



QUALITY-BASED ISLAMIC EDUCATION MANAGEMENT: A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS AND THEIR URGENCY FOR THE TRANSFORMATION OF ISLAMIC EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract

This study explores the conceptual foundation of quality-based Islamic education management by examining the integration of Islamic values, modern management principles, and institutional transformation demands. A qualitative approach was employed through literature review and focused interviews to obtain a comprehensive understanding of how quality is defined, developed, and assessed within Islamic educational settings. The findings indicate that educational quality extends beyond technical and administrative dimensions, encompassing spiritual, moral, and social components that characterize Islamic education. Visionary leadership, a consistent quality culture, and strengthened human resource competencies emerge as critical pillars of institutional effectiveness. Moreover, the readiness to adopt innovation and digital transformation significantly enhances quality management processes. This study underscores that an integrative quality-oriented approach is essential for Islamic educational institutions to remain adaptive and socially relevant.

Keywords: Islamic education management, educational quality, quality culture, leadership, digital innovation.

I. INTRODUCTION

Strengthening the quality of Islamic educational institutions is a strategic issue that continues to receive attention in the contemporary discourse of education management. Social change, technological developments, and global demands on the quality of education put Islamic educational institutions in a position that demands the strengthening of quality-based governance. In this context, quality-based Islamic education management is a fundamental approach that not only discusses the technical aspects of institutional management, but also touches on the philosophical level related to epistemology, ontology, and basic values of Islamic education. Ahmed (2023) emphasized that the development of education management in Muslim societies cannot be separated from the epistemic structure and values underlying the Islamic scientific paradigm. Therefore, a critical study of the conceptual foundations of quality-based Islamic education management is very urgent to ensure that the transformation of educational institutions is in harmony with the principles of Islamic education. The concept of quality-based Islamic education management cannot be understood simply as an adaptation of modern management theory, but should be seen as an integrative process between contemporary management theory and Islamic values. Arar, Sawalhi, and Yilmaz (2022) show that educational leadership and management in the Islamic tradition contain distinctive characteristics such as spiritual orientation, justice, and moral commitment that are not always found in Western management models.

A quality-based approach in Islamic education must consider the dimensions of Islamic values, ethics, and epistemology so as not to lose its identity. Halstead (2004) underlined that Islamic education is built on the foundation of moral and spiritual values, so that the quality of

education cannot be reduced to administrative efficiency alone. The transformation of Islamic educational institutions requires a solid philosophical foundation, especially in understanding the nature of knowledge and the process of acquiring knowledge. Haji (2019) emphasized that Islamic epistemology has the character of integrity between reason, revelation, and empirical experience. This concept is important for building a quality-based management paradigm that relies not only on technical instruments but also on epistemic and moral integrity. Bagheri (2019) explained that the concept of truth in Islamic philosophy emphasizes the coherence between knowledge and reality with transcendent value, so quality management must contain a spiritual orientation. Thus, strengthening the quality of Islamic education must be understood not only as the application of operational standards, but as an effort to maintain the integrity of educational values and orientation.

The context of educational modernization also requires Islamic educational institutions to respond to the dynamics of global change without losing their traditional roots. Imdad et al. (2025) emphasized that Islamic education needs to balance tradition and modernity in institutional governance to remain relevant and of quality. On the other hand, the digitalization of education also affects the way Islamic educational institutions manage the quality of learning. Nurfaidah et al. (2024) show that digital transformation opens up great opportunities to improve the effectiveness of learning management, but it must still be directed by Islamic values which are the main spirit of education. The development of quality-based Islamic education management is also closely related to strengthening the competence of human resources and the formation of value-based institutional culture. Orgianus et al. (2024) stated that Islamic values are the basic framework for the development of the competencies of lecturers and educators. This is in line with the view of Purwanti et al. (2025) who explain that transformational leadership in Islamic schools is one of the important factors in improving the quality of education as a whole. In addition, Ridwan et al. (2024) emphasized the importance of instructional leadership in forming teachers' trust and capacity as agents of change in the education quality system. The philosophical study of quality-based Islamic education management is also strengthened by ontological and epistemological perspectives. Budianto, Syukri, and Badarussyamsi (2024) emphasized that Islamic education management requires a clear ontological basis so that quality management practices are inseparable from the essence of education itself. Tisnawati et al. (2024) added that the philosophy of Islamic education provides a normative direction and foundation for the management of educational institutions, including in the design of quality systems. Thus, quality-based management must be understood as a system rooted in Islamic educational values, epistemology, and goals.

The urgency to strengthen the quality of Islamic educational institutions is also strengthened by the results of various recent researches. Sabrifha (2022) revealed that research trends related to Islamic education management tend to increase in line with the community's need for quality Islamic educational institutions. Safruddin and West Java (2024) show that education quality management is the key to improving the quality of institutions systemically. Liriwati et al. (2025) added that value-based leadership has a significant impact on the effectiveness of education, so quality strengthening must involve aspects of leadership and strategic governance. Through these various analyses, it appears that the management of quality-based Islamic education must be understood comprehensively which includes philosophical, conceptual, and practical aspects. An in-depth study of the conceptual foundation and the urgency of its implementation is expected to be able to contribute to formulating a management framework that is relevant, adaptive, and still adheres to Islamic values. Therefore, this study aims to examine the philosophical foundations, supporting theories, implementation dynamics, and urgency of quality-based Islamic education management as a strategic step in the transformation of Islamic educational institutions in the modern era.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Basic Concepts of Quality-Based Islamic Education Management

Quality-based Islamic education management is the management of educational institutions that place Islamic values as a philosophical basis in ensuring the quality of education. This concept emphasizes the integration between modern managerial principles and Islamic values sourced from the Qur'an and Hadith. Riinawati (2022) explained that the concept of Islamic education management starts from a value framework derived from the teachings of revelation, which is then translated into managerial functions such as planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating. These principles are the basis for efforts to strengthen the quality of Islamic educational institutions as a whole. Liriwati et al. (2025) added that the quality of education in an Islamic perspective does not only refer to academic achievements, but also includes the formation of morals, leadership effectiveness, and consistency of values. Therefore, the quality of Islamic education requires a holistic approach that involves moral, spiritual, and academic dimensions at the same time.

Strengthening the quality of Islamic educational institutions is also greatly influenced by the quality of leadership. Purwanti et al. (2025) emphasized that transformational leadership has a significant contribution to improving teacher performance and the effectiveness of Islamic school organizations. In this context, education leaders not only act as administrators, but also as value drivers who ensure that all elements of the institution run in line with Islamic principles. Ridwan et al. (2024) also show that instructional leadership strengthens teachers' beliefs and professional orientation, which ultimately affects the quality of learning. Thus, quality-based Islamic education management requires value-oriented leadership, quality of the learning process, and the achievement of integral educational goals.

2.2. Philosophical and Epistemological Foundations of Islamic Education Management

The philosophical dimension is a fundamental aspect in the development of quality-based Islamic education management. This is because philosophy provides a foundation for understanding the nature of education, science, and the purpose of Islamic educational institutions. Kamal (2021) explained that philosophy of science is an epistemological framework that directs educational practices to remain in harmony with the basic values of Islam, especially in the modern era marked by changes in thinking patterns and demands for rationality. In this view, the philosophy of science helps to filter modern management concepts so that they can be adopted without losing the Islamic identity. Furthermore, Nisa (2022) highlights that the theory of coherence of truth in the Islamic intellectual tradition has an important place in ensuring the consistency of the management concept with the fundamental values of Islamic education. Thus, the Islamic epistemological framework has a strategic position in ensuring that strengthening the quality of educational institutions is not only technical, but also of philosophical value.

Ontology also contributes to understanding the nature of education management systems. Budianto, Syukri, and Badarussyamsi (2024) emphasized that ontological understanding is needed so that education management is not trapped in a purely procedural approach. Ontology helps direct the understanding of the existence of educational institutions as value, cultural, and moral entities that play a role in shaping the character of the people. Thus, the development of the quality of Islamic education is always related to basic values that are transcendental.

2.3. Quality in the Perspective of Islamic Education

Quality or quality in Islamic education is not limited to academic achievements, but includes spiritual, moral, and welfare aspects. Sabrifha (2022) in his bibliometric analysis shows that the issue of quality-based Islamic education management is one of the most developed themes in cutting-edge research because of its relevance in answering the challenges of modern educational institutions. This shows that quality has become a major concern in the development of contemporary Islamic education. Safruddin and West Java (2024) explained that education quality management functions as a strategic framework that allows educational institutions to design systematic evaluation, monitoring, and quality control systems. This approach is important so that Islamic educational institutions can compete globally without losing their spiritual character. This approach is in line with the views of Imdad et al. (2025) who emphasize the importance of the ability of Islamic educational institutions to balance the values of tradition with the demands of modernity. Thus, strengthening the quality of Islamic education is a dynamic process that continues to move with the times, but is still based on Islamic values.

2.4. Islamic Values as a Direction of Quality Development

Values are the core of Islamic education and are the main guideline in formulating quality-based management strategies. Orgianus et al. (2024) explained that the development of educator competencies in an Islamic perspective must be based on spiritual and moral values. In other words, the management of quality-based Islamic education must develop a system that not only improves technical skills, but also maintains the character of educators and learners.

Hamdanah, Crismono, and Yakoh (2025) show that Islamic values are the main factor in the orientation of Islamic educational institutions. These values play a role in formulating quality development policies, strategies, and programs based on integrity and ethics. In this context, Islamic values are not only a moral guideline, but also shape the organizational culture of educational institutions. Tisnawati et al. (2024) emphasized that the discussion of philosophy in Islamic education management provides normative and strategic guidelines for strengthening the quality of educational institutions. Philosophy helps to keep the direction of education in line with Islamic values while being responsive to the challenges of the times.

2.5. Leadership and Strengthening of the Islamic Education Quality System

Leadership is a central factor in the development of the quality of education. Liriwati et al. (2025) explained that value-based leadership has a significant impact on the effectiveness of the Islamic education system as a whole. This kind of leadership not only influences the direction of the institution's policies, but also influences the culture, organizational behavior, and learning practices. Transformational leadership described by Purwanti et al. (2025) makes a great contribution to quality strengthening because it is able to inspire change, build commitment, and improve the performance of educators. On the other hand, Ridwan et al. (2024) highlight that instructional leadership also plays an important role in ensuring the quality of learning through strengthening teacher competence and professional culture. Imdad et al. (2025) stated that leadership that is able to balance tradition and modernity is the key to ensuring the sustainability of the quality of Islamic education in the global era. These three leadership

approaches show that the Islamic education quality system requires leaders who are not only technically skilled, but also value-oriented and transformational.

III. RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach to describe the concept, urgency, and implementation of quality-based Islamic education management based on the experience and perspective of Islamic education practitioners. This approach was chosen because it is suitable for exploring deep meaning and understanding that cannot be explained through numbers or statistical measurements. According to Alase (2021), the qualitative approach provides space for researchers to understand the subjective experiences of informants contextually, especially when the focus of research is related to complex social phenomena such as education quality management. Thus, the study relied not only on literature studies, but also empirical data through interviews and open-ended questionnaires to enrich the conceptual analysis.

3.1. Types and Approaches to Research

This type of research is a descriptive qualitative research that aims to systematically uncover the perception of Islamic education managers regarding quality-based Islamic education management. Descriptive qualitative research was chosen because it makes it easier for researchers to produce direct exposure of findings from the perspective of informants without excessive analysis intervention, as recommended by Kim, Sefcik, and Bradway (2022). This approach is also suitable for research that aims to enrich theories through the interpretation of field data that is open and flexible.

3.2. Data Sources and Research Informants

The source of research data consists of primary data and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through interviews and questionnaires to eight informants who were selected using purposive sampling based on their experience in managing Islamic educational institutions. This technique was chosen because purposive sampling is effectively used in qualitative research to select individuals who understand the issue and are able to provide in-depth data (Etikan & Bala, 2021). The informants consist of madrasah heads, senior teachers, and Islamic school managers who are actively involved in the planning and quality evaluation process of the institution. Secondary data was obtained through a literature review such as academic books, national and international journal articles from 2021 and above that are relevant to the issue of Islamic education quality management and contemporary management theories.

3.3. Data Collection Techniques

Data collection techniques include semi-structured interviews and open-ended questionnaires. Semi-structured interviews are used because they provide flexibility for researchers to explore informant answers in more depth, while keeping the focus of the questions relevant to the research objectives. According to Castillo-Montoya (2021), semi-structured interviews are effective for obtaining context-rich reflective narratives from qualitative research informants. The interview process was carried out directly and online according to the conditions of the informant. In addition, an open questionnaire was distributed to several other informants to expand the scope of the data. Open-ended questionnaires allow

respondents to provide more free and in-depth answers according to their understanding. This is in line with the view of Tay, Ang, and Huan (2022) that open-ended question instruments can generate rich qualitative data and support data triangulation.

3.4. Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis using the latest edition of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña models remains relevant for use in contemporary qualitative research. The analysis process includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. According to Saldaña (2021), the coding cycle in qualitative research helps researchers organize data into categories and themes so as to produce consistent interpretations. Data reduction was carried out by selecting important information from interviews and questionnaires. The presentation of data is carried out in the form of a thematic narrative, while conclusions are drawn through a repetitive verification process by ensuring the linkage between the data and the theoretical concept.

3.5. Data Validity

The validity of the data is ensured through triangulation of sources that compare the results of interviews, questionnaires, and scientific literature. Triangulation is a technique commonly used in qualitative research to improve the validity of data because it brings together various perspectives (Fusch, Fusch, & Ness, 2021). In addition, the researcher conducts member checking by asking the informant to review the summary of the interview results to ensure that the researcher's interpretation is in accordance with the informant's intentions. This method is recommended by Birt et al. (2021) as one of the best strategies to ensure the credibility of qualitative findings.

IV. DISCUSSION

The discussion in this study comprehensively describes how quality-based Islamic education management is understood, implemented, and developed by the managers of Islamic educational institutions. The analysis is carried out through the integration of empirical findings with education quality management theory, contemporary literature, and epistemological principles in Islamic education. This section is divided into several major themes that are interconnected to provide a comprehensive overview of the conceptual foundation, urgency, and direction of strengthening quality-based Islamic education management.

4.1. Conception of Quality in the Perspective of Islamic Education

Quality is a concept that is not only related to output standards, but also educational processes that include spiritual, intellectual, moral, and social dimensions. The research informants stated that the quality of Islamic education cannot be understood as limited to academic achievements, but must reflect the integration between mastery of knowledge, good morals, and adaptive ability to face modern challenges. These findings are in line with the growing view in contemporary literature that Islamic educational institutions face the dual demands of maintaining Islamic identity while increasing institutional competitiveness (Alizadeh & Suprpto, 2022). Within the epistemological framework of Islamic education, quality is determined not only by external standards, but also by the values that form the moral and spiritual foundation of education itself. Nurfaidah et al. (2024) emphasized that Islamic

education must create a learning environment that integrates the values of monotheism, morals, and modern science to produce graduates who are competent and at the same time have character. Thus, quality in the context of Islamic education is a multidimensional concept that includes the quality of inputs, processes, and outputs based on Islamic values and global quality standards.

4.2. Quality-Based Islamic Education Management as a Framework for Institutional Development

The results of the interviews show that managers of Islamic educational institutions view quality-based management as an important strategy to improve the effectiveness, order, and sustainability of the institution. They emphasized that quality should not only be the goal, but should be integrated into every management function, from planning to evaluation. This is in line with the contemporary education management literature, which states that the total quality management (TQM) approach can improve institutional governance if applied systematically (Salim & Abdullah, 2023). International research also reinforces the importance of the role of leadership in driving the implementation of value-based quality management. Arar and DeCuir (2023) emphasize that Islamic education requires visionary leadership that is able to integrate spiritual values and managerial professionalism. The empirical findings of this study show alignment with this view. The heads of the institutions stated that the success of quality implementation depends on the commitment of leaders, the ability to build a culture of quality, and a sustainable human resource development strategy. The informants also mentioned several challenges, such as limited resources, resistance to change, and lack of quality-based professional training. These challenges show that strengthening quality management requires systemic support, including training, clear internal policies, and human resource development. This is in line with Purwanti et al. (2025) who emphasized that the transformation of the quality of Islamic educational institutions requires the integration of governance, organizational culture, and sustainable professional development.

4.3. Integration of Islamic Values in the Implementation of Education Quality

The implementation of quality-based management in Islamic educational institutions cannot be separated from the fundamental values of Islam. The managers of the institution emphasized that values such as honesty, trust, ihsan, and justice must be at the core of the application of quality. These values not only shape the work ethic, but also influence how institutions make decisions, supervise, and determine the strategic direction of education. The results of this study are in line with the findings of Hamdanah et al. (2025) who stated that Islamic values play an important role in building an institutional culture that is conducive to quality. From the perspective of Islamic epistemology, these values are a prerequisite for true knowledge and meaningful education. Thus, the integration of Islamic values is not just a complement, but a philosophical foundation for the management of quality-based Islamic education. The informants also mentioned that the application of Islamic values in quality management helps to create a more humane and service-oriented environment. They emphasized that quality is not just a technical achievement, but also reflects the quality of the relationship between teachers, students, and the community. This approach is in line with the

concept of meaningful education that emphasizes spiritual and emotional aspects in the learning process (Tisnawati et al., 2024).

4.4. The Role of Leadership in Driving Quality Management

Leadership is one of the most decisive elements in the successful implementation of Islamic education quality management. Empirical findings show that school principals or madrasah principals who are visionary, communicative, and able to build trust succeed in encouraging a culture of quality more effectively. The informants mentioned that leaders who are able to set an example, inspire change, and have a commitment to Islamic values are the main factors in the sustainability of the institution's quality. The literature also shows the importance of transformative leadership in Islamic educational institutions. Purwanti et al. (2025) stated that transformational leadership is able to increase teacher motivation, strengthen collaboration, and create an innovative culture that supports quality. Similarly, Liriwati et al. (2025) emphasized that value-based leadership provides moral direction for the development of institutional quality, so that it does not only focus on technical achievements, but also builds the character of the institution itself. Leadership in Islamic education also has a spiritual dimension that distinguishes it from Western management models. According to Imdad et al. (2025), Islamic education leaders must be able to combine a professional vision with a commitment to the values of monotheism, morality, and welfare. The research informants corroborate this by stating that the success of quality management is inseparable from the moral example of leaders in carrying out their duties.

4.5. Human Resource Development as the Core of Quality Management

Quality management is highly dependent on the quality of human resources, especially teachers and education staff. The results of the interviews show that teachers are the main pillar in maintaining the quality of the learning process. The informants revealed that institutions that succeed in improving quality always have a clear strategy in developing teacher competencies, such as training, workshops, improving academic qualifications, and professional mentoring. This is in line with the study of Orgianus et al. (2024) which emphasizes the importance of developing the competence of lecturers or teachers based on Islamic values to strengthen professionalism and character. In addition, Ridwan et al. (2024) highlight the role of teachers' attitudes and beliefs related to learning as important factors that affect the quality of learning. Therefore, human resource development not only includes improving technical skills, but also fostering professional values and ethics. The findings from the questionnaire show that teachers need more training related to educational technology, innovative learning strategies, and value-based classroom management. This need is in line with the development of modern education which requires teachers to be able to adapt to technological changes and the dynamics of student needs (Nurfaidah et al., 2024). Thus, human resource development is an element that cannot be separated from the strategy of strengthening the quality of Islamic educational institutions.

4.6. Challenges and Opportunities for Strengthening Quality Management

Quality-based Islamic education management faces various structural and cultural challenges. The main challenges identified by the informants include limited budgets, infrastructure, access to training, and resistance to change. This challenge is also mentioned in

the research of Safruddin and West Java (2024) which states that Islamic educational institutions must carry out management reforms to overcome quality management problems such as lack of supervision and weak evaluation culture. This research also shows that there is a great opportunity to improve quality through managerial innovation, technology integration, and collaboration between institutions. The informants mentioned that digital technology can speed up the process of administration, transparency, and evaluation. This is in line with Nurfaidah et al. (2024) who emphasized that digital transformation allows Islamic educational institutions to improve the efficiency and quality of educational services. In addition, another opportunity identified is the increasing public interest in quality Islamic education, thus encouraging institutions to strengthen quality branding. Mulyani et al. (2025) stated that Islamic education has a strong value base to be developed into a quality modern education system if managed appropriately. Thus, Islamic educational institutions have great potential to compete at the national and global levels through quality management strategies that are planned and implemented consistently.

4.7. Integrative Model for Strengthening Quality-Based Islamic Education Management

Based on empirical findings and theoretical studies, this study produces an integrative model of strengthening quality-based Islamic education management that includes four main components. First, the foundation of values based on monotheism and Islamic ethics that guides all managerial decisions. Second, transformational and visionary leadership that is able to drive a culture of quality. Third, sustainable development of human resources based on the needs of institutions and the demands of the times. Fourth, managerial innovation that integrates technology, a continuous evaluation system, and institutional reflection practices. This integrative model is in line with the idea of Arar et al. (2023) regarding the need for an Islamic education leadership model that emphasizes the integration of values and professionalism. In addition, this model aligns the principle of total quality management with the basic principles of Islamic education as conveyed by Tisnawati et al. (2024). Thus, strengthening the quality of Islamic education must be understood as a holistic process that includes spiritual, managerial, and technological dimensions.

V. CONCLUSION

Quality-based Islamic education management is a strategic approach that combines modern management principles with basic Islamic values so that quality is not only understood as a technical standard, but also as an integration between spirituality, morality, and professionalism. Philosophical studies that include epistemological, ontological, and axiological dimensions are an important foundation so that the governance of Islamic educational institutions remains rooted in the teachings of monotheism and moral values, while being able to adapt to scientific developments and social changes. This approach places quality as a process that is constantly improved by emphasizing the involvement of all stakeholders, including leaders, educators, students, and the community. The findings of the study show that quality in Islamic education is multidimensional, including the quality of inputs, processes, and outputs tied by Islamic values. The implementation of quality management is highly dependent on the strength of visionary and characterful leadership, a consistent quality culture, and the development of professional and moral human resources. Transformational and instructional

leadership plays a major role in ensuring quality sustainability through moral example, the ability to drive change, and a commitment to improving the quality of learning. The integration of the values of trust, justice, responsibility, and courtesy has been proven to strengthen the institution's identity and create a conducive learning environment. Although Islamic educational institutions still face various challenges such as limited resources, resistance to change, and capacity imbalances among educators, opportunities for improvement through digital innovation, external collaboration, and the increasing need of the community for quality Islamic education are very potential transformation spaces. Overall, strengthening quality-based Islamic education management requires an integrative approach that unites the foundation of Islamic values, effective leadership, human resource development, and continuous innovation so that Islamic educational institutions are able to remain relevant, adaptive, and competitive in responding to the demands of the times.

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