction

*Source: Research Data Processed by the Author (2024)

The Enhancement of Students' Communicative Competence

The study found that participation in Arabic MC workshops significantly contributed to improving students' speaking fluency, pronunciation accuracy, vocabulary acquisition, and self-confidence in public communication. Students demonstrated noticeable improvement in their ability to deliver formal speeches,

manage audience interaction, and respond spontaneously during institutional events conducted in Arabic. The workshop environment encouraged repeated language exposure and active participation, which facilitated natural language acquisition through continuous practice and interaction.

Interview data revealed that students initially experienced anxiety and hesitation when speaking Arabic publicly. However, through regular mentoring, peer collaboration, and repeated performance simulations, they gradually developed confidence and communicative fluency. Teachers also noted that students participating in the workshop showed greater linguistic discipline, stronger motivation to practice Arabic daily, and higher participation in other language activities within the pesantren environment.

These findings support the communicative language teaching perspective, which emphasizes authentic interaction and contextual communication as essential elements in language acquisition. Hasibuan et al. (2024) explained that communicative learning approaches effectively enhance speaking competence because students engage directly in meaningful interaction rather than memorizing isolated grammatical structures. Similarly, Anwar et al. (2025) argued that speaking-oriented activities such as muhadatsah, role-play, and public speaking training significantly improve students' communicative fluency and linguistic confidence in Arabic learning contexts.

The results also indicated that the workshop contributed to the development of soft skills beyond linguistic competence. Students learned leadership, teamwork, discipline, event coordination, and communication ethics throughout the training process. This demonstrates that curriculum innovation in pesantren education can simultaneously support academic competence and character formation through integrated learning activities. Such findings reinforce the argument that modern Islamic boarding school curricula increasingly adopt holistic educational models integrating intellectual, communicative, and character-based development.

Arabic MC Workshops as Institutional Legacy and Hidden Curriculum

Another important finding of this study was that Arabic MC workshops functioned as a medium of institutional legacy and organizational regeneration within the pesantren environment. Senior students and teachers transferred practical communication skills, institutional traditions, and public speaking techniques to younger students through mentoring and collaborative training processes. This intergenerational learning mechanism enabled the continuity of language culture and organizational values within the boarding school system.

The findings further demonstrated that the workshop represented a form of hidden curriculum operating through institutional traditions, social interaction, and collective participation. Students not only learned Arabic expressions and public speaking techniques but also internalized discipline, responsibility, confidence, and communication ethics embedded in the pesantren culture. Such educational values were transmitted implicitly through repeated participation in institutional activities and direct interaction with teachers and senior students.



This finding is consistent with the perspective that hidden curriculum plays an important role in shaping students' social behavior, leadership, and communicative identity within educational institutions. Hamid et al. (2024) emphasized that language environments in pesantren contribute not only to language acquisition but also to the formation of students' cultural and social behavior through continuous interaction and institutional discipline. Similarly, Muttaqin et al. (2024) highlighted that authentic language environments facilitate sustainable language practices because students are immersed in collective communication activities integrated into daily institutional life.

Moreover, the workshop strengthened female students' participation in leadership-oriented activities within Islamic educational institutions. Through MC training, female students developed public communication skills and leadership confidence while maintaining the ethical and cultural values upheld by the pesantren. This finding indicates that curriculum innovation through public speaking workshops can become an effective educational strategy for

empowering female students in Islamic boarding school contexts.

Overall, the findings suggest that Arabic MC workshops represent an innovative curriculum model integrating communicative language learning, experiential education, leadership training, and institutional culture. The workshop contributed not only to enhancing Arabic speaking competence but also to strengthening students' confidence, organizational participation, and character development within the modern pesantren educational system.

Table 3. The Contributions of Arabic MC Workshops to Students' Development

No.	Development Aspects	Contributions of Arabic MC Workshops	Indicators Observed
1	Linguistic Competence	Improving students' Arabic speaking fluency and pronunciation accuracy	Increased confidence in speaking Arabic during formal and daily communication
2	Communicative Skills	Enhancing public speaking and audience interaction abilities	Students' ability to moderate institutional events effectively
3	Vocabulary Enrichment	Expanding students' mastery of formal Arabic expressions and event-related terminology	More varied and context-appropriate Arabic expressions used by students
4	Leadership Development	Strengthening students' leadership and organizational management skills	Students' involvement in managing official pesantren activities
5	Self-Confidence	Reducing speaking anxiety and increasing confidence in public performance	Students' willingness to appear in public events and formal ceremonies
6	Teamwork and Collaboration	Encouraging cooperative learning and peer support during workshop preparation	Active collaboration among students in organizing and evaluating performances
7	Character Formation	Developing discipline, responsibility, and communication ethics	Consistent participation, punctuality, and respectful communication practices
8	Institutional Participation	Increasing students' engagement in pesantren organizational and ceremonial activities	Greater participation in language and institutional programs
9	Language Environment Sustainability	Strengthening the Arabic-speaking culture within the pesantren environment	More intensive Arabic interaction during daily and formal activities
10	Hidden Curriculum Transmission	Internalizing institutional values through mentoring and collective participation	The emergence of leadership attitudes, discipline, and communicative etiquette

*Source: Research Data Processed by the Author (2024)

DISCUSSION

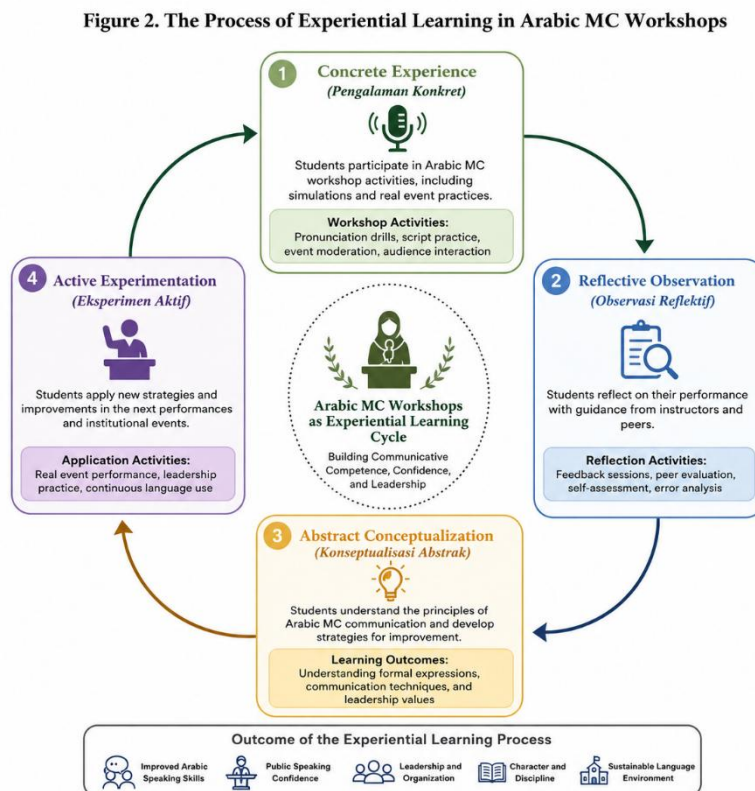
The findings of this study demonstrate that Arabic Master of Ceremony (MC) workshops represent an innovative form of curriculum development that integrates communicative language learning, experiential education, and leadership formation within the modern pesantren system. Unlike conventional Arabic instruction that often emphasizes grammatical mastery and textbook-oriented learning, the workshop positioned language as a practical communication tool embedded in authentic institutional activities. This finding indicates a pedagogical shift from teacher-centered instruction toward performance-based and student-centered learning models, which are increasingly emphasized in contemporary language education discourse.

The implementation of Arabic MC workshops reflects the principles of communicative language teaching (CLT), which emphasize meaningful interaction, contextual communication, and authentic language use as central aspects of language acquisition. Through public speaking simulations, formal

event moderation, and direct performance practices, students were exposed to real communicative situations requiring spontaneous interaction, linguistic adaptation, and public confidence. Such practices enabled students to internalize Arabic expressions functionally rather than merely memorizing vocabulary and grammatical patterns. Previous studies have similarly argued that communicative and experiential approaches significantly improve students' speaking proficiency, fluency, and confidence because learners engage directly in socially meaningful interactions (Hasibuan et al., 2024; Rahim & Hermawan, 2024).

Furthermore, the workshop can be interpreted as a form of experiential learning that transforms institutional activities into educational spaces for language acquisition and self-development. Kolb's experiential learning theory emphasizes that knowledge is constructed through concrete experience, reflective observation, conceptual understanding, and active experimentation. In this study, students developed communicative competence through repeated participation in simulations, mentoring sessions, and formal institutional performances. The workshop therefore functioned not only as a training program but also as a pedagogical mechanism that facilitated reflective and practical learning experiences. This finding supports previous research asserting that experiential and performance-based learning models are highly effective in Islamic boarding school contexts because they create continuous interaction between theory and practice within students' daily lives (Mahsunah et al., 2023; Silviyanti et al., 2024).

Figure 2. The Process of Experiential Learning in Arabic MC Workshops



Source: Adapted from Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (Kolb, 2015) and Research Findings (2026)

Another significant finding concerns the role of the workshop in strengthening the hidden curriculum of the pesantren institution. The study found that Arabic MC workshops transmitted not only linguistic competence but also institutional values such as discipline, responsibility, leadership, cooperation, and communication ethics. These values were internalized implicitly through participation in organizational activities and intergenerational mentoring

processes between teachers, senior students, and junior students. This finding confirms that pesantren education operates through both formal curriculum structures and informal cultural mechanisms embedded in institutional traditions. Hamid et al. (2024) emphasized that language environments in pesantren play a dual role in supporting language acquisition and shaping students' behavioral and social identities through collective interaction and disciplinary culture.

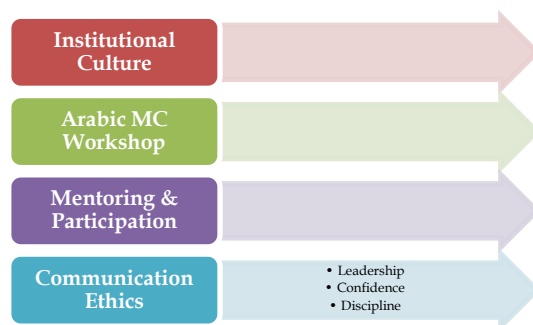
The concept of hidden curriculum becomes particularly relevant because the workshop created a sustainable mechanism for organizational regeneration and institutional legacy. Senior students transferred communicative strategies, public speaking styles, and institutional norms to younger students through continuous mentoring and collaborative participation. Such processes demonstrate that curriculum innovation in pesantren is not limited to formal syllabus modification but also involves preserving institutional culture through practical educational traditions. This finding expands previous studies on pesantren curriculum innovation by highlighting the importance of informal educational transmission in sustaining linguistic and organizational culture within Islamic boarding schools (Mustaqiim & Azani, 2024).

Moreover, this study highlights the contribution of Arabic MC workshops to female students' empowerment within Islamic educational institutions. Public speaking training enabled female students to develop confidence, leadership capacity, and communication competence while remaining within the ethical framework of pesantren culture. This finding challenges the assumption that female participation in leadership-oriented activities within Islamic educational settings is limited. Instead, the workshop demonstrated that pesantren institutions can create inclusive educational spaces that encourage female students' active participation in public communication and organizational leadership. Similar findings were reported by recent studies emphasizing that communicative and leadership-oriented activities contribute significantly to female students' self-confidence and social participation in Islamic educational environments (Anwar et al., 2025).

From a curriculum perspective, the study indicates that integrating Arabic MC workshops into pesantren education reflects adaptive curriculum innovation responding to contemporary educational demands. In the era of globalization and communication-centered education, language competence increasingly requires not only grammatical knowledge but also communicative, interpersonal, and public speaking abilities. Therefore, curriculum innovation in modern Islamic boarding schools should move toward integrative educational models combining language mastery, soft-skill development, organizational participation, and character formation. The workshop model identified in this study provides evidence that performance-based language programs can effectively support holistic student development within Islamic educational institutions.

Despite these contributions, this study remains limited to a single institutional setting, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings across different pesantren contexts. Future studies may therefore explore comparative analyses among various Islamic boarding schools or investigate the long-term impact of performance-based Arabic learning programs on students' academic and professional development. Quantitative or mixed-method approaches may also complement the present findings by measuring the effectiveness of Arabic MC workshops in improving speaking proficiency and communicative competence statistically.

Figure 3. Arabic MC Workshop as Hidden Curriculum Model



Overall, this study contributes theoretically to the discourse of Arabic language education, experiential learning, and curriculum innovation in Islamic boarding schools. Practically, the findings offer an alternative model for integrating communicative language learning and leadership training within pesantren curricula through institutional and performance-based educational activities.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Arabic Master of Ceremony (MC) workshops at PMDG Putri Campus 1 represent an innovative curriculum model that integrates communicative language learning, experiential education, leadership training, and institutional culture within the modern pesantren system. The workshop functioned not merely as an extracurricular activity but as a performance-based educational strategy that enabled female students to practice Arabic authentically in formal and social contexts. Through simulations, public speaking practices, and institutional event management, students developed communicative competence, speaking fluency, confidence, and organizational skills simultaneously. The findings demonstrate that curriculum innovation in Islamic boarding schools can be effectively implemented through practical language activities embedded within the pesantren's daily educational culture.

The study also reveals that Arabic MC workshops operate as part of the hidden curriculum that transmits institutional values such as discipline, responsibility, communication ethics, collaboration, and leadership through collective participation and intergenerational mentoring. The workshop strengthened the sustainability of Arabic language culture while simultaneously supporting organizational regeneration among female students. This finding indicates that curriculum innovation in pesantren education should not be limited to formal syllabus development but should also encompass institutional traditions and experiential learning practices that support holistic student development. Therefore, integrating public speaking and communicative performance programs into Arabic language education may become an effective strategy for enhancing students' linguistic and social competencies in Islamic educational institutions.

Practically, this study implies that modern Islamic boarding schools need to develop more communicative and performance-oriented Arabic learning programs that connect classroom instruction with authentic institutional practices. Arabic MC workshops may serve as an alternative model for strengthening speaking competence, leadership formation, and student participation in organizational activities. Theoretically, this study contributes to the discourse on curriculum innovation, communicative language teaching, and experiential learning in pesantren education by demonstrating how institutional culture can function as a pedagogical medium for language acquisition and character formation. Future studies are recommended to examine the effectiveness of similar programs in different pesantren contexts and explore their long-term impact on students' academic, social, and professional development.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors would like to express sincere gratitude to the leaders, teachers, and female students of Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor Putri Campus 1 for their support, participation, and valuable contributions throughout this research process. Special appreciation is also extended to all participants who willingly shared their experiences, insights, and institutional practices related to the implementation of Arabic Master of Ceremony workshops. Their cooperation greatly contributed to the completion of this study.

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