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Conceptual reconstruction of curriculum management based on the integration of managerial functions

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ABSTRACT

Curriculum management is commonly described through the managerial functions of planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling (POAC), yet much of the literature examines these functions one at a time or treats them as a linear sequence, which weakens their explanatory and practical value in contemporary curriculum reform. This article aims to reconstruct the concept of curriculum management by integrating the four managerial functions into a coherent conceptual framework. The study used a conceptual, library-based design with theory synthesis. Purposively selected scholarly publications, from 2020 to 2026, on POAC, curriculum making, Merdeka Curriculum implementation, school leadership, and educational governance were analyzed through coding, comparison across sources, and model building. The analysis produced a reconstruction in which the four functions operate as a dynamic cycle bound together by three integrative mechanisms: a feedback loop that returns evaluative evidence from controlling to planning, instructional and distributed leadership as a coordinating mechanism, and participatory sense-making supported by adequate resources and capacity building. Four propositions are derived to guide future empirical testing. The reconstructed model shifts curriculum management from a sequence of administrative tasks to an integrated, evidence-informed, and learning-oriented system in which each function both depends on and corrects the others. The framework offers a theoretical lens for researchers and a practical reference for school principals, curriculum teams, and policymakers who seek to strengthen curriculum governance, particularly in contexts of curriculum change such as Indonesia's Merdeka Curriculum. Empirical validation through multi-site and mixed-methods studies is recommended.

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Introduction

Curriculum is the central instrument through which educational institutions translate national aspirations and institutional vision into concrete learning experiences, and the quality of its management therefore shapes the quality of education itself. In Indonesia, the shift to the Merdeka Curriculum has placed heavy managerial demands on schools, which are now expected to develop their own operational curriculum, organize collaborative learning communities, differentiate instruction, and evaluate the process continuously (Asmansyah & Muallim, 2025; Ramadina, 2024; Rokayah et al., 2023). A widely used lens for analyzing such work is the cycle of

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managerial functions attributed to George R. Terry, namely planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling (POAC), which has been applied to school curriculum, to Islamic education, and even to non-formal programs (Erlangga et al., 2023; Nurhikmah, 2024). Recent studies report that schools plan the curriculum participatively through special teams and in-house training, divide tasks on the basis of competence, adopt differentiated instruction, and use formative and summative evaluation as a basis for improvement (Asmansyah & Muallim, 2025; Ramadina, 2024). The same body of work also records persistent difficulties, such as resistance to change at the early stage of implementation (Asmansyah & Muallim, 2025), challenges experienced by educators in enacting the curriculum (Rokayah et al., 2023), and evaluation that still needs to be more structured (Iriyani et al., 2023). Meanwhile, leadership research indicates that curriculum implementation depends on how leaders coordinate monitoring, resources, and distributed responsibility across the school (Adams & Hamdhiyya, 2022; Rifai et al., 2025), and a systematic review of a competency-based curriculum reform shows that weak governance can undermine implementation (Deng, 2026).

Read together, the POAC-based studies reviewed here share three limitations that define the research gap addressed by this article. First, they are largely single-site descriptive case studies that report what a school does under each managerial heading, whether the planning of the Merdeka Curriculum (Ramadina, 2024), the whole cycle in a Sekolah Penggerak (Asmansyah & Muallim, 2025), or program management outside schools (Erlangga et al., 2023). They document the functions but do not explain how one function affects another. Second, they tend to present POAC as a sequence that ends with controlling, so that evaluation appears as a final stage and not as an input to the next round of planning; where evaluation is found weak, the diagnosis is that it needs to be more structured (Iriyani et al., 2023), not that it is disconnected from planning. Third, leadership and governance research (Adams & Hamdhiyya, 2022; Deng, 2026; Rifai et al., 2025; Rodrigues et al., 2025) and work on facilities and human resources (Devi, 2021; Gusniati et al., 2024; Riswan et al., 2025) treat coordination, governance, and capacity as separate conditions that are seldom connected to the managerial functions in a single account. At the same time, curriculum scholarship has argued that curriculum making is not a linear chain of command from policy to practice but a non-linear activity distributed across intertwined sites (Priestley et al., 2021), an understanding that sits uneasily with the sequential reading of POAC that dominates practice and that POAC studies have not yet used. As a result, the relationships among the four functions, and the mechanisms that make them operate as one system, remain under-theorized.

This article differs from the studies above in three respects, which together constitute its novelty. First, it treats the integration of the managerial functions, rather than the functions themselves, as the object of conceptualization, and it locates three recurring integration gaps. Second, it identifies three integrative mechanisms, namely a feedback loop, leadership coordination, and participatory sense-making supported by resources and capacity building, and shows which links each one addresses. Third, it connects POAC with the non-linear view of curriculum making and expresses the result as four propositions that can be tested empirically. Using theory synthesis (Jaakkola, 2020), the article reconstructs curriculum management as an integrated cycle and addresses two questions: how the four managerial functions can be conceptually integrated, and which mechanisms and propositions follow from that integration for research and practice.

Managerial Functions: The POAC Cycle

Management is commonly defined as the effective and efficient use of resources to achieve organizational goals, and Terry's formulation describes its cycle as planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling (as cited in Asmansyah & Muallim, 2025; Erlangga et al., 2023). Planning determines objectives and the means of achieving them; in curriculum terms it covers the analysis of context, the formulation of learning goals, and the preparation of the operational curriculum. Organizing

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allocates tasks, authority, and resources so that plans can be executed; it includes the formation of curriculum teams, the distribution of teaching and project responsibilities, and the provision of facilities. Actuating moves people to act, and in schools it appears as the enactment of learning, the guidance and motivation of teachers, and the building of their capacity. Controlling measures performance against standards and corrects deviations, which in curriculum work means monitoring, supervision, and evaluation. Applications of the cycle in Islamic and general education, and in course programs, show how adaptable it is (Erlangga et al., 2023; Nurhikmah, 2024).

Each function also depends on specific resources. Human resource management has been examined in relation to the quality of graduates (Riswan et al., 2025), and the development of educators through compensation, motivation, and job satisfaction has been studied as a condition of institutional performance (Yaqin & Subiyantoro, 2024). Teacher pedagogical competence is likewise a policy concern in its own right (Riswan & Habibah, 2022), while standards for facilities and infrastructure are regarded as supports for effective learning (Devi, 2021; Gusniati et al., 2024). These strands indicate that the organizing and actuating functions cannot be separated from capacity and resources, a point that becomes important when the functions are integrated.

Curriculum Management and Curriculum Making

Curriculum management is the coordination of curriculum design, implementation, and evaluation within an institution. Contemporary curriculum scholarship cautions against imagining this coordination as a hierarchy. Priestley et al. (2021) frame curriculum making as a non-linear activity across intertwined supra, macro, meso, micro, and nano sites, described as types of activity rather than institutional functions. This framing matters for POAC because it suggests that planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling are not stages that occur once, in order, at one level, but activities that recur and interact across sites. In Indonesia the Merdeka Curriculum widens school-level responsibility; research describes its potential for education recovery after the pandemic (Rizaldi & Fatimah, 2023), its role in encouraging creativity and innovation among religious education teachers in madrasah (Asfiati, 2023), and its adaptive design that attends to individual differences (Anam et al., 2024), together with implementation experiences in pilot madrasah and junior high schools (Imron, 2023; Iriyani et al., 2023) and the challenges and impacts documented more broadly (Hunaepi & Suharta, 2024). Because curriculum decisions also involve what knowledge is selected and how it is organized, debates about knowledge and curriculum remain relevant to the planning function (Deng, 2025).

Leadership and Governance as Conditions of Integration

Leadership is the most frequently reported condition for coordinating curriculum work. A study of a Sekolah Penggerak found that the instructional leadership of the principal, a collaborative teacher culture, and planned use of technology accompanied successful implementation (Asmansyah & Muallim, 2025). A systematic review of principal leadership identifies monitoring the curricular program and distributing leadership among the practices that advance instruction (Adams & Hamdhiyya, 2022), and instructional leadership has been linked to stronger curriculum implementation and more comprehensive evaluation (Rifai et al., 2025). Governance forms the wider frame: weak governance has been reported to undermine curriculum implementation (Deng, 2026), and systematic reviews map the recurring problems and approaches in educational governance (Rodrigues et al., 2025). Contextual constraints, such as limited network access and underdeveloped digital literacy ecosystems in remote areas, can also shape what is feasible in learning (Enstein et al., 2024; Purba et al., 2025). Taken together, leadership, governance, and context describe the conditions under which the four managerial functions either reinforce or fail to support one another.

 ISSN 2747-089X

Relationships among the Theoretical Strands: Toward a Conceptual Foundation

The strands reviewed above are not parallel topics. They stand in specific relations to one another, and these relations provide the conceptual basis for the model proposed in this article. The first relation is that of function to site. POAC specifies what managers do, namely plan, organize, actuate, and control, whereas the curriculum-making literature specifies where and among whom that work takes place (Priestley et al., 2021). Read together, they imply that each function recurs at several sites and that what is planned at one site is reinterpreted at the next, so the managerial cycle cannot be assumed to travel intact from policy to classroom. For the same reason, actuating cannot be reduced to executing a plan: practitioners enact a curriculum by interpreting it, which links the cycle to the sense-making perspective (Soini et al., 2021).

The second relation is that of leadership to function. The leadership literature describes principals as those who monitor the curricular program, distribute responsibility, and connect evaluation to curriculum design (Adams & Hamdhiyya, 2022; Rifai et al., 2025). In theoretical terms, leadership is therefore not a fifth function added to the cycle but the activity that couples the four functions so that the output of one becomes the input of the next. Without such coupling the functions can be performed side by side without being aligned, which is consistent with reports that evaluation is conducted but remains insufficiently structured for use in decisions (Iriyani et al., 2023).

The third relation is that of conditions to function. Governance shapes the authority and accountability within which organizing and controlling operate (Deng, 2026; Rodrigues et al., 2025), while facilities, human resources, and teacher capacity determine whether organizing and actuating can be carried out as planned (Devi, 2021; Gusniati et al., 2024; Riswan et al., 2025; Yaqin & Subiyantoro, 2024). Contextual limits such as network access (Purba et al., 2025) act in the same way. These conditions are therefore expected to moderate the integration of the functions and not to substitute for it.

Taken together, the strands support a single logic. The managerial functions supply the content of curriculum management, curriculum making supplies its non-linear and multi-site structure, leadership supplies coordination, and governance and resources supply the enabling conditions. This logic gives the three integrative mechanisms and the four propositions presented in the Result section their theoretical footing: the feedback loop expresses the functions in recursive form, leadership coordination expresses the coupling role of leaders, participatory sense-making expresses the interpretive work of curriculum making together with capacity, and governance and resources appear as moderating conditions in the fourth proposition.

Method

This study employs a conceptual research design based on library research. Conceptual articles build theory by synthesizing existing ideas rather than by collecting new empirical data, and Jaakkola (2020) argues that such work must rest on an explicit research design in which the choice of theories and their role in the analysis are justified. The study follows the theory synthesis template, which combines concepts and findings from separate streams of work into a more integrated account. Library research was used to gather and examine the sources (Sari & Asmendri, 2020).

The analysis proceeded in five steps. First, the scope was delimited to curriculum management understood through the managerial functions of POAC, together with three closely related streams that the study treats as conditions of integration: curriculum making, school

 ISSN 2747-089X

leadership, and educational governance. Resources, capacity, and context were included where the sources linked them to the performance of a managerial function.

Second, sources were identified through keyword searches on open-access journal platforms and publisher websites, using combinations of the terms curriculum management, POAC, managerial functions, Merdeka Curriculum, curriculum making, instructional leadership, and educational governance. Sources were then selected purposively against four criteria: (a) a scholarly publication, namely a journal article, book, or book chapter, with accessible full text; (b) explicit attention to curriculum, managerial functions, leadership, or governance, or to a resource condition directly tied to curriculum implementation; (c) publication from 2020 onward; and (d) relevance to the Indonesian context of the Merdeka Curriculum, or a contribution to the theoretical or comparative understanding of curriculum making and governance. Sources that mentioned curriculum only incidentally, or that did not bear on how curriculum work is managed, led, or governed, were not retained.

Twenty-seven works were retained, all published between 2020 and 2026: two methodological references (Jaakkola, 2020; Sari & Asmendri, 2020) and 25 substantive sources. Classified by primary focus, the substantive sources comprise studies of POAC and managerial functions (3), of Merdeka Curriculum implementation (8), of curriculum making and knowledge (3), of leadership (2), of governance and context (4), and of resources, human resources, and capacity (5). The corpus consists mainly of journal articles, with one edited book and one book chapter.

Third, each source was read and coded by managerial function, and the passages that described how one function related to another were marked separately as link passages. Fourth, the codes were compared across sources and contexts to identify recurring integration gaps, the conditions associated with their resolution were grouped into mechanisms, and the functions and mechanisms were assembled into a model (Figure 1). Each proposition was then formulated as a relationship between a mechanism or condition and an outcome, and was retained only if it could be traced to at least two sources. Fifth, the credibility of the reconstruction was strengthened by checking each claim against more than one source where possible, by keeping an audit trail of coding decisions, and by stating the limits of the evidence. Because the sources were selected purposively rather than through an exhaustive systematic search, the reconstruction is a theoretical proposal and not an empirical generalization.

Result

The synthesis yielded three results: a functional mapping that shows how the literature treats each function and where it stops (Table 1), a set of three integrative mechanisms that connect the functions (Table 2), and a reconstructed model of curriculum management that is summarized in Figure 1 and expressed as four propositions (Table 3).

Table 1: Reconstruction of Managerial Functions in Curriculum Management

Function	Conventional conception in the reviewed literature	Reconstructed conception	Integrative link
Planning	A curriculum team prepares the operational curriculum before the school year, aligned with regulation (Asmansyah & Muallim, 2025; Ramadina, 2024).	Continuous, evidence-informed design that is revised using evaluation data and shaped by participation.	Receives feedback from controlling; defines indicators and roles for organizing.

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Function	Conventional conception in the reviewed literature	Reconstructed conception	Integrative link
Organizing	Division of tasks by competence, formation of teams, and provision of facilities and partners (Asmansyah & Muallim, 2025; Devi, 2021).	Structuring of roles, capacity, and resources around the plan, with shared leadership.	Translates the plan into roles and resources; sets the conditions for actuating.
Actuating	Classroom implementation, differentiated instruction, and teacher training (Anam et al., 2024; Asmansyah & Muallim, 2025).	Guided enactment in which teachers interpret the plan and are supported by coaching and learning communities.	Generates the evidence and experience that controlling examines and planning needs.
Controlling	Periodic evaluation and supervision, with a call for more structured evaluation (Asmansyah & Muallim, 2025; Iriyani et al., 2023).	Participatory and formative monitoring and evaluation that is tied to decisions.	Returns findings to planning, organizing, and actuating as corrective action.

Three integration gaps recur in the sources reviewed. The first lies between controlling and planning: evaluation is conducted regularly, but its use as a basis for decisions is reported mainly where schools make the feedback loop explicit (Asmansyah & Muallim, 2025), while other studies note that evaluation still needs to be more structured (Iriyani et al., 2023). The second lies between planning and actuating: participatory planning and in-house training are used to reduce resistance to change (Asmansyah & Muallim, 2025; Ramadina, 2024), yet the difficulties that educators report (Rokayah et al., 2023) indicate that plans are not automatically translated into practice. The third lies between organizing and actuating: facilities, human resources, and partners are treated as preconditions of implementation (Devi, 2021; Gusniati et al., 2024; Riswan et al., 2025), but in the sources reviewed here the resource dimension is usually discussed apart from planning and evaluation.

Three integrative mechanisms were derived from these gaps. Each is explained below, and Table 2 summarizes which gaps it addresses, how it operates across the four functions, and how it supports the continuity of curriculum management.

The first mechanism is the feedback loop, which addresses the gap between controlling and planning. In the conventional sequence, controlling produces a report and the cycle stops. In the reconstructed model, controlling produces evidence that is returned to three destinations: to planning, where objectives and indicators are revised; to organizing, where roles and resources are realigned; and to actuating, where teachers receive coaching and workshops. Asmansyah and Muallim (2025) describe such a continuous improvement cycle, in which evaluation results lead to teacher workshops and program adjustment. The loop supports sustainable management because each round starts from what the previous round revealed, so improvement accumulates across rounds instead of being re-created in each. It works only when evaluation is structured and tied to decisions (Iriyani et al., 2023), which is why Table 1 describes controlling in the reconstructed conception as tied to decisions.

The second mechanism is leadership coordination, which holds the links together and therefore bears on all three gaps. The principal and the curriculum team act as instructional and distributed leaders: they monitor the curricular program and distribute responsibility across teachers (Adams & Hamdhiyya, 2022), and they use evaluation to inform curriculum design and implementation (Rifai et al., 2025). In the model this appears as three coordinating acts: convening evaluation-based planning discussions (controlling to planning), matching roles and resources to the plan (planning to organizing), and aligning guidance and teacher motivation with the plan during

 ISSN 2747-089X

enactment (organizing to actuating). Because responsibility is distributed, coordination is not expected to depend on a single person, which supports continuity over successive cycles.

The third mechanism is participatory sense-making supported by resources and capacity building, which addresses the gaps between planning and actuating and between organizing and actuating. Teachers and other stakeholders do not merely receive the plan; they interpret it, and shared interpretation is what brings plan and practice together, as the account of curriculum reform in Finland shows (Soini et al., 2021). Participation in planning, in-house training, and learning communities (Asmansyah & Muallim, 2025; Ramadina, 2024) is used to reduce resistance and the difficulties that educators report (Rokayah et al., 2023), while facilities, human resources, and partners provide the capacity to act on shared understanding (Devi, 2021; Gusniati et al., 2024; Riswan et al., 2025). In the model, this mechanism underlies the cycle (Figure 1): it turns actuating into guided interpretation and makes the evidence generated in actuating meaningful to those who must act on it when it returns through the feedback loop.

The three mechanisms are interdependent. The feedback loop supplies the evidence that leaders need in order to coordinate; leadership supplies the channel through which evidence changes plans, since evidence alters practice only when someone convenes the conversation about it; and sense-making supplies the understanding and capacity to act on that evidence. If one is missing, the others weaken: a feedback loop without leadership yields reports that no one uses, leadership without evidence coordinates by habit, and sense-making without feedback or coordination yields local understanding without change across the system. This interdependence is what allows the cycle to sustain itself, because each round strengthens the conditions for the next, and it is the reason the propositions in Table 3 are stated as relationships between mechanisms and outcomes.

Table 2: Integrative Mechanisms and Their Links to the Managerial Functions

Mechanism	Gap addressed	How it operates across the four functions	Contribution to sustainable management
Feedback loop	Controlling to planning; also reaches organizing and actuating	Controlling returns evaluative evidence to planning (revised objectives and indicators), organizing (realigned roles and resources), and actuating (coaching and workshops).	Each round starts from the evidence of the previous round, so improvement accumulates.
Leadership coordination	All three gaps	The principal and curriculum team convene evaluation-based planning, match roles and resources to the plan, and align guidance with it during enactment.	Distributed responsibility means coordination does not rest on one person.
Participatory sense-making with resources and capacity building	Planning to actuating; organizing to actuating	Teachers take part in planning and interpret the plan; training, learning communities, facilities, and human resources enable them to act on it.	Shared understanding and capacity keep practice consistent with the plan and make evidence usable.

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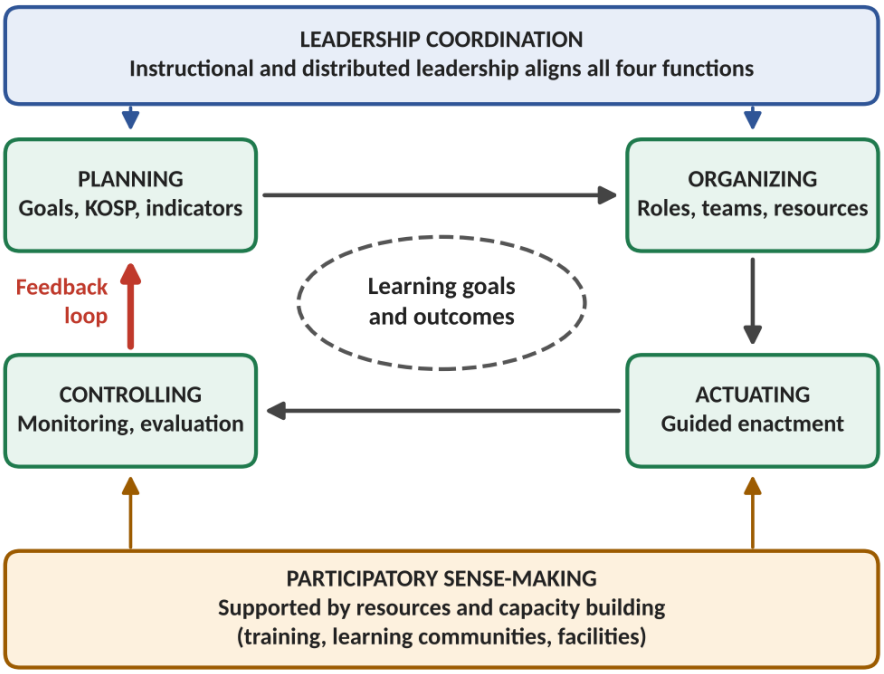


Figure 1: Integrated Model of Curriculum Management Based on Managerial Functions

The model in Figure 1 places learning goals and outcomes at the center and depicts the four functions as an interdependent cycle. The feedback loop runs from controlling to planning, leadership coordination connects all four functions, and participatory sense-making with resources and capacity building underlies the cycle. Because the cycle recurs at several sites of curriculum making, such as the classroom, the school, and the wider education authority, it is consistent with the non-linear view of curriculum making (Priestley et al., 2021). In the figure, leadership coordination sits above the cycle and aligns all four functions, the red arrow from controlling to planning marks the principal return path of evidence, and participatory sense-making sits beneath the cycle and supports actuating, where the plan is interpreted, and controlling, where evidence is read. Read as a whole, the model states that curriculum management is sustained not by performing each function in turn but by keeping the links among them active. Four propositions follow from the model and are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Propositions Derived from the Reconstructed Model

No.	Proposition	Basis in the literature
P1	Curriculum management quality is higher when controlling findings are explicitly used to revise plans, organizational arrangements, and implementation (feedback loop).	Asmansyah & Muallim (2025); Iriyani et al. (2023)
P2	Coherence among the four functions is higher when principals and curriculum teams exercise instructional and distributed leadership.	Adams & Hamdhiyya (2022); Rifai et al. (2025)
P3	The translation of plans into classroom practice is stronger when teachers take part in planning and are supported by contextual training and learning communities.	Asmansyah & Muallim (2025); Ramadina (2024); Rokayah et al. (2023); Soini et al. (2021)
P4	The effect of integration on curriculum implementation is moderated by governance conditions and by the availability of facilities and human resources.	Deng (2026); Gusniati et al. (2024); Riswan et al. (2025); Rodrigues et al. (2025)

 ISSN 2747-089X

Discussion

The central interpretation of this article is that the quality of curriculum management depends less on how well each function is performed than on whether the functions are connected. The reviewed studies, mostly case-based, show that schools perform planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling in recognizable ways (Asmansyah & Muallim, 2025; Ramadina, 2024), but a description of each stage cannot explain why some schools convert the cycle into improvement while others remain administrative. The integrated model offers a conceptual answer: improvement is more likely when the connections between stages, especially the return of evaluative evidence to planning, are deliberately designed. This extends the conventional reading of POAC as a linear sequence, in which controlling is the final stage, toward a cyclical and recursive reading in which controlling is also the beginning of the next round of planning. It also invites a different reading of the common finding that evaluation needs to be more structured (Iriyani et al., 2023): the deficit may lie not only in the structure of evaluation but in the absence of a route by which its findings reach planning, organizing, and actuating.

The second contribution concerns coordination. Leadership appears in the literature mostly as a background condition, yet the model gives it a specific role, which is to couple the functions so that the output of one becomes the input of the next. This is consistent with findings that principal instructional leadership is associated with stronger implementation and more comprehensive evaluation (Rifai et al., 2025) and that effective principals monitor the curricular program and distribute leadership (Adams & Hamdhiyya, 2022). Two implications follow. Theoretically, leadership is positioned as a mechanism and not as a fifth function, which avoids enlarging POAC while helping to explain why similar structures can produce different results under different leaders. Practically, leadership development programs could train principals in connecting the functions, for example by using evaluation data to lead planning conversations, and not only in performing each function well.

The third contribution links the model to curriculum making. Priestley et al. (2021) show that curriculum making unfolds across multiple, interacting sites. Read against this view, the POAC cycle in a school is one nested cycle among others, and its integration depends on how it connects with classroom, district, and national activity. This may help explain why Merdeka Curriculum implementation varies across settings (Hunaepi & Suharta, 2024; Iriyani et al., 2023) even when schools follow the same national guidance, and it suggests that governance conditions moderate the effect of internal management (Deng, 2026; Rodrigues et al., 2025). Contextual constraints such as limited network access (Purba et al., 2025) and underdeveloped digital literacy ecosystems (Enstein et al., 2024) further indicate that organizing and actuating cannot be designed independently of the local environment. The emphasis on participatory sense-making is also consistent with the account of Soini et al. (2021), in which shared sense-making among practitioners at all layers of the system is central to curriculum reform. Together, the second and third contributions place the model between two bodies of work that have rarely been combined: managerial-function studies, which supply a vocabulary of what management does, and curriculum-making studies, which supply an account of where and how that work becomes curriculum in practice.

In sum, the model contributes to the theory of curriculum management in four ways. It changes the unit of analysis from the function to the relationship among functions. It specifies three mechanisms through which those relationships are sustained, and shows which gap each mechanism addresses. It connects POAC with the non-linear account of curriculum making, so that the managerial cycle is understood as recurring across sites and not as occurring once at the level of the school. And it converts these claims into four propositions: the first three state how

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integration operates through the feedback loop, leadership, and participation, and the fourth states under which conditions, namely governance and resources, it is stronger or weaker.

For practice, and particularly for the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, in which schools carry responsibility for developing their own operational curriculum, the model suggests that school principals and curriculum teams can audit their management by asking not only whether each function is performed but whether each link is working: whether evaluation findings change the plan, whether roles and resources match the plan, whether teachers help interpret the curriculum, and whether leadership time is spent on coordination. For policymakers, the model implies that regulations and training programs should address the links among functions, for instance by asking that evaluation reports feed into the next operational curriculum and by supporting capacity building alongside facilities.

This study has limitations. The reconstruction is built from purposively selected literature, so it is a theoretical proposal and not an empirical finding, and the case studies on which it draws are concentrated in Indonesia and in descriptive qualitative designs. The propositions therefore require testing. Future research may examine them through multi-site case studies, mixed-methods designs, and quantitative models that test mediation by the use of feedback and moderation by governance and resources, and may develop indicators for each integrative link.

Conclusion

This article set out to reconstruct curriculum management by integrating the managerial functions of planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling, and it reaches three main findings. First, the POAC-based literature describes each function in detail but leaves three links under-theorized: controlling to planning, planning to actuating, and organizing to actuating. Second, these gaps can be addressed by three integrative mechanisms, namely a feedback loop from controlling to planning, leadership coordination, and participatory sense-making supported by resources and capacity building, which turn the four functions from a sequence of administrative tasks into a self-correcting cycle. Third, the reconstruction yields four propositions that make this integration empirically testable.

The conceptual contribution of the article is to move the object of theorizing from the functions to the relations among them, and to connect POAC with the non-linear account of curriculum making. For the science of educational management, the added value is that POAC, long used as a descriptive checklist, becomes an explanatory framework: it can say why schools with similar structures obtain different results, and it locates the points at which intervention is most needed, namely the links between functions. For practice, the model gives principals, curriculum teams, and policymakers a way to audit and strengthen those links, especially in periods of curriculum change such as the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. Because the model is built from purposively selected literature, empirical testing of the propositions across contexts is the next step.

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