



Integrating Total Quality Management and Islamic Values: A Values System Culture Framework for Sustainable Educational Quality

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ABSTRACT

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Quality management has become increasingly important for Islamic educational institutions seeking to strengthen accountability, educational standards, and public trust. However, the implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) may remain largely administrative when quality assurance procedures are not supported by shared ethical commitments. This study aims to examine the relationship between TQM, Islamic values, and organizational quality culture and to develop a conceptual framework for integrating these dimensions. The study employed a qualitative narrative literature review, synthesizing relevant scholarly literature on quality management and Islamic educational institutions. The findings indicate that *ihsan*, *itqan*, and *amanah* offer complementary ethical foundations for excellence, professional discipline, and accountability. These values can be connected to organizational quality practices through leadership, continuous improvement, human resource development, stakeholder participation, evaluation, and responsible governance. The study proposes a Values System Culture framework in which Islamic values serve as normative foundations, quality management systems provide organizational mechanisms, and quality culture represents the potential expression of shared commitments in institutional practices. The framework contributes conceptually to discussions of values-based quality management, although its proposed relationships require empirical validation. The findings imply that institutional leaders should embed Islamic ethical principles into quality policies, professional development, decision-making, and evaluation to promote meaningful and sustainable educational improvement.

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INTRODUCTION

Quality management in education has become a significant societal concern as communities increasingly expect educational institutions to demonstrate accountability, maintain educational standards, and earn public trust. Islamic educational institutions, including madrasahs, Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), and Islamic higher education institutions, contribute to developing knowledgeable, ethical, and socially responsible individuals. Their responsibilities extend beyond academic achievement because educational quality also influences moral development, spiritual integrity, and social behavior (Dermawan & Yusuf, 2026; Hikmah et al., 2026). Consequently, institutional performance cannot be assessed exclusively through administrative efficiency or accreditation outcomes. Public confidence depends partly on whether educational institutions consistently translate their stated values into responsible organizational practices. In this context, quality management becomes important because it provides a foundation for aligning institutional objectives, professional responsibilities, and educational outcomes. Understanding this relationship is essential for strengthening the contribution of Islamic education to society.

The importance of quality management is reinforced by growing expectations concerning accreditation, internal quality assurance, regulatory compliance, and institutional transparency. Madrasahs, *pesantren*, and Islamic higher education institutions must respond to these expectations while maintaining their distinctive educational missions (Tarigan & Zahara, 2024; Wulandari et al., 2025). However, meeting formal standards does not necessarily guarantee meaningful educational quality. Institutions must also cultivate intellectual competence, moral character, and spiritual responsibility among learners (Agustina et al., 2026; Suratman & Sugiyono, 2025). Total Quality Management (TQM) provides an approach emphasizing continuous improvement, leadership commitment, stakeholder participation, and evidence-informed decision-making. Its relevance lies in connecting institutional processes with sustained improvement rather than treating quality as a temporary accreditation requirement. Therefore, examining TQM alongside Islamic educational values is important for understanding how accountability, educational excellence, and ethical responsibility can be pursued within a coherent institutional framework.

A fundamental problem arises when formal quality assurance mechanisms operate separately from the ethical commitments that should guide institutional behavior. Written policies, performance indicators, evaluation procedures, and accreditation documents may establish organizational expectations without necessarily creating shared responsibility for continuous

improvement. When quality becomes primarily an administrative obligation, institutional members may prioritize compliance over substantive educational development. This creates a challenge for Islamic educational institutions, whose missions require both professional effectiveness and moral accountability. The central problem is therefore not simply the absence of managerial systems, but the possibility that these systems remain disconnected from everyday professional conduct and institutional values (Khomairotusshiyama et al., 2023; Furqon & Zahroh, 2025). Such a disconnect raises questions about how quality is understood, practiced, and sustained by educators, leaders, and other stakeholders. Addressing this problem requires a perspective that considers managerial arrangements and ethical commitments together rather than treating them as separate dimensions of educational governance.

In practice, Islamic educational institutions operate within diverse organizational environments, where leadership structures, professional capacities, stakeholder expectations, and institutional resources may influence quality management. Existing discussions address TQM implementation in madrasahs, *pesantren*, and Islamic higher education institutions, indicating that managerial approaches must be interpreted in relation to institutional objectives and circumstances (Azizi et al., 2023; Ismail, 2023; Sudir et al., 2025). Research on academic culture, organizational development, and educational services also offers perspectives on institutional practices and quality-oriented environments (Haningsih et al., 2026; Hasbi et al., 2025; Syihabudin et al., 2024). Nevertheless, these discussions do not automatically establish that formal procedures have become embedded in shared organizational behavior. The practical challenge is to understand how institutional expectations are translated into recurring professional practices and whether ethical commitments meaningfully inform leadership, evaluation, collaboration, and accountability.

Previous studies have examined several relevant dimensions of this problem. Yusuf (2023) investigated the relationship between TQM and higher education quality through meta-analysis, while Yuliana et al. (2026) examined TQM practices in Algerian higher education institutions. Rahman and Nasrin (2024) explored factors associated with perceived service quality in Bangladeshi higher education. Other publications have considered Islamic values in quality management (Putri et al., 2026; Udhma & Minarti, 2025), value-based quality management in Islamic boarding schools (Rada et al., 2024), and TQM practices in Qur'anic memorization education (Taufikin et al., 2025). Agustina et al. (2026) conceptually associate *ihsan*, *itqan*, and *amanah* with quality improvement, disciplined implementation, and responsible governance. Collectively, these studies provide relevant managerial and ethical perspectives, but their differing emphases leave room for a more integrated explanation of how ethical

foundations relate to organizational arrangements and quality-oriented behavior.

A further limitation concerns the distinction between conceptual compatibility and organizational implementation. The alignment of TQM principles with *ihsan*, *itqan*, and *amanah* does not, by itself, demonstrate that these values consistently influence institutional decisions or professional conduct. Similarly, the presence of quality assurance systems does not establish that a sustainable quality culture has developed. Existing discussions therefore require conceptual synthesis to clarify the relationships among normative commitments, managerial mechanisms, and shared organizational practices. The novelty of this article lies in proposing a three-layer Values System Culture framework that positions Islamic values as normative foundations, quality management systems as organizational arrangements, and quality culture as a potential manifestation in everyday institutional practices. Rather than assuming that integration automatically produces improvement, the framework explains possible connections, identifies areas requiring institutional attention, and provides a conceptual basis for future empirical investigation across diverse Islamic educational settings.

Accordingly, this article addresses four research questions: how TQM principles are discussed and applied in Islamic educational institutions; which Islamic values are relevant to TQM and what ethical functions they may serve; through which organizational mechanisms these principles and values may contribute to quality culture; and what challenges and practical implications emerge from their integration. The central research problem concerns how managerial systems and Islamic ethical commitments can be conceptually connected to explain the development of sustainable quality-oriented practices. This article argues that Islamic values can provide normative direction, TQM can organize institutional processes, and quality culture may emerge when these dimensions are consistently reinforced through leadership, professional development, stakeholder participation, evaluation, and accountability. These relationships are proposed as an interpretive argument rather than established causal effects. Through a narrative literature review, the article seeks to clarify this conceptual relationship, identify unresolved issues, and establish directions for subsequent empirical research.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative narrative literature review to examine the conceptual relationship between Total Quality Management (TQM), Islamic values, and organizational quality culture in Islamic educational institutions. A qualitative approach is appropriate because the study seeks to interpret concepts,

compare scholarly arguments, and develop a conceptual framework rather than measure variables or test causal relationships statistically. The narrative review design enables the integration of empirical findings and theoretical discussions from different educational and institutional contexts. Unlike a systematic literature review, it does not aim to identify every relevant publication through an exhaustive, reproducible screening procedure or conduct a formal appraisal of methodological quality. Instead, it prioritizes interpretive depth, conceptual relevance, and the identification of relationships among managerial principles, ethical commitments, and organizational practices. This design supports the development of a Values System Culture framework for future empirical investigation.

Because this study is a literature review rather than field-based research, it does not involve a specific geographical research location, physical research site, or direct engagement with participants. Its analytical scope encompasses Islamic educational institutions, including madrasahs, Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), and Islamic higher education institutions. These institutional settings provide the contextual boundaries for interpreting discussions of quality management, Islamic ethics, and organizational culture. The selection of this scope is based on the distinctive combination of managerial responsibilities and religious-ethical objectives associated with Islamic education. Scholarly publications from other educational contexts are also considered when they offer relevant comparative perspectives on TQM, educational leadership, stakeholder participation, and quality assurance. This approach enables the review to consider institutional diversity without assuming that managerial practices or organizational challenges are identical across different educational settings.

Data are collected through the identification, selection, and examination of relevant scholarly publications addressing TQM, educational quality assurance, organizational culture, educational leadership, and Islamic values in educational management. Particular attention is given to literature published between 2021 and 2026, while earlier publications may be considered when they provide important conceptual foundations. The materials include empirical studies and conceptual discussions concerning Islamic educational institutions and broader educational contexts. Sources are selected purposively according to their relevance to the research questions, conceptual contribution, and usefulness for explaining relationships among ethical principles, management systems, and organizational practices. The review distinguishes empirical findings from theoretical arguments to avoid treating different forms of evidence as equivalent. However, because the review does not employ exhaustive systematic screening, it does not claim comprehensive coverage of all available publications or a fully reproducible search process.

Data analysis follows a narrative and conceptual synthesis process informed by the principles of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. During data condensation, relevant information is selected, grouped, and summarized according to the research questions and the recurring themes of TQM, Islamic values, organizational mechanisms, and quality culture. Data display involves organizing the synthesized findings into thematic categories and examining conceptual relationships among *ihsan*, *itqan*, *amanah*, leadership, continuous improvement, stakeholder participation, human resource development, and quality assurance. Conclusion drawing and verification involve comparing arguments across publications, identifying convergences and differences, and assessing whether the proposed interpretations are adequately supported by the reviewed literature. These analytical stages inform the development of the three-layer Values System Culture framework. The resulting framework represents a conceptual interpretation, not an empirically validated causal model.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Adoption of Total Quality Management in Islamic Educational Institutions

The literature synthesis identifies five interconnected dimensions of Total Quality Management (TQM) in Islamic educational institutions: leadership commitment, continuous improvement, systematic evaluation, stakeholder participation, and institutional accountability. These dimensions operate across madrasahs, Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), and Islamic higher education institutions, although their practical expressions depend on institutional missions, governance structures, and organizational capacities.

In madrasahs, quality management is associated with instructional improvement, academic culture, institutional planning, teamwork, and the coordination of educational services. In Islamic higher education, quality management emphasizes formal quality assurance, accreditation, performance monitoring, and structured evaluation cycles. Islamic boarding schools and Qur'anic education settings additionally connect quality management with religious learning, character development, and moral responsibility. These findings indicate that educational quality encompasses academic, organizational, religious, and ethical dimensions.

The synthesis also identifies an important distinction between adopting management procedures and embedding quality-oriented practices within institutional routines. Planning, documentation, monitoring, and evaluation provide organizational structures, but their presence alone does not establish that institutional members consistently participate in improvement. The principal

finding is that TQM is most meaningfully conceptualized as an organizational approach connecting institutional objectives, managerial processes, and recurring educational practices, rather than as a collection of administrative requirements.

Islamic Values as Ethical Foundations of Quality Management

Three Islamic values emerge as the principal ethical foundations of the proposed framework: *ihsan*, *itqan*, and *amanah*. These values represent complementary orientations toward educational quality. *Ihsan* emphasizes excellence, moral commitment, and continuous improvement. *Itqan* emphasizes diligence, precision, professional discipline, and consistency in carrying out responsibilities. *Amanah* emphasizes trustworthiness, transparency, accountability, and responsible governance.

The synthesis further identifies *syura*, *ta'awun*, and *qudwah* as complementary concepts. *Syura* represents consultation and shared decision-making, *ta'awun* emphasizes cooperation and collective responsibility, and *qudwah* highlights exemplary leadership. Together, these concepts extend the ethical dimensions of quality management beyond individual conduct to include organizational relationships, collaborative decision-making, and leadership behavior.

The resulting interpretation distinguishes normative commitments from their organizational expression. Islamic values provide ethical direction, whereas institutional arrangements determine how responsibilities, procedures, and expectations are organized. The relationship between the two is therefore not automatic. Their organizational significance depends on how values are interpreted, communicated, and translated into observable practices. The synthesis consequently treats Islamic values as normative foundations for quality management rather than as evidence that quality culture has already been achieved.

Organizational Mechanisms Linking TQM, Islamic Values, and Quality Culture

Five organizational mechanisms emerge as potentially important in connecting ethical commitments with quality-oriented practices: leadership, formal quality assurance, human resource development, stakeholder participation, and accountability.

Leadership provides a means of communicating institutional expectations and demonstrating ethical commitments through decision-making and professional conduct. Formal quality assurance establishes standards, documentation procedures, evaluation cycles, and improvement plans. Human resource development supports professional competence, collective learning,

and the capacity to implement institutional priorities. Stakeholder participation creates opportunities for consultation, collaboration, and shared responsibility. Accountability connects institutional commitments with transparent decisions, responsible reporting, and the maintenance of stakeholder trust.

These mechanisms perform complementary functions. Leadership provides direction; management systems organize responsibilities; professional development strengthens implementation capacity; participation supports collective ownership; and accountability reinforces responsible governance. Their combined presence offers a conceptual explanation of how normative commitments may become embedded in organizational routines. Nevertheless, the synthesis does not establish that any individual mechanism, or their combination, necessarily produces a sustainable quality culture.

Table 1. Proposed Relationships Among TQM Principles, Islamic Values, and Quality Culture

TQM principle	Corresponding Islamic value	Proposed manifestation in quality culture
Leadership and commitment	<i>Amanah, qudwah</i>	Exemplary leadership and shared commitment to institutional quality
Stakeholder orientation	<i>Ihsan</i>	Responsive educational services and concern for learners' well-being
Continuous improvement	<i>Ihsan, itqan</i>	Regular evaluation, reflection, and improvement of institutional practices
Evidence-based management	<i>Itqan, amanah</i>	Reliable documentation, responsible reporting, and transparent evaluation
Participation and teamwork	<i>Syura, ta'awun</i>	Consultation, collaboration, and shared responsibility
Accountability and governance	<i>Amanah</i>	Transparent decision-making and institutional responsibility

Note. The relationships represent proposed conceptual correspondences and have not been empirically validated as a unified model.

Table 1 shows how managerial principles can be interpreted through corresponding Islamic ethical values and potential organizational manifestations. The relationships distinguish the ethical orientation of institutional activities from the procedures used to implement them and the practices that may become established over time. The table also indicates that individual values may support multiple management principles, while particular principles may involve more than one ethical orientation. These correspondences constitute an analytical framework rather than a set of established causal relationships.

Implementation Challenges and the Values System Culture Framework

The synthesis identifies four principal challenges to integrating TQM and Islamic values: administrative formalism, fragmented quality management, limitations in institutional capacity, and difficulties in measuring ethical dimensions of organizational culture.

Administrative formalism arises as a potential concern when documentation and accreditation requirements receive greater attention than substantive improvement. Fragmentation occurs when planning, evaluation, professional development, and stakeholder participation operate as disconnected activities. Institutional capacity influences whether personnel can implement quality procedures, maintain reliable records, use digital systems, and participate meaningfully in improvement initiatives. Measurement presents a further challenge because ethical concepts cannot be fully represented through conventional performance indicators without appropriate conceptualization and validation.

These findings inform a three-layer Values System Culture framework. The first layer comprises Islamic values as normative foundations. The second consists of organizational systems that translate ethical commitments into responsibilities, procedures, and coordinated activities. The third concerns quality culture as the potential expression of shared commitments through recurring institutional practices. The framework also incorporates feedback through evaluation and collective reflection, allowing institutional arrangements and priorities to be reconsidered over time.

Table 2. Conceptual Overview of the Four Guiding Questions

Guiding question	Main conceptual discussion
RQ1: TQM practices	TQM provides principles of leadership, planning, evaluation, improvement, and accountability that may be adapted to different educational contexts.
RQ2: Islamic values	<i>Ihsan</i> , <i>itqan</i> , and <i>amanah</i> provide ethical orientations relevant to excellence, professional discipline, and responsible governance.
RQ3: Quality culture	Leadership, quality assurance, staff development, stakeholder participation, and accountability are proposed as mechanisms connecting institutional values and organizational practices.
RQ4: Implementation challenges	Administrative formalism, institutional capacity, fragmented practices, and the operationalization of ethical values require further consideration.

Note. Table 2 presents a conceptual overview of the literature discussed in this article. It does not represent a systematic comparison or formal quality appraisal of the cited studies.

Table 2 summarizes the principal findings in relation to the four guiding questions. It demonstrates the conceptual progression from managerial practices and ethical foundations to organizational mechanisms and implementation challenges. The synthesis positions quality culture as a potential organizational expression of shared values and coordinated systems, rather than an automatic consequence of adopting TQM. The resulting framework provides a basis for further empirical investigation while recognizing that its proposed relationships remain unvalidated.

Discussion

The findings extend existing discussions of TQM by emphasizing the relationship between managerial processes and the distinctive educational missions of Islamic institutions. Previous studies have examined quality management through academic culture, institutional planning, quality assurance, and educational services (Haningsih et al., 2026; Azizi et al., 2023). Broader educational research also demonstrates the relevance of TQM to institutional quality and service delivery (Yusuf, 2023; Rahman & Nasrin, 2024). The present synthesis is consistent with these perspectives but adds an interpretive distinction between adopting managerial procedures and developing shared quality-oriented practices. This distinction matters because formal implementation does not necessarily establish cultural internalization. The theoretical implication is that TQM in Islamic education should be examined through both organizational processes and the ethical purposes guiding their implementation.

The interpretation of *ihsan*, *itqan*, and *amanah* provides a complementary perspective on the ethical foundations of educational quality. Agustina et al. (2026) associate these values with excellence, disciplined implementation, and responsible governance, while Al Faruq et al. (2024) and Udhma and Minarti (2025) address the integration of Islamic values into quality management. Hasbi et al. (2025) further connects value-based quality management with students' moral development. These discussions support the relevance of ethical considerations but do not establish that conceptual alignment automatically produces organizational change. The present framework contributes by distinguishing the normative function of Islamic values from the operational function of management systems. Practically, institutional leaders can articulate how ethical commitments relate to professional responsibilities, decision-making, and evaluation, while avoiding the assumption that the presence of religious terminology alone demonstrates substantive integration.

The proposed organizational mechanisms are consistent with literature emphasizing leadership, academic culture, and institutional accountability.

Haningsih et al. (2026) examine leadership commitment and teamwork in academic culture, while Romlah et al. (2025) discuss exemplary leadership and Siswadi et al. (2025) consider leadership in relation to quality culture. Aziz et al. (2022) provide an institutional perspective on accountability and legitimacy in Islamic boarding schools. These studies offer complementary insights into the organizational conditions relevant to quality development, although they do not collectively validate the proposed framework. The theoretical contribution is to position leadership, professional development, stakeholder participation, and accountability as potential connecting mechanisms between values and recurring practices. In practical terms, institutions may strengthen coordination among these activities rather than managing quality assurance, staff development, and ethical leadership as unrelated administrative responsibilities.

The distinction between formal quality assurance and sustainable quality culture also provides an important contribution to educational management. Al Faruq et al. (2023) discuss quality planning, control, and improvement through the Juran Trilogy, while Tarigan and Zahara (2024) examine internal quality assurance in relation to accreditation outcomes. Wulandari et al. (2025) and Yuliana et al. (2026) address quality assurance challenges in Islamic higher education. These perspectives establish the importance of organizational procedures without necessarily demonstrating that compliance leads to shared behavioral commitments. The present synthesis therefore treats formal systems as necessary organizational arrangements whose cultural significance remains contingent on implementation. Practically, institutions should use evaluation results to inform professional learning, decision-making, and improvement planning rather than treating documentation as the final objective. This interpretation highlights substantive organizational learning alongside procedural accountability.

A further implication concerns institutional diversity and the measurement of ethical quality. Research across madrasahs, Islamic boarding schools, and Islamic higher education addresses different educational objectives and organizational conditions (Ismail, 2023; Taufikin et al., 2025; Hasbi et al., 2025). Consequently, the proposed framework should not be interpreted as prescribing identical implementation procedures for every institution. Its value lies in providing common conceptual categories that can be adapted to different contexts. The measurement of *ihsan*, *itqan*, and *amanah* also requires particular care because their ethical and spiritual meanings cannot be reduced to conventional performance scores. Zien et al. (2024) provide relevant material for considering Islamic quality management measurement, but a dataset alone does not establish a universally valid instrument. Future studies should examine contextual validity, observable behaviors, and the relationship between formal value statements and institutional practices.

The principal contribution of this article is the proposed Values System Culture framework, which clarifies the potential relationship between Islamic ethical foundations, managerial arrangements, and shared organizational practices. Unlike an interpretation that assumes direct correspondence between religious values and management principles, the framework emphasizes institutional mechanisms and the possibility that implementation may be inconsistent (Musthofa et al., 2026). Its three layers support future investigation of how ethical commitments are communicated, organized, and expressed in educational settings. Nevertheless, the framework remains conceptual because the narrative review does not provide exhaustive literature coverage, formal comparative quality appraisal, or empirical testing of the proposed relationships. Future research should investigate the framework across different Islamic educational institutions, develop context-sensitive measures, and examine whether the interaction of leadership, quality assurance, participation, and ethical commitments is associated with sustained changes in organizational behavior. Such research could establish the framework's explanatory value and practical applicability.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the integration of Total Quality Management (TQM) and Islamic values in Islamic educational institutions requires more than formal quality assurance procedures; it depends on how ethical commitments are translated into consistent organizational practices. The principal lesson is that *ihsan*, *itqan*, and *amanah* can provide normative foundations for excellence, professional discipline, and accountability, while leadership, continuous improvement, human resource development, stakeholder participation, and evaluation may connect these values with institutional quality culture. The study's principal scholarly contribution is the proposed Values System Culture framework, which distinguishes ethical foundations, organizational arrangements, and the potential development of shared quality-oriented practices. However, the narrative literature review does not provide exhaustive literature coverage or empirical validation of the proposed relationships. Future research should test the framework across diverse Islamic educational settings and develop context-sensitive indicators of value-oriented quality culture. Practically, the findings suggest that institutional leaders should integrate ethical commitments into quality policies, professional development, decision-making, and evaluation so that quality management supports meaningful educational improvement rather than merely fulfilling administrative requirements.

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