



Problems of Education Quality in Private Islamic Universities Through Organizational Culture and Total Quality Management

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ABSTRACT

This study found that a strong organizational culture at An-Nur University, Lampung, plays a crucial role in improving educational quality. Values such as discipline, commitment to quality, and collaboration among academics shape behavioral patterns that support the achievement of institutional goals. The implementation of integrated quality management also makes a significant contribution through a system involving systematic planning, control, and evaluation. Integrated quality management at An-Nur University, Lampung, involves all relevant parties, from leaders to educators and education staff. The process of regular performance measurement, combined with the use of information technology in evaluation, improves the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, significant improvements have been seen in both academic and non-academic aspects. This study demonstrates that a strong organizational culture and integrated quality management can improve educational quality. Islamic universities are expected to develop organizational cultural values that support educational quality, such as collaboration and shared commitment. Furthermore, regular performance evaluation is necessary for continuous improvement and effective policy-making to improve academic quality. This research can also serve as a reference in developing educational policies in Indonesia.

Keywords: Organizational Culture, Islamic Higher Education, Integrated Quality Management, Educational Quality

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received

February 20, 2025

Revised

April 28, 2025

Accepted

June 30, 2025

Journal Homepage <https://ojs.staialfurqan.ac.id/IJoASER/>

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INTRODUCTION

The quality of education in Private Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTIS) remains a crucial issue that has not been fully resolved. Various problems such as low study program accreditation, weak teaching staff competency, minimal learning innovation, and a suboptimal institutional management system indicate a weak institutional foundation for managing educational quality holistically. Organizational culture, which should be a driving force for change, often becomes an obstacle because it has not been formed in a positive and productive manner. The phenomenon of a work culture that tends to be non-collaborative, resistance to change, and weak institutional integrity exacerbate this quality stagnation. On the other hand, the implementation of

Total Quality Management (TQM) in many PTIS is often formalistic and not down-to-earth, so that its core values such as continuous improvement, customer (stakeholder) focus, and comprehensive involvement of all organizational elements are not consistently implemented.

Understanding and strengthening organizational culture in private Islamic higher education environments is becoming increasingly important given the complex challenges and ever-evolving opportunities in today's global era.(Supadi, 2025;Fattah et al., 2024). The complexity and high level of competition in the education sector demands a strong commitment to continuous quality improvement and sustainable progress.(Albaroudi & Iqbal, 2024; Rahman & Nasrin, 2024)In this context, Total Quality Management (TQM) becomes an important paradigm that emphasizes continuous improvement and a stakeholder-centered approach.(Nugraha et al., 2025;Parveen et al., 2024).

Although the principles of TQM have been widely applied in various industrial sectors, their application in the unique context of Islamic higher education, especially in areas such as Gorontalo, Indonesia, is still relatively unstudied.(Nuryani, 2025; Prasetya et al., 2025)Therefore, it is important to examine the relationship between TQM practices and organizational culture shaped by Islamic values and local wisdom. Existing literature tends to focus more on the general educational context and often fails to address the specific characteristics and challenges faced by Islamic educational institutions.(Nasir & Sunardi, 2025).

Although a number of previous studies provide useful insights into the mechanisms of TQM implementation and the influence of organizational culture(Fadillah et al., 2025; Nuryani, 2025), many have not yet fully described the complexity of the relationship between these two aspects in the Islamic academic environment.(Fadillah et al., 2025). Most existing studies still rely on Western theoretical frameworks, which may not adequately represent the cultural specificities and operational realities in Eastern or Islamic contexts.(Al Faruq et al., 2024; Supadi, 2025). Elements such as Islamic ethical standards, governance principles, and community involvement are often overlooked, even though they are very influential in shaping how institutions adopt and adapt to TQM principles.(Susanto et al., 2024)This literature gap emphasizes the need for research that focuses on local TQM implementation through an institutional culture perspective.(Zien et al., 2024).

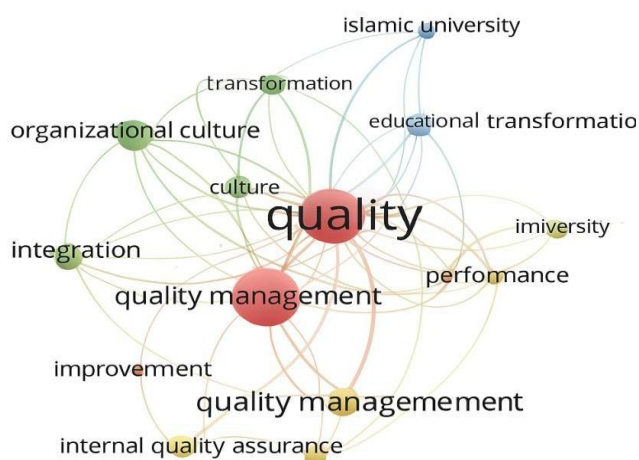


Figure 1. Conceptual Network Map of the Transformation of the Quality of Islamic Higher Education through Organizational Culture and Quality Management

Figure 1 shows the conceptual network map of the transformation of the quality of private Islamic higher education through organizational culture and quality management, illustrating the interrelationships between key concepts relevant to this research theme. The keyword "quality" appears at the center of the network and has a strong relationship with terms such as organizational culture, quality management, educational transformation, and Islamic university. The size of the nodes (circles) indicates the frequency of occurrence of the term in academic literature, while the lines connecting the nodes indicate the degree of interconnection or coexistence between concepts in the same publication. This visualization demonstrates that your research topic remains highly relevant and offers ample scope for academic exploration, particularly in the context of Islamic higher education, which has not been extensively explored. This indicates that this research is not only feasible but can also contribute significantly to the development of knowledge in the field of educational management and the quality of Islamic higher education institutions.

This study aims to fill this gap by examining the relationship between organizational culture and TQM practices at An-Nur University, Lampung, as a case study to explore how organizational cultural dynamics can support or hinder the success of TQM. This study will identify cultural attributes that support or hinder the effective implementation of TQM, and assess the extent to which existing values align with or conflict with the core principles of TQM. The role of leadership in managing these cultural elements to create a mindset oriented toward quality and improvement will also be analyzed. The ultimate goal of this study is to formulate strategic recommendations for An-Nur University, Lampung, and other institutions with similar characteristics to build a sustainable supportive culture for TQM integration, in order to improve educational quality and institutional performance.(Suryani, 2024; Susanto et al., 2024).

Through a case study approach, this research will present an in-depth overview of the cultural dynamics at An-Nur University, Lampung, and their implications for the implementation of TQM. By exploring the direct experiences of lecturers, administrative staff, and institutional leaders, this research aims to uncover the cultural dimensions that subtly influence the success of TQM. Thus, this research makes both theoretical and practical contributions to the discourse on quality management and organizational culture in Islamic higher education.(Diana & Faslah, 2025). Special attention is also given to the role of ethical leadership, given its fundamental influence in shaping the norms and value systems of institutions.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative methodology with a case study approach to explore the organizational culture at An-Nur University Lampung, one of the leading private Islamic universities in Lampung. Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews with 30 key informants consisting of lecturers, educational staff, and students, as well as through direct observation of cultural practices and interactions occurring on campus. The interviews provided valuable insights into the institutional values upheld by the academic community, such as a commitment to discipline, integrity, and collective harmony. Meanwhile, observational data showed how these values were realized in daily life on campus, including in religious activities and collaborative academic activities.

The interview process was conducted in two stages. The first stage focused on identifying the core cultural principles that developed within the institution and their influence on individual behavior and group dynamics. The second stage explored the contribution of these shared values to the integration and effectiveness of quality management practices. Findings indicated that principles such as teamwork and transparent communication significantly support the implementation of the quality management system and foster a shared commitment to academic excellence.

The collected data was systematically analyzed using thematic analysis techniques to identify recurring patterns and meaningful themes emerging from interview transcripts and field observation notes. This analysis process highlighted the critical role of leadership involvement and student participation in improving educational quality.(Nurhayati et al., 2024). The main findings emphasize the strategic function of institutional culture in strengthening quality assurance measures and improving pedagogical standards.

To ensure the credibility and reliability of the research findings, data triangulation techniques were used to confirm information from interviews, direct observations, and institutional documents. Furthermore, member checking was conducted to validate the researcher's interpretations and obtain direct feedback from informants. These steps increased the validity of the data and strengthened the relationship between the researcher and participants, thus supporting the integrity of the study's conclusions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The research findings show that the organizational culture at An-Nur University, Lampung, is deeply ingrained with Islamic values that emphasize cooperation, integrity, and accountability. These core values not only serve as ethical guidelines for individuals but also shape collaborative dynamics between lecturers and students. Within this framework, cooperation is a fundamental element in various academic and non-academic activities. Examples include community service activities that involve collaboration between lecturers and students, not merely as a formality but reflecting a shared dedication to social development. Lecturers offer their expertise, while students contribute with enthusiasm and creativity, forming a synergistic team.

These supportive interactions are crucial to creating an effective learning environment. Students tend to be more engaged and confident when they view their instructors not just as teachers but as mentors who care about their development. This creates a positive classroom atmosphere, where each individual feels valued and empowered. For example, when a student is having difficulty understanding material, they are encouraged to ask questions, and the instructor will patiently and clearly answer until they understand. This situation reflects the values of honesty and responsibility—the student openly admits their difficulties, and the instructor plays their part in fostering understanding.

The implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) at An-Nur University, Lampung, has shown significant results. A student survey revealed that 85% of respondents were satisfied with the academic services provided, indicating the successful implementation of a quality-oriented strategy. However, challenges remain, particularly related to limited professional development opportunities for staff to effectively implement the TQM framework. This highlights the need for increased investment in capacity-building programs.

One concrete step taken is the implementation of a lecturer development program to improve teaching quality. This program equips lecturers with the latest pedagogical methods, which in turn increases learning effectiveness. Following the training, there was a 10% increase in average student academic performance, underscoring the importance of continuous professional development in improving educational quality.

However, resistance to change remains a significant challenge. Some staff have expressed concerns about the increased workload and the impact on work-life balance resulting from the additional responsibilities associated with TQM procedures. Addressing this requires management support that includes clear communication and tailored training to emphasize the long-term benefits of quality management. This approach allows all organizational components to be more actively involved in continuous improvement efforts.

The Islamic ethical framework upheld at An-Nur University, Lampung, provides a solid foundation for the successful implementation of TQM. A culture of mutual trust, collaboration, and personal accountability fosters innovation and continuous improvement. For example, in institutional evaluation meetings, staff are encouraged to share ideas and constructive criticism, reflecting a culture where every voice is heard and valued. This participatory approach fosters a sense of shared ownership and unites stakeholders toward a common goal.

In the context of higher education, the success of TQM depends heavily on the active participation of all stakeholders, including management, faculty, and students. The experience of An-Nur University, Lampung, demonstrates that involving faculty in curriculum planning and teaching innovation can increase student engagement and motivation. This dynamic interaction creates a positive cycle, where improvements drive a greater commitment to excellence.

Continuous monitoring is also crucial for sustaining TQM initiatives. An-Nur University Lampung routinely conducts internal evaluations, including satisfaction surveys, academic performance analysis, and faculty feedback mechanisms. These tools enable the institution to identify weaknesses and take timely corrective action. For example, if students express dissatisfaction with a particular teaching technique, additional training can be provided to address the issue effectively.

Technology also plays a vital role in this transformation. Digital platforms such as Learning Management Systems (LMS) are used to facilitate more dynamic interactions between lecturers and students, expand access to learning resources, and facilitate monitoring of academic progress. These systems increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the overall learning process.

When addressing the challenges associated with TQM, clear and ongoing communication is key. Management must proactively explain the rationale and benefits of quality improvement measures to foster understanding and acceptance throughout the institution. Holding workshops or open forums on TQM can bridge the gap in understanding and foster a more holistic approach to quality improvement.

This study confirms that the strong Islamic-based organizational culture at An-Nur University, Lampung, plays a crucial role in supporting the implementation of integrated quality management. The institution's commitment to Islamic principles, coupled with consistent quality initiatives, has created an educational environment conducive to growth and collaboration. Maintaining and expanding these efforts requires the full involvement of all stakeholders.

The strategic integration of TQM not only raises educational standards but also strengthens the university's institutional identity and ethos. With a shared commitment to values such as cooperation, honesty, and responsibility, An-Nur University Lampung is well-positioned to foster a responsive and visionary academic culture. Addressing challenges collaboratively ensures that every individual is an active contributor to the achievement of sustainable excellence.

Developing a cohesive organizational culture begins with instilling shared values that shape the institution's character. At An-Nur University, Lampung, Islamic values serve not only as a moral guideline but also as an inspiration for innovation and long-term improvement. When these principles are internalized at all levels, synergy and unity are created in achieving institutional goals.

This is evident in various initiatives involving faculty and students, such as seminars, workshops, and community service projects. These activities encourage knowledge exchange, mutual respect, and foster student leadership and initiative. Through this collaboration, students become active contributors, helping to build an inclusive and dynamic academic community.

Academic integrity, rooted in the value of honesty, is also emphasized throughout campus life. Students and faculty alike are expected to respect intellectual property rights and uphold ethics in research and assessment. This fosters trust and ethical awareness within the academic ecosystem.

Responsibility extends beyond academic duties to a commitment to social impact. Students are encouraged to engage in community-oriented activities, in line with the university's mission to contribute to social development. These experiences instill civic responsibility and broaden students' understanding of their role as agents of change.

For TQM to be successful, every stakeholder must have a sense of ownership in the quality assurance process. Inclusive decision-making and transparent communication foster a shared commitment to institutional progress. Regular evaluations accompanied by responsive follow-up plans ensure that improvements are collaborative and data-driven.

Finally, technological advances significantly facilitate the implementation of TQM. The use of an LMS allows for efficient resource sharing, feedback collection, and real-time monitoring of learning outcomes. By leveraging digital tools, institutions can maximize their capacity to deliver impactful, student-centered education.

In conclusion, This study confirms that the deeply ingrained Islamic values at An-Nur University, Lampung, serve as a solid foundation for the implementation of Total Quality Management. The synergy between values-based leadership and systematic quality practices has created an ethical and performance-oriented academic culture. Continued support and active participation from all stakeholders are key to maintaining and enhancing educational excellence at this institution.

Table 1. Key Findings of This Study

Aspect	Findings	Concrete Example
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Organizational culture	Shaped by Islamic principles such as cooperation, integrity and accountability.	Joint involvement between lecturers and students in community service activities. Lecturers act as mentors and supporters of students' academic processes.
Cooperation	Play an important role in academic and non-academic activities.	In community service projects, lecturers share knowledge, while students provide enthusiasm and creativity.
Honesty	Academic integrity is maintained, thus fostering mutual respect for intellectual endeavors.	Students cite references correctly in their final assignments – Lecturers are responsible for ensuring that students understand the material.
Responsibility	Each individual is responsible for their role and duties, including in social service.	Students are active in community-based social activities.
TQM Implementation	TQM contributes to improving the quality of education, although there are still obstacles such as lack of training and resistance to change.	Lecturer professional development improves student performance by 10% – Challenges include increased workload and additional responsibilities.
Evaluation	Assessments are conducted on an ongoing basis to measure the effectiveness of the program.	Feedback from student satisfaction surveys and learning outcome analysis is used to improve the learning process.
The Role of Technology	Technology greatly supports the implementation of TQM through tools such as Learning Management Systems (LMS).	The use of LMS encourages engagement between lecturers and students and monitors student learning progress in real-time.
Effective Communication	Clear communication between management, lecturers, and students is important for the successful implementation of TQM.	TQM-themed forums and workshops are held to explain the objectives and gather input from all stakeholders.
Strong Organizational Culture	An organizational culture based on Islamic values encourages innovation and continuous improvement.	Collaborative activities such as seminars, workshops, and community service programs that

actively involve lecturers and students.

Discussion

The organizational culture at An-Nur University Lampung is uniquely characterized by its integration of Islamic principles such as integrity, cooperation, and accountability. These values not only serve as an ethical compass for individuals within the institution but also shape the interpersonal dynamics between faculty, administrative staff, and students. This creates a supportive and conducive environment for intellectual growth and personal development.(Nuryani, 2025)Collaboration is a fundamental element in various academic and non-academic activities. In community service activities, for example, collaboration between lecturers and students is not merely administrative but reflects a shared commitment to making a positive contribution to society. Lecturers contribute their expertise, while students bring enthusiasm and creativity. This synergy significantly increases student engagement and motivation.(Diana & Faslah, 2025; Fadillah et al., 2025).

When students view their instructors as accessible and helpful mentors, they'll be more engaged in the learning process. A lecturer's willingness to guide students through difficult material demonstrates both empathy and dedication, creating a learning environment that encourages honesty and fosters a sense of responsibility.(Supadi, 2025; Yochanan et al., 2024)Students feel comfortable admitting their limited understanding, and instructors demonstrate a commitment to ensuring each student truly understands the material in its entirety.

In the broader educational context, instilling values and character is a primary function of higher education. At An-Nur University Lampung, this is accomplished through various strategies, such as delivering announcements containing moral messages, leading by example, and fostering consistent Islamic practices. Islamic values are integrated into campus life through the internalization of *i'tiqodiyah* (faith) values through spiritual activities such as religious lectures, congregational *Dhuha* and *Dhuhur* prayers; *khuluqiyah* (morals) values through discipline, courtesy, and adherence to rules; and *amaliyah* (behavior) values through morning *tadarus* (recitation of the Koran), congregational prayers, participation in religious lectures, and activities to summarize religious books.

The implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) principles at An-Nur University, Lampung, has shown positive results, particularly in terms of student satisfaction with academic services. Survey data shows a high level of satisfaction, indicating the success of TQM implementation on campus. Within the TQM framework, student satisfaction is a key performance indicator that determines service standards across all units. In Islamic educational institutions, TQM is implemented to improve service quality, including the provision of quality resources, improving the quality of learning, developing a contextual curriculum, and enhancing the efficiency of the academic administration system.(Nurmalasari et al., 2025).

To maintain this quality, the university actively invests in continuous professional development for faculty and staff. Training programs include improving digital literacy and English language skills, aimed at enhancing human resource competencies. Improved staff capabilities will have a direct impact on improved learning outcomes. TQM provides a structured approach to institutional development

across three key dimensions: academic (cognitive) capacity, social (interpersonal) skills, and ethical (moral) awareness.(Laia et al., 2024).

Furthermore, various variables influence the quality of education, such as institutional diversity, pedagogical strategies, and the overall learning environment. Realizing TQM values requires universal ethical principles, a holistic-integrative approach, active participation of the entire academic community, integration of local knowledge, strengthening 21st-century competencies, principles of fairness and inclusivity, and alignment with technological advances.(Murtafi'ah, 2024). Improving the quality of education is a continuous process that requires collaboration from all elements of the organization.(Diana & Faslah, 2025; Prasetya et al., 2025)Quality academic services create a conducive learning climate, which in turn improves student achievement. To realize this vision, institutions need to develop and implement annual quality improvement plans.(Tambingon et al., 2025).

Thus, a strong organizational culture rooted in Islamic values, as well as the effective implementation of TQM principles, are the keys to improving the quality of education at An-Nur University, Lampung.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) at An-Nur University, Lampung, is a strategic and visionary step aimed at enhancing educational excellence while strengthening the institution's organizational values. By fostering a culture rooted in a spirit of cooperation, integrity, and accountability, the university strives to create a more dynamic and supportive academic atmosphere. Overcoming existing obstacles requires a sense of shared ownership and the active participation of all stakeholders, so that each party can play its role in the process of continuous quality improvement. Through these efforts, An-Nur University, Lampung, has the potential to develop into a superior educational institution capable of making a real contribution to both local and global communities.

More than just an academic center, An-Nur University Lampung also aspires to be a place for the development of moral and spiritual development based on Islamic values. By encouraging a spirit of togetherness, ethical behavior, and a strong sense of responsibility, the university is committed to developing well-rounded individuals capable of intellectual and social achievement. Thus, An-Nur University Lampung remains relevant as a center of learning that has an impact and long-term influence on national development.

However, several limitations need to be acknowledged. First, this study was limited to the context of An-Nur University, Lampung, so the findings may not be generalizable to other Islamic universities. Second, the relatively small number of 30 participants may not adequately represent diverse perspectives on TQM implementation and organizational culture as a whole. Third, although data triangulation was conducted to increase reliability, the subjectivity inherent in qualitative interviews may still influence the interpretation of the findings.

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