

Wasathiyah Quality Management: An Approach in Islamic Education Quality Management

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ABSTRACT. This paper explores the *wasathiyah* approach to quality management in Islamic educational institutions. The research uses library research methods to build an established scientific discourse. The study results show that in the management of Islamic educational institutions, which includes input, process, and output, it is necessary to apply the Wasathiyah approach. The implication of this research is to provide the principle of balance in managing the quality of Islamic education following the values in *wasathiyah* so that educational institutions can remain grounded in the values of balance (*wasath*). Currently, the secularization of Islamic educational institutions has led to the loss of the goals of Islamic education. Therefore, the Wasathiyah approach to managing education can maintain the institution's balance.

Keywords: *Conflict management, management strategies, organizational culture*

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INTRODUCTION

As a constituent in education, Islamic educational institutions face various problems. The emergence of materialism and secularism in Islamic education adds to the problems of institutional management. On the other hand, many Islamic educational institutions are pretty strict with their religious norms (traditions), so they are less able to compete with public educational institutions in responding to global challenges. The two sides of the paradigm, it seems, impact the issue of the dichotomy of science and impact more complex problems, namely unbalanced Total Quality Management (TQM), thus causing it not ready to use (Maimunah, M., & Delta, 2020; Thoyyib, 2012; Djuhartono et al., 2021).

Various factors cause inequality in quality management in Islamic educational institutions, such as the difficulty of managers to change personally and organizationally, lack of management commitment, and reluctance to make organizational changes. Islamic educational institutions only focus on a small part of the total quality, and institutional managers cannot change the old paradigm confined by stagnant, less effective, and unproductive norms, which are part of the cause of inequality in quality management (Thoyyib, 2012). Fadillah's research shows that most Islamic educational institutions, including Islamic boarding schools, do not yet have a clear educational style and curriculum due to poor planning/management (Fadillah, 2015). Meanwhile, Surahman's research shows that Islamic educational institutions face the era of Society 5.0, which

requires every scholarly output to have various skills ranging from leadership and digital literacy to spiritual depth (Surahman, 2022).

Suppose this is allowed, according to Baharun and Zamroni. In that case, it will create prerequisites that are completely unstructured, unintegrated, incoherent, and unable to compete, so gradually, they will find a point of decline (degradation). In other words, such a reality will impact the existence of educational institutions that are only concerned with the quantity aspect (populist) rather than prioritizing quality (Baharun & Zamroni, 2017). So it is no exaggeration to mention that many Islamic educational institutions put forward materialistic institutions but pay less attention to the values of 'spiritualism' (Surahman, 2022). Suppose we are guided by the thesis, which states that the existence and succession of Islamic education in the future is determined mainly by the strong readiness of its competitive educational tools, namely institutional quality management (Thoyyib, 2012) basis. In that case, the quality management of Islamic educational institutions must be formulated appropriately. In the future, so that Indonesian Islamic education can survive and compete, it will require the movement of human resources, ideas, and information characterized by globalization (Kusumaputri, 2021). Many efforts must be made to address these issues; apart from the managerial side, they must also touch on the philosophical and practical realms to create quality improvement in an integral and comprehensive system.

Building the philosophical realm of quality assurance in Islamic educational institutions must refer to Islamic values, which can be extracted from the texts of the al-Quran, while still paying attention to balance with global challenges; or, in other terms used by Nur Hidayah is to adapt religious commodification with pious neoliberalism (Hidayah, 2021), this is what the writer calls the wasathiyah approach. Therefore, this article will examine more deeply related to quality assurance efforts with a wasathiyah perspective that Islamic educational institutions can use as a reference.

METHOD

This research is included in qualitative research with a variety of library research. This type of research aims to build an established concept of a discourse, in this case, namely the wasathiyah approach in the quality management of Islamic educational institutions. Based on this, the researchers sought to explore by examining data from books, journals, articles, and reports related to the theme. The main reference in the absorption of the wasathiyah concept is a book written by M. Quraish Shihab. The study of quality management of Islamic education, used as the main reference, is a book written by Baharun and Zamroni. Of course, it is supported by various other references. Furthermore, the researchers attempted to consolidate to find common ground between the quality management of Islamic education with the concept of wasathiyah. So that it can be seen the extent of the continuity of the two, thus, the concept of wasathiyah, which reflects the main values in Islam, can be implied in the management of the quality of Islamic education.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Basic Concepts of Quality Management of Islamic Educational Institutions

Quality in linguistic studies means what kind of (Sallis, 2011). It, according to Gaspersz—in Jamaluddin's quote—has several categories, including performance, perfection (special), skill (reliable), conformation (adaptation), durability, service, beauty, and perceived quality (Jamaluddin, 2017). According to Mukhopadhyay, *quality* can be defined into two concepts at once, namely, a complete overview and a relative concept. In an absolute definition, quality is a complete, impeccable characteristic or standard attached to a particular product. Nevertheless, the relative definition, quality is not seen as an attribute but as a service for the product, so in this

case, quality is an effort to ensure whether the product meets the standard (Mukhopadhyay, 2020).

The operation of quality management is then translated into the world of education. According to Prasojo, quality management in education is an effort to provide output with full consideration of customer needs (parents/community) and to plan and direct all processes with high-quality standards. It is nothing but to prepare for the role of educational organizations in building high competitiveness in the education arena (Prasojo, 2016). When applied in education, quality management is based on an intrinsic and an extrinsic review. Intrinsic review in education quality management is seen as producing products with ideal standards for producing educated people. While in the extrinsic review, education is seen as an instrument in creating trained experts, for example, how educational institutions design a good system. Therefore, to improve the quality of education in every educational institution, it must be carried out with a clear, focused, and competitive approach by applying the principles of the balanced scorecard (balance score) in the development activities of educational institutions in order to have competitiveness (competitive) and high marketability (Baharun & Zamroni, 2017).

The reality in the implementation of quality management in educational institutions, according to Kaiseroglou, is that the majority of primary and secondary education institutions are still not well established. It is due to the quality culture, although it uses quality management principles but does not follow them holistically (Kaiseroglou, 2020). Therefore, a balanced approach is needed in all aspects. It is expected to be able to create a better quality culture. More specifically, in Islamic educational institutions, it is also required to improve the organization and service quality to customers (parents, community, and government), first because of the internal managerial problems of the institution. Second, because of the challenges and opportunities of Islamic educational institutions, the Indonesian Muslim population wants quality education for their children (Haryanto & Istikomah, 2020). In other words, quality improvement management in Islamic educational institutions is a way of empowering and fulfilling the needs of all members of the institution, students, and the community, which is carried out on an integrative and organizational basis (Kuntoro, 2019).

According to Nurzannah, Ginting, & Setiawan, implementing it is by applying the principles of cohesiveness and continuity from the planning, implementation, and evaluation or measurement. Three components are continuously improved to maintain the quality of the result and the learning process. Furthermore, all programs, regulations, and policies must be studied and known and carried out by all humans in an integrated manner. According to Mutohar, quality improvement management in Islamic educational institutions, such as Islamic schools (*madrrasah*), is nothing but an effort to build effective and productive institutions. These managerial characteristics can be studied more specifically from how educational institutions can maximize the performance of their institutional organizations, their learning processes, human resource management, and managerial administration (Mutohar, 2014). These things can be simplified into four main things: input, process, output, and outcome (objective), which can be pursued optimally (Arcaro, 2007).

According to Kusumaputri, the strategies that can be used to implement educational institutions' quality management include at least several important points, including 1) planning and management of financial allocations. 2) improve the quality of human resources by mastering science and technology, community service, conducting research, attending workshops, sharing, discussions, giving rewards, and cooperating with other parties. 3) learning management. 4) always raise the bar better than before. 5) still maintain religious values. 6) establishment of quality control team auditors (Kusumaputri, 2021). Quality management objectives in educational institutions are 1) to develop and manage system-based devices, which include; administrative management and curriculum preparation, human resource management, facilities and infrastructure, financing, and public relations. 2) to create an effective, efficient, and relevant

management system to achieve a goal. 3) so that the management of the education program runs smoothly. 4) implementation of a good teaching and learning process. (Kuntoro, 2019).

Wasathiyah Approach

In linguistic studies, the phrase *wasathiyah* has the root word *wasath*, which means 'middle'; when interpreted, it means 'justice' or 'the best'. Ali Al-Shallaby explained that the word *wasath* in the Qur'an has at least four meanings, namely 1) being fair, 2) the best, 3) ideal and knowledgeable, and 4) middle position (Ash-Shallaby, 2007). According to Khairiyah, *wasathiyah* can be understood as a way to take a moderate stance, straight, not skewed, balanced, and in line with the truth (Khairiyah, 2021). However, according to Quraish Shihab, these meanings do not reflect the expected content of the substance covered by the word. For example, if it is interpreted as 'fair,' whereas 'fair' does not necessarily mean 'equal,' but it could mean 'balance.' Shihab concludes that *wasathiyah* is balancing in all matters, both worldly and hereafter, but still clinging to religious instructions while being able to adapt to the objective conditions being experienced (Shihab, 2019).

Then Shihab gave a very good explanation of how to actualize the *wasathiyah* principle in all lines of human life. In the aspect of worship, for example, the *wasathiyah* principle requires ease and does not want difficulty (as in QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 185). Divine Shari'a produces convenience and a prohibition against burdening oneself if there are still options that make it easier (Shihab, 2019). In the legal aspect, the embodiment of *wasathiyah* taught by Islam is by considering the Syar'iyah rules, which are the reasonable goals behind the enactment of *syara'* law (with consideration of the context) and in determining the laws (Shihab, 2019). Which of these main things can be used as a general goal in legal *istimbath* to find problems (Auda, 2015).

In-state management, the first thing that needs to be considered is the relationship or involvement of a religion with state management. Meanwhile, technical issues are left to the experts or experts to harmonize these details with the development and benefit of society while always being principled on spiritual-religious values. In the perspective of *wasathiyah*, an effort to manage the state is not based on exact details of religious guidance so that it is included in the realm of *ijtihad* by experts, with the consequences of that *ijtihad*, of course, the results will be different (Shihab, 2019), likewise with other formulations.

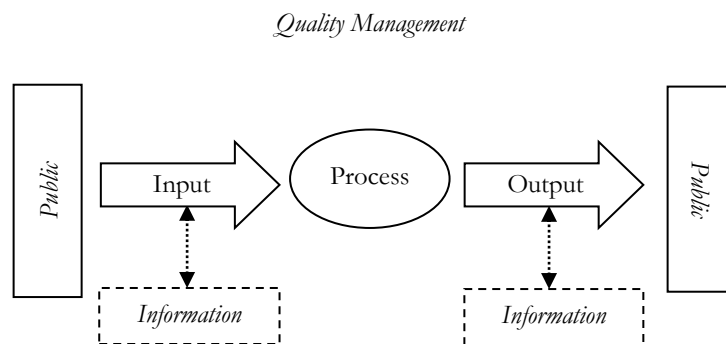
The essence of the *wasathiyah* insight is to position oneself from inclinations from extreme or exaggerating attitudes (Fitri, 2015). It can also be understood that the *wasathiyah* approach is a balanced attitude (*tawazun*) or fairness (*'adl*) from two sides, in which one side is not exaggerated or neglected by the other side. For example, the balance between spiritual and material aspects, individual and collective aspects, idealistic and reality aspects, dogmatic and relative aspects, and others can benefit. The understanding of *wasathiyah*, when applied in a system or method, according to Afrizal and Mukhlis, will be reflected in 1) A universal point of view. Many aspects will be considered in deciding an issue to contribute to improving life, organizing well, shaping and reforming people's lives. 2) There is a priority in decisions; namely, it will be understood that not all orders have the same level of urgency in each paradigm. Some benefits are universal, and some are partial. Thus, understanding *wasathiyah* will bring someone on a priority scale in every stage that must be carried out. 3) Gradual in the building. The *wasathiyah* perception demands understanding the existing reality and not being too greedy in creating conditions that must be done once (Lubis, 2015).

Quality Management of Islamic Educational Institutions Projection with Wasathiyah Insight

According to Shihab, the concept of *wasathiyah* can be implemented in all aspects of human life. So, in this case, it is possible can be implied in the management of education quality. This concept is nothing but an approach to absorbing the principles of Islam, *wasathiyah*. Using these

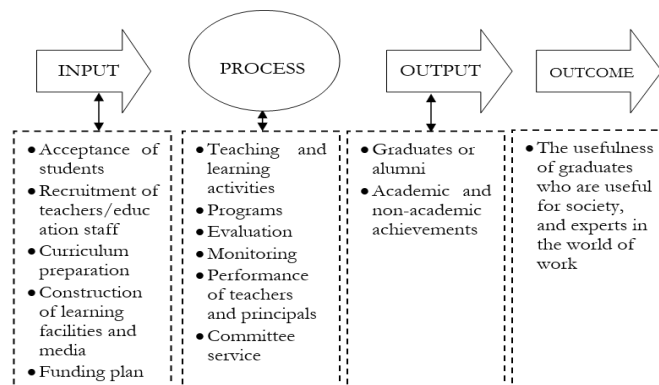
Islamic principles, Islamic-based educational institutions remain in their Islamic position. Quality management in Islamic educational institutions includes at least three scopes, namely input, process, output, and objectives (profit/outcome). It applies to efforts to ensure the quality of students, educators, and even school principals. Input is everything that must be there because it will be used as 'raw material' such as students, teachers, and school principals. In contrast, the process in question is an effort that is carried out systematically to achieve goals, for example, evaluation, monitoring, and recruitment systems. The output is the result obtained by bringing the quality of the educational process, such as the quality of graduates, student achievement, etc.

What is main and different is when the quality management projection is based on the *wasathiyah* approach, namely a moderate approach in carrying out each of its components, which does not only prioritize one thing while ignoring other things, but in a balanced, comprehensive, and integrative way. The concept of quality management of Islamic educational institutions can be seen from the following framework:



Picture 1. The concept of quality management of Islamic educational institutions

Characteristics of quality assurance based on the above framework is a preventive effort by: 1) integrating the needs of the community as a customer and a supplier. 2) improve quality through a process system that integrates customer information and work processes. 3) quality is the responsibility of every person who becomes a worldview (Jamaluddin, 2017). The application of the *wasathiyah* approach in these aspects is by incorporating multiple values , which become a single unit of the aspects that have been used as quality benchmarks. For example, when recruiting teachers who have only prioritized their diplomas or academic abilities, the recruitment process should involve an assessment of morality, spirituality, and social sensitivity. There is always a double side to an aspect that has been used as a benchmark so far. Thus, there is always control management to get an established outcome in the aspect of input, process, and output. When described further, it can be projected as follows:



Quality issues are not only related to inputs, processes, and outputs but also outcomes, namely to determine the extent to which the quality of the outputs can synergize well. This concerns productivity, effectiveness, innovation, and quality of work when in the community or the customer (Kuntoro, 2019). From the description above, including *wasathiyah* values in each element is necessary, from input to outcome. Quality management with a *wasathiyah* perspective is a realization of the teachings of Ihsan (Al-Qashash [28]: 77), namely so that humans do good which refers to quality, and do not do damage, exaggeration, and destruction. Therefore, something is of good quality if it can provide goodness to customers by sticking to balance, conformity, and productivity. The application of the *wasathiyah* approach in quality management, as an overview and can be developed by each institution, can be done as follows:

Input

Aspect	Things that need to be considered	
Formulation of vision and mission	The formulation of the vision and mission of the institution must be based on quality by taking into account the balance between national education goals, community expectations, and containing noble ideals and religious values to realize quality education.	
Acceptance of students	Academic test/achievement	Moral assessment, social sensitivity, worship, aptitude tests.
Recruitment of teachers/educators	Linearity	Noble character, social care, communication skills, spiritual depth
Curriculum preparation	Guided by teacher manuals and government regulations	- Taking into account local wisdom, local culture and traditions, taking into account the needs of the community, incorporating skills, literacy and educational programs - Combining religious and general knowledge.
Facility development	Classroom and office	- There needs to be development that supports student activities such as laboratories, places of worship, fun libraries, and sports venues. - Care and hygiene

Process

Aspect	Things that need to be considered	
Study activities	Teacher centered Sharpen intellectual abilities	Student centered Sharpen spiritual, emotional, and social skills Balance between theoretical and practical Creating PAKEM learning
Educational programs	olympic tutoring	Literacy, Islamic Spirituality (Rohis), tahfidz, scouts, nature lovers, hand-drawn batik, and other innovations.
Evaluation	Administrative requirements (RPP)	Needs analysis, formulating goals, identifying competencies, assessing learning outcomes, and providing consideration for the next program. Pay attention to continuity, comprehensive, and cooperative.

Output

Aspect	Things that need to be considered	
Graduate	Academically smart Ready to work	Emotionally, spiritually and socially intelligent Provision of community service
	Achieve academically	Achievement in many aspects, especially being able to build society and the nation.

Outcome

Aspect	Things that need to be considered
Graduate	Able to maintain positive contributions according to their abilities in society, the world of work, and public institutions.

The design above is a partial projection of how quality management in Islamic educational institutions can refer to the *wasathiyah* approach or the concept of balance in a comprehensive aspect. Considering various aspects of a matter to become a unified whole is actually what the *wasathiyah* (balance) approach is meant. The balance is not skewed in a particular orientation. Balance can be seen from the surrounding aspects that complement each other (play a role), for example, between worldly goals and the hereafter, between physical and spiritual, intellectual and emotional-spiritual, and between hopes and challenges. So, from input to outcome activities, we can provide the best quality for the community or customers, especially in facing global challenges.

All aspects of the quality management of Islamic education must be approached with an understanding of *wasathiyah* to create consistency from the beginning of the process to its output. Because it is difficult to imagine if *wasathiyah* is only applied to one aspect, for example, input, but is not applied to other aspects, then inequality will occur. If the *wasathiyah* concept is only applied to inputs, it will result in a chaotic product. Likewise, if the *wasathiyah* concept is only applied to the process aspect, it will not be easy to find superior seeds from the start. Moreover, if the *wasathiyah* concept is only applied to the output aspect, it will produce a pseudo (fake) product.

Therefore, every aspect or process in education quality management must have a *wasathiyah* perspective to produce superior and quality products. These aspects are, of course, based on many considerations, such as cultural, social, economic, religious, human nature (fitrah), and others, which are supported by the latest theories in the times. With these considerations, there will be more and more aspects that can be considered a subject in determining the final goal. The size of the value in the *wasathiyah* approach is as follows: 1) internal perspective, which includes; educational innovation, competitive education, excellent service, quality learning system, and quality of graduates. 2) from a learning perspective, including improving the quality of educators, teacher and employee commitment, organizational growth, work ethic, and increased innovation. 3) from the customer's perspective include; recognition from the community, widespread interest, loyalty of enthusiasts, customer satisfaction, extensive networking, and good communication with stakeholders (Baharun & Zamroni, 2017).

The essence of the three perspectives is that positive and productive sustainability will be created if education quality management is approached with the *wasathiyah* concept. From an internal perspective, innovations in education will emerge per the progress of the times and technology. Meanwhile, based on the learning perspective, it will improve the quality of education and quality culture. Meanwhile, from the customer's perspective, extensive networking will be created, which will impact mutual welfare. From this, the *wasathiyah* approach is expected to bring up aspects that have not been thought of or even wasted so that they become mature considerations.

CONCLUSION

A very radical effort is needed to improve the tough system of Islamic educational institutions, namely by improving the quality management of each educational institution. Because according to experts, the progress of education in the future starts with organized quality management. One approach used in building quality management is the *wasathiyah* approach which seeks to provide balance in every managerial step. Especially in Islamic educational institutions, this *wasathiyah* approach is very good to consider. So far, Islamic educational institutions have been on two uncertain sides. Some are very 'secular,' but some are very 'religious.' This research is conceptual, only in the theoretical scope. So that it is hoped that the next research is: 1) to review the continuity between the *wasathiyah* concept and the study of the quality of Islamic education,

especially in the study of religious arguments, to produce a more established concept. 2) it is expected to conduct field research related to implementing the *wasathiyah* concept in the management of Islamic education quality. So it will be found where lies the effectiveness and obstacles.

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