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IMPLEMENTATION OF TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT IN INDONESIAN PESANTREN: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini memetakan pola implementasi Manajemen Mutu Terpadu (TQM) pada pondok pesantren di Indonesia, cara pesantren menyelaraskan nilai salaf dengan indikator mutu modern, faktor pendukung dan penghambat, serta dampaknya terhadap mutu santri dan daya saing lembaga. Tinjauan literatur sistematis dilakukan mengikuti PRISMA 2020 terhadap 28 rekaman dari Google Scholar, Garuda, dan portal jurnal SINTA; setelah penghapusan duplikat dan penilaian kelayakan, 14 artikel terbitan 2020–2026 disintesis secara tematik. Hasil menunjukkan tiga pola implementasi: TQM berbasis prinsip, TQM berbasis siklus dan standar formal (PDCA, ISO 21001:2018, akreditasi), dan TQM yang menyatu dengan fungsi manajemen serta budaya pesantren. Penyelarasan nilai berlangsung melalui penerjemahan nilai, seperti musyawarah, amanah, ikhlas, khidmah, istiqamah, ihsan, dan uswah, ke dalam prinsip mutu, dengan kaidah al-muhafazhah sebagai penyaring. Komitmen kiai dan budaya religius menjadi pendukung utama, sedangkan keterbatasan dana dan sarana, beban administratif, serta ketegangan budaya menjadi penghambat. Dampak yang dilaporkan meliputi kepuasan pemangku kepentingan, kinerja pendidik, karakter santri, dan daya saing, tetapi bukti kuantitatif atas mutu lulusan masih sangat terbatas.

Kata kunci: manajemen mutu terpadu; pondok pesantren; nilai salaf; mutu lulusan; tinjauan literatur sistematis

Abstract

This study mapped the patterns of Total Quality Management (TQM) implementation in Indonesian pesantren (Islamic boarding schools), the ways in which pesantren aligned traditional salaf values with modern quality indicators, the factors that supported and hindered implementation, and its effects on graduate quality and institutional competitiveness. A systematic literature review was conducted in accordance with PRISMA 2020. Twenty-eight records retrieved from Google Scholar, Garuda, and SINTA-indexed journal portals were screened; after duplicates were removed and eligibility was assessed, 14 articles published between 2020 and 2026 were synthesised thematically. Three implementation patterns were identified: principle-based TQM, cycle- and standard-based TQM (PDCA, ISO 21001:2018, and accreditation), and TQM embedded in management functions and pesantren culture. Value alignment took place through the translation of values such as deliberation (musyawarah), trustworthiness (amanah), sincerity (ikhlas), service (khidmah), consistency (istiqamah), excellence (ihsan), and exemplary conduct (uswah) into quality principles, with the al-muhafazhah maxim acting as a filter. The commitment of the kiai and a religious organisational culture were the main enablers, whereas limited funding and facilities, administrative burden, and cultural tension were the main barriers. Reported effects included stakeholder satisfaction, teacher performance, student character, and competitiveness, although quantitative evidence on graduate quality remained very limited.

Keywords: total quality management; pesantren; traditional values; graduate quality; systematic literature review

INTRODUCTION

The pondok pesantren is the oldest form of Islamic educational institution in Indonesia. It rests on the relationship between the kiai and the santri (students), on the teaching of classical Islamic texts (kitab kuning), and on scholarly traditions transmitted across generations (Dhofier, 2011). Since Law No. 18 of 2019 on Pesantren (Republic of Indonesia, 2019) formally recognised their functions in education, religious outreach (dakwah), and community empowerment, pesantren have occupied a dual position. They are expected to preserve their distinctive character, yet they are increasingly bound by national quality standards, accreditation, and public expectations that their graduates can compete nationally and globally (Khoir & Amaliyah, 2025; Noviyanti et al., 2025).

Total Quality Management (TQM) is one of the frameworks most frequently proposed to meet these demands. TQM emphasises customer focus, continuous improvement, the involvement of all members of the organisation, and fact-based decision-making (Deming, 1986; Sallis, 2002). The framework, however, originated in industry. Its application in pesantren raises fundamental questions: whether santri can be treated as "customers", and whether technocratic quality standards are compatible with an institutional orientation grounded in sincerity, blessing (barakah), and dakwah (Bukhori, 2024; Khoir & Amaliyah, 2025).

Research on TQM in pesantren has grown, but its findings are scattered across single-institution case studies and conceptual papers. Existing reviews tend to address TQM in Islamic education in general. Baihaki et al. (2025), for example, reviewed five articles on TQM practice and student satisfaction across different levels of Islamic education, while Suryani (2024) and Sujarwo et al. (2025) discussed TQM in madrasahs and Islamic schools. No synthesis has yet focused specifically on how pesantren implement TQM, how salaf values are reconciled with modern quality indicators, which factors determine success, and how far the effects on graduate quality have been demonstrated.

This review addresses that gap through four research questions. RQ1: What patterns of TQM implementation in Indonesian pesantren can be identified in the existing literature? RQ2: How do pesantren align traditional salaf values with the indicators of modern quality management standards? RQ3: What factors support and hinder the successful implementation

of TQM in pesantren? RQ4: What effects does TQM implementation have on the quality of santri and graduates and on the competitiveness of pesantren? The review contributes a typology of implementation patterns, a map of the alignment between pesantren values and quality principles, and a critical appraisal of the strength of evidence on the effects of TQM in pesantren.

METHOD

Research design

This study is a systematic literature review reported in accordance with the PRISMA 2020 guideline (Page et al., 2021). This design was chosen because the research questions required a comprehensive mapping of evidence through an explicit and replicable procedure (Snyder, 2019).

Data sources and search strategy

Searches were conducted in Google Scholar, Garuda (Garba Rujukan Digital), and the portals of SINTA-accredited journals using the following combination of keywords: ("total quality management" OR "TQM" OR "manajemen mutu terpadu" OR "manajemen mutu" OR "ISO 21001" OR "akreditasi") AND ("pondok pesantren" OR "pesantren" OR "Islamic boarding school"). No publication year limit was applied so that the development of the field could be observed; all eligible records were published between 2020 and 2026. Retrieved records were compiled in a single working folder and coded.

Eligibility criteria

Eligibility criteria were defined before screening (Table 1). Studies addressing TQM in Islamic educational institutions in general, without a pesantren context, were excluded because they could not answer questions about pesantren values. Systematic reviews were excluded from the synthesis corpus to avoid double-counting evidence, but they were retained as points of comparison.

Table 1. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Aspect	Inclusion	Exclusion
Publication type	Published journal articles	Non-peer-reviewed proceedings, theses, opinion pieces
Focus	TQM, quality management, quality standards (ISO, accreditation), or the integration of traditional values with modern management in pesantren	TQM in general Islamic educational institutions without a pesantren context
Context	Pesantren or educational units grounded in pesantren values in Indonesia	Pesantren outside Indonesia

Aspect	Inclusion	Exclusion
Study type	Field studies (qualitative, quantitative, mixed) and library or conceptual studies	Secondary studies such as systematic reviews or bibliometric analyses
Language and access	Indonesian or English; full text available	Other languages; abstract only

Study selection

The identification stage yielded 28 records. After 11 duplicates were removed, 17 records were screened by title and abstract. Two records were excluded because they addressed TQM in Islamic educational institutions in general rather than in pesantren. Fifteen full-text articles were assessed for eligibility, and one was excluded because it was a systematic review. The final corpus comprised 14 articles (Figure 1).

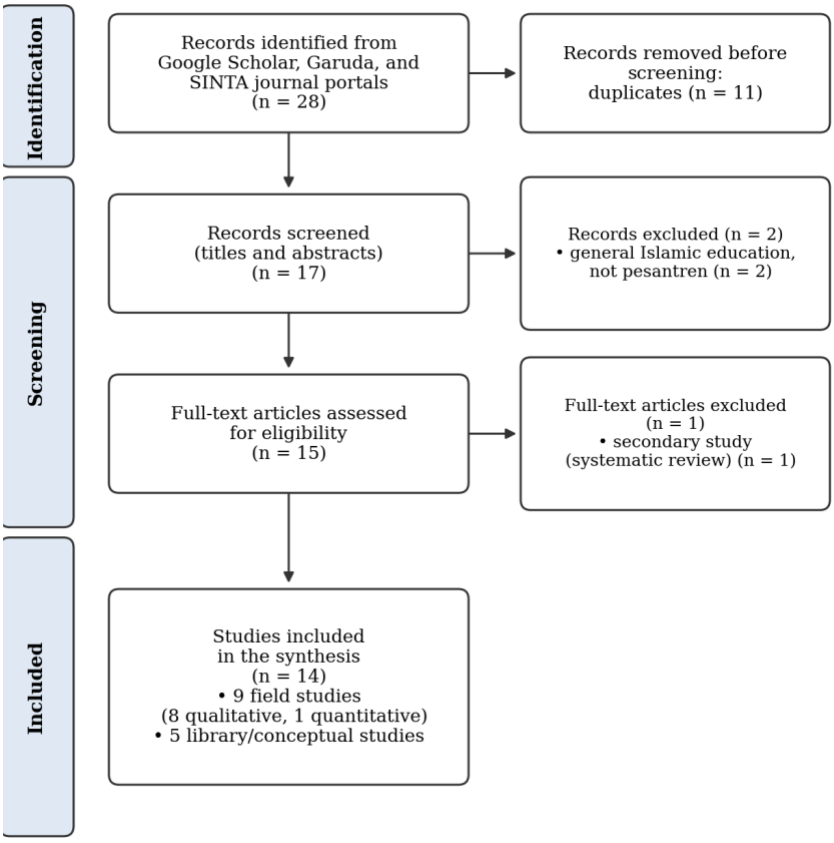


Figure 1. Study Selection Flow Diagram Based on PRISMA 2020

Quality appraisal, data extraction, and synthesis

Each article was appraised against five questions: clarity of aims, appropriateness of design, transparency of data collection, clarity of analysis, and consistency between conclusions and data. The appraisal was used to weigh the strength of evidence rather than to exclude articles. Data were extracted into a matrix covering author, year, journal, design, location, TQM

elements, pesantren values, supporting factors, inhibiting factors, and effects. The synthesis followed the three stages of thematic synthesis (Thomas & Harden, 2008): coding of findings, development of descriptive themes, and generation of analytical themes to answer RQ1–RQ4. Deductive categories were derived from TQM principles (Deming, 1986; Sallis, 2002), while categories for pesantren values and contextual factors were developed inductively (Braun & Clarke, 2006). A category was recorded as present when it was discussed substantively in the results or discussion section of an article.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Characteristics of the included studies

Table 2 presents the 14 studies included in the synthesis. Nine were field studies, comprising eight qualitative studies and one quantitative correlational study; the remaining five were library or conceptual studies. The field studies were concentrated in East Java (Mojokerto, Sumenep, Sampang, and Probolinggo), and three of them were conducted within the Nurul Jadid pesantren complex. The other sites were South Lampung, Dharmasraya, and three leading pesantren in a multiple-case study.

Table 2. Matrix of Included Studies

Code	Author (Year)	Design and setting	Focus and main findings
P1	Syarifah (2020)	Library study	TQM positions quality as a strategy oriented to customer satisfaction and grounded in Islamic values; quality tools (flowchart, fishbone, force field analysis)
P2	Chotimah et al. (2023)	Qualitative; PP Amanatul Ummah, Mojokerto	Cultural management based on the al-muhafazhah maxim; formal schools established to raise graduate quality and competitiveness
P3	Bukhori (2024)	Conceptual	Reconstruction of pesantren quality management through TQM; critique of the commercial connotation of "customer"
P4	Latifah (2024)	Qualitative; PP Hidayatul Mubtadiin, Jati Agung	Management commitment, continuous training, and santri involvement; improved learning quality, administration, and santri satisfaction
P5	Rojikin (2024)	Library study	TQM principles align with pesantren management values; some pesantren apply TQM implicitly
P6	Wanda (2024)	Quantitative correlational; PP Albarkah, Sumenep (25 teachers)	High level of TQM implementation; positively correlated with teacher productivity, explaining 52% of its variance
P7	Asyhari & Budianto (2025)	Multiple-case; three leading pesantren	Internalisation of vision and values, governance restructuring, tradition-based innovation; khidmah, ta'dzim, barakah, ukhuwah
P8	Khoir & Amaliyah (2025)	Qualitative; PP Nurul Jadid, Probolinggo	Tension between local values and accreditation standards; institutional synchronisation strategy
P9	Khoiroh et al. (2025)	Qualitative; MA Nurul Jadid, Probolinggo	Integration of ikhlas, amanah, ihsan, and musyawarah into TQM principles; spirituality-based quality model

Code	Author (Year)	Design and setting	Focus and main findings
P10	Mujiburrohman & Baharun (2025)	Qualitative; PP Nurul Jadid, Probolinggo	ISO 21001:2018 through PDCA; greater participation, transparency, accountability, and stakeholder satisfaction
P11	Noviyanti et al. (2025)	Conceptual with case illustrations; Daar el-Qolam and Al-Azhar	Integration of tradition and modernisation; transformational leadership, performance-based management, integrative curriculum
P12	Apriyenti et al. (2026)	Qualitative; PP Darussalam, Dharmasraya	Participatory quality planning, stakeholder involvement, PDCA evaluation; improved academic quality and character
P13	Bashori et al. (2026)	Qualitative; PP Al-Ikrom, Sampang	Tahfizh management based on POAC, TQM, modernism, and Madurese culture; measurable memorisation targets and tiered evaluation
P14	Kurniasari & Jawhari (2026)	Library study	Value-based TQM (amanah, khidmah, istiqamah, uswah, syura, ihsan) improves human resource and graduate quality

The quality of the studies varied. Most field studies described their informants, data collection techniques, and triangulation procedures (Apriyenti et al., 2026; Mujiburrohman & Baharun, 2025). The quantitative study by Wanda (2024) reported a clear measure of association, but its sample was small (25 teachers) and drawn from a single pesantren. Library studies rarely described how sources were located, so their claims about effects were treated as propositions rather than as evidence.

Publication trend

Research on TQM in pesantren has developed mainly in the past three years (Figure 2). Twelve of the 14 studies (85.7%) were published between 2024 and 2026. Field studies increased from 2025 onwards, marked by the entry of ISO 21001:2018 and accreditation into the discourse on pesantren quality.

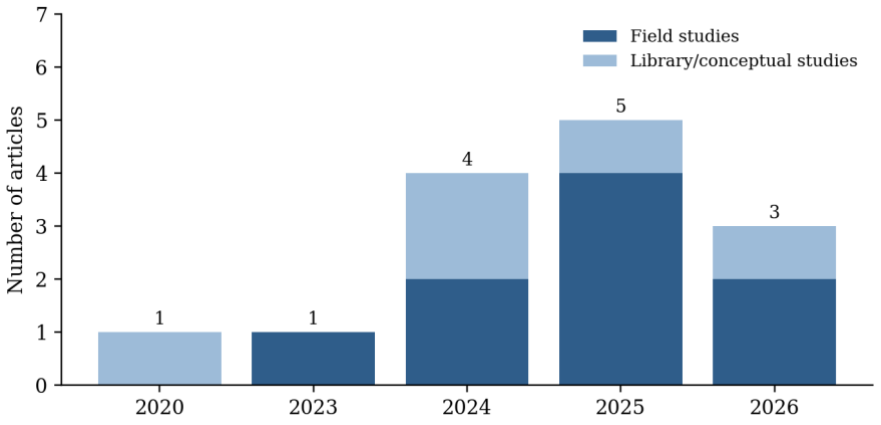


Figure 2. Distribution of Studies by Year of Publication and Research Design

RQ1: Patterns of TQM implementation in pesantren

The synthesis identified three implementation patterns (Table 3). The patterns are not mutually exclusive; a single pesantren may display more than one.

Table 3. Patterns of TQM Implementation in Pesantren

Pattern	Main characteristics	Dominant TQM elements	Studies
A. Principle-based TQM	TQM principles are adopted as a management philosophy and applied to curriculum, human resources, and services for santri	Customer focus (9 studies), continuous improvement (10), total involvement (6)	P1, P3, P4, P5, P6, P9, P14
B. Cycle- and standard-based TQM	Quality is managed through the PDCA cycle and documented external standards	PDCA, ISO 21001:2018, accreditation, self-evaluation (7 studies refer to external standards)	P8, P10, P12
C. TQM embedded in management functions and culture	Quality principles operate through POAC, institutional structures, and pesantren traditions, often without the TQM label	Participatory planning, tiered evaluation, internal quality assurance units	P2, P7, P11, P13

Pattern A was the most common. Here, TQM is positioned as a management philosophy that makes quality an institutional strategy (Syarifah, 2020). It is visible in leadership commitment, continuous training for teachers, and the involvement of santri in providing feedback (Latifah, 2024). Rojikin (2024) observed that some pesantren already apply TQM principles implicitly through a collective work culture and visionary leadership, even without naming them as TQM.

Pattern B represents the highest degree of formalisation. Pesantren Nurul Jadid implemented ISO 21001:2018 through a PDCA cycle involving the pesantren leadership, the education bureau, teachers, santri, parents, alumni, and internal auditors (Mujiburrohman & Baharun, 2025). Pesantren Darussalam in Dharmasraya followed three stages: participatory quality planning based on its vision and mission, programme implementation involving all stakeholders, and continuous evaluation through PDCA (Apriyenti et al., 2026). This pattern also covers the responses of pesantren to national accreditation (Khoir & Amaliyah, 2025).

Pattern C shows TQM that has become part of tradition. At Pesantren Al-Ikrom in Sampang, the tahfizh (Qur'an memorisation) programme was managed through planning, organising, actuating, and controlling. Planning was conducted through deliberation, memorisation targets were set in measurable terms, and tiered evaluation was overseen by an internal quality assurance unit (Bashori et al., 2026). The multiple-case study by Asyhari and Budianto (2025) showed that transformation proceeded through the internalisation of vision

and values, the restructuring of governance, and educational innovation rooted in tradition. This pattern is consistent with Sallis's (2002) view that TQM is essentially a change in organisational culture rather than a set of procedures.

In terms of TQM elements, continuous improvement (10 studies) and a focus on customers or santri (9 studies) were the most frequently discussed. Fact-based decision-making appeared in only four studies (Khoiroh et al., 2025; Mujiburrohman & Baharun, 2025; Noviyanti et al., 2025; Rojikin, 2024), and quality tools such as fishbone diagrams or force field analysis were addressed only by Syarifah (2020). TQM implementation in pesantren is therefore stronger in its philosophical and cultural dimensions than in the technical and statistical dimensions that characterise classical TQM (Deming, 1986).

RQ2: Aligning salaf values with modern quality indicators

The literature indicates that pesantren do not adopt TQM wholesale but translate it through pesantren values. Table 4 maps the values that appeared most often and the quality principles with which they were paired.

Table 4. Mapping of Pesantren Values onto Modern Quality Principles

Pesantren value	Corresponding quality principle or indicator	f	Studies
Musyawarah/syura (deliberation)	Total involvement; participatory planning; joint evaluation	8	P5, P7, P9–P14
Ikhlas (sincerity)	Intrinsic commitment and motivation for quality	4	P2, P7, P8, P9
Ihsan/itqan (excellence)	Standards of excellence; doing things right the first time	4	P5, P9, P13, P14
Uswah (exemplary conduct)	Quality leadership; leaders as role models	4	P2, P11, P13, P14
Barakah/ta'dzim (blessing, reverence)	Organisational culture; kiai–santri relationship as quality capital	4	P2, P7, P9, P13
Amanah (trustworthiness)	Accountability; transparency; quality documentation	3	P5, P9, P14
Khidmah (service)	Service orientation towards santri and the community	3	P7, P8, P14
Istiqamah (consistency)	Continuous improvement and process consistency	2	P9, P14
Al-muhafazhah 'ala al-qadim al-shalih wa al-akhdzu bi al-jadid al-ashlah	Innovation filter: adopting better modern elements without abandoning tradition	1	P2

Deliberation (musyawarah) emerged as the strongest meeting point between pesantren tradition and TQM. The TQM principles of total involvement and participatory planning find a direct counterpart in the tradition of syura, so the involvement of ustadz, administrators, parents, and alumni is not perceived as foreign (Apriyenti et al., 2026; Bashori et al., 2026). Khoiroh et al. (2025) formulated a spirituality-based quality model in which ikhlas, amanah,

ihsan, and musyawarah were integrated into student focus, continuous improvement, and total involvement. The result was a quality culture that was rational and systematic as well as spiritual and transcendental. Kurniasari and Jawhari (2026) described the same dynamic: TQM principles supplied a systematic framework, while pesantren values provided a moral foundation that strengthened commitment.

Alignment did not always proceed smoothly. Two points of tension appeared in the literature. First, the term "customer" was considered commercial in tone and inconsistent with the mission of pesantren as institutions of dakwah. Bukhori (2024) argued that TQM could be applied in pesantren provided it rested on the principle of continuous improvement, without positioning the pesantren as a commercial service provider. Second, accreditation standards based on a technocratic paradigm clashed with the values of khidmah, humility (tawadhu'), and ikhlas. Pesantren Nurul Jadid did not resist; instead, it pursued a strategy of institutional synchronisation, translating local values into administrative narratives compatible with accreditation forms (Khoir & Amaliyah, 2025). This phenomenon can be read through the concept of coercive isomorphism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983): regulatory pressure pushes towards uniform structures, yet pesantren retain the substance of their values behind those uniform forms.

The most explicit alignment mechanism was articulated by Chotimah et al. (2023) through the maxim al-muhafazhah 'ala al-qadim al-shalih wa al-akhdzu bi al-jadid al-ashlah, meaning to preserve good old traditions and adopt better new ones. The maxim operates as a filter: elements of TQM are accepted insofar as they strengthen the religious and cultural mission of the pesantren. Asyhari and Budianto (2025) added that cultural tensions were eased through negotiation grounded in adab (proper conduct), deliberation, and respect for tradition. Value alignment in pesantren therefore occurs through three strategies: translating values into quality principles, filtering modern elements through the al-muhafazhah maxim, and synchronising administratively with external standards.

RQ3: Supporting and inhibiting factors

Table 5 summarises the factors that influence the success of TQM in pesantren, together with their frequencies.

Table 5. Factors Supporting and Inhibiting TQM Implementation

Type	Factor	f	Studies
Supporting	Leadership and commitment of the kiai or pesantren leaders	10	P2–P5, P7, P8, P11–P14
	Religious and collective organisational culture	10	P1, P4–P7, P9–P12, P14
	Participation of all members and deliberation	8	P5, P7, P9–P14
	Continuous training and human resource development	9	P1, P4–P6, P10–P14
Inhibiting	Limited funding, facilities, and infrastructure	12	P1–P8, P10–P12, P14
	Administrative burden and documentary formalism	7	P6–P8, P10–P12, P14
	Resistance and cultural tension	5	P4, P5, P7, P8, P11
	Limited human resources and understanding of quality concepts	3	P4, P5, P12

The leadership of the kiai was the most decisive enabling factor. Latifah (2024) showed that pesantren leaders with a clear vision were able to integrate TQM principles into management and teaching. Asyhari and Budianto (2025) found that visionary, transformative, and communicative change leadership, rather than authoritarian leadership, served as the bridge between inherited tradition and the demands of modernisation. The charismatic authority of the kiai cuts both ways: it accelerates the acceptance of change because the kiai is obeyed, but it also risks making the quality system dependent on a single figure. A religious and collective culture was the second major enabler. Apriyenti et al. (2026) identified leadership commitment, religious culture, and effective organisational coordination as the main factors, while Wanda (2024) pointed to organisational culture and management commitment as drivers of success.

Among the inhibiting factors, limited funding and facilities were reported most often (12 studies). Chotimah et al. (2023) noted that pesantren faced infrastructure constraints while also being pressed by government and society to meet applicable standards. A distinctive barrier that deserves attention is administrative burden (7 studies). Teachers at Pesantren Albarkah expressed concern about the additional administrative tasks that TQM entailed (Wanda, 2024), and accreditation standards were seen as imposing an administrative logic that could shift value orientations (Khoir & Amaliyah, 2025). Other barriers included a weak understanding of quality concepts and limited human resources (Apriyenti et al., 2026; Rojikin, 2024), as well as resistance to modern managerial systems (Asyhari & Budianto, 2025; Latifah, 2024).

Taken together, these factors reveal a paradox. The traditional strengths of pesantren, namely the authority of the kiai and a collective culture, facilitate the initial adoption of TQM. Its sustainability, however, depends on elements that have traditionally been weak in pesantren: documentation, data, and systems that do not rely on a single figure. Mujiburrohman and Baharun (2025) recommended strengthening human resource training, digitising the quality system, and conducting participatory evaluation to bridge this paradox.

RQ4: Effects of TQM on santri quality and pesantren competitiveness

The reported effects were grouped into four categories (Table 6). The evidence column distinguishes measured effects from effects reported on the basis of informant perceptions or conceptual argument.

Table 6. Effects of TQM Implementation and Strength of Evidence

Effect	f	Studies	Type of evidence
Stakeholder satisfaction and participation	9	P1, P3–P6, P9, P10, P12, P14	Qualitative: greater participation, transparency, and accountability (P10); santri satisfaction (P4)
Santri and graduate quality (academic, character, memorisation)	8	P2–P4, P9, P11–P14	Qualitative: academic quality and character (P12); discipline and character in tahfizh (P13); no data on graduate outcomes
Teacher performance and productivity	6	P4, P6, P7, P12–P14	Quantitative: TQM explained 52% of the variance in teacher productivity (P6)
Competitiveness and public trust	6	P2, P5, P6, P11, P13, P14	Qualitative/conceptual: formally recognised diplomas (P2); graduate relevance to community needs (P11)

The most frequently reported effect was greater stakeholder satisfaction and participation. The implementation of ISO 21001:2018 at Nurul Jadid improved the effectiveness of educational management and services, as reflected in greater participation, transparency, and accountability (Mujiburrohman & Baharun, 2025). The only quantitative evidence in the corpus came from Wanda (2024), who found a positive and significant relationship between TQM implementation and teacher productivity, with TQM accounting for 52% of the variance.

Effects on santri quality were reported along two dimensions: academic achievement and character. Apriyenti et al. (2026) concluded that TQM grounded in Islamic values improved educational quality holistically, in both academic terms and character formation. Bashori et al. (2026) reported improvements in santri discipline and character through measurable memorisation targets and tiered evaluation. With regard to competitiveness, Chotimah et al. (2023) showed that Pesantren Amanatul Ummah established formal schools so that its graduates would hold equivalent diplomas and be able to compete with graduates of non-

pesantren institutions, while Noviyanti et al. (2025) linked an integrative curriculum and the use of technology to graduates' readiness to contribute to socio-economic development.

Nevertheless, the evidence for effects on graduate quality and global competitiveness remains weak. No study used graduate attainment data, alumni tracer studies, pre- and post-implementation comparisons, or cross-pesantren benchmarking. Claims of improved graduate quality were generally based on the perceptions of leaders and teachers or on conceptual argument (Kurniasari & Jawhari, 2026; Rojikin, 2024). The link between TQM and the global competitiveness of pesantren graduates is therefore better regarded as a promising hypothesis than as an established finding.

Synthesis: a pesantren value-based TQM model

Drawing on these four sets of findings, this review proposes a five-layer pesantren value-based TQM model (Table 7). The model is a synthesised proposition that requires empirical testing.

Table 7. Pesantren Value-Based TQM Model

Layer	Content	Basis
1. Value foundation	The al-muhafazhah maxim as a filter; ikhlas, amanah, ihsan, and istiqamah as sources of motivation for quality	RQ2
2. Leadership	The kiai as a quality role model (uswah) with a visionary-participatory style; roles distributed to an internal quality assurance unit	RQ3
3. Process	PDCA conducted through deliberation; measurable targets; tiered evaluation	RQ1, RQ2
4. Standards	ISO 21001 or accreditation translated into the value narrative of the pesantren; quality documentation and data	RQ1, RQ2
5. Outcomes	Santri quality (scholarship, character, competence), teacher performance, stakeholder satisfaction, competitiveness	RQ4

The model emphasises that the success of TQM in pesantren depends less on how completely quality instruments are adopted than on how well they are translated into the language of pesantren values. The second and fourth layers are the most vulnerable. Dependence on the kiai needs to be balanced by institutionalising quality assurance roles, and formal standards need to be managed so that they do not turn into an administrative burden. Future research should include alumni tracer studies to measure graduate quality, multi-site quantitative studies testing the relationship between TQM and santri achievement, comparative studies of salaf (traditional) and khalaf (modern) pesantren, and studies conducted outside East Java.

This review has several limitations. The corpus is relatively small (14 studies), concentrated in East Java, and three studies came from the same pesantren complex. The search was limited to national databases, so international publications may not have been captured. Coding was performed by a single researcher, so inter-coder reliability could not be calculated, although every category was checked against the full texts.

CONCLUSION

TQM implementation in Indonesian pesantren follows three patterns: principle-based TQM; cycle- and standard-based TQM such as PDCA, ISO 21001:2018, and accreditation; and TQM embedded in management functions and pesantren culture. Pesantren align salaf values with modern quality indicators by translating values such as musyawarah, ikhlas, amanah, ihsan, istiqamah, khidmah, and uswah into quality principles, by filtering modern elements through the al-muhafazhah maxim, and by synchronising administratively with external standards. The commitment of the kiai, a religious culture, and collective participation are the main enablers, whereas limited funding and facilities, administrative burden, cultural tension, and a weak understanding of quality concepts are the main barriers. Reported effects include stakeholder satisfaction, teacher performance, the character and academic quality of santri, and institutional competitiveness, but measured evidence on graduate quality remains very limited. Pesantren leaders should institutionalise their quality systems so that they do not depend on a single figure, and researchers should test the proposed value-based TQM model through quantitative, comparative, and alumni tracer studies.

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