

Spiritual Values-Based Islamic Education Quality Management: A Comprehensive Analysis

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Received: Januari 5, 2026. Accepted: February 25, 2026 Published: March 25, 2026

Abstract: *The management of Islamic education quality is experiencing a paradigm expansion, no longer focusing solely on the quantitative-academic dimension, but also on the qualitative-spiritual dimension. Spiritual values derived from Islamic teachings are the core identity and primary differentiator of Islamic educational institutions. This journal article aims to conduct an in-depth and systematic study of the concept, implementation, challenges, and strategies for strengthening spiritual values-based Islamic education quality management. This research uses qualitative research methods with an exploratory and analytical library research approach. Data were collected from primary and secondary sources such as the Qur'an, Hadith, textbooks, and relevant scientific journal articles, then analyzed thematically and philosophically. The results show that the integration of spiritual values such as sincerity (ikhlas), trustworthiness (amanah), steadfastness (istiqamah), exemplary conduct (qudwah hasanah), and reliance on God (tawakal) into the quality management cycle (planning, organizing, implementing, evaluating, and developing) creates a holistic approach called Total Spiritual Quality Management. The implementation of this model contributes to the comprehensive improvement of educational process and output quality, the formation of an Islamic organizational culture, and the strengthening of students' character (shakhsiyah islamiyah). However, complex implementation challenges, ranging from misconceptions and weak transformational-spiritual leadership to a lack of integrated evaluation instruments, hinder system optimization. Therefore, strategic reconstruction is needed through strengthening spiritual leadership, developing an Islamic performance management system, and internalizing values through systematic and sustainable acculturation programs.*

Keywords: *total spiritual quality management, Islamic education, divine values, Islamic transformational leadership, religious organizational culture.*

Introduction

Islamic education, throughout its historical development, carries a dual mission: the transmission of knowledge and the formation of the complete human being (insan kamil) who embodies faith, piety, and noble character (Al-Attas, 1999). Education in Islam is not merely a cognitive enterprise but a transformative process aimed at cultivating individuals who harmonize intellectual excellence with spiritual

depth and moral integrity. In this sense, Islamic education integrates epistemological, ethical, and spiritual dimensions within a unified worldview rooted in tawhid.

In the contemporary era, Islamic educational institutions operate within the dynamic currents of globalization, modernization, and increasing demands for public accountability. These pressures require institutions to adopt effective and efficient management systems to ensure competitiveness and sustainability (Azra, 2002). Consequently, quality management models largely derived from industrial and corporate contexts have been widely implemented in educational settings. However, in many cases, their application tends to emphasize technical and procedural compliance while neglecting the deeper philosophical and spiritual foundations of Islamic education itself (Huda & Kartanegara, 2015).

From an Islamic perspective, the notion of quality transcends measurable indicators such as accreditation status, numerical performance targets, or institutional certification. Quality possesses a profound dimension (profound quality) that encompasses not only external achievement but also internal spiritual excellence and moral refinement. As emphasized by Al-Ghazali in *Ihya Ulumuddin*, true excellence is inseparable from sincerity, ethical conduct, and closeness to Allah SWT. Therefore, quality in Islamic education must be understood as both outward institutional effectiveness and inward spiritual authenticity.

This reality calls for a reconceptualization of educational quality management within an Islamic framework. Conventional management approaches should not be rejected outright; rather, they need to be critically integrated and infused with Islamic spiritual values so that they align with the ultimate objectives of Islamic education. Such integration enables the development of a managerial framework that is both academically sound and spiritually grounded (Sallis, 2014).

This article seeks to explore in depth the concept of Islamic education quality management based on spiritual values. It examines the philosophical foundation of quality from an Islamic perspective, analyzes spiritual values as the underlying basis of management practices, constructs an implementation model for integrating these values into managerial functions, identifies critical challenges in contemporary

application, and formulates holistic strengthening strategies. Through this exploration, the article aims to contribute to the theoretical development and practical advancement of Islamic education management that is not only academically excellent but also spiritually robust and transformative.

Method

This study employs a qualitative research design using a library research approach to explore and construct a conceptual framework of spiritual values-based Islamic education quality management. A qualitative approach is considered appropriate because this research seeks to understand meanings, philosophical foundations, and value constructions rather than to test statistical hypotheses (Creswell, 2014). Through library research, the study systematically examines normative Islamic sources and contemporary management literature to formulate an integrative and contextual model.

The approach adopted in this research is exploratory-analytical. The exploratory dimension aims to uncover the essential concept of quality within Islamic epistemology, including its theological, ethical, and philosophical foundations as articulated by classical and contemporary Muslim scholars (Al-Attas, 1999; Al-Ghazali, *Ihya Ulumuddin*). The analytical dimension critically examines modern quality management theories—such as Total Quality Management and the PDCA cycle—and evaluates their relevance and potential integration within an Islamic spiritual framework (Sallis, 2014; Juran & Godfrey, 1999). This integrative approach is grounded in the Islamic epistemological view that knowledge is unified and interconnected, thereby rejecting the dichotomy between revealed and acquired sciences (Kuntowijoyo, 2006).

The data sources of this study consist of primary and secondary materials. Primary sources include the Qur'an and Hadith as normative foundations, classical Islamic works such as Al-Ghazali's *Ihya Ulumuddin*, and foundational texts on Islamic educational philosophy (Al-Attas, 1999). Secondary sources include scholarly books and peer-reviewed journal articles on Islamic education management (Azra, 2002; Nata, 2012; Rais, 2014), quality management theories (Sallis, 2014; Juran &

Godfrey, 1999), spiritual and transformational leadership (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002; Shah, 2006), as well as organizational culture and evaluation models (Schein, 2010; Stufflebeam & Coryn, 2014). The selection of these sources was based on relevance, scholarly credibility, and their contribution to building a comprehensive conceptual synthesis.

Data were collected through systematic document analysis, which involves identifying, reviewing, classifying, and interpreting relevant textual materials (Bowen, 2009). The researcher conducted an in-depth reading process, categorized key themes such as quality, spiritual values, leadership, organizational culture, and evaluation, and extracted theoretical arguments related to the integration of divine values into management functions.

Data analysis was conducted using thematic and philosophical analysis. Thematic analysis was applied to identify core spiritual values—such as sincerity (*ikhlas*), trustworthiness (*amanah*), steadfastness (*istiqamah*), exemplary conduct (*qudwah hasanah*), and reliance on God (*tawakal*)—and to map their integration into planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling functions (Said & Khairunnas, 2018). Philosophical analysis was employed to examine the ontological, epistemological, and axiological foundations underlying the concept of quality in Islamic education, thereby enabling the formulation of a coherent conceptual model known as the Spiritual-Integrated Quality Management (SIQM) framework (Asy'ari, 2019). The analytical process followed stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing to synthesize conceptual relationships systematically (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014).

To ensure credibility and trustworthiness, the study applied source triangulation by comparing classical Islamic texts with contemporary management literature. Conceptual consistency was maintained by aligning normative Islamic principles with established management theories. Through this rigorous qualitative and analytical process, the study formulates a comprehensive model of Total Spiritual Quality Management grounded in Islamic values while remaining responsive to contemporary educational management discourse.

Result and Discussion

The Philosophical Foundation of Quality in Islamic Education

The philosophical foundation of quality in Islamic education is rooted in a theocentric worldview that integrates faith, knowledge, and action within the framework of tawhid. Unlike secular-materialistic paradigms that often reduce quality to measurable outputs and performance indicators, Islam conceptualizes quality as a manifestation of spiritual consciousness and moral responsibility. The terms *al-ihsan* and *itqan* are frequently used to denote excellence, referring to performing tasks with precision, sincerity, and optimal effort as an expression of devotion to Allah SWT (Q.S. Al-Mulk: 2). The Prophet Muhammad SAW emphasized this principle by stating, “Indeed, Allah loves a servant who, when he does something, does it with *itqan* (excellence)” (HR. Thabrani). Thus, quality in Islam is not merely the attainment of worldly achievements but a reflection of faith actualized through professional and ethical conduct (Beekun & Badawi, 2005).

Within this philosophical framework, the benchmark of quality in Islamic education is inseparable from its ultimate objective: the formation of *insan kamil*—a complete human being characterized by faith, piety, intellectual competence, and noble character. The educational ideal is the development of *muttaqin* individuals who embody Islamic ethical values in personal and social life. Therefore, quality indicators in Islamic educational institutions must balance cognitive-intellectual mastery (*fardhu ‘ain* and *fardhu kifayah*), affective-spiritual internalization (faith and devotion), and psychomotor-behavioral realization in the form of *akhlakul karimah* (Marimba, 1989). Quality, in this sense, is holistic and comprehensive, oriented toward success in both worldly life and the hereafter.

Spiritual Values as the Foundation of Quality Management

Spiritual values function as foundational principles guiding thought, attitude, and action within Islamic education management. These values are not supplementary ethical ornaments but core determinants shaping institutional identity and operational direction (Said & Khairunnas, 2018). Among the essential spiritual

values are sincerity (ikhlas), trustworthiness (amanah), steadfastness (istiqamah), exemplary conduct (qudwah hasanah), and reliance on God (tawakal).

Sincerity (ikhlas) signifies the purification of intention solely for the sake of Allah SWT (Q.S. Al-Bayyinah: 5). In management practice, sincerity eliminates ego-driven, political, or image-oriented motives, ensuring that policies and programs are directed toward genuine educational improvement rather than symbolic achievement. Trustworthiness (amanah), as emphasized in Q.S. Al-Anfal: 27, requires leaders and educators to regard their roles as divine trusts accountable before Allah. This value becomes the ethical foundation of transparency, integrity, and accountability in financial, curricular, and institutional governance.

Steadfastness (istiqamah), referenced in Q.S. Fussilat: 30, reflects consistency in upholding truth and excellence despite external pressures. In quality management, istiqamah is manifested in disciplined adherence to standards, continuity of vision, and resilience in maintaining Islamic institutional identity amid modernization. Exemplary conduct (qudwah hasanah) derives from the prophetic model described in Q.S. Al-Ahzab: 21. Leadership through example fosters a value-based organizational culture more effectively than regulatory enforcement alone. Meanwhile, reliance on God (tawakal), grounded in Q.S. Ali Imran: 159, instills balance between maximum effort and spiritual humility, preventing arrogance in success and despair in failure. Each of these values shapes a management ethos that harmonizes professional excellence with spiritual accountability.

Implementation Model: Integrating Spiritual Values into Quality Management

Spiritual values-based quality management requires systematic operationalization across the entire management cycle. This study conceptualizes such integration through the Spiritual-Integrated Quality Management (SIQM) Cycle, which embeds spiritual reflection within planning, organizing, implementation, and evaluation processes (Beekun, 2011). The model emphasizes that every managerial activity is both an administrative responsibility and an act of worship.

In planning, the process begins with purification of intention and clarification of educational purpose. Beyond conventional SWOT analysis, institutions are encouraged to conduct a spiritually oriented environmental assessment, evaluating opportunities and risks through the lens of halal-haram and benefit-harm considerations (Khan, 2012). Vision and mission statements must reflect the Qur'anic balance between worldly achievement and eternal success (Q.S. Al-Qasas: 77). Strategic goals are filtered through the framework of maqashid al-shari'ah—preserving religion, life, intellect, lineage, and wealth (Audah, 2007). Thus, planning documents become moral commitments (mu'ahadah) before Allah, not merely bureaucratic instruments (Rivai & Veithzal, 2013).

In organizing, institutional structures are designed to ensure clarity of responsibility and effective communication grounded in the principle of mutual counsel in truth (Q.S. Al-'Asr: 3). Decision-making is guided by consultation (syura) as instructed in Q.S. Ali 'Imran: 159. Recruitment and placement emphasize the integration of competence (kafa'ah) and piety (taqwa), reflecting the Qur'anic example of Prophet Yusuf AS (Q.S. Yusuf: 55) (Fachruddin, 2015). Justice ('adl) must govern delegation and workload distribution to maintain organizational harmony.

Implementation and leadership are driven by spiritual-transformative principles. Spiritual leadership derives influence from shared transcendental values and moral example rather than authority alone (Fry, 2003). Authentic and exemplary leadership strengthens trust and organizational commitment (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Communication within the institution adheres to Qur'anic ethics such as qaulan sadida, qaulan ma'rufa, and qaulan layyina (Q.S. Al-Ahzab: 70; Q.S. Al-Baqarah: 263; Q.S. Taha: 44). Motivation is nurtured through awareness of work as worship, supported by ongoing spiritual development activities inspired by classical Islamic scholarship (Al-Ghazali, Ihya Ulumuddin).

Evaluation and control within the SIQM framework expand beyond academic measurement to encompass spiritual and character dimensions. Instruments should assess integrity, discipline in worship, social responsibility, and

moral behavior (Zohar & Marshall, 2004). Evaluation processes must uphold honesty (shidq) and justice (‘adl), recognizing accountability before Allah. The traditional PDCA cycle evolves into a spiritually infused cycle incorporating introspection (muhasabah) as a corrective mechanism (Juran & Godfrey, 1999). Conflict resolution and complaint management are conducted through reconciliation (ishlah) principles as guided in Q.S. Al-Hujurat: 9–10.

Implementation Challenges

The implementation of the SIQM model faces multidimensional challenges. Paradigmatic tensions arise between those who reject modern management as secular and those who adopt it uncritically, neglecting spiritual integration (Husni, 2020). The persistence of knowledge dichotomy further complicates integration efforts (Al-Attas, 1999).

Leadership challenges involve discrepancies between spiritual depth and managerial competence. Effective implementation requires leaders who combine ethical authenticity with strategic capability (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Governance weaknesses and inconsistent commitment can hinder long-term transformation.

Human resource capacity also presents difficulties. Teachers may possess either strong spiritual knowledge without pedagogical skill or strong pedagogical competence without value integration capacity (Majid, 2016). Organizational culture resistant to transparency and consultation further obstructs reform (Schein, 2010). Externally, policy frameworks and accreditation systems often prioritize administrative compliance over substantive character formation (Nata, 2012).

Strengthening Strategies Toward Total Spiritual Quality Management

Addressing these challenges requires integrative and sustainable strategies. Paradigm reconstruction through philosophical discourse and conceptual socialization can foster shared understanding of SIQM’s foundations (Kuntowijoyo, 2006). Leadership development programs must integrate spiritual formation, managerial competence, and transformational capacity (Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002).

Human resource systems should integrate competence and integrity assessment while embedding spiritual performance indicators (Shah, 2006).

Organizational culture must institutionalize values through ethical codes and meaningful rituals (Schein, 2010). Holistic evaluation systems should assess spiritual climate and stakeholder satisfaction (Stufflebeam & Coryn, 2014). Collaborative networks among Islamic educational institutions and community organizations strengthen shared learning and policy advocacy (Rais, 2014).

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretically, this study contributes to the enrichment of quality management discourse by integrating spiritual-transcendental dimensions into mainstream management theory (Asy'ari, 2019). It bridges normative Islamic educational philosophy with systematic managerial frameworks, demonstrating that Islamic values can function as operational principles rather than abstract ideals.

Practically, the SIQM model offers a roadmap for institutional transformation, enabling leaders, educators, policymakers, and communities to collaboratively pursue holistic quality improvement. By harmonizing academic excellence with spiritual authenticity, Islamic educational institutions can preserve their identity while remaining competitive and socially relevant in contemporary contexts.

Conclusion

Spiritual values-based Islamic education quality management constitutes both a philosophical imperative and a strategic necessity for safeguarding the identity, integrity, and competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions in the contemporary era. This approach reaffirms that the highest standard of educational quality is not limited to measurable academic performance, but is fundamentally oriented toward the formation of God-conscious individuals (*muttaqin*) who embody intellectual excellence, moral integrity, and social responsibility.

The systematic integration of divine values sincerity (*ikhlas*), trustworthiness (*amanah*), steadfastness (*istiqamah*), exemplary conduct (*qudwah hasanah*), and reliance on God (*tawakal*) into the full spectrum of management functions transforms quality management from a purely technical-administrative mechanism into a spiritually meaningful process. Within this framework, planning becomes a

moral commitment, organizing becomes the structuring of trust, leadership becomes value-based exemplification, and evaluation becomes reflective introspection (muhasabah). As a result, operational efficiency and institutional accountability coexist harmoniously with spiritual consciousness and ethical depth.

Although the implementation of this model encounters multidimensional challenges ranging from paradigmatic tensions and leadership limitations to human resource capacity and systemic constraints these obstacles are not insurmountable. Through paradigm reconstruction, strengthening of spiritual-transformative leadership, revitalization of integrity-based human resource systems, and the institutionalization of value-driven organizational culture, Islamic educational institutions can progressively realize a holistic and sustainable model of Total Spiritual Quality Management.

Ultimately, this integrative approach offers a transformative pathway through which Islamic education can remain faithful to its theological foundations while responding adaptively and competitively to contemporary global demands.

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