

Total Quality Management, Transformation Towards Quality and Competitive Madrasah

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the application of total quality management (tqm) in realizing quality and competitive madrasas by highlighting the basic principles, implementation strategies, and challenges faced. The background of the research departs from the need for madrasas to improve quality and competitiveness in the midst of the demands of globalization without ignoring Islamic values. The research method used is library research by examining various literature related to TQM, education management, and the concept of quality in Islam. The results show that TQM principles such as customer focus, engagement of all elements, continuous improvement, and data-driven decision-making, are aligned with Islamic values such as ishlah (improvement) and itqan (rigor). Implementation strategies include strengthening quality culture, improving educator competence, stakeholder participation, and implementing transparent and data-based evaluations. However, the implementation of TQM still faces challenges, including limited human resources, inadequate infrastructure, and organizational culture that tends to be bureaucratic. In conclusion, the implementation of TQM in Islamic educational institutions has great potential to improve quality and competitiveness, as long as it is supported by visionary leadership, shared commitment, and consistency in building a culture of quality.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the main pillars in building a nation's civilization. The success of a nation in facing global challenges is highly determined by the quality of education organized, including in Islamic educational institutions (Tidjani, 2017). In this context, Islamic educational institutions are faced with two main demands, namely maintaining an Islamic identity that is loaded with moral and spiritual values, and ensuring the achievement of educational quality standards that are relevant to the development of science, technology, and the needs of modern society (Annisa, 2021). This condition encourages the importance of implementing the concept of integrated quality management or Total Quality Management (TQM) as a strategic approach to improve the quality of Islamic education. TQM not only emphasizes the aspect of achieving the end result, but also focuses on processes that are oriented

towards continuous improvement, customer satisfaction (stakeholder), and the participation of all elements of the organization (Susanto et al., 2024).

In the world of education, especially Islamic education, the application of TQM is becoming increasingly relevant because educational institutions face complex challenges related to the quality of graduates, the competence of educators, curriculum, and institutional management. Many Islamic educational institutions still experience various obstacles such as limited resources, ineffective management, and low adaptation to changes in the strategic environment. This has an impact on the low competitiveness of graduates, the lack of innovation, and the decline in public trust. Therefore, the implementation of TQM is seen as a strategic solution to transform the governance of Islamic education so that it is able to produce graduates who not only excel in the academic field, but also have moral integrity and strong Islamic values.

The concept of TQM was basically born from the world of industry and business, but in its development it has been widely adopted by educational institutions in various parts of the world (Abaimuhtar & Yasin, 2024). The main principles of TQM such as customer orientation, involvement of all members of the organization, continuous improvement, data-driven decision-making, and effective leadership, can be integrated with the vision and mission of Islamic education (Ardaini, 2025). Thus, TQM is not just a technical method, but a management paradigm that emphasizes the importance of collaboration, consistency, and innovation to achieve the expected quality. In Islamic educational institutions, the customers in question are not only students, but also parents, the community, the government, and even the world of work who will accept graduates. Therefore, the implementation of TQM is expected to be able to answer the expectations of all parties in a proportionate and sustainable manner. The application of TQM in Islamic educational institutions is also in line with Islamic values that emphasize the importance of *ihsan* (perfection), *itqan* (thoroughness), and *istiqamah* (consistency). The concept of quality in Islam has actually been introduced for a long time through various teachings that encourage the ummah to work professionally, trustfully, and responsibly. The implementation of TQM in Islamic education, therefore, is not something foreign, but the actualization of Islamic values in modern management practices. For example, customer orientation can be linked to the responsibility of educational institutions in providing the best service to students and the community. Continuous improvement can be understood as a form of commitment of educational institutions to continue to improve the quality of education delivery according to the guidance of the times. With this integration, TQM can strengthen the character of Islamic educational institutions while increasing their competitiveness in the era of globalization.

However, reality shows that the implementation of TQM in Islamic educational institutions is not easy. Many Islamic educational institutions, especially at the middle and high levels, are still stuck in traditional management patterns that are bureaucratic, less adaptive, and not data-driven. This results in quality improvement programs that are often sporadic, unmeasurable, and unsustainable. In addition, the limitation of human resources who have an understanding of TQM, the lack of infrastructure, and the weakness of visionary leadership are also serious obstacles. On the other hand, there are also organizational cultural challenges that do not fully support the creation of a collaborative, transparent, and innovative work climate. Therefore, research on the implementation of TQM in Islamic educational institutions is very important to explore the strategies, opportunities, and obstacles faced. The urgency of implementing TQM in Islamic educational institutions is also increasing in line with the demands of accreditation and national and international quality standards.

Accreditation of higher education, for example, requires an integrated and sustainable internal quality assurance system. In this context, TQM can be a framework that assists Islamic educational institutions in building a strong quality culture. The implementation of TQM can also increase public trust, expand cooperation with various parties, and strengthen the reputation of Islamic educational institutions at the local, national, and even global levels (Rizalullah & Untung, 2025). This is in line with the ideals of Islamic education which not only aims to produce a generation of faith and knowledge, but also to be competitive in various fields of life. In addition, the implementation of TQM can also have a positive impact on the quality of educators and education personnel in Islamic educational institutions.

With TQM, educators are encouraged to continuously improve their competencies through training, research, and self-development. The involvement of all parties in the quality improvement process can also create a stronger sense of belonging to the institution, thereby having an impact on increasing motivation and performance. On the other hand, the implementation of TQM can help Islamic educational institutions in building a more objective, transparent, and improvement-oriented evaluation system. Thus, TQM not only has an impact on students, but also on the entire educational ecosystem involved in it.

Research on the implementation of TQM in Islamic educational institutions is important to fill the literature gap as well as make a practical contribution to the management of Islamic education. Most previous studies have focused more on TQM in the context of public educational institutions or the business sector, while research examining its specific application in Islamic educational institutions has remained relatively limited. Therefore, this research is expected to be able to provide a comprehensive understanding of how TQM can be adapted in accordance with the characteristics of Islamic education, appropriate implementation strategies, and factors that support and hinder its success.

The results of this research can also be a reference for Islamic education managers in formulating more effective and sustainable policies, programs, and quality improvement measures.

2. METHODS

This research uses a library research approach, which is a research method that emphasizes the collection of data and information from various relevant literature. The literature used as sources includes education management books, scientific journals, research articles, related laws and regulations, and other scientific works that discuss the concept of Total Quality Management (TQM) and its implementation in educational institutions, especially Islamic educational institutions. This method was chosen because the research aims to explore theoretical concepts and practices for the application of TQM based on the results of previous academic studies, so that the data obtained are qualitative and analytical (Wijaya et al., 2025).

The data collection process is carried out by selecting relevant, valid, and up-to-date literature. The primary sources used are books or journals that comprehensively examine TQM theory, while secondary sources are popular articles, research reports, or policy documents that support the analysis. The collected data were then classified according to the focus of the research, including the principles of TQM, implementation strategies, supporting and inhibiting factors, and the relevance of TQM to Islamic educational values. The data analysis technique used is content analysis, which is a critical and in-depth study of the content of the literature to find patterns, relationships, and relevance to the research focus. Furthermore, the data that has been analyzed is systematically compiled with a descriptive-analytical pattern. Descriptive means presenting an explanation of the concept of TQM and its implementation in Islamic educational institutions clearly, while analytical means providing a critical interpretation of the data found to obtain sharper conclusions. With this literature research method, the results of the research are expected to be able to present an in-depth understanding of the application of TQM in Islamic educational institutions, as well as provide academic and practical recommendations for the development of Islamic education quality management in the future.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Education is the heart of life, a meeting point that bridges intellectuality, emotionality and spirituality, Education is also the heart of civilization. According to Bagus Muljadi, a lecturer at the *University of Nottingham* in one of the *podcasts* stated that the answer to all kinds of problems in Indonesia is education.

In a pluralistic culture and religion, geographical conditions and climate that tend to be dynamic like in Indonesia, education faces enormous challenges. Policy consistency from the Center (Ministry of Religion) is often not fully realized in grassroots educational institutions (RA/Madrasah). The implementation of the Computer-Based National Assessment (ANBK) and the Academic Ability Test

(TKA), for example, although it has been designed with various schemes, still finds blind spots, namely the limited availability of learning facilities such as computers or laptops, fluctuating network access and relatively unaffordable electricity availability so that it does not rule out the possibility of *boccos* in the middle of the road.

There are several fundamental problems that force madrasah residents to conclude that the quality of madrasah cannot be generalized, no matter how hard we try. This includes the professionalism of educators who will never be questioned. However, it is not the Ministry of Religion if it is not able to solve all forms of education crisis, because madrasas have a religious label that is impossible to 'Single'. The trust that the community gives has never wavered in the midst of slanted issues about religious education that tend to be crippling.

In today's era of education digitalization, every education stakeholder should improve, including the most crucial one is madrasah management. The reason is that today's students are very different from the generation of the 90s, the courage to convey their voices, whether it concerns teachers personally or madrasah policies in general, this is related to the flow of information that is impossible to filter the development, so it requires a response from education personnel to really facilitate every aspiration of students.

Answering these existential challenges, we can implement *Total Quality Management* (TQM) in madrasas as part of efforts to improve the madrasah. TQM or Integrated Quality Management is a strategic approach that involves every structural element of the organization, centered on quality improvement (students), services, and sustainable processes that focus on achieving satisfaction.

TQM was initially introduced to companies engaged in the industry, they involve every element, improving from within to achieve customer satisfaction. Around 1980 TQM began to enter the field of education, several universities in the UK and America began to implement it so that around 1990 it experienced development. According to Sallis, TQM in education is a philosophy of continuous improvement that can provide a set of practical tools to every educational institution in meeting needs. Here are three points of TQM implementation in madrasas.

1. Involvement of Every Element of the Organization

The active role of all elements of the madrasah is very decisive. A good leader is certainly ready to guide and direct each member to achieve a common goal, this is where the step begins, as long as the head of the madrasah is able to move each member to be active according to their respective duties and functions, then all goals will be achieved easily.

This is not easy for educational institutions such as madrasas, especially at the private level, some private madrasas with low honorarium considerations, educators and education personnel tend to run on their own without paying too much attention to the directions of the madrasah head, plus indeed the majority of madrasah heads do not fully have the authority to give sanctions, because there is interference or intervention by the organizing foundation, where the foundation often turns a blind eye to this. This is where the head of the madrasah must show a firm attitude so that teachers can be re-regulated and directed.

2. Continuous Improvement

When the leadership of the madrasah head begins to strengthen, the next is the monthly evaluation in the internal forum of the madrasah which is attended by all elements of the madrasah including involving the Foundation and the madrasah committee. Complex problems ranging from student data collection, violations of the code of ethics to program achievements need to be given attention in the forum so that the head of the madrasah and other structures under it exchange ideas and unite views.

Consistent monthly evaluations will be enough to contribute positively to the madrasah in general and the work program in each division in particular, not only for control efforts from the head of the madrasah to the educators and education staff, the communication built on the monthly evaluation can also be used as a *moment sharing* between teachers to help each other and establish a harmonious relationship.

An equally important part of increasing sustainability is the commitment to always *upgrade* knowledge for every educator and madrasah education. Each educators and education staff must actively participate in outside activities related to improving professionalism, this is very *urgent* because according to several studies in recent years, educators in Sumenep Regency are still not fully professional, in other words "as long as they are, as long as they want to work".

3. Focus on Students (output)

Of course, in this case, students must be made the center of every madrasah work program, all elements must release personal ego, because lowering personal ego is an inseparable part of moderation.

The absorption of aspirations from students must also be considered in order to keep the madrasah so that it always adapts to each generation, therefore it is necessary to exchange opinions from students which is facilitated by the madrasah criticism box and suggestions. If the madrasah does not have enough educational personnel, especially for private institutions, the head of the madrasah can use other educators as long as the activity has a symbiotic-mutualistic relationship between members.

The implementation of TQM in madrasas in particular has basically become a very urgent matter, in addition to being able to improve madrasah management, TQM also greatly contributes to the prevention of unwanted cases such as violence, *bullying* or negligence of educational institutions such as the case of the demonstration at SMAN 4 Karawang because the school is considered negligent in registering students in the National Selection Based on Achievement (SNBP) in Higher Education State (PTN) in February 2025. The head of the madrasah and all the elements under it certainly do not want the same thing to happen, so the first step that can be taken is to optimize TQM in the environment of their respective madrasas.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the description of the application of Total Quality Management (TQM) in Islamic educational institutions, it can be concluded that TQM is a modern management approach that is relevant and in line with Islamic values such as ishlah (improvement) and itqan (thoroughness). Its implementation requires the involvement of all elements of the institution, visionary leadership, and a transparent and data-based evaluation system. Key strategies include strengthening the quality culture, improving teacher competence, participation of all stakeholders, and developing innovative learning systems. However, the implementation of TQM still faces obstacles in the form of limited human resources, infrastructure, and organizational culture that has not fully supported innovation. Therefore, the success of the implementation of TQM in Islamic education is highly determined by the commitment, consistency, and cooperation of all parties in building educational institutions that are quality, competitive, and able to answer the demands of the times without abandoning Islamic values.

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