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Implementation School Quality Management Based School Culture and Student Quality Assurance in Primary Education

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Abstract: Improving the quality of basic education requires not only effective management practices but also the integration of cultural and spiritual dimensions that support holistic student development. However, previous studies have generally examined school quality management, school culture, and quality assurance separately, with limited attention to their integration within Islamic basic education. This study aimed to analyze the implementation of school quality management based on school culture and student quality assurance at Al Falah Darussalam Primary and Secondary Schools, Indonesia, and to propose a conceptual model integrating these dimensions. A qualitative case study approach was employed, involving two principals, four teachers, two students, one parent representative, and administrative staff selected purposively. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observations, and document analysis and were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña. The findings revealed that quality management was implemented through four interconnected dimensions: Intention, Effort, Evaluation, and Trust. These dimensions integrate Islamic values with contemporary quality management principles and emphasize continuous improvement, shared responsibility, reflective evaluation, and trust among educational stakeholders. The model is grounded in the Islamic concepts of *tarbiyah*, *ta'dib*, and *muhasabah*, which emphasize holistic development, character formation, discipline, and continuous self-evaluation. The proposed Intention, Effort, Evaluation, and Trust Quality Assurance Model contributes theoretically to Islamic educational management by integrating school culture, quality management, and student quality assurance into a unified framework. Practically, the model provides schools with a culturally and spiritually responsive approach to strengthening educational quality, student character, stakeholder engagement, and sustainable quality improvement within Islamic basic education.

Keywords: School quality management; school culture; student quality assurance; quality assurance.

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INTRODUCTION

Improving the quality of basic education has become a strategic concern for educational systems worldwide, particularly in response to globalization, technological advancement, and increasing demands for educational accountability (Adeoye dkk., 2025; Dewi dkk., 2026). Basic education serves as the foundation for higher levels of education and plays a crucial role in shaping students' intellectual, moral, social, and spiritual development. Consequently, improving educational quality should not merely focus on academic achievement but should also encompass the formation of character and holistic human development. In Indonesia, the results of the Programme for International Student Assessment 2022 indicate that Indonesian students' performance in literacy, mathematics, and science remains below the average of Organisation for Economic Co-operation and

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Development countries, suggesting the need for comprehensive improvement in educational management and quality assurance systems (Purnasih dkk., 2026; Sumliyah dkk., 2025).

School Quality Management has been widely recognized as an essential strategy for enhancing educational effectiveness and organizational performance. Rooted in the principles of Total Quality Management, school quality management emphasizes continuous improvement, stakeholder participation, and systematic evaluation of educational processes (Deming, 2018; Hidayat dkk., 2026; Ridwan dkk., 2025; Thareja, 2017). School quality management ensures continuous improvement, while Indonesia's Internal Quality Assurance System promotes quality culture, service standards, accountability, and sustainable improvement across educational institutions. Nevertheless, various studies have shown that the implementation of quality management in schools often encounters challenges related to weak organizational culture, insufficient stakeholder commitment, and limited quality assurance mechanisms (Fatimah dkk., 2024; Mu'alimin dkk., 2026).

In addition to managerial factors, school culture constitutes an important determinant of educational quality. School culture encompasses values, beliefs, traditions, norms, and patterns of interaction that influence the behavior of all school members (Deal & Peterson, 2016a; Jerab & Mabrouk, 2023). A positive school culture contributes to the development of conducive learning environments, teacher collaboration, and students' academic and social achievements. In Islamic educational institutions, school culture carries a broader meaning because it functions not only as an organizational mechanism but also as a medium for transmitting religious values and cultivating students' moral character. Religious practices, discipline, cooperation, and exemplary behavior are considered essential elements of Islamic school culture that contribute to the formation of responsible and morally conscious learners (Hadi & Prayogi, 2025; Mahfudi & Rifa'i, 2025; Wijayanto dkk., 2025).

Another essential component in improving educational quality is Quality Assurance. Quality assurance refers to a systematic process designed to ensure that educational processes and outcomes meet predetermined standards and continuously improve over time (Lathifah dkk., 2025; Martin dkk., 2025; Miranda, 2025). Within the context of basic education, quality assurance should not be limited to academic assessment but should also include the evaluation of students' attitudes, character, social competence, and personal development. Therefore, quality assurance serves not merely as a control mechanism but also as a means of promoting continuous learning and institutional improvement. Contemporary perspectives emphasize that quality assurance should facilitate reflection, accountability, and evidence-based decision-making to enhance educational effectiveness (Anwar & Hidayati, 2025; Hasbi dkk., 2025; Hellberg & Fauskanger, 2023).

From the perspective of Islamic education, quality improvement should be understood in a more comprehensive and holistic manner. Islamic education aims not only to develop intellectual competence but also to nurture moral, spiritual, and social dimensions. Classical Muslim scholars such as Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas and Al-Ghazali emphasize that education is fundamentally concerned with the cultivation of adab, morality, and spiritual consciousness. Al-Attas introduced the concept of *ta'dib*, which views education as a process of instilling proper manners and recognition of the right order of existence (Jaelani, 2025; Samhudi dkk., 2025). Similarly, Al-Ghazali argued that education should integrate knowledge, morality, and spirituality in order to produce individuals who

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possess noble character and fulfill their responsibilities as servants and vicegerents of Allah (Azizah & Abidin, 2025; Lubis & Rahman, 2025).

Furthermore, the concept of *tarbiyah* emphasizes continuous nurturing and gradual development through guidance, habituation, and exemplary practices (Alfarisi, 2025; Aliyah dkk., 2025; Suciati dkk., 2026). Islamic educational philosophy also promotes values such as *itqan* (excellence), *amanah* (responsibility), *shura* (consultation), and *muhasabah* (self-evaluation), which are highly compatible with the principles of contemporary quality management (Asamoah dkk., 2025; Misztal & Ratajszczak, 2025; Sutikno dkk., 2025). Consequently, integrating Islamic educational perspectives with school quality management provides a stronger philosophical foundation for establishing educational systems that are academically effective and morally grounded. Numerous previous studies have investigated school quality management, school culture, and quality assurance in different educational settings. Research conducted by Díez dkk. (2020); Khutwane & Mahlangu (2025); Menteşoğullari (2023) demonstrated that effective quality management contributes significantly to improving school performance.

Similarly, studies by Hadi & Prayogi (2025); Setyani dkk. (2024) revealed that Islamic school culture positively influences students' character development and learning outcomes. Other studies have emphasized the role of quality assurance systems in promoting educational accountability and continuous improvement (Asamoah dkk., 2025; Cheong Cheng, 2003; Kayyali, 2023). Despite these contributions, most previous studies have examined these dimensions separately and have rarely explored their interrelationship within a unified framework. More importantly, the absence of an integrated approach creates both theoretical and practical limitations. Theoretically, educational quality is a multidimensional construct that cannot be adequately explained through managerial aspects alone. Quality management requires a supportive school culture and an effective quality assurance mechanism to sustain continuous improvement.

Practically, schools frequently encounter difficulties in maintaining consistency between organizational values, educational practices, and quality evaluation systems. As a result, quality initiatives often remain fragmented and fail to produce sustainable transformation. Therefore, the integration of School Quality Management, School Culture, and Student Quality Assurance becomes essential for establishing a comprehensive and sustainable quality system, particularly within the context of Islamic basic education. This study addresses these limitations by proposing a holistic framework that combines managerial, cultural, and evaluative dimensions. Unlike previous studies, which focused primarily on administrative effectiveness, the present study emphasizes the integration of Islamic values and educational philosophy in quality management practices. Drawing upon the concepts of *tarbiyah, ta'dib*, and *muhasabah*, this study introduces the normative-integrated educational quality assurance Model as a conceptual framework for Islamic educational quality.

The normative-integrated educational consisting of Intention, Effort, Evaluation, and Trust, represents a spiritual adaptation of the conventional Plan, Do, Check, Act cycle. Whereas Plan, Do, Check, Act primarily focuses on organizational efficiency and continuous improvement, the normative-integrated educational cycle incorporates spiritual accountability and moral responsibility as integral components of educational quality. Accordingly, the novelty of this study lies not merely in proposing a new management model but in providing a theoretical synthesis between contemporary quality management principles and Islamic educational philosophy. The proposed normative-integrated

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educational quality assurance Model extends existing quality management frameworks by integrating school culture and student quality assurance within a holistic paradigm of human development.

Therefore, this model contributes theoretically to Islamic educational management and provides practical implications for Islamic schools seeking to develop sustainable quality cultures and comprehensive quality assurance systems. Based on these considerations, this study aims to analyze the implementation of School Quality Management based on School Culture and Student Quality Assurance at Al Falah Darussalam Primary and Secondary Schools. Specifically, it examines how quality management practices are implemented, how school culture serves as a foundation for educational quality, how student quality assurance mechanisms are conducted, and how interactions among these dimensions contribute to developing a holistic quality management model for Islamic basic education. The study also explores their potential to strengthen continuous improvement and sustainable educational quality.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of School Quality Management based on School Culture and Student Quality Assurance at Al Falah Darussalam Primary and Secondary Schools. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the study aimed to explore participants' experiences and perceptions regarding quality management practices within their natural setting. According to Creswell & Creswell (2023); Tisdell dkk., (2025) qualitative research enables researchers to understand social phenomena from the perspectives of participants, while case study research facilitates a comprehensive examination of contemporary issues in their real-life contexts (Hancock dkk., 2021; Schoch, 2020; Yin, 2018). This study was conducted at Al Falah Darussalam Primary and Secondary Schools in Sidoarjo, East Java, Indonesia.

These institutions were selected purposively because they have implemented quality management practices based on Islamic values and have established internal quality assurance mechanisms for monitoring students' academic, social, and spiritual development. Furthermore, the schools possess a strong organizational culture characterized by religious habituation, collaborative practices, and a commitment to continuous improvement. The study participants included two principals, four teachers, two students, one parent representative, and administrative staff who were directly involved in the implementation of quality management and quality assurance practices. Participants were selected using purposive sampling because they possessed relevant knowledge and experiences related to the phenomenon under investigation. The principals were chosen due to their strategic roles in formulating and implementing school policies.

Teachers were selected because of their active involvement in teaching, character development, and quality improvement programs. Students and parents were included to provide insights into their experiences regarding school culture and quality assurance practices, while administrative staff contributed information concerning the documentation and implementation of quality management activities. Data were collected through three techniques, namely in-depth interviews, participant observations, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore participants' perceptions and experiences concerning School Quality Management, School Culture, and

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Student Quality Assurance. Participant observation enabled the researchers to examine daily educational activities and interactions among school members. In addition, various documents, including strategic plans, quality reports, meeting minutes, and students' progress records, were analyzed to provide supporting evidence and strengthen data triangulation.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, methodological triangulation was employed by comparing information obtained from interviews, observations, and documents. Member checking was also conducted to confirm the accuracy of participants' statements and interpretations. Data were analyzed using the interactive model proposed by Saldaña (2021), which consists of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. These processes were carried out continuously throughout the study to identify patterns and relationships among School Quality Management, School Culture, and Student Quality Assurance. The analysis focused on understanding how these three dimensions interacted and contributed to the development of the normative-integrated educational quality assurance Model as a holistic framework for improving the quality of Islamic basic education.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The interview findings revealed that school quality management at Al Falah Darussalam Primary and Secondary Schools was implemented through the active involvement of the principal, teachers, and students. The principal emphasized that educational quality was developed through systematic planning, continuous monitoring, regular evaluation, and collaboration among all members of the school community. The principal explained: "*Quality cannot be achieved through the work of the principal alone. At the beginning of each academic program, we establish clear targets, communicate them with teachers, monitor their implementation, and evaluate the results together. Every member of the school has a responsibility for maintaining and improving quality*." This statement indicates that school leadership positioned quality improvement as a collective and continuous process rather than merely an administrative responsibility. Regular meetings and evaluations were used to identify problems, assess program implementation, and determine appropriate follow-up actions.

Teachers confirmed that quality management was integrated into their daily professional practices, particularly in lesson preparation, classroom management, student mentoring, and learning evaluation. One teacher stated: *"We do not only focus on completing the curriculum. We also monitor students' learning progress, discipline, attitudes, and religious development. When we identify a problem, we discuss it with other teachers and determine what support the student needs."* Another teacher highlighted the importance of collaboration and school culture in maintaining educational quality: *"The culture of the school encourages us to work together. Discipline, responsibility, Islamic values, and cooperation are continuously reinforced, not only for students but also for teachers. These values influence the way we teach and interact with students."* The students' responses supported the teachers' accounts. Students reported that teachers regularly monitored their academic progress and behavior and provided guidance when difficulties occurred.

One student explained: *"The teachers often remind us about discipline, assignments, and our responsibilities. If our learning results decrease or we have difficulties, the teacher talks to us and helps us understand what we need to improve."* Another student described

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how school programs contributed to character and religious development: *"At school, we are not only encouraged to achieve good academic results. We are also taught to be disciplined, responsible, respectful, and consistent in religious activities. These activities have become part of our daily routine."* The interviews therefore demonstrated that quality assurance operated at multiple levels. Leadership provided direction and monitoring, teachers translated quality standards into teaching and mentoring practices, while students experienced quality assurance through academic supervision, discipline, character formation, and religious activities.

The consistency among the perspectives of the principal, teachers, and students indicates that quality management was embedded in the daily culture of the school. The interview findings were categorized into five interconnected dimensions: leadership commitment, teacher collaboration, student monitoring, school culture, and continuous evaluation. These dimensions collectively supported the implementation of student quality assurance at Al Falah Darussalam Primary and Secondary Schools. As illustrated in Figure 1, the interviews with the principal, teachers, and students provided complementary perspectives on how quality management was implemented in practice. The principal described leadership and quality policies, teachers explained classroom implementation and collaborative practices, while students shared their experiences of monitoring, guidance, discipline, and participation in school activities.



Fiture 1: Interviews with the Principal, teachers and students

Implementation of School Quality Management

The findings of this study revealed that School Quality Management at Al Falah Darussalam Primary and Secondary Schools was implemented through four interrelated stages, namely planning, implementation, evaluation, and continuous improvement. These processes involved principals, teachers, administrative staff, students, and parents as key stakeholders in maintaining educational quality. Interview data indicated that quality planning was conducted at the beginning of each academic year through annual meetings involving school leaders and teachers. According to the principal of the primary school, quality improvement activities always began with collective reflection on previous programs and the identification of priorities for subsequent development. Such participatory practices encouraged teachers to develop a shared commitment to improving educational quality.

Interview data indicated that quality planning was conducted at the beginning of each academic year through annual meetings involving school leaders and teachers. According to the principal of the primary school: *"Every quality improvement program*

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begins with an evaluation of the previous program. We discuss what has worked well, what needs to be improved, and which priorities should be included in the next program." Similarly, the principal of the secondary school emphasized the importance of collective responsibility in quality management: "Quality is not the responsibility of the principal alone. Teachers, staff, students, and parents all have roles in maintaining and improving the quality of the school." These statements indicate that participatory planning was an important component of the school's quality management practices.

During the implementation stage, teachers actively participated in lesson study activities, peer teaching, and professional development programs. The collaborative atmosphere among teachers enabled the exchange of ideas and experiences regarding instructional strategies and character development. One teacher explained: *"We regularly share our teaching experiences with other teachers. When we face difficulties in teaching or guiding students, we discuss them together and try to find the most appropriate solution."* Another teacher highlighted the relationship between instructional quality and student character development: "Our responsibility is not only to improve students' academic achievement but also to develop their discipline, responsibility, religious values, and character." These findings were consistent with the observation results, which showed that teachers continuously monitored students' academic achievement and character formation through classroom activities and regular mentoring programs.

Observation results showed that teachers continuously monitored students' academic achievement and character formation through classroom activities and regular mentoring programs. Evaluation was carried out systematically through meetings, classroom observations, and analysis of students' learning outcomes. The schools also utilized internal monitoring systems to document attendance records, academic performance, and religious activities. Findings from school documents demonstrated improvements in academic achievement and disciplinary behavior during the 2024/2025 academic year. The data further showed that School Quality Management at Al Falah Darussalam was not implemented solely through administrative procedures but also reflected Islamic values. Both principals emphasized that quality management should be understood as a form of collective responsibility and moral commitment.

Consequently, the schools adopted a quality cycle consisting of Intention, Effort, Evaluation, and Trust as a contextual adaptation of the conventional Plan–Do–Check–Act model. While Plan–Do–Check–Act emphasizes organizational effectiveness through systematic planning, implementation, evaluation, and improvement, the adapted cycle integrates spiritual values into educational management. The process begins with intention (*niyyah*), which provides a moral foundation for quality improvement, followed by sincere effort (*ikhtiar*) in implementing planned programs. The third stage involves systematic reflection and evaluation (*muhasabah*) to identify strengths and areas requiring improvement. Finally, trust in God (*tawakkul*) encourages stakeholders to accept outcomes while maintaining commitment to continuous improvement. This adaptation demonstrates how quality management principles can be meaningfully contextualized within Islamic educational institutions.

School Culture as the Foundation of Educational Quality

The findings revealed that school culture constituted the foundation of educational quality at Al Falah Darussalam Primary and Secondary Schools. Observation results indicated that various religious and social activities had become integral parts of students'

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daily lives. These activities included congregational prayers, Qur'anic recitation, charitable giving, and the implementation of the smile, greeting, salutation, politeness, and courtesy. Interview data showed that school leaders regarded culture as the "spirit" of educational quality. According to the principal of the secondary school, academic excellence could not be achieved without establishing a strong culture of discipline, cooperation, and worship. Similarly, teachers emphasized the importance of exemplary behavior in fostering students' moral development. Teachers described the school environment as a collaborative community characterized by mutual support and professional brotherhood.

They frequently shared teaching experiences and discussed challenges collectively. Such collaboration contributed to the development of a positive working culture and strengthened their commitment to quality improvement. Students also perceived school culture positively. Interview findings indicated that religious habituation and collaborative learning activities had fostered discipline, responsibility, and social awareness. Parents confirmed these observations by reporting positive changes in their children's attitudes and worship practices at home. Document analysis and observations suggested that school culture functioned not merely as a collection of routines but as a mechanism for internalizing Islamic values. Therefore, school culture played a significant role in supporting the implementation of School Quality Management and promoting holistic student development.

Student Quality Assurance Practices

Another important finding concerned the implementation of Student Quality Assurance. The quality assurance system covered academic achievement, character development, social competence, and leadership skills. Evaluation results were documented periodically through report cards, reflective notes, and quality reports prepared by teachers and homeroom teachers. Interview data revealed that teachers perceived quality assurance as a tool for continuous improvement rather than merely an assessment mechanism. Weekly meetings were conducted to discuss students' progress and identify appropriate interventions when problems emerged. Consequently, quality assurance facilitated evidence-based decision-making and strengthened collaboration among teachers. Document analysis showed improvements in students' discipline, communication skills, and academic performance.

These findings indicated that student quality assurance contributed to both cognitive and non-cognitive development. Interview data revealed that students were encouraged to reflect on their learning achievements, behavior, discipline, and personal development. One student explained, “Teachers do not only ask about our academic results but also remind us to evaluate our behavior and improve our weaknesses” (Student 3). Teachers similarly emphasized reflective practices through mentoring and character development programs. A teacher stated, “We guide students to recognize their strengths and weaknesses and encourage them to make continuous improvements” (Teacher 2). Parents also participated in monitoring students’ progress through regular communication with teachers and home activity reports. Thus, student quality assurance involved academic monitoring, character formation, reflection, parental engagement, and continuous self-improvement.

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Integration of School Quality Management, School Culture, and Student Quality Assurance

The findings demonstrated that School Quality Management, School Culture, and Student Quality Assurance were closely interconnected and formed an integrated quality system. School leaders emphasized that educational quality could only be achieved when managerial processes, cultural values, and evaluation mechanisms operated harmoniously. Thematic analysis identified three dimensions underlying this integration. First, the structural dimension involved planning, implementation, and evaluation processes. Second, the cultural dimension consisted of the internalization of Islamic values through daily practices and collaborative relationships. Third, the evaluative dimension focused on monitoring students' academic and character development. These three dimensions interacted dynamically and provided the basis for the development of the normative-integrated educational quality assurance Model.

The model illustrates that sustainable educational quality is achieved not only through managerial effectiveness but also through spiritual values, reflective practices, and collective responsibility. The integration of School Quality Management, School Culture, and Student Quality Assurance represents a holistic approach to educational quality improvement. School Quality Management provides systematic mechanisms for planning, implementing, evaluating, and improving educational programs. School Culture strengthens these processes by embedding shared values, discipline, collaboration, integrity, and Islamic principles into daily school practices. Meanwhile, Student Quality Assurance ensures that quality improvement is reflected in students' academic achievement, character development, behavior, and personal growth. The interaction among these components creates a continuous quality cycle in which management, culture, and student development mutually reinforce one another, supporting sustainable educational improvement.

framework for improving the quality of Islamic basic education.

The religious culture developed at Al Falah Darussalam reflects the concept of *ta'dib* proposed by Al-Attas (1991), which emphasizes the cultivation of proper manners and moral discipline through habituation and exemplary practices. In addition, Al-Ghazali (2004) asserts that character formation is achieved through continuous practice and moral guidance. Therefore, school culture serves not only as an organizational mechanism but also as a medium for nurturing Islamic character and spiritual awareness among students. The interview findings supported these observations. The principal explained that religious habituation was intentionally integrated into students' daily activities. As the principal stated, *"We try to make religious values part of students' everyday lives, not only something taught in the classroom. Discipline, prayer, respect, and responsibility must become habits."* A teacher similarly explained, "*Students are continuously guided through religious activities and daily routines. Teachers also try to become examples because students learn not only from what we say but also from what we do."*

A student confirmed this practice by stating, *"We are accustomed to praying together, maintaining discipline, respecting teachers, and participating in religious activities at school."* The results of the observation also showed that the school applied an internal quality monitoring system to record student attendance, learning outcomes, and religious habituation activities. One junior high school teacher, Ustadzah Lidia, an English teacher, explained that every teacher was required to compile a *lesson improvement report* at the

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end of each semester. She stated, *"We do not only report students' grades. We also reflect on which teaching strategies worked and which ones still need improvement. We learn from the successful practices of other teachers."* This finding indicates that teacher evaluation was oriented toward reflective learning and continuous professional improvement. The interview findings further revealed that quality monitoring was used as a basis for follow-up actions.

Another teacher explained, *"When we identify students who have difficulties in learning or discipline, we do not simply record the problem. We discuss it and determine what kind of guidance or intervention is needed."* The principal also emphasized that monitoring results were discussed during school meetings to determine subsequent improvement programs. Thus, the quality monitoring system functioned not merely as an administrative instrument but as a mechanism for continuous improvement. Evaluation results obtained from school data showed that during the 2024/2025 academic year, the average academic achievement increased by 7.8%, while student disciplinary cases decreased from 15 to 5 cases. These findings suggest that the planning and implementation of quality programs were associated with measurable improvements in both learning achievement and student behavior.

Teachers' accounts supported this development, with one teacher stating, *"We can see changes in students after the programs are implemented. Their learning motivation and discipline have improved, although there are still areas that require continuous attention."* Management quality at Al Falah Darussalam Primary and Secondary Schools adopts principles of Adapted Total Quality Management within the context of Islamic education. Deming (2018) explains that TQM is a management system emphasizing the participation of all organizational members in continuous quality improvement. This principle is consistent with the Islamic concept of *itqan*, which emphasizes sincerity, professionalism, excellence, and moral responsibility in performing work. The principals at Al Falah Darussalam implement Total Quality Management principles through an Intention, Effort, Evaluation, and Trust cycle. The process begins with sincere intention (*niyyah*), followed by earnest effort (*ikhtiar*), systematic evaluation (*muhasabah*), and entrusting the outcome to Allah SWT (*tawakkul*).

The principal explained, *"We begin every program with the intention to provide the best educational service. Then we make the effort, evaluate the results, and finally place our trust in Allah while continuing to improve."* This Intention, Effort, Evaluation, and Trust model integrates spiritual values into the modern management cycle of Plan–Do–Check–Act. The approach is also consistent with Qur'an Surah Al-Mulk [67]:15, which encourages human beings to make efforts on earth and seek sustenance while recognizing their ultimate dependence upon Allah. Thus, the Intention, Effort, Evaluation, and Trust cycle provides a spiritual framework for Islamic quality management that combines rational organizational effort with spiritual submission. The implementation of Intention, Effort, Evaluation, and Trust at Al Falah Darussalam not only supports organizational effectiveness but also contributes to the development of an Islamic work ethos among teachers and students.

A teacher stated, "*We regard teaching as a responsibility and an act of worship. Therefore, we try to work sincerely, evaluate our weaknesses, and improve our practices continuously.*" Similarly, a student explained, "*Studying here is not only about getting good grades. We are also taught to be disciplined, responsible, and to remember that learning is part of worship.*" These interview findings demonstrate that quality management at Al

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Falah Darussalam integrates managerial, cultural, reflective, and spiritual dimensions. The findings indicate that teachers and students perceive education as both an academic and moral process. This perspective is consistent with Mulyasa (2020), who emphasizes that Islamic educational quality can be strengthened when educational processes are understood as forms of devotion to God rather than merely administrative activities and procedures.

School Quality Management from the Perspective of Total Quality Management and Islamic Education

The findings indicate that School Quality Management at Al Falah Darussalam Primary and Secondary Schools reflects the principles of Total Quality Management, which emphasize continuous improvement, stakeholder participation, and organizational commitment to quality (Deming, 2018; Sallis, 2015). The planning, implementation, evaluation, and improvement processes observed in this study demonstrate that quality management is not limited to administrative procedures but functions as a continuous and collaborative effort involving principals, teachers, students, and parents. However, unlike conventional Total Quality Management models, the quality management practices implemented at Al Falah Darussalam are deeply rooted in Islamic values. This finding supports the argument that educational quality in Islamic institutions cannot be separated from moral and spiritual dimensions.

Al-Ghazali (2004) emphasized that education should cultivate knowledge, morality, and spirituality simultaneously, while Al-Attas (1991) argued that education should foster *adab* and moral consciousness. Accordingly, quality management should not merely pursue organizational effectiveness but also contribute to the development of virtuous individuals. The findings demonstrate that quality improvement at Al Falah Darussalam is understood as a collective responsibility and an act of worship. This perspective reflects the Islamic principle of *itqan*, which encourages excellence, professionalism, sincerity, and responsibility in performing tasks. Consequently, educational quality is perceived not only as an institutional target but also as a moral commitment. This approach integrates managerial effectiveness, character formation, spiritual development, and continuous improvement within Islamic educational practice.

School Culture and the Concept of Ta'dib

Another important finding concerns the role of school culture as the foundation of educational quality. The results show that religious practices, discipline, collaboration, and exemplary behavior constitute essential elements of school culture at Al Falah Darussalam. These findings are consistent with the theory proposed by Deal & Peterson (2016b) School culture significantly influences organizational effectiveness and educational outcomes. From an Islamic educational perspective, however, its role extends beyond organizational norms and practices. Al-Attas (1991) introduced the concept of *ta'dib*, defining education as a process of cultivating proper manners, moral discipline, and ethical awareness. Accordingly, school culture functions as a medium through which Islamic values are internalized and transmitted to students through consistent habituation, exemplary behavior, discipline, and positive role modeling in everyday educational practices.

The implementation of congregational prayers, Qur'anic recitation, charitable activities, and the 5S culture illustrate how moral and spiritual values are embedded in everyday educational practices. Such activities support Al-Ghazali's view that character

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formation is achieved through continuous practice and exemplary conduct. Therefore, school culture functions not merely as a supporting factor for quality management but as a mechanism for nurturing students' moral and spiritual development. These findings are also consistent with previous studies conducted by Muhaimin (2022) and Marzuki and Mahfud (2021), which demonstrated that Islamic school culture contributes significantly to character education and students' social development. Nevertheless, the present study extends previous research by showing that school culture interacts with quality management and quality assurance mechanisms within an integrated framework.

Student Quality Assurance and the Principle of Muhasabah

The findings reveal that Student Quality Assurance at Al Falah Darussalam extends beyond academic evaluation and encompasses character, social competence, and leadership development. This finding supports Alnnale (2026) argument that quality assurance should not merely function as a control mechanism but should facilitate institutional learning and continuous improvement. From an Islamic perspective, the implementation of Student Quality Assurance reflects the concept of *muhasabah* or self-evaluation. In Islamic teachings, self-reflection is regarded as an important means of improving one's behavior and fulfilling moral responsibilities. This principle is reflected in Surah Al-Hashr (59:18), which encourages believers to evaluate their actions in preparation for the future. The quality assurance practices observed in this study demonstrate that evaluation is not intended to punish students but to encourage reflection and self-improvement.

Through mentoring activities, weekly evaluations, and regular communication with parents, students are guided to develop responsibility, self-awareness, discipline, and moral awareness. Teachers provide continuous feedback to help students recognize their strengths, address weaknesses, and improve their behavior and learning practices. Parents further support this process by monitoring students' activities and communicating their development to teachers. Therefore, quality assurance functions as both an educational and spiritual process that integrates academic monitoring with character formation. This finding extends contemporary perspectives on quality assurance by emphasizing reflective practices, continuous guidance, parental involvement, and moral accountability. In this context, quality assurance becomes an integral component of holistic education, rather than merely a technical mechanism for measuring academic achievement and institutional performance.

Theoretical Contribution of the Normative-Integrated Educational Quality Assurance Model

One of the major contributions of this study lies in the development of the normative-integrated educational quality assurance Model. Previous studies have generally examined School Quality Management, School Culture, and Quality Assurance separately. Although these studies have provided valuable insights, they have rarely explained how these dimensions interact within the context of Islamic basic education. Theoretically, the integration of these dimensions is important because educational quality is multidimensional. Effective quality management requires a supportive culture, while sustainable improvement depends on systematic evaluation. Without strong cultural foundations, quality management tends to become procedural. Likewise, without quality assurance mechanisms, organizational values cannot be translated into measurable

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outcomes. Therefore, integrating these dimensions provides a more comprehensive understanding of educational quality.

The Intention, Effort, Evaluation and Trust cycle proposed in this study represents a contextual adaptation of the conventional Plan–Do–Check–Act cycle. Whereas Plan–Do–Check–Act focuses primarily on organizational effectiveness, the normative-integrated educational cycle incorporates four dimensions grounded in Islamic educational philosophy: Intention (*niyyah*), Effort (*ikhtiar*), Evaluation (*muhasabah*), and Trust (*tawakkul*). These dimensions emphasize that quality improvement should involve not only technical and managerial considerations but also spiritual and ethical responsibilities. Accordingly, the novelty of the normative-integrated educational quality assurance Model does not merely lie in changing the terminology of the Plan–Do–Check–Act cycle. Rather, its originality lies in integrating contemporary quality management principles with the Islamic educational concepts of *tarbiyah*, *ta'dib*, and *muhasabah*.

Through this integration, the model extends existing quality management frameworks by incorporating spiritual accountability and holistic human development as essential dimensions of educational quality. Practically, it provides an alternative framework for Islamic schools seeking to establish sustainable quality cultures and comprehensive quality assurance systems. The findings indicate that educational quality can be strengthened when managerial effectiveness, cultural values, reflective practices, and evaluative mechanisms operate synergistically within a framework rooted in Islamic educational philosophy. Thus, the normative-integrated educational quality assurance model contributes theoretically to Islamic educational management by expanding conventional quality perspectives. Practically, it supports the development of quality-oriented Islamic educational institutions that integrate organizational improvement, character formation, spiritual responsibility, and continuous evaluation into sustainable educational quality practices.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the quality of Islamic basic education cannot be understood solely from managerial perspectives but should be viewed as a holistic process involving organizational, cultural, evaluative, and spiritual dimensions. The findings revealed that School Quality Management, School Culture, and Student Quality Assurance are interconnected components that collectively support sustainable educational quality improvement. School culture provides a moral and spiritual foundation for quality management, while Student Quality Assurance functions as a mechanism for continuous reflection, monitoring, and improvement. The study further indicates that educational quality at Al Falah Darussalam Primary and Secondary Schools is implemented not only through administrative procedures but also through the internalization of Islamic values. Religious habituation, teacher collaboration, mentoring, and reflective evaluation enable schools to foster academic achievement, character development, discipline, and spiritual awareness simultaneously. These findings demonstrate that quality improvement in Islamic education should encompass cognitive, affective, social, moral, and spiritual dimensions. A major contribution of this study is the development of the normative-integrated Educational Quality Assurance Model. Unlike conventional quality management frameworks that primarily emphasize organizational effectiveness, the proposed model integrates the Islamic concepts of *tarbiyah*, *ta'dib*, and *muhasabah* with contemporary quality management principles. Its quality cycle—Intention, Effort, Evaluation, and Trust—

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extends the Plan–Do–Check–Act model by incorporating spiritual accountability and moral responsibility. Therefore, the model contributes theoretically to Islamic educational management by integrating managerial effectiveness, school culture, and student quality assurance within a holistic framework. Practically, it provides an alternative approach for Islamic schools seeking sustainable quality cultures. Future research should examine its applicability across diverse contexts and validate its effectiveness through mixed-method or quantitative studies.

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