

Integrating Islamic Values and 21st-Century Competencies into Quality Management for Madrasah and Pesantren Graduates

Anisa Rahmawati

Universitas Islam Negeri Palangka Raya, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: nisarahma.2510130459@uin-palangkaraya.ac.id

Abstract

The advent of the digital age has presented challenges for the management of Islamic education. This study aims to describe the management of graduate quality in meeting the educational demands of the 21st century as applied in Madrasah and Pesantren. This qualitative study, in the form of a literature review, employs the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) analytical model. The results indicate that the quality of madrasah and pesantren graduates, amidst the demands for 21st-century competencies, is determined not only by academic achievement but also by religious character, social skills, digital literacy, critical thinking skills, and readiness to face global change. However, the implementation of quality management in madrasahs and pesantren often still faces obstacles, such as uneven human resource quality, a weak quality evaluation system, suboptimal curriculum integration, and limited utilisation of educational technology. This research presents a quality management model that integrates Total Quality Management, a culture of quality, transformational leadership, and the application of Islamic values in the management of religious education

Keywords: Management Integration, Graduate Quality, Madrasah, Pesantren.

Abstrak

Perkembangan era digital telah memberikan tantangan bagi manajemen pendidikan Islam. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan manajemen kualitas lulusan dalam memenuhi tuntutan pendidikan di abad ke-21 yang diterapkan pada madrasah, dan Pesantren. Penelitian kualitatif dalam bentuk studi pustaka ini menggunakan model analisa Systematic Literature Review (SLR). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kualitas lulusan Madrasah dan Pesantren di tengah tuntutan kualitas kompetensi Abad 21 tidak hanya ditentukan oleh prestasi akademik, tetapi juga karakter religius, keterampilan sosial, literasi digital, kemampuan berpikir kritis, dan kesiapan menghadapi perubahan global. Namun, penerapan manajemen mutu di madrasah dan pesantren seringkali masih menghadapi kendala, seperti kualitas sumber daya manusia yang belum merata, sistem evaluasi mutu yang lemah, integrasi kurikulum yang belum optimal, serta pemanfaatan teknologi pendidikan yang masih terbatas. Penelitian ini memberikan sebuah model manajemen kualitas yang menyatukan pendekatan Total Quality Management, budaya kualitas, kepemimpinan transformasional, dan penerapan nilai-nilai Islam dalam pengelolaan keagamaan.

Kata Kunci: Integrasi Manajemen, Kualitas Lulusan, Madrasah, Pesantren

INTRODUCTION

The quality of education is a key indicator in determining the success of educational institutions in producing competitive human resources of good character. In the context of Islamic education, graduate quality is measured not only through academic achievement but also through students' ability to internalize Islamic values, build moral integrity, and be prepared to face social challenges and global developments (Sallis, 2021). Therefore, managing graduate quality in Madrasah and Pesantren has become a strategic issue in the development of contemporary Islamic education.

The evolution of 21st-century education demands that educational institutions produce graduates equipped with critical thinking, creativity, communication, collaboration, and digital literacy skills. On the other hand, Islamic educational institutions bear an additional responsibility in shaping the spiritual and moral character of students. This situation means that Islamic educational institutions face more complex challenges than general educational institutions because they must be able to integrate global competencies with religious values into a cohesive educational system (OECD, 2021). In the era of globalization, Islamic education is also required to develop contextual and transformative learning systems that are adaptive to social change and modern developments. Islamic Religious Education learning should not merely focus on cognitive achievement but must also integrate affective and psychomotor dimensions in a balanced manner to produce graduates who are both religious and globally competitive (Anamisari et al., n.d.2026).

In practice, the implementation of graduate quality standards in madrasahs and pesantren still faces various challenges. Several studies indicate quality gaps among Islamic educational institutions, particularly regarding the quality of teaching staff, curriculum development, the use of educational technology, and quality evaluation systems that are not yet functioning optimally (Fadhli, 2022). Furthermore, some Islamic educational institutions still tend to manage quality in an administrative and formalistic manner, resulting in graduate quality development that is not yet fully oriented toward students' needs and the challenges of the global community (Sianipar et al., 2024)

From an educational management perspective, the concept of Total Quality Management (TQM) is a relevant approach for continuously improving the quality of educational institutions. TQM emphasizes the importance of continuous improvement, visionary leadership, a culture of quality, the participation of all organizational members, and a focus on educational customer satisfaction (Goetsch & Davis, 2021). However, the application of modern quality concepts in Islamic education requires adaptation to the characteristics and core values of Islamic education so as not to lose its spiritual and moral dimensions.

Islamic education, by its very nature, is not only oriented toward the attainment of technical competencies but also toward the development of well-rounded individuals who possess a balance between intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and social aspects. Therefore, the development of graduate quality in madrasahs and Islamic boarding schools must be

based on an integrative paradigm that combines modern quality systems with the internalization of Islamic values in the educational process (Muhaimin, 2020).

In addition, pesantren and madrasahs historically have not only functioned as centers for the transmission of Islamic knowledge but also as social and cultural institutions that contribute to the development of Indonesian society. The development of madrasahs as a response to educational modernization demonstrates that Islamic educational institutions continue to adapt to social change while maintaining their Islamic identity (Putri et al., n.d., 2026)

This study aims to describe the management of graduate quality in meeting the educational demands of the 21st century as applied in Madrasahs and Pesantren. This qualitative study, in the form of a literature review, utilises the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) analysis model.

Several previous studies have examined the implementation of quality management in Islamic educational institutions. Bush (2021) explains that educational leadership plays a crucial role in building an organizational quality culture. Karim (2021) emphasizes that academic supervision systems contribute to improving the quality of learning in madrasahs. Hasanah (2023) also demonstrates that the internalization of spiritual values in educational management can enhance educators' commitment and work culture. However, most of these studies still address aspects of quality, leadership, and Islamic values in a fragmented manner.

Given these circumstances, there is a need to develop a more integrated model of graduate quality management, particularly in the context of Islamic education. This study aims to examine the implementation of graduate quality standards in madrasahs, pesantren, and Islamic higher education institutions (PTKI) through an integrated quality management approach that incorporates Islamic values as the foundation for holistic educational quality development.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach in the form of library research. This approach is used to conduct an in-depth examination of the concept of graduate quality management in Islamic educational institutions through the analysis of various relevant scientific literature. The research data sources consist of secondary data obtained from reputable scientific journals, academic books, educational regulations, and previous research findings from the years 2020–2026. The selection of sources was conducted purposively based on the relevance of the topic, the authors' credibility, and the connection to the research focus.

Data collection was conducted through a documentary study by identifying, reading, reviewing, and categorizing literature related to quality management in Islamic education, graduate quality standards, quality culture, and Islamic educational leadership. This process aimed to obtain comprehensive information regarding the implementation of quality management in Islamic educational institutions.

The data were analysis employed thematic analysis techniques through the stages of data reduction, categorization, interpretation, and drawing conclusions. The analysis was conducted systematically to identify patterns of relationships between quality implementation, educational leadership, and graduate quality development from an Islamic education perspective. To ensure data validity, the study employed source triangulation by comparing various references with high relevance and credibility. Additionally, the study addressed the aspect of trustworthiness, which encompasses credibility, dependability, and confirmability in the data analysis process (Creswell & Poth, 2023).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Impelementation of Total Quality Management in Islamic Education

Total Quality Management (TQM) is a management approach that focuses on continuous quality improvement by involving all parts of an organization. In the field of education, TQM aims to improve the quality of educational services, the effectiveness of the learning process, and the satisfaction of all parties involved in education (Sallis, 2021). The concept of quality in education is not merely viewed as meeting administrative standards but also as the ability of educational institutions to produce graduates who align with societal needs and the demands of the modern era (Goetsch & Davis, 2021).

In Islamic educational institutions, the implementation of quality management cannot be separated from the spiritual and moral values that are the hallmark of Islamic education. Islamic education focuses not only on academic ability but also on the development of a well rounded individual one who possesses good intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual qualities (Muhaimin, 2020). Therefore, to improve the quality of Islamic education, we need to use an approach that combines modern quality systems with the application of Islamic values in the teaching and learning process.

Furthermore, leadership in education plays a crucial role in fostering a culture of quality within educational institutions. Transformational leadership focuses on a leader's ability to build a shared vision, boost the morale of organizational members, and create a work culture that is adaptable and innovative (Leithwood, 2021). In Islamic education, leadership also has a spiritual aspect evident in values such as trustworthiness, exemplary conduct, responsibility, and moral commitment in managing educational institutions (Hasanah, 2023).

Integration of Islamic Values, Leadership, and Graduate Quality Development

This study is based on the relationship between Islamic values, transformational leadership, a culture of quality, and the development of graduate quality in Islamic education. Islamic values are considered the foundation of norms in all educational management processes, while transformational leadership serves as a driver of change within the organization and the formation of a culture of quality in educational institutions.

A quality culture shaped by visionary leadership will influence how effectively educational quality management is implemented. In this context, an integrated quality management system serves as a strategic tool to ensure that all educational processes

operate in an orderly, measurable, and sustainable manner. The combination of Islamic values, a culture of quality, and educational management is expected to produce graduates who are not only academically excellent but also possess religious character, social skills, digital competencies, and the readiness to face global challenges in the 21st century.

This conceptual framework explains that administrative measures alone are not sufficient to improve the quality of Islamic education. It is also important to integrate modern management systems, transformative leadership, and the instillation of spiritual values at every stage of education.

Implementation of Graduate Quality Management in Madrasah and Pesantren

The research findings indicate that the implementation of graduate quality management in Islamic educational institutions has primarily focused on developing students' academic abilities and fostering their religious character. Madrasahs and pesantren strive not only to produce academically intelligent graduates but also those with moral and spiritual integrity. This is evident in how Islamic values are integrated into the learning process, school culture, and student character development (Muhaimin, 2020; Anwar, 2021).

However, the implementation of graduate quality standards still varies among Islamic educational institutions. Some madrasahs and pesantren have been able to develop quality systems aligned with contemporary developments, but others still face challenges regarding human resources, facilities, and quality evaluation systems. This situation indicates that the success of quality implementation is highly dependent on the institution's management's ability to manage all educational components in an organized and continuous manner (Sallis, 2021; Sianipar et al., 2024).

In addition, many Islamic educational institutions still focus more on administrative aspects and meeting formal standards than on prioritizing quality. In fact, the quality of graduates should not be assessed solely on the basis of administrative documents or academic achievements, but also on students' ability to cope with social change, technological advancements, and global challenges in the 21st century (OECD, 2021).

In addition, to improve the quality of graduates from madrasahs and pesantren, there is also a need for continuous improvement in the capabilities of teachers and educational staff. Teachers play a crucial role in determining the quality of learning, shaping students' character, and ensuring the successful implementation of a culture of quality within the Islamic educational environment. Therefore, enhancing teachers' professionalism through training, mastery of educational technology, and the development of teaching skills is vital to producing high-quality graduates who can adapt to the changing times (Mulyasa, 2021; Arifin, 2022).

On the other hand, to implement graduate quality management, support is also needed from leaders with a clear vision and a continuous assessment system. Madrasah principals and pesantren leaders are expected to foster an organizational culture that is collaborative, creative, and focused on continuous quality improvement. Quality evaluation should not be limited to academic aspects but must also encompass character

development, discipline, social skills, and students' readiness to face global challenges and advancements in digital technology (Leithwood, 2021; Hasanah, 2023).

Educational Leadership as a Driver of a Culture of Quality

Research shows that leadership in educational institutions is crucial in fostering a culture of quality in madrasahs and pesantren. Madrasah principals or pesantren leaders do not merely act as administrators but also as leaders who drive change and guide the development of educational quality (Bush, 2021).

In practice, transformational leadership is evident in a leader's ability to build a shared vision, inspire educators, and create a work environment that supports the improvement of learning quality. This finding aligns with Leithwood's (2021) theory, which explains that transformational leadership can enhance organizational commitment and the professionalism of educators.

Furthermore, leadership in Islamic education possesses a spiritual dimension that constitutes the primary distinction compared to leadership in conventional education. The head of a madrasah is not only tasked with achieving organizational goals but also with instilling values such as trustworthiness, sincerity, responsibility, and an Islamic work ethic within the culture of the educational institution (Hasanah, 2023).

A culture of quality built through visionary leadership will have an impact on educators' commitment, the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process, and the continued improvement of the overall quality of Islamic educational institutions.

In addition, effective leadership in education is also crucial for fostering collaboration among all stakeholders within educational institutions, such as teachers, students, parents, and the community. Involving various parties in improving the quality of education can create a better learning environment and help achieve the overall goals of Islamic education. Educational leaders who can communicate effectively and motivate everyone in the school will find it easier to establish a culture of quality that endures (Wahjosumidjo, 2021; Robbins & Judge, 2022).

In this digital and globalized era, leaders in madrasahs and Islamic boarding schools must also adapt to technological advancements and social changes. Islamic educational leaders must encourage innovative approaches to learning, the use of educational technology, and the development of 21st-century skills for students. Thus, the culture of quality that is built focuses not only on academic achievement and religious values but also on graduates' ability to compete and contribute to the global community without neglecting their Islamic identity (Fullan, 2020; Sianipar et al., 2024).

1. Issues in the Implementation of Quality Management in Islamic Education

This study identified several key issues in the implementation of quality management in Islamic education. First, there are still limitations regarding the quality of educators, particularly in their mastery of learning technologies, innovative teaching methods, and the development of an integrated curriculum (Fadhli, 2022).

Second, the quality assessment systems in some Islamic educational institutions are not yet functioning effectively. Evaluations remain overly focused on administrative matters and do not fully account for the quality of learning or the overall development of students' competencies (Sianipar et al., 2024).

Third, there are challenges in integrating Islamic values with the need for global skills in the 21st century. Some Islamic educational institutions still face challenges in balancing the strengthening of religious identity with the need to master technology, digital literacy, and critical thinking skills (OECD, 2021).

Upon closer examination, this issue reveals that simply changing the curriculum or official policies is not enough to improve the quality of Islamic education. We also need to transform the organizational culture, strengthen leadership, and develop a more flexible and sustainable educational management system.

In addition to factors such as teaching staff and assessment methods, a lack of educational facilities and infrastructure also poses a barrier to the implementation of quality management in Islamic educational institutions. Some madrasahs and Islamic boarding schools still face challenges in providing adequate learning facilities that incorporate technology, internet access, laboratories, and learning resources. These conditions can affect the effectiveness of the learning process and hinder the development of students' skills in line with current educational needs (Mulyasa, 2021; Fadhli, 2022).

Additionally, success in implementing quality management is influenced by the educational institution's ability to foster a culture of continuous evaluation and improvement. Islamic educational institutions must have a systematic monitoring and evaluation system so that each educational program can be periodically analyzed and developed according to needs. Through continuous evaluation, educational institutions can respond more quickly to changes in society, technological advancements, and global competency needs, while maintaining the core values of Islamic education (Sallis, 2021; Bush, 2021).

2. Integration of Islamic Values in Educational Quality Management

Research indicates that internalizing Islamic values is crucial for improving the quality of graduates from Islamic educational institutions. Values such as trust, discipline, responsibility, hard work, and a passion for learning serve as essential moral foundations for fostering a culture of quality within educational institutions (Anwar, 2021).

In this context, Islamic values are not merely viewed as teaching materials but are also applied in leadership practices, teacher development, organizational culture, and social relationships within the educational environment. This indicates that the quality of Islamic education encompasses a spiritual dimension that is inseparable from educational management practices (Muhaimin, 2020).

When linked to the concept of Total Quality Management (TQM), the application of Islamic values aligns with the principles of continuous improvement, organizational commitment, and a focus on quality. The difference lies in the philosophical foundation, where Islamic education places spiritual values as the primary foundation for improving

educational quality. Furthermore, the integration of religion and science has become an important aspect in strengthening the quality of Islamic education in the digital era. The integration of scientific knowledge with Islamic spiritual values can be implemented through curriculum development, learning methods, research approaches, and educational evaluation. This integrative approach supports the creation of contextual and dialogical Islamic learning systems that remain grounded in ethical and spiritual values (Afdila et al., n.d., 2026).

In addition to serving as a moral foundation, the integration of Islamic values into educational quality management also helps shape students' character by fostering a balance between intellectual and spiritual development. Islamic education focuses not only on academic achievement but also on the development of good character, compassion for others, and a balanced approach to interacting with society. Therefore, the application of Islamic values in all educational activities can create a learning environment that is more humane, religious, and focused on the formation of a well-rounded individual (Nata, 2021; Azra, 2020).

Furthermore, integrating Islamic values into the organizational culture of an educational institution can strengthen the commitment of all school members to continuously improve quality. Teachers, educational staff, and students will collectively recognize that improving the quality of education is part of their moral responsibility and a form of worship. Thus, the culture of quality that is formed focuses not only on achieving institutional goals but also on developing ethics, integrity, and social responsibility within Islamic education (Suyitno, 2022; Hasanah, 2023).

3. An Integrative Model for Quality Management of Islamic Education Graduates

Based on the overall research findings, this study develops an integrated model for the quality management of Islamic education graduates consisting of three main components. First, Islamic values as the normative foundation. Second, transformational and spiritual leadership as a strategy. Third, integrated quality management as a tool for implementation.

Islamic values serve to provide moral guidance and meaning in every step of the educational process, while transformational leadership functions as a catalyst for change within the organization and the development of a culture of quality. On the other hand, integrated quality management ensures that all educational processes are conducted in an organized, measurable, and continuous manner.

This model demonstrates that to improve graduate quality, administrative measures alone are insufficient. A combination of management systems, leadership, and spiritual values is also required. This integration yields quality improvements that focus not only on academic abilities but also on the development of students' character and moral integrity.

Furthermore, this integrated model demonstrates that a modern quality system need not conflict with the Islamic educational perspective. On the contrary, the two can complement each other in improving the quality of Islamic education so that it can adapt to the changing times without losing its Islamic identity.

CONCLUSION

Based on the main focus of the research, it is concluded that the quality of graduates from madrasahs and pesantren, amidst the demands for 21st-century competencies, is not only determined by academic achievement but also by religious character, social skills, digital literacy, critical thinking skills, and readiness to face global change. However, whilst this is recognised in theory, the implementation of quality management in madrasahs and pesantren often still faces various obstacles, such as uneven human resource quality, weak quality evaluation systems, sub-optimal curriculum integration, and limited use of educational technology.

The theoretical contribution of this research lies a culture of quality, transformational leadership, and the application of Islamic values in the management of religious education. This model serves as a foundation for the sustainable development of educational quality. This study is still a literature review, so field research is needed to test the practical application of the model in various contexts of Islamic educational institutions. Practically, Islamic educational institutions are advised to strengthen their methods of evaluating quality, develop teachers' capabilities, and integrate educational technology into the teaching and learning process.

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