

Implementation of Total Quality Management and Curriculum on the Education Quality

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Abstract

This study developed an approach to assess the quality of education in *Pondok Pesantren* in Indonesia. The study used a descriptive qualitative methodology. The research location is Ma'had Darullughah Wadda'awah, Pasuruan City, East Java, Indonesia. The study results revealed that: 1) The planning of the *Pondok Pesantren*-based curriculum is carried out by the structural parties of an institution and the functionaries to synchronize the educational program in ma'had categorized into two classes, namely, internal and external; 2) The curriculum is implemented by the institution through continuous improvement in response to changing times, cultural changes, organization's quality standards, and harmonious relationships with stakeholders and guardians of students through the development of da'wah media, mastery of Arabic language skills, and application of deep Islamic values (*dirasah al Islamiyyah*) at both theological normative and ethical levels; 3) *Pondok Pesantren* conducts two types of evaluations to measure students' abilities: structural component evaluations and student learning competency evaluations. The former kind of evaluation aims to examine the curriculum that produces conclusions in the form of data, while the latter refers to the process when curriculum developers obtain the requisite data to revise the curriculum more effectively. It is possible to conclude that implementing total quality management (TQM) in *Pondok Pesantren* is one of the key approaches to achieving effective Islamic education goals. The government must devote significant attention and resources to TQM for the growth and development of *Pondok Pesantren* students in Indonesia.

Keywords: *Total Quality Management, Curriculum, Education Quality.*

Introduction

Educational institutions are the driving force of the education of a nation. Improving the quality of educational institutions to achieve educational goals and success is confronted with numerous challenges. Involvement of various related elements, such as the government, residents of *Pondok Pesantren*, parents of students, and local community leaders, is also essential for improving the quality of educational institutions and the academic system (Kurniawan, 2017). In Islamic education, the prime goal is to guide children or students to become true Muslims, have strong

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faith, do good deeds, and have a noble character that is useful for society, religion, and the state. A previous study noted that in the digital era, Islamic educational institutions face challenges and prospects for sustainability that are no less difficult than educational institutions in general (Hidayat et al., 2022). Recent studies have revealed that the factors behind critical thinking about Islamic education in Indonesia are self-concept (Bashori et al., 2021; Anam et al., 2021), tradition and culture (Manshur, 2020; Musaddad, 2021), curriculum management (Ilyas et al., 2019; Fatmawati, 2016), leadership (Hanafi et al., 2021), and government policies (Ismail et al., 2022; Sarnoto et al., 2021).

Pondok Pesantren education is an important part of efforts to improve educational quality. The extant literature shows that the development of the times had a major impact on *Pondok Pesantren* and faced several socio-cultural changes that were unavoidable due to the impact of advances in information technology and modernization. The cultural climate of the *pesantren* is wrapped up in the dynamics of society, which raises questions about the resistance, responsibility, ability, and sophistication of the *Pondok Pesantren* as well as the ever-changing demands (Ihsan et al., 2021; Fathurrochman et al., 2020; Ilyasin, 2020; Krisdiyanto et al., 2019).

Indonesia's position and history provide a solid foundation for the development of *Pondok Pesantren* and the religion of Islam in general. *Pondok Pesantren* play a significant role in improving the quality of human resources. This is based on the needs of an increasingly diverse society, in addition to the demands of scientific and technological development (Ma'arif et al., 2022). The literature reveals that *Pondok Pesantren* not only teach religious knowledge to instill good moral values in students but also provide formal education such as in junior high schools and equivalent (Zakariyah et al., 2022).

The existence of *Pondok Pesantren* throughout history, combined with the development of modern science, has fostered a strategic response from the *pesantren*. This response must be formulated through strategic curriculum management in all elements of the *Pondok Pesantren*, including management, infrastructure, community relations, and human resource management (Rohaeni et al., 2021). *Pondok Pesantren* are now important because of their strategic position in public and relevance to the public interest. Regarding the importance and function of Islamic education, the function and purpose of Islamic education are placed more important than the function of general education because the function and purpose of the former are to empower students (Manshur, 2020; Wekke, 2015). Although their operational model must be adjusted, *Pondok Pesantren* have

survived the development of the government order with the main function of building a civilized and Islamic-minded society (Muhajir, 2022; Hakim & Herlina, 2018).

Previously, everyone viewed *Pondok Pesantren* as poorly organized schools that ignored the interests of the existing world. Thus perception must change as not all *Pondok Pesantren* follow the old tradition of resisting to a new culture. Several *Pondok Pesantren*, which were originally aimed at only mastering religious knowledge, have shifted their orientation to become more open and accepting of all forms of new knowledge (Muzakki & Nisa', 2020). The findings of previous researchers' research. A previous study assessed the quality of *Pondok Pesantren* using the fuzzy method to generate a service quality score (Faizah et al., 2018). Another study has shown that a new model is emerging in schools that is centered on formal education. This model has proven to be effective in implementing management strategies to improve the quality of schools and student (*santri*) resources. This new model is different as it intends to increase the ability of schools to adapt to the times and respond to public interests without rejecting Indonesian traditions and heritage (Munifah et al., 2019).

This paper discusses the muslim community's desires in terms of providing teaching concepts in *Pondok Pesantren* that are relevant to the community's needs. The Darullughah Wadda'awah *Pondok Pesantren* in Pasuruan always implements the curriculum that strives to achieve success and educational goals. This aligns with the concept of total quality management (TQM), which seeks continuous improvements and changes in culture as well as organization, quality standards, and harmonious relationships between institutions and stakeholders and guardians of students. Starting with this thought, the researchers attempted to investigate how the curriculum implementation in *Pondok Pesantren* enhanced learning in light of TQM.

According to recent studies, global competition has placed a high value on various commercial sectors. In order to compete, businesses must improve their capabilities in terms of quality rather than marketing. The TQM movement emerges, offering hope for progress (Lim et al., 2022). The rationale for TQM is straightforward. Producing the highest quality is the best way to compete and excel in global competition. As a result, efforts to continuously improve human capabilities, processes, and the environment are required. TQM is the most effective way to improve the capabilities of these components. TQM implementation in a company or organization can provide significant benefits, increasing profits and competitiveness. The company can increase profits. First, improve the marketing channel's competitive position so that the market share is larger and

the selling price is higher. Second, through quality improvement efforts, businesses can increase output that is free of damage. This reduces the company's operating costs while increasing profits (van Kemenade, 2022). Previous literature on how the curriculum is evaluated to determine its quality. However, in general, it focuses on designing, making preliminary preparations, gathering information, conducting analysis, drawing conclusions, making recommendations, and implementing the results of previous evaluations. TQM has the potential to influence educational quality. This is because TQM is a unique concept and practice of change in school management, and it has an impact on measures of success or school quality (Glaveli et al., 2021). There are still many schools in its development that are struggling with their daily operations without demonstrating quality development. Even though the curriculum has changed, the quality is said to have not improved. Quality is said to be declining even though teacher education is improving. Furthermore, the quality of education graduates is said to be inadequate in comparison to the needs of today's communities. TQM can, of course, solve this problem with the cooperation of all parties (Kadhim & Ahmad, 2021; Karageorgos et al., 2021).

The findings of this study are novel as they show that *Pondok Pesantren* bring people into society who are aware of the problems they face so that they can find alternative solutions to these problems. An educational environment that is diverse and complex and grows rapidly requires a high level of professionalism to improve the quality of agency performance. If a *Pondok Pesantren* can meet the interests of the community, it can produce various models that focus on the development of the *Pondok Pesantren*. The phenomenon of the emergence of various models of *Pondok Pesantren* occurs in formal educational institutions. This study was conducted in Ma'had Darullughah Wadda'awah, Pasuruan Regency. The institution was chosen because there is a strong reception from the pesantren culture of technological developments in this era. In addition, this institute is thick with large institutions of *Pondok Pesantren*.

Research Questions

This study focuses on the strategies employed for improving the quality of education in the 20th century in *Pondok Pesantren*. The following research questions were sought to be answered:

1. How is the educational curriculum planning carried out by the *Pondok Pesantren* Ma'had Darullughah Wadda'awah?

2. How is the implementation of total quality management carried out by the *Pondok Pesantren Ma'had Darullughah Wadda'awah*?
3. How are the education curriculum and total quality management of the education quality of *Pondok Pesantren Ma'had Darullughah Wadda'awah* evaluated by the institution?

Literature Review

Basic Concepts of Total Quality Management within the Scope of Education

Integrated TQM is focused on improving the quality of services and products continuously centered on customer needs, improving the process of member involvement to win in the competition and maintain the existence of the organization in a competitive era. Implementing TQM can ensure that all departments or employees cooperate in improving the quality of service (Tribus, 2010). There are eight main principles in the implementation of TQM, namely: (1) focus on customers; (2) overall employee engagement; (3) focus on defined processes and continuously monitor performance measures; (4) an integrated system connecting critical elements of business improvement to exceed consumers' and stakeholders' expectations; (5) a strategic and systematic approach to achieve the vision, mission, and goals; (6) continuous improvement to encourage creativity and analytical attitude; (7) decisions based on facts that can increase accuracy during the decision-making process, reach consensus, and make predictions based on previous events; (8) communication involving strategy, method, and timeliness (Tari, 2005; Waychunas, 2020).

Theoretically, the long-term benefits of TQM are to improve customer satisfaction and experience in addition to improving quality and identifying and analyzing a product so that it can meet consumer expectations. The literature reveals that the productivity framework in the TQM envelope is the main target of educational institutions. This is because the main focus of education and TQM is productivity. Thus both have the same vision and mission of improving organizational performance (Hackman & Wageman, 1995). The implementation of TQM as an effort to improve the quality of education cannot be achieved instantly. This means that the expected innovative changes cannot be realized directly as continuous efforts are required to achieve high productivity (Ghobadian & Gallear, 1996). In the world of education, TQM is a new framework. TQM can reorient management systems, staff behavior, organizational focus, and service delivery processes. Through TQM, educational institutions can organize better, more effective services that meet the learning needs of *santri* (Mukhopadhyay, 2020). Ideally, to realize effective TQM, togetherness

and cooperation of all components of education providers are needed. This is the main reason for TQM as a strategy of improving the quality of education (Sherr & Lozier, 1991). In their study on TQM in education, Owlia and Aspinwall (1997) noted that the philosophy of TQM is generally viewed as an alternative to improving quality of competitiveness in the education sector. Another study suggested the importance of investigating the correct approach to implement TQM in education to improve competitiveness quality, increase efficiency, and face the increasingly fierce global education competition. Despite its efficiency and success, TQM has been found to ignore development and integration. Thus, future studies must overcome this limitation (Nasim et al., 2020). Conceptual analysis must be performed to investigate different cases in relation to the main features of TQM, including strategic planning, an organization for quality, employee engagement and teamwork, and focus on internal customer satisfaction. This is because the different backgrounds of each educational institution also have different TQM practices, including the level of completeness of TQM practices, academic participation or division, the level of employee involvement, and the time span of the evaluation of the TQM program. Recent studies have focused on TQM models/frameworks in education, for example, in higher education institutes (Alauddin & Yamada, 2022; Jasti et al., 2021; Jermsittiparsert & Sommanawat, 2019), primary and secondary education institutes (Glaveli et al., 2021), special educational and institutes (Tahira et al., 2020). The most recent study to investigate the practice of TQM in Islamic boarding schools has focused on the character education process (Saifulloh & Neoh, 2022). Only a few studies have comprehensively investigated TQM practices at *Pondok Pesantren*, causing the TQM concept to remain unclear, and there is definitely room for improvement in the level of TQM practices at *Pondok Pesantren*.

***Pondok Pesantren* Education Quality**

Pondok Pesantren, are an educational establishment always striving to optimize students' talents and potential to achieve excellence in their lives. Excellence in an intellectual field requires having essential skills and a graceful moral attitude (Öztürk, 2020; Puad & Ashton, 2021). Development of human abilities can be influenced by habituation and academic activities designed by policymakers to manage the *pesantren* curriculum, which is artistically created and used by anyone for the stated purpose, namely, good habits. In the current context, the process involves a design of activities based on achieving goals. The role of *pesantren*, in general, cannot be separated from

students (Thahir, 2014). *Pondok Pesantren* education intends to change the behavior of students both regarding the level of progress in the process of intellectual development in particular, as well as the process of psychological development, including development of attitudes, understanding, skills, interests, adjustments. This can be realized through special programs centered on the cultivation of national cultural character values incorporated into the educational curriculum (Asifudin, 2017). Improving the quality of *Pondok Pesantren* education is the foundation for the creation of quality education. The quality of *Pondok Pesantren* is one of the central issues in education, in addition to other issues such as equity, relevance, and efficiency of *Pondok Pesantren* management (Widodo, 2018). The development of science and technology and the demands for professionalism in the management of these institutions pose the greatest challenge to the success of da'wah institutions, such as *Pondok Pesantren*, in achieving their goals. *Pesantren* have historically been closely linked to the public interest, emphasizing the importance of Islamic education. This is due to the fact that *Pondok Pesantren* are a type of Islamic educational institution (Munifah et al., 2019). *Pesantren* have an extraordinary experience in building quality education. They follow the path of developing moral values and religious teachings to educate the nation's younger generation, helping them develop a noble character and have faith in and fear God Almighty (Umiarso, 2022). Findings of previous studies have revealed that if the quality of *Pondok Pesantren* is good, the contribution will be even greater and vice versa. Therefore, *Pondok Pesantren* are required to provide professional education, character building, and competence. Many studies on the development of the education quality of *Pondok Pesantren* focus on the practice of quality assurance of education (Lathifah et al., 2022; Junaidi, 2019), teacher human resource management practices (Baso et al., 2018), and integrated education management practices (Muhdi, 2018). This study investigated the quality of education of *Pondok Pesantren*. The literature explains that *Pondok Pesantren* have a different curriculum from public schools. While public schools use the curriculum developed by the government, *Pondok Pesantren* use a combination of the curriculum developed by the government and the *Pondok Pesantren*'s special curriculum, which focuses on religious education. Therefore, *Pondok Pesantren*'s quality of education is likely to be different from that of public schools (Zahraini et al., 2022).

Methods

Design

This study employed a phenomenological research design with a qualitative approach. The underlying reason for conducting qualitative research is to gain a detailed understanding of a particular theme, problem, or meaning through first-hand experience. Phenomenological research design is concerned with establishing answers to *why* and *how* of a phenomenon. Spiegelberg (1971) explained that a phenomenological approach is a scientific approach that aims to examine and describe phenomena as they are experienced directly without any interpretation and abstraction. Examining a phenomenon means going through the process of exploring, analyzing, and describing the same to obtain its complete and in-depth picture. Therefore, researchers must temporarily store or isolate the assumptions, beliefs, and knowledge that they already have to be able to do the bracketing process. The qualitative approach is suitable because it focuses on developing a complete, accurate, and clear description and understanding of the experiences felt directly by the participants. Researchers analyzed the data using a qualitative approach adapted from Creswell (2009) theory to investigate educational curriculum planning, TQM practice, and evaluation of both in relation to the quality of *Pondok Pesantren* education. The researchers also attempted to ascertain how these individuals feel after the program is implemented in the educational institution. The research location is Ma'had Darullughah Wadda'awah Pasuruan, East Java, Indonesia. This educational institution was chosen because of its strong acceptance of the *pesantren* culture in regard to technological developments. This institution has a quality identity as a *pesantren*, with several students from various corners of the country. The teaching and learning process at this *Pondok Pesantren* uses the applicable *Pondok Pesantren* curriculum in addition to basic Arabic language skills regarding quality and other extracurricular activities.

Participants

Twenty-five participants were recruited in this study, including one *pesantren* builder, one chairperson of the foundation, the members of advisory boards, two deputy chairpersons, five *pesantren* coordinators, and 13 *pesantren* teachers. Random sampling was used for selecting participants in this study, where participants were selected according to their knowledge regarding the implementation of TQM programs in their educational institutions. This random sampling

technique gives everyone from all targets the same chance to be chosen as participants, but the sample is chosen at random rather than sequentially. This technique allows the collection of response data that results in a stronger understanding of the TQM phenomenon in pesantren with more precise results. The participants had special knowledge about this research, which not everyone in the institution had. Special knowledge possessed by Islamic boarding school managers who have attended training on trainer (ToT) training, which is part of the Social and Environmental Responsibility program of BUMN (state-owned enterprises) and the *Pondok Pesantren* independence program. The criteria for participants in the study were people who were in the management committee of Ma'had Darullughah Wadda'awah Pasuruan and who played a role in TQM practice from 2020 to date (see Table 1)

Table 1

Participant Description

Variable	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	23	92
	Female	2	8
Age group (in years)	26–35	4	16
	36–50	9	36
	51 and above	12	48
Participant	President	1	4
	Advisory board member	1	4
	Vice chairperson	3	12
	Coordinator	2	8
	Teacher	5	20
		13	52

Data Collection Technique

The study data were collected from the *Pondok Pesantren* Ma'had Darullughah Wadda'awah. There are two sources of data in this study. The primary data were derived from observations and interviews with participants. This study's secondary data includes research materials published in scientific journals that are relevant to the research theme.

Observations

Observations were made to collect data through direct observations, including recording and recording activities of *Pondok Pesantren* related to educational curriculum planning and TQM practices. The researchers made observations after getting permission from the leadership of the *Pondok Pesantren*. The total time required for observations is 14 working days, with 7 days required at the start of the semester and 7 days required at the end of the odd semester of the 2022

school year. The researchers visited *Pondok Pesantren* from Monday to Sunday. The time required for each observation schedule is seven days. During the observation, the researcher observed the same object, only the time of the visit was different. This was done to find out the planning and evaluation activities carried out by the participants. The aspects observed were the location where the TQM practice took place and the habits of the participants, including how they think, how they work, the language they use, and what they do in their spare time. During the observation, the researchers recorded the data in the observation sheet and recorded the activities of several participants using a video recorder. After getting the results of observations and visits, the researchers compiled the results of the observations in detail in the form of a narrative starting from the introduction (reasons for observing the place/object and the purpose of the observation) and a description of the results obtained from the observations.

Interview

In-depth interviews were used in this study as they are suitable because the discussion of the problems asked can be complex, with varied and possibly contradictory responses. In addition, they can dig up complete and in-depth information about participants' attitudes, knowledge, and views on research problems. Interview data were collected by seeing and hearing explanations and a more detailed understanding of the participants' views about their experiences of TQM practices. Interviews with the administrators of the *Pondok Pesantren* were conducted in their respective offices. Meanwhile, interviews with teachers were conducted in another room used to teach students. Interview data were collected in approximately one week with a single interview duration ranging from 30 to 45 minutes. The President, an Advisory Board member, a Vice-chairperson, a Coordinator, and a Teacher were among those interviewed. The quality standards of education used, efforts to improve the education quality system, changes in organizational culture/culture, education and training received were among the interview topics that became the focus of TQM.. During the interviews, the researchers recorded the interview so that when compiling the results of an interview, it could be replayed. The interview focused on responding to the research formulation on the phenomenology of the TQM programs at Islamic boarding schools. Each interview transcript was identified and checked for accuracy with colleagues. The researchers also focused on ethical considerations, including providing information about the nature of the study,

voluntary participation, permission to record interviews, participant confidentiality in recordings, transcripts, and full descriptions.

The researcher created field notes by recording and writing down all of the necessary information in an interview transcript. The interview transcript contains all of the necessary information, beginning with the names of the participants, the time of the interview, and the outcomes of the interviews. The interview data was then analyzed to create an interview outline based on well-structured interview topics. The researcher double-checked the interview results and rewrote them as needed without changing the content of the interviews. Secondary data were gathered from relevant pesantren manuals and journals. Management systems, employee behavior, organizational focus, service delivery, and student learning processes are examples of data sources.

Data analysis technique

Data collection is typically followed by data analysis. Spiegelberg's (1971) theory is referred to as a qualitative phenomenological data analysis technique. The structured steps taken in this study using phenomenology are as follows. The first step involved performing data reduction and interpretation using bracketing. Bracketing, also known as phenomenological reduction, is the initial process of researchers identifying by "postponing" any preconceived beliefs and opinions about the phenomenon under study to reduce the effects of prejudice to focus on experience analysis. Bracketing helps researchers understand the phenomenon as it is. In the initial phase, the researchers identified and temporarily stored the assumptions, beliefs, and the existing knowledge of the phenomenon under consideration to concentrate on each aspect of the phenomenon and describe it. In this early stage, the researchers were neutral and open to this phenomenon. Bracketing is generally carried out by exploring subjectivity, sorting, and grouping data based on an assessment of which data are the most important from field notes. This allows researchers to separate their personal experience and helps them be more reflexive and critical. At this point, the researcher had gathered all of the data necessary to determine the true picture of TQM practice in Islamic boarding schools. Phenomenological data in the form of descriptive narratives, collected as transcripts, were then interpreted into each research theme. By interpreting and responding to participants' experiences, data interpretation focuses on deeper subjective aspects. To answer the research question, the researcher describes the overall essence of the phenomenon under study using textual description. The triangulation technique is used to test the data's validity. Researchers

investigate the truth of information about the practice of TQM in education through various data sources such as documents, interviews, and observations, which are thought to have different perspectives and are compared with relevant theoretical perspectives. Each of these data sets will generate different evidence and provide different perspectives on the TQM practice under consideration. As a result, it will give birth to the breadth of knowledge required to obtain reliable truth. The results of data reduction that have been simplified were transformed into a summary form representing the entire data that have been obtained. From the summary data, it can be seen that the data category focuses on curriculum practices, TQM, and the quality of *Pondok Pesantren* education, which lasts for one semester. In the second stage, after the data were reduced, the results of the data exposure were presented systematically in the form of narrative texts in the pattern of the relationship between curriculum planning on the quality of education and TQM practices on the quality of education. The third stage involved drawing conclusions from the results obtained. Drawing conclusions and verifying data essentially aims to find meaning from the data collected by looking for relationships, similarities, or differences to draw conclusions as answers to existing problems. The conclusions drawn by the researchers were found to be supported by valid and credible evidence.

Results and Discussion

Management-based curriculum planning at *Pondok Pesantren* Ma'had Darullughah Wadda'awah Pasuruan, Indonesia

The first theme is curriculum management at *Pondok Pesantren*. The research findings reveal that the planning process of Islamic education curriculum in *Pondok Pesantren* is an attempt to determine the activities to be carried out, especially those related to the curriculum, which includes components of objectives, content, learning strategies/methods, learning resources, and curriculum assessment/evaluation strategies. This information is then used for design and learning experiences. *Pondok Pesantren* curriculum planning can create a curriculum that can develop all the potential that exists in students. Thus, it is expected to improve the quality of *Pondok Pesantren* education. This is because the *Pondok Pesantren* curriculum is a means to foster students who make religious values a spirit in living life. Religious values are life values that reflect the growth and development of religious life which consists of three main elements, namely *aqidah*, worship, and morals which become behavioral guidelines in accordance with divine rules to achieve

prosperity and happiness in life in the world and the hereafter. More deeply, the findings confirm that the practice of curriculum planning in *Pondok Pesantren* management at Ma'had Darullughah Wadda'awah is based on theological and normative teachings to respond critically and wisely to the development of the times and the current industrial revolution. *Pondok Pesantren* are trying to find solutions that encourage students to have extensive and in-depth knowledge and resilience in the face of modernization changes and preserve their historical identity.

The interview results revealed that the planning of teaching and learning in this pesantren makes use of the applicable curriculum as well as basic Arabic skills. *Pondok Pesantren* extracurricular activities are conducted for *santri* such as English speeches, da'wah to outermost, underdeveloped, and underdeveloped areas, entrepreneurs, and so on.

“Ma'had Darullughah Wadda'awah Pasuruan has a teaching staff of male teachers (*ustad*) or female teachers (*ustadzah*) as well as educators who are competent in their respective fields of study so that they are of high quality and become one of the best *Pondok Pesantren* for learning Arabic in Indonesia. There are also various facilities such as comfortable classrooms, comfortable dormitories, practical laboratories, libraries, sports fields, canteens, and mosques. *Pondok Pesantren* need to improve themselves to successfully meet the needs of modern society.”

Data (1) above explains that *Pondok Pesantren* are required to build a reliable curriculum planning and are required to provide adequate facilities and offer a modern and universal understanding of Islam. In addition to adopting these modernization ideas, pesantren must adhere to the correct application of management processes. The educational objectives explain the orientation chosen by the teachers in guiding their students. Selection is an assessment process because when educators make their choice, they prioritize some values over others. Thus, crystallization of values is the prime purpose of education. Values are the driving force in one's life that give meaning and legitimacy to their actions. The values developed in *Pondok Pesantren* have several dimensions, namely, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual dimensions related to religion (Saerozi, 2019). Based on education in *Pondok Pesantren*, it is difficult for someone to introduce changes in their life from a small scale that begins with a learning process. However, the learning process can provide changes in behavior or personality changes in a person. As per the modern view, behavior in learning is wide-ranging, including physical (structural) and spiritual (functional) terms, both of which are interrelated and interact with each other. The behavior pattern includes skills, habits, emotions, and aspirations, physical and social relations, character, and so on.

Planning is very important to achieve a goal. Curriculum is essentially a plan of learning activities carried out, in this case, in *Pondok Pesantren*, including the development of educational quality. To design the curriculum, of course, it is necessary to hold a meeting to participate together in making decisions. The results of interviews with *Pesantren* administrators are shown in data (2).

“Curriculum planning at Ma’had Darullughah Wadda’awah Pasuruan is carried out by holding evaluation workshops and work plans for *Pondok Pesantren*, reviewing the curriculum on a holiday, which is not only attended by the internal parties of the *Pondok Pesantren* but also by involving the *Pondok Pesantren* committee to participate in planning the curriculum. As the committee is a representative of the *Pondok Pesantren* environment as well as representatives of the guardians of students to convey their aspirations, the planning carried out can enhance the quality of the *Pondok Pesantren*, especially the learning process.”

Data (2) explains that curriculum planning at the beginning of the school year is done by holding a workshop with personnel related to the development of academic learning programs that have been determined by the caregivers. Following this socialization, educators put the workshop’s outcomes into action by following the teacher’s guidelines in carrying out the learning process. Before planning the curriculum, it is necessary to have an evaluation conducted by *Pondok Pesantren* through evaluation workshops and plans for subsequent activities. By evaluating the performance of the *Pondok Pesantren* for one year running, various advantages and disadvantages can be identified as a basis for planning the work plan of the *Pondok Pesantren*. If deficiencies are identified, it is necessary to follow up or find solutions to overcome these deficiencies in the performance of *Pondok Pesantren*.

In addition to holding workshops, there is a coordination meeting for all *pesantren* residents to follow up on unfinished planning activities such as the teacher allocation, preparation of subject matter, viewing the academic calendar, extracurricular coaching. Planning something important to achieve educational goals requires a lot of accuracy and time as well as mature decisions, considering the results of the curriculum plan will be realized in the learning process. Thus, it is important to design a curriculum that is relevant in the present and future. Every subject educator is then required to master the subject matter.

A previous study revealed that good curriculum planning in *Pondok Pesantren* includes careful curriculum planning including the formulation of Quran memorization program (*tahfiz*) objectives, *tahfiz* materials, and evaluation (Zaini et al., 2020). Clearly, it is very important to pay attention to the ability of students, to look at the input of students, to look at the facilities, the *pesantren*

environment, according to the circumstances and curriculum needs in implementing something new while carrying out the provisions of the Ministry of Religion. Ma'had Darullughah Wadda'awah Pasuruan's curriculum planning has been done at the end of each year when its students *Pondok Pesantren* have a holiday. Curriculum planning begins with evaluation workshops and upcoming work plans. Each educator is assigned a subject that is distributed and taught according to the academic calendar and is adjusted to the *Pondok Pesantren*'s vision and mission and the characteristics of the students so that when the teaching and learning process has been actively started, the educators already have mature readiness. Furthermore, the distribution of teaching educators, tutoring educators, extracurricular coaches, and the implementation time, schedule of educator pickets, and so on, are ready to be carried out when the *Pondok Pesantren* reopens because it has been meticulously planned.

Implementation of the TQM at *Pondok Pesantren* Ma'had Darullughah Wadda'awah Pasuruan

The second theme of this study is the TQM in *Pondok Pesantren*. The findings reveal that the implementation of TQM in *Pondok Pesantren* is an effort to create a quality culture of religion-based education that encourages all implementers to be customer-oriented. Quality culture is the ultimate goal of reforms that need to be made in the development of education. Therefore, implementation is an important part of the TQM concept in *Pondok Pesantren* education. The concept in applied TQM focuses on the customer's need to seek better results by meeting higher standards. The customers referred to in this study are those who make decisions on the quality of education. These high standards are product assurance standards (students are considered a product of education) and standards according to customer perceptions. More deeply, the aspect that has been well implemented is the planning of the educational curriculum. Aspects of long-term planning that are clear, structured, and systematic to achieve quality education are the strengths of TQM in education at *Pondok Pesantren*. Strategic planning allows the formulation of long-term priorities and institutional changes based on rational considerations. Other aspects related to TQM implementation that are being improved are aspects of resilience to external pressures, adequate monitoring mechanisms, and demands for staff and teachers to understand the purpose of *Pondok Pesantren*. Of these three aspects, an adequate monitoring mechanism is the weakest aspect

because this aspect in its implementation must be monitored directly by stakeholders and requires a large budget.

The evidence that the researchers identified in the implementation of TQM can be seen in the activities that have been carried out by *Pondok Pesantren*. In terms of teaching, a teacher prepares subject matter and other needs to be coordinated with the management of the *Pesantren* curriculum relevant to the vision and mission of the *Pondok Pesantren*. Leaders are an important element because they play a role in empowering teachers and giving them broad authority to improve the teaching and learning process. As for academic literacy, *Pondok Pesantren* refer to the yellow book as the root of their literacy culture. The results of the interviews revealed that for *Pondok Pesantren*, the yellow book is their identity that distinguishes them from other educational institutions. The yellow book contains *fiqh*, moral creed, Sufism, *hadith*, Islamic law, *kalam* (theology), and Arabic interpretation using Arabic script produced by scholars, especially from the Middle East. However, in its development, the yellow book also has local (regional) languages, such as Malay, Sundanese, and Javanese. Islamic boarding schools that are involved in TQM will benefit from having an effective team from all levels from leaders, staff, and teachers who play an active role in fulfilling their respective duties. The most specific implementation of TQM is regarding the planning of teaching curricula to improve the quality of continuing education. This is because the planning of the *Pesantren* teaching curriculum is different from the curriculum in general education. The planning of the *Pesantren* curriculum does not only refer to the curriculum that has been set by the government but also the self-developed religious education curriculum based on theological and normative teachings.

According to the study findings, the *Pondok Pesantren* curriculum team directed the curriculum implementation at Ma'had Darullughah Wadda'awah Pasuruan to monitor all curriculum-related activities, such as the learning process. This is done so that the implementation of the curriculum can run smoothly according to what has been previously planned to achieve satisfactory results and expected goals. The implementation of the curriculum at Ma'had Darullughah Wadda'awah Pasuruan is essentially the same as the equivalent *Pondok Pesantren* in general but has its uniqueness that is not shared by other *Pondok Pesantren* in curriculum development, namely, the existence of *Pondok Pesantren* with nuances like those in the Middle East with a strong culture, starting from the language of food, how to dress, as well as guests who are mostly from the Middle East region. The results of the interview are further presented in data (3).

“Educators realize the curriculum in the learning process by mastering learning materials according to the subjects they teach. They also master several models and learning methods as an alternative form if the students’ conditions do not allow them to use the previously planned method. In addition to being competent on the professional side in the field of subject matter, they must also have *akhlaq karimah* (good morals and credibility) to remain patient and hold emotions when students face difficulty in understanding the material being taught, and the importance of providing role models for students because indirectly students will imitate what has been taught by the teacher.”

Data (3) reveals that *Pondok Pesantren* teachers must have the nature, sincerity, and commitment to work. Educators must possess these qualities to develop basic competencies to students. The readiness of educators must be prepared before carrying out the teaching and learning process in the classroom. Educators prepare old subject matter before the session begins in *Pondok Pesantren* and refine the same while carrying out the learning process. Some educators are also actively teaching in the form of learning videos uploaded via YouTube media so that students who forget or do not understand the previous material can easily review the learning from the teacher’s explanation. The students who intend to study, as well as the general public, are benefited from this access so that they can participate in learning and reflect on the concepts at any time and place. There is a website from this institution that contains several useful articles and writings from students, alumni, and the *asatidz* council (educators who are specially appointed with the main task of teaching). This is closely related to digital literacy, which is now being promoted both in past world news columns, Islamic articles, and *manaqib shalihin* (the activity of reading the history of the believer). Thus, to determine the readiness of educators, supervision is carried out by the head of the *Pondok Pesantren* in relation to the lesson plans that have been made. More depth is shown in data (4).

“All activity plans will be checked by the head of the *Pondok Pesantren* before being actualized by all educators. Then, in its implementation in the classroom, it will be checked whether the learning process is going without obstacles or not. Based on the results of observations made by researchers, every day in *Pondok Pesantren*, there are picket teachers. When they are on duty, they occupy a chair and a long table in front of the teacher’s room and sit there. However, not all of the pickets gather there but take turns because some of them clash with the teaching schedule.”

Data (4) explains that basically, a teacher’s responsibility is to condition students to recapitulate the attendance of students from class to class. In addition, a teacher is in charge of recapitulating the absence of educators. The absence of educators is to check the readiness of educators in

teaching and eventually control the learning process, such as an order for educators to enter class, condition the class for educators who are unable to attend because of personal reasons or other commitments. Thus, a picket educator is responsible for giving assignments or acting as a substitute to the absentee teacher. The interaction between educators and students during the learning process must be carried out properly. Previous research has shown that this interaction is important for supporting the learning process and building emotional closeness between educators and students so that the former can adjust learning strategies based on the characteristics of students and design the study material easily comprehensible so that the learning process can run smoothly (Muhajir, 2022).

As per the interview results, the interaction between educators and students has been going very well; good communication has been established, not only in class but also during break time. Educators welcome active students and have high curiosity about learning problems that are not understood. The role of *Pondok Pesantren*, in general, cannot be separated from students (Thahir, 2014). *Pondok Pesantren* education intends to actively change the behavior of students, which results in changes in individual students, in the level of progress in the process of intellectual development in particular and the process of psychological development, including development of attitudes, understanding, skills, interests, adjustments (Asifudin, 2017).

Pondok Pesantren can optimize students' talents and potential to achieve excellence in their lives. *Pondok Pesantren* can integrate social intelligence, emotions, and spiritual values (Ilyasin, 2020). An educator leads the lesson by praying together and motivating before the material is delivered and when the learning is finished, ending the same with a prayer together. Thus, the interaction in learning is filled with Islamic values and students are taught to glorify educators, *tawadhuk* (humble attitude) to educators as learning resources, and educators are there to act as good role models for their students. In addition, in the learning process, each educator is given the freedom to determine the method that is adapted to the characteristics of the *santri* with the supervision under the head of the *Pondok Pesantren*. Learning activities not only take place in the classroom but also outside the classroom by the material to be delivered. The material for the *Hajj* rituals (visit a great place) of students are invited to practice spaciousness and so on.

This learning model aims to improve the ability of educational institutions to adapt to the times and respond to public interests without rejecting Indonesian traditions and heritage (Munifah et al., 2019). Coordination is essential, of course, so that all educators can exchange information

about learning materials that are deemed suitable using the right method. Coordination also strengthens the ties of brotherhood among educators. Conversely, if educators have shortcomings, for example, if their teaching practices are not optimal, teaching methods are less varied and not in agreement with student characteristics, and learning is not going according to what has been planned, the head of the *Pondok Pesantren* will follow up to resolve these issues. TQM can reorient the management system, staff behavior, organizational focus, and service provision processes to students (Mukhopadhyay, 2020). This way, the *Pondok Pesantren* can organize better, more effective services that meet the learning needs of students. Ideally, realizing effective TQM requires good cooperation from all components of the *Pesantren* structure. This is the prime reason for TQM to be able to improve the quality of education (Sherr & Lozier, 1991).

Evaluation of the Management-based curriculum and TQM at *Pondok Pesantren* Ma'had Darullughah Wadda'awah Pasuruan

The third research theme describes the education quality in *Pondok Pesantren*. The findings reveal that evaluation of strategic curriculum planning and TQM in education are mutually supportive when seeking to improve the quality of education. This is because *Pondok Pesantren* integrate TQM principles into strategic planning through a framework designed to achieve the vision, mission, and long-term goals rooted in customer satisfaction. Evaluation is carried out by identifying the best quality measures in accordance with customer expectations (internal education customers are teachers and Islamic boarding school staff, while external customers are parents, students, and the community). The quality measures in question are the educational services provided, the quality of *Pondok Pesantren* graduates, and the education customer experience. The evaluation process leads to the results of improvements to all components of the management of *Pondok Pesantren*, consisting of components in the fields of curriculum, student affairs, personnel, facilities and infrastructure, finance, and special services (libraries, health businesses, and so on). In other words, the benefits obtained are that all management components that are owned can be more optimal to improve the relationship between *Pondok Pesantren* and “customers.” The findings prove that all components of *Pondok Pesantren* management are the main forces in determining whether curriculum planning and TQM practices are implemented properly. These components can carry out curriculum management fairly well in improving the quality of education, both for determining education policy in general and for curriculum decision-making.

This means that aspects of personality development of all management components (especially students) need to be improved. The weakness that the researchers found was the lack of external participation (government supervision) in monitoring the implementation process and evaluating the *Pondok Pesantren* curriculum planning and TQM practices that had been carried out.

There are three main aspects that the researchers found as improvements, namely (1) continuous improvement of the quality of curriculum management by prioritizing the integration of all elements in educational institutions; (2) determination of the quality standards of curriculum management in a cooperative, comprehensive, systemic, and systematic manner to realize the achievement of curriculum objectives; (3) maintenance of the relationship between students, educators, and leaders by placing educators in teaching through the supervision of the leaders of *Pondok Pesantren*, including how to order educators to enter the classroom, and how to apply them in the learning process.

In addition, educators are also assessed through their performance by the head of the *pesantren*. They are assessed in regard to their attitudes and other qualities. If there are educators who are not good at implementing learning, they will receive a letter of warning to make improvements in all matters. Curriculum is also evaluated by the community through committees, community organizations, and community leaders. This form of assessment is implemented with data on the time of admission of new students. In addition, there is an unscheduled evaluation of external supervisors. Data (5) describes supervisor evaluation practices:

“In the morning, the head of the *Pondok Pesantren* visits classes with prior information to check the flow of the learning process. This is done to ascertain the performance of educators in carrying out the learning process and to see if their teaching strategy is the same as that planned, and so on. In addition, the head of the *Pondok Pesantren* also receives advice from one of the homeroom teachers regarding the learning process that takes place in the latter’s class. From this, the homeroom teacher also indirectly supervises the class he/she guides by checking the presence of educators who teach in his/her class, asking students about the obstacles they face during the learning process and being responsible for finding solutions to problems. This is done so that the learning process yields the desired results. Furthermore, based on the results of observations, obstacles to implementing the curriculum in improving the quality of education are that the overall curriculum has not been managed.

In the end, the TQM approach to developing the character of *Pondok Pesantren* is implemented by incorporating the main elements of TQM, which are focusing on customers, optimizing leadership roles, involving all staff in quality and continuous improvement, using the Deming

cycle model, namely, plan, do, check, and act. Educational management functions have been implemented starting from planning and organization, which can be seen in the delegation of authority derived from the organizational structure, staffing, leading, and controlling. *Pesantren* not only teach religious knowledge to instill the character of students but also formal education, such as in junior high schools and equivalent (Zakariyah et al., 2022). They attempt to integrate social intelligence, emotions, and spiritual values (Ilyasin, 2020).

This study contributes to Hackman and Wageman's (1995) research on the long-term benefits of TQM in improving consumer satisfaction and experience, improving organization performance, identifying and analyzing a product so that it can meet consumer expectations. The findings reveal that the long-term benefits of implementing TQM are, in fact, not only increasing consumer satisfaction and experience but also the experiences of stakeholders involved in TQM practices, namely, leaders, *Pondok Pesantren* supervisors, foundation chairs, advisory boards, deputy chairpersons, school coordinators, and school teachers. The practice of TQM through planning, implementation, and evaluation in these schools has created advantages, disadvantages, and aspects for future improvement to enhance the performance of *pesantren*. Dahlgard et al. (2008) explained the importance of a continuous TQM process to detect and reduce weaknesses and ensure that all employees attend training properly. This finding is different from the previous study conducted by Tribus (2010). The findings explain that TQM is focused on improving service quality continuously centered on customer needs, improving the process of member involvement to win in the competition and maintain the existence of the organization in this competitive era. In fact, the practice of TQM in *Pondok Pesantren* is not only about customer needs but also to be able to ensure people who are in the organizational structure to cooperate with each other in improving the quality of Islamic education.

A number of studies have examined the practice of TQM in educational institutions. However, there are very few studies that reveal in depth the practice of TQM focusing on curriculum management and evaluation. Previous studies have affirmed that TQM practices can reorient management systems, staff behavior, organizational focus, and service procurement processes. Educational institutions can organize better, more effective services that meet the learning needs of students (Mukhopadhyay, 2020).

This study presents novel findings regarding the practice of TQM in *Pondok Pesantren* that have the characteristics of educational management, namely aspects of planning, implementation, and

evaluation are guided by the values of the Islamic faith; prioritizing strengthening faith; development of science, charity and morals. Evaluating *Pesantren* curriculum management has a number of advantages, especially in terms of the ability to cooperate with its existing organizational structure. Three important aspects that support the practice of TQM include: (1) improving the quality of curriculum management on an ongoing basis; (2) establishing quality standards for curriculum management in a cooperative, comprehensive, systemic, and systematic manner to realize the achievement of curriculum objectives; (3) and maintaining the relationship between students, teachers/employees, and leaders who are supported by students, parents, community, educators, infrastructure, and technology. In the end, to realize the application of TQM in Islamic educational institutions, *Pondok Pesantren* must make every effort so that the curriculum can be achieved, produce graduates who have good achievements, and ultimately foster public confidence in sending their children to *Pondok Pesantren*. All results of curriculum evaluation should be used as a reference for making further plans to improve the quality of education.

The study results imply that the practice of TQM involves the entire organizational structure to maintain the quality of the curriculum and the quality of *pesantren*-based education. In managerial implications, good leadership is required to overcome the weaknesses of TQM practices in educational institutions, as well as to increase stakeholder participation in overseeing the TQM process to achieve the goals of the *pesantren*. The TQM process is indispensable in detecting advantages, disadvantages, and aspects of improvement that support organizational performance. Thus, it is clear that the *pesantren*-based education in the era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution cannot succeed instantly but requires a long and sustainable process and persistent efforts. In this study, the quality of the curriculum and the implementation of TQM is considered important for improving the quality of *pesantren*-based education that can guide the future generations of the nation to become human beings with noble character. This is the first study to investigate TQM in Islamic boarding schools as an empirical paradigm using a phenomenological research design that has an impact on educational quality. The researcher refers to Chiarini (2020) research, recommends additional research by focusing on four categories of topics that arise in TQM practices in the 4.0 era, including creating customer value; artificial intelligence; quality assurance and control system; and development of quality management skills. Furthermore, curriculum management planning and evaluation are TQM elements that are related to educational quality.

Previous research has found that the practice of TQM in education is most prevalent in primary and secondary schools, which has an impact on teacher job satisfaction. TQM in education also includes teacher participation, assessment systems, and leadership (Glaveli et al., 2021). According to another study, TQM practices are most common in the tertiary and secondary sectors (van Kemenade, 2022), ensuring the manufacturing industry's long-term viability (Zhang et al., 2021; Verma et al., 2022), its application in the defense industry (Brata & Soediantono, 2022), TQM's role in education, particularly in schools and universities (Bishnoi, 2018; Kigozi & Yuen On, 2019). The practical implication is that TQM practice in education must consider proper planning and evaluation design in order to improve educational quality. TQM policies that promote teaching quality and process effectiveness within the education system, as well as motivate teachers for continuous improvement, must be designed and implemented in Islamic boarding schools.

Conclusion

The findings reveal three main focuses. First, in planning curriculum management, *pesantren* are based on developing da'wah media, mastering Arabic language skills, and applying deep Islamic values culture (*dirasah al Islamiyyah*) both at the theological normative and ethical levels. Second, the application of TQM in *Pondok Pesantren* has been carried out by identifying student needs and coordinating with management, resulting in well-planned programs. Third, the evaluation of the education curriculum included aspects of improving TQM practices in Islamic boarding schools, as well as strengths and weaknesses. It can be concluded that the practice of TQM through *pesantren*-based curriculum management at Ma'had Darullughah Wadda'awah Pasuruan has been carried out continuously following the times, cultural changes, as well as organization, quality standards, and harmonious relationships between institutions and stakeholders and students. The study findings are novel as they show that the practice of TQM in Islamic educational institutions has a well-organized and critical structure couple with wise planning and implementation of Islamic values-based curriculum adapted according to modern times. Three important aspects support the practice of TQM in an effort to improve the quality of *pesantren*-based education namely, (1) improving the quality of curriculum management on an ongoing basis; (2) establishing quality standards for curriculum management in a cooperative, comprehensive, systemic, and systematic manner; and (3) maintaining relationships between stakeholders

(students, teachers/employees, student leaders, parents, and the community). The limitation of this study is related to the object of research, namely, the practice of TQM at the *Pondok Pesantren* Ma'had Darullughah Wadda'awah, Pasuruan City, East Java. The study findings cannot be generalized to *Pondok Pesantren* in other areas. Future studies can expand the object of research and incorporate multiple *Pondok Pesantren* or educational institutions in Indonesia with the same problem but adding other factors and more sophisticated methods. To improve the quality of *pesantren*-based education, *pesantren* leaders need to maintain good communication to ensure the involvement of the entire organizational structure and ensure they are able to work well together to support the vision, mission, and goals of the *pesantren*. The government must support the practice of TQM in *Pondok Pesantren* and other Islamic educational institutions by holding training sessions on an ongoing basis so that they are able to make the implementation of TQM successful.

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