

# Building Quality Islamic Schools through Total Quality Management

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# Abstract:

This study aims to evaluate the implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) in an Islamic school in Bukittinggi to answer the challenges of modern education, such as the need for efficient quality management, learning innovation, and stakeholder involvement. Using a qualitative approach with a case study method, this research involved the principal, teachers, students and parents as research subjects. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation analysis. The results showed that the implementation of TQM improved customer satisfaction through teacher training, strengthening communication with parents, using innovative learning media, and transparency in school management. However, the main challenges faced include resistance to change in organizational culture, limited human resources, and an unoptimal communication system. To overcome these challenges, the proposed solutions include continuous training, active involvement of stakeholders and implementation of an integrated feedback system. The findings show that TQM not only improves the quality of education in Islamic schools but also creates a culture of continuous improvement that supports holistic student development. This research makes a significant contribution to the development of quality management strategies in Islamic education institutions in Indonesia

Keywords: Customers; Islamic School; Total Quality Management.

# Introduction

TQM or Total Quality Management is a strategy aimed at instilling quality awareness in all processes in the organization. A management approach in institutions certainly focuses on quality and aims for long-term success through customer satisfaction and benefits all members in the organization and society. In Indonesia, the use of TQM in Islamic schools is still rare. TQM is known to be quite popular in the private sector. The application of TQM was initially applied to leading companies and state-owned companies, as part of a strategy to increase competitive power that prioritizes quality. Since TQM is considered an appropriate approach, Islamic educational institutions such as Islamic schools try to adopt and start adapting to this concept, as a strategic step to improve maximum service to its customers (Jasuri, 2014).

Education plays a crucial role in shaping the character and competencies of the younger generation (Dinata et al., 2024). In this context, Islamic schools in Indonesia are required to not only provide quality education, but also meet the needs and expectations of parents and students. One approach that can be applied to achieve this goal is to apply the concept of Total Quality Management (TQM). TQM is a management system in improving overall quality in customer satisfaction-oriented competition by involving the totality of the work of organizational members (Fahruddin, 2020).

With the development of competition in the world of education, the application of TQM in schools is becoming increasingly relevant. TQM can help schools create a better learning environment, increase customer satisfaction (in this case, students and parents), and create a culture of continuous improvement. Based on the observation in Islamic schools, it shows that there are various challenges and opportunities in implementing TQM to meet customer needs.

During the observation activities at the Islamic school, the researcher observed that most of the teachers showed a high commitment to teaching quality. However, some teachers still need further training in more innovative and interactive teaching methods. School facilities are adequate but there is a need to update the learning tools and technology used. This is important to improve students' learning experience. An interview was also conducted with the school principal. From the interview, it was concluded that the principal stated that implementing TQM is very important in creating improvement (Nawawi & La'alang, 2020). He acknowledged that although there have been some initiatives to improve quality, there are still many things that need to be improved, especially in terms of teacher training and facilities management. Interviews with teachers concluded that teachers felt that training in TQM would greatly help them in understanding how to improve teaching quality. They also emphasized the importance of teamwork in implementing change.

The implementation of TQM in Islamic schools has great potential to improve the quality of education and meet customer needs. However, achieving this requires good cooperation between all stakeholders, adequate training for teachers and an effective communication system between the school and parents. With the right approach, Islamic schools can become model examples of quality education that is responsive to the needs of students and parents.

In order for quality to be maintained and for the quality improvement process to be controlled, there must be a standard that is set and agreed upon to serve as an evaluation indicator of the success of the quality improvement (standard reference point). So how is the implementation

of TQM in Islamic educational institutions. This study aims to evaluate the application of the Total Quality Management (TQM) concept in Islamic schools and its effect on meeting customer needs, which include students and parents. TQM is considered an approach that can improve the quality of education and services in schools.

# Methods

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method to explore the implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) in an Islamic school in Bukittinggi. This approach was chosen because it can explore in depth the dynamics of TQM implementation, including challenges, solutions and its impact on education quality and customer satisfaction. The research location is an Islamic school that has implemented TQM principles in its management. The research subjects included the principal as a strategic decision maker, teachers as program implementers, students as recipients of educational services, and parents as external customers who play a role in service evaluation. Participants were selected using purposive sampling technique, considering their experience and involvement in TQM implementation.

The data was collected through three main techniques: observation, interviews and documentation. Observations were made of activities in the school, including teaching and learning processes, management meetings, and interactions between stakeholders. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with principals, teachers, students, and parents to understand their views on TQM implementation. Questions in the interviews covered aspects of planning, implementation, and evaluation of the TQM policy. Documentation was obtained from school archival data, such as work program reports, student evaluation results, and meeting minutes, which were used to complement and confirm observation and interview data.

Data analysis was conducted through a process of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data obtained from various sources were analyzed thematically to identify key patterns in TQM implementation. Triangulation of methods was used to ensure the validity of the research results by comparing data from interviews, observations, and documentation. In addition, member checking was conducted by asking participants to confirm the interview results to improve the accuracy of the data. With this approach, this research seeks to provide a comprehensive picture of the implementation of TQM in Islamic schools and its contribution to improving the quality of education. This research uses a qualitative research type, with a case study approach (Akhyar & Zalnur, 2024). In other words, this research seeks to describe, as well as describe an ongoing situation based on facts and information obtained from the field and then analyzed based on one variable with another. The location of this research is located in Islamic schools in the city of Bukittinggi. The research subjects were principals, teachers, students and parents. Data collection techniques in this study were carried out through observation, interview, documentation methods. Data analysis in this study was carried out during data collection and after completion of data collection within a certain period. During the interview the researcher has analyzed the interviewee. If the interviewee's answer feels unsatisfactory, then the researcher will continue the question again, until a certain stage until the data obtained is considered credible (Febriyanti Meliyana et al., 2022).

# Results and Discussion

Implementation of the TQM concept as has been done by the educational institutions that have been studied, of course, with the application following the results of the analysis of customer needs, both internal and external. The results of the analysis that has been carried out become the basis for the application of quality management that will be applied later. Implementing Integrated Quality Management or TQM in Islamic educational institutions must still follow the concepts and philosophies that have become paradigms developed in Total Quality Management. Realizing the quality of educational products is influenced by the extent to which the institution can optimally manage all potential ranging from educators, education personnel, students, learning processes, educational facilities, and including its relationship with the community. Therefore, Islamic educational institutions must be able to change the new paradigm of quality-oriented education in which all of these potentials must be managed with integrated quality management.

Based on the results of a joint interview with one of the Islamic school principals in Bukittinggi City that in implementing TQM, the school started with training all teaching staff on TQM principles. This helps to create a culture of quality in the school. In further implementation, the principal also explained that the school also seeks to involve parents in the education process. Every semester the school holds a meeting to discuss student progress and get feedback. Transparency in school management is important. Besides conducting meetings related to student progress, the school also routinely provides financial and academic progress reports to parents.

In the context of planning, the role of the principal is very significant in efforts to improve the quality of Islamic schools. Based on observations and interviews, it appears that the school has implemented the planning as described above. The principal, as the main leader, coordinates the school's programs and goals based on the vision and mission that have been set. Every activity is directed to empower all available resources, both human resources and supporting facilities, to support the implementation of school programs.

In addition, interviews with several teachers were also conducted. From the joint interviews with several teachers in this Islamic school, it was concluded that with a feedback system, teachers can better understand the needs of students. Teachers can conduct periodic evaluations to improve teaching methods. The interview results are also supported by statements from other teachers that TQM encourages teachers to innovate in teaching. Teachers can try different approaches, such as project-based learning, to attract students' interest. This is also supported by the results of interviews with other teachers that the training that has been conducted is very useful. Teachers learned how to manage the classroom better and improve interaction with students. In addition, workshops involving parents were also held so that parents can be more active in supporting their children's education.

The approach in using learning media has been adjusted to the lesson plan that has been prepared before the implementation of teaching and learning activities at the beginning of the school year. The utilization of various learning media and resources has a significant impact on students' understanding and participation in solving learning problems. Learners tend to be more excited when educators use varied learning media compared to a monotonous approach. The facilities and infrastructure that have been provided support intra- and extra-curricular activities. Each class is equipped with an LCD and projector, allowing educators and learners to access learning resources at any time. Sports and arts facilities support learners' achievements, and contribute positively to extracurricular activities. This will give learners the

opportunity to self-actualize and appreciate their abilities.

In addition to conducting interviews with the school, of course, researchers also conducted interviews with customers, namely parents. Based on the results of an interview with one of the parents, they feel more involved in their child's education at school. The school invites parents to provide input, which makes parents feel valued. This opinion is also supported by interviews with other parents who concluded that the school's transparency in managing activities is very good. That way parents can see how funds are used to improve facilities. Not only that, the parents also gave their hopes for the school, in the interview it was concluded that they hoped there would be more programs involving parents in the teaching and learning process, such as seminars or training.

The interview results show that the steps taken by Islamic schools in planning are in line with Dwi Putranti's research, where the principal develops an organizational structure that involves parents through the school committee, completes facilities and infrastructure, and plans programs by considering the needs of educators and education personnel.

In establishing relationships with secondary customers, Islamic schools involve them in various activities that support school programs. One example is the invitation to secondary customers at the beginning of the new school year to jointly determine the school program and the contribution of parents/guardians of students in supporting learning at school. Through a committee meeting attended by parents/guardians of learners, the school presents an evaluation of the work program for a year, the results of the achievements that have been made, and plans the work program for the future.

From the interview results, it appears that the implementation of TQM in Islamic schools can increase customer satisfaction through:

- Active leadership in applying TQM principles creates an environment that supports quality improvement.
- Involvement of parents and teachers in the education process helps to create a sense of belonging.
- An effective feedback mechanism enables the school to adjust services according to the needs of students and parents.
- Teachers are encouraged to apply varied teaching methods, which contribute to improving the quality of education.

The application of TQM concepts in Islamic schools has shown positive results in meeting customer needs, improving the quality of education and strengthening the relationship between schools and parents. Continuous efforts are needed to ensure that this process remains relevant and effective. The application of the Total Quality Management (TQM) concept in the context of education, especially in Islamic schools, is a strategic step to improve the quality of services and education. In this analysis, the researcher will discuss the various aspects involved in the application of TQM, the results of interviews with various stakeholders, and its implications for customer satisfaction.

Total Quality Management (TQM) is a management system that promotes quality as a business strategy and is oriented towards customer satisfaction by involving all members of the organization (Hanoum et al., 2022). TQM aims to improve students' learning experience, teaching quality, and parental satisfaction. The basic principles of TQM include:

## a. Leadership

Effective management and commitment from management to improve quality. One of the key aspects expressed by the principals is the importance of commitment from management. They adopt training for teaching staff and create an integrated quality culture. Strong management creates an environment that supports innovation and openness to improvement.

#### b. Employee Involvement

Involvement of all individuals in the improvement process. The involvement of all parties, including parents, in the education process is very important. Principals stated that they regularly hold meetings with parents to discuss student progress and seek feedback. This helps create a better relationship between the school and parents and increases parents' ownership of their children's education.

#### c. Customer Focus

Understanding needs of and meeting the customers (students and parents). Transparency and Accountability. Parents emphasize the importance of transparency in school management. They want clear reports on the use of funds and students' academic progress. Schools that apply TQM principles provide open information, so parents feel more trusting and involved (Latif et al., 2020). Parental involvement in the education process creates a better relationship between schools and families. Parents feel valued and involved, which in turn increases their trust in the school.

#### d. System-based Process

A systematic approach in achieving quality objectives. TQM encourages teachers to innovate in teaching methods. Teacher respondents stated that they apply various approaches, such as project-based learning, to engage students. This not only increases student engagement but also helps them develop critical and creative skills. Through a feedback system, schools can be more responsive to the needs of students and parents. This creates a more inclusive and relevant learning environment.

#### e. Continuous Improvement

A commitment to continuous improvement in all aspects. An effective feedback system is an integral part of TQM. Teachers report that they get valuable feedback from students and parents, which helps them understand students' needs and expectations. With regular evaluations, teachers can adjust teaching methods and improve students' learning experience. With a structured system for continuous improvement in place, the quality of education services improves. This has a positive impact on student experience and parent satisfaction. TQM implementation creates a culture where all parties are committed to continuous learning and adaptation, which is essential in the ever-changing world of education.

### Challenges in TQM Implementation

Although the implementation of TQM in Islamic schools has shown many benefits, there are some challenges that need to be overcome, based on the results of the interviews, the researcher summarized some of the challenges faced by Islamic schools:

#### a. Changes in Organizational Culture

To implement the TQM concept by changing the organizational culture in schools requires a lot of time and effort.

#### b. Resources

The implementation of TQM often requires additional resources for training and development, not only from within the school but also from outside.

#### c. Communication

It is important to ensure that all staff members, students and parents are clearly informed about TQM and its benefits.

From the above description, we can conclude that the implementation of TQM in Islamic schools has shown significant results in improving the quality of education and meeting customer needs. Through management commitment, stakeholder involvement, effective feedback systems and innovation in learning, schools can create an environment that supports student development and parental satisfaction. However, challenges in implementing TQM must be overcome for the benefits to be maximized. Further research is needed to explore the long-term impact of TQM in the context of Islamic education.

#### Total Quality Management or (TQM) in Islamic Schools

Total Quality Management or often referred to as integrated Quality Management in terms of etymology consists of three words namely "Total", "Quality", and "Management". The word total leads to the involvement of all parties to succeed in achieving common goals, including the involvement of customers and providers (services). When associated with the context of education, the customers here are students, parents and the community. The service provider is occupied by the Islamic education institution. Quality or quality can be interpreted as "(measure) good or bad of an object; level; level or degree; quality". In the context of education, the notion of quality can be viewed through the "educational process" and "educational outcomes". In the "education process", quality must be supported by various aspects, such as; teaching materials, methods, qualified infrastructure, competent human resources, and efforts to create a conducive school environment. Meanwhile, when examined in terms of "educational outcomes", quality refers to the success of schools in carving out academic and non-academic achievements over a certain period of time both within the regional, national and international scope. Between the process and results of quality education are integrated. The achievement of quality must be formulated clearly in advance in order to be right on target. So that the implementation process is not misdirected (Syarifah, 2020).

"Management" is directly translated in Indonesian into the word management, which means management, administration or leadership (Dakir, 2020). If understood in the context of educational institutions, the role of management as a senior executor here is held by the principal. Total Quality Management or TQM is seen as a paradigm and methodology that helps every institution to manage change and set their own agenda to deal with various external pressures.

Total Quality Management according to Yamit is a unified management system that involves the totality of the work of each individual member of the organization to work together in an effort to improve overall quality in competition oriented towards customer satisfaction (Antari & Setiawan, 2022). Total Quality Management (Integrated Quality Management) is an approach that is oriented towards improving the quality of products produced by an

institution or organization in accordance with the demands of service users for customer satisfaction and to cope with an ever-changing environment so that continuous improvements need to be made by the institution. This improvement is carried out with the aim of controlling the existing quality and continuing to strive for improvement. The implementation of TQM will make management more focused on improving quality (Ella Anastasya Sinambela & Didit Darmawan, 2021). In addition, to create quality, a strong commitment is needed from all parties. Not only by the leader or but also the total involvement of all subordinates, through empowerment related to improving their performance so that they always produce quality products.

The things that need to be considered in the implementation of Total Quality Management are as follows:

#### a. Optimizing the Role of Leadership

The quality of good leadership greatly affects the success or failure of the institution in achieving the goals that the institution has aspired to. The type of leader needed in Islamic management is: having an understanding of the vision, mission of the organization being led, having firmness, being open and always prioritizing musawarah. The leader of an Islamic educational institution is not only a leader but also a leader. Because if a leader (principal) only acts as a leader then he will only lead and not manage or manage the organization properly.

# b. Cultivating the Idea of Quality

Every staff at the institution must have the same understanding of how to achieve maximum quality that the institution wants to achieve. This is intended to provide a guarantee of existence for the institution when there is a level of intense competition. That way it is expected that each component in the organization appears optimistic attitude and in the next stage appears willing to sacrifice for the implementation of this TQM.

#### c. Continuous Improvement

As a systematic approach, institutions that innovate constantly, make improvements and changes in a directed manner, and practice Total Quality Management or TQM, will experience a cycle of continuous improvement. That way, it will foster the spirit to analyze what is being done and plan its improvement. In order to achieve the goals of the institution, a leader must involve all components in the Islamic education institution, including in terms of placing competent staff in accordance with their fields, always trying to make continuous improvements; optimizing the function of educational resources; and being proactive towards change, whether teachers, parents, administrators are all responsible for the success of this Total Quality management.

# d. Culture Change

Total Quality Management or TQM requires a change in culture or culture that exists in Islamic educational institutions and generally takes a long time. Total Quality Management or TQM requires attitudinal and mental changes in the process of implementation in Islamic educational institutions. The environment that surrounds staff has a huge influence on their ability to do their work

appropriately and effectively. Every member and staff in the institution must be able to understand the essence of the implementation of Total Quality Management or TQM, so that it can have a good impact on the Islamic education institution itself.

## e. Improving the Quality of Staff and Teachers

One of the problems that often occurs in Islamic educational institutions is regarding human resources such as the quality of staff and teachers. For this reason, it is necessary to improve the quality of work of staff and teachers in Islamic educational institutions (Sari, 2021). This work quality improvement program can be carried out by providing special training to staff and teachers related to the implementation of Total Quality Management or TQM to maximize the process of achieving quality (Rahmat & Ardiansyah, 2022).

### f. Professional and Customer Focused

In the context of educational institutions, effective human resource management is important in improving their performance. To achieve these goals, educational institutions must have human resources who can work optimally, so it is necessary to develop human resources to have a creative and innovative attitude in the face of competition (Veronika et al., 2023). Every staff and teacher in Islamic educational institutions must provide excellent service to ensure customer satisfaction. This means that all process inputs mobilized by the school are aimed at increasing the satisfaction of students who focus on continuous quality improvement. In this case the service is adjusted to their respective duties.

#### g. Curriculum Management

The development and management of this curriculum must be very concerned by Islamic educational institutions to be able to compete in providing the best quality for their customers. As an example in the context of madrasah education, so that graduates have a different advantage from others with maximum competence, the curriculum is structured based on the achievement of student competencies.

## h. Maintaining Relationships with Customers or Service Users

As the main concept promoted is to prioritize customer or service user satisfaction. The diversity of the level of needs of each service user is a major factor in the need to establish good relations with service users. With a good relationship with customers, an Islamic education institution can understand the character of its customers, so that it can predict what customer expectations will be in the future (Syafi'i & Fitriyah, 2020).

Total quality management offers a solution for educational institutions to manage themselves effectively in times of rapid change and maintain a clear focus on essential and dominant educational goals (Kurniawan, 2020).

# Conclusion and suggestion

The application of Total Quality Management or TQM in Islamic Education Institutions is indeed very important because looking at the reality in Indonesia today Islamic education institutions are still considered less competitive with public schools in terms of output. For this

reason, educational institutions must offer superior alternatives, namely with a quality assurance system.

Quality assurance emphasizes that education is not only focused on products but also the process of making products. By carrying out the principle of customer satisfaction or service users in this case students, parents and society in general, the presence of quality-based management will make the branding image of Islamic educational institutions increase in the eyes of the community.

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