

Educational Management Approaches in Islamic-Based Schools: A Systematic Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

Islamic-based schools face increasing challenges in maintaining educational quality, institutional competitiveness, and character development amid digital transformation and social change. This study aims to identify dominant management approaches applied in Islamic educational institutions and examine their contributions to institutional effectiveness. The study also highlights research gaps in the development of integrative management models for Islamic schools. A Systematic Literature Review method was employed using the PRISMA 2020 framework. From an initial 159 articles, 22 eligible studies were selected for in-depth analysis based on predefined inclusion criteria. The findings reveal that management practices in Islamic schools are characterized by the integration of Islamic leadership values, strategic management, Total Quality Management, digital transformation, parental involvement, and religious program management. These approaches strengthen institutional accountability, administrative efficiency, curriculum integration, teacher professionalism, and student character formation. The novelty of this study lies in the formulation of an integrative conceptual synthesis that combines spiritual leadership, quality management, and digital adaptation within Islamic educational institutions. The study concludes that future Islamic educational management models should be more contextual, measurable, and adaptive to contemporary educational challenges.

1. INTRODUCTION

Improving educational quality remains a major challenge in the Indonesian education system, including in Islamic-based schools such as madrasahs, Islamic boarding schools, and integrated Islamic schools (Sumarsono et al., 2025) (Guru & Alfauqi, 2025; Romlah et al., 2025; Setyowati et al., nd). This urgency is reflected in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2022 results, which indicate that only 18% of Indonesian students achieved at least Level 2 proficiency in mathematics, 25% in reading, and 34% in science (Bilad et al., 2024; OECD, 2023; Tantowi et al., 2025). Similar concerns are also highlighted in the World Bank report showing that more than half of Indonesian children still experience learning poverty and fail to achieve minimum reading proficiency at the end of primary school (Bank, 2024). These conditions demonstrate that educational quality problems are not only related to students' learning outcomes, but are also closely associated with school governance, educational leadership, teacher professionalism, institutional management, and stakeholder involvement (Bank, 2024; Bilad et al., 2024; OECD, 2023; Sumarsono et al., 2025). Islamic-based schools play a strategic role in improving national educational quality because they integrate academic learning, character formation, religious values, and institutional culture within the educational process (Biggs, 1996;

Muhammad et al., 2024; Rama et al., 2023; Setyowati et al., n.d.). Previous studies emphasize that strengthening the quality of Islamic educational institutions requires effective educational management through visionary leadership, curriculum management, teacher professional development, resource allocation, and continuous quality evaluation (Rama et al., 2023; Setyowati et al., n.d.; Tauhid, 2025). Educational management in Islamic schools is therefore not merely administrative management, but also a strategic process for integrating academic quality, ethical leadership, parental involvement, and participatory governance into institutional development (Muhammad et al., 2024; Rama et al., 2023; Romlah et al., 2025; Sumarsono et al., 2025; Romlah et al., 2025; Setyowati et al., nd; Sumarsono et al., 2025). Recent studies indicate that educational management approaches in Islamic-based schools have developed through various models, including Islamic leadership, Total Quality Management, digital transformation, parental involvement, and institutional quality improvement (Romlah et al., 2025; Sumarsono et al., 2025). For example, the Qudwatuna leadership model has been shown to strengthen institutional quality through exemplary leadership, teacher development, financial transparency, and continuous evaluation (Romlah et al., 2025). Other studies also highlight the contribution of participatory governance and parental involvement in improving accountability and strengthening school quality (Sumarsono et al., 2025). These findings show that educational management in Islamic schools is increasingly moving toward multidimensional and integrative approaches. However, previous studies still demonstrate several limitations.

Most studies focus only on specific aspects such as leadership, parental involvement, religious culture, or quality management separately, resulting in fragmented findings and limited conceptual integration (Romlah et al., 2025; Sumarsono et al., 2025). In addition, many studies remain dominated by case-study approaches conducted in single institutions, making it difficult to identify broader patterns of educational management practices across different forms of Islamic-based schools. This gap indicates the need for a more comprehensive synthesis capable of systematically mapping educational management approaches and their contribution to school governance and educational quality (Romlah et al., 2025; Sumarsono et al., 2025). The novelty of this study lies in its integrative synthesis of educational management approaches in Islamic-based schools through a Systematic Literature Review framework. Unlike previous studies that primarily examine isolated management aspects within specific institutional contexts, this study systematically integrates various approaches, including Islamic leadership, quality management, digital transformation, parental involvement, institutional branding, and educational service management into a unified conceptual framework. This study also contributes by identifying research trends and conceptual gaps in Islamic educational management studies, thereby providing a broader understanding of how Islamic-based schools strengthen governance, educational quality, and institutional sustainability. Based on these problems and research gaps, this study aims to analyze educational management approaches commonly applied in Islamic-based schools, examine their contribution to school governance and educational quality, and identify research gaps in Islamic educational management studies. Through a Systematic Literature Review approach, this study is expected to provide a comprehensive conceptual foundation for developing more integrative, adaptive, and sustainable educational management models in Islamic educational institutions. (Romlah et al., 2025; Sumarsono et al., 2025).

2. METHODS

This study uses a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach with reference to the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA 2020) guidelines. The SLR approach was chosen because it can provide a systematic, transparent, and replicable

process of searching, screening, assessing, and synthesizing literature (Page et al., 2021; Snyder, 2019). In the context of this article, SLR is used to identify and analyze various educational management approaches applied in Islamic-based schools, including madrasahs, Islamic boarding schools, Islamic boarding schools, and integrated Islamic schools. The focus of the study is directed at educational management approaches, their contribution to educational governance and quality, and research gaps that are still found in Islamic educational management studies. This method framework follows the SLR pattern that includes database searches, Boolean search strings, inclusion-exclusion criteria, PRISMA-based article selection, and thematic analysis. The exclusive use of the Scopus database was intended to ensure the quality, credibility, and international visibility of the selected literature. Scopus was chosen because it indexes peer-reviewed journals with rigorous academic standards, provides broad multidisciplinary coverage, and is widely recognized as a reliable source for systematic literature reviews. Limiting the search to a single reputable database also helped maintain consistency in article indexing, metadata structure, and screening procedures, thereby improving the transparency and replicability of the review process.

The data collection process was carried out through the Scopus database because this database provides cross-disciplinary scientific literature that has gone through an academic selection process and is widely used in bibliometric studies and systematic literature reviews (Falagas, Matthew E.; Pitsouni, Eleni I.; Malietzis, George A.; Pappas, 2008; Mongeon, Philippe; Paul-Hus, 2016; Pranchutè, 2021). The article search was carried out using a combination of keywords relevant to the research topic, namely, *educational management* and *Islamic school*. To obtain articles that match the focus of the study, the search was limited to the fields of social sciences and arts-humanities, journal article document types, English language, open access articles, and articles published in the period 2023–2025. The Boolean search string used is as follows: (Title-Abs-Key (Educational Management) And Title-Abs-Key (Islamic School)) And (Limit-To (Subjarea, "Soci") Or Limit-To (Subjarea, "Arts")) And (Limit-To (Doctype, "Ar")) And (Limit-To (Language, "English")) And (Limit-To (Oa, "All")) And Pubyear > 2022 And Pubyear < 2026. The article selection process followed the PRISMA 2020 framework, including identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion stages (Page et al., 2021). The study included English-language open-access journal articles published between 2023 and 2025 that discussed educational management in Islamic-based schools, particularly related to governance, leadership, quality management, digitalization, and institutional development. Non-journal publications, irrelevant studies, inaccessible full texts, and purely normative discussions were excluded. The initial search identified 159 articles, which were reduced to 40 after screening and finally narrowed to 22 articles based on relevance to the research objectives. The selection process was documented using a PRISMA flowchart to ensure transparency and systematic review procedures.

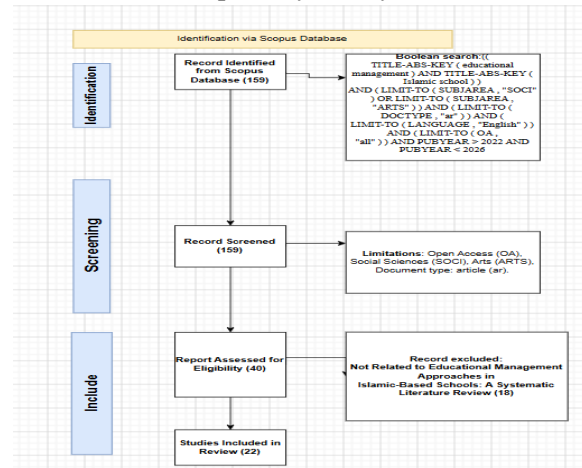


Figure 1. PRISM Diagram

Data from 22 selected articles were then extracted based on several main components, namely the author's name and year of publication, article title, journal name, country or institutional context, type of Islamic-based school studied, research method, educational management approach discussed, contribution to educational governance and quality, and research gaps indicated by each article. The articles analyzed covered various themes, such as Qudwatuna leadership, charismatic leadership of kiai, academic kiai, Total Quality Management, digital transformation of Islamic boarding schools, EMIS 4.0, digital literacy, parental involvement, tahfidz program management, administrative services, Islamic school branding, and the quality of Islamic boarding school services. Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis was used to identify, group, and interpret key patterns emerging from the selected articles (Braun, Virginia; Clarke, 2006). These themes were then grouped according to three study focuses: educational management approaches commonly applied in Islamic-based schools, the contribution of these approaches to school governance and educational quality, and research gaps in Islamic educational management studies. Through this process, findings from various articles were not only presented descriptively but also synthesized to produce a conceptual map of the development of educational management approaches in Islamic-based schools. To maintain the quality of the synthesis, selected articles were assessed based on topic relevance, clarity of research objectives, appropriateness of methods, strength of findings, and their contribution to the study of Islamic educational management (Page et al., 2021; Snyder, 2019). This assessment was conducted to ensure that the articles analyzed were directly related to the research focus and could provide a strong scientific basis for the discussion. Therefore, this research method was designed to produce a systematic, measurable, transparent, and relevant study in answering the problem formulation of the article regarding educational management approaches in Islamic-based schools (Page et al., 2021; Snyder, 2019).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Characteristics of Articles

Table 1 presents 22 studies published between 2024 and 2026 on educational management in Islamic-based schools. The findings show that management approaches in Islamic educational institutions are increasingly integrative, covering Islamic leadership, digital transformation, quality management, parental involvement, and institutional governance to improve educational quality and sustainability

Table 1. Thematic Classification and Main Substance of Educational Management Studies in Islamic-Based Schools

No	Theme	Main Substance of Studies	Representative Studies
1	Islamic Leadership	Leadership models based on Islamic values, charismatic kiai leadership, Qudwatuna leadership, and modernization leadership in pesantren management	(Romlah et al., 2025; Hariadi et al., 2024; Masuwd et al., 2026; Salim et al., 2024)
2	Quality and Service Management	Total Quality Management, administrative excellence, educational service quality, and customer satisfaction in Islamic educational institutions	(Sudir et al., 2025; Hasan et al., 2025; Baharun et al., 2025)
3		Digital transformation,	(Mahsusi et al., 2024; Tantowi et

	Digital Transformation	EMIS 4.0 implementation, digital literacy, and technology-based administration in Islamic schools	al., 2025; Saepurohman et al., 2025; Hidayat et al., 2025)
4	Participatory Governance	Parental involvement, organizational citizenship behavior, and participatory governance in Islamic educational institutions	(Sumarsono et al., 2025; Wahyudin et al., 2025)
5	Strategic and Institutional Development	Institutional transformation, strategic management, branding, marketing, and educational competitiveness	(Thoyib et al., 2024; Mahmud et al., 2026; Ikhwan et al., 2025; Darwanto et al., 2024)
6	Character and Religious Education	Tahfidz management, inclusivity, moderation values, and student character development	(Setiawan et al., 2026; Setiawan et al., 2025)
7	Islamic School Management Models	PMDG management models, governance models, and institutional evolution in Islamic schools	(Lateh et al., 2024,; Sumanti et al., 2024)

The analysis of articles shows that studies on educational management approaches in Islamic-based schools are dominated by publications from Indonesia. Of the total articles analyzed, 19 originated from the Indonesian context. This indicates that research on Islamic educational management is developing quite strongly in the context of madrasas, Islamic boarding schools, Islamic boarding schools, and integrated Islamic schools. The Indonesian dominance also demonstrates that issues of Islamic educational leadership, quality management, digital transformation, parental involvement, administrative services, Islamic school branding, and character building are important concerns in the development of Islamic educational management studies in Indonesia (Romlah et al., 2025; Sumarsono et al., 2025; Tantowi et al., 2025). Thailand ranks second with two articles specifically addressing the management of private Islamic schools in Southern Thailand. These articles are significant because they examine management models and best practices inspired by Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor (PMDG), such as leadership, curriculum integration, teacher development, waqf management, social enterprise, and institutional policy strengthening. The presence of articles from Thailand demonstrates that Islamic-based school management is not only an issue in the Indonesian context but also a concern across Southeast Asia, particularly in Muslim-minority areas where governance, institutional identity, and the competitiveness of Islamic education require strengthening (Lateh et al., 2024, 2025; Thoyib et al., 2024). In addition, there is one article categorized as Indonesia & Thailand because it discusses innovative change strategies in Islamic education in these two countries. This cross-national article is important because it demonstrates that Islamic education management can be studied from a comparative perspective, particularly in aspects of institutional innovation, curriculum development, teacher quality, student competitiveness, and school quality improvement strategies. With this comparative article, the systematic literature review becomes stronger because it not only describes Islamic education management practices in one country but also shows how Islamic-based schools in different countries face the challenges of educational modernization (Awad, 2024b; Lateh et al., 2025; Thoyib et al., 2024). Overall, the country distribution indicates that the analyzed literature remains heavily concentrated on the Indonesian context, while studies from

Thailand and comparative studies between Indonesia and Thailand are still limited. This pattern suggests opportunities for further research to expand the study of Islamic-based school management to other country contexts, both in Southeast Asia and other Muslim-minority regions. Therefore, further research needs to strengthen cross-country comparative studies to generate a broader understanding of educational management approaches in Islamic-based schools (Darwanto et al., 2024; Lateh et al., 2025; Masuwd, 2026).

Table 2. Number of Contributions Per Country

Country	Number of Publications
Indonesia	19
Thailand	2
Indonesia and Thailand	1

After reviewing the characteristics of the articles based on their country of origin and publication context, the next discussion focuses on a thematic synthesis of the 22 selected articles. This synthesis is structured around three main research focuses: identifying educational management approaches commonly applied in Islamic schools, analyzing the contribution of these approaches to school governance and educational quality, and identifying research gaps that still exist in Islamic educational management studies. Therefore, the following discussion not only describes the trends of the reviewed articles but also connects the literature findings with the research problem formulation. systematic.

Educational Management Approach in Islamic-Based Schools

The findings demonstrate that educational management in Islamic-based schools is fundamentally integrative, combining Islamic values, leadership, governance, quality management, digital transformation, and institutional sustainability within a unified management framework. Islamic values such as sincerity, trustworthiness, justice, deliberation, and exemplary behavior function as the normative foundation that shapes leadership practices and organizational culture in Islamic educational institutions. These values are reflected in various leadership models, including Qudwatuna leadership, charismatic kiai leadership, spiritual leadership, and academic kiai leadership, all of which emphasize moral authority, role modeling, and participatory decision-making (Awad, 2024a; Hariadi & Sumardjoko, 2024; Masuwd, 2026; Romlah et al., 2025). The synthesis also indicates that leadership acts as the central mechanism connecting Islamic values with governance and educational quality. Leadership based on Islamic values strengthens organizational discipline, collaboration, transparency, accountability, and institutional commitment, thereby improving school governance. Effective governance subsequently supports the implementation of quality management practices such as Total Quality Management (TQM), Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI), curriculum integration, teacher development, and periodic evaluation systems. This relationship suggests that educational quality in Islamic-based schools is not produced by isolated managerial practices, but through interconnected processes linking values, leadership, governance, and institutional management (Agus Setiawan, Ruslan, Ihlas, Amma Ainun, 2025; Baharun et al., 2025; Hidayatullah & Yusuf, 2025; Lateh et al., 2024, 2025). Digital transformation further reinforces this integrative process by improving administrative efficiency, communication, monitoring systems, and educational services through EMIS 4.0, e-learning platforms, digital literacy initiatives, and management information systems (Hidayat & Dhuhani, 2025; Saepurohman et al., 2025; Tantowi et al., 2025). At the same time, participatory governance through parental involvement, stakeholder collaboration, and community engagement strengthens institutional legitimacy and sustainability. Consequently, educational quality in Islamic-based schools is conceptualized not only in terms of academic achievement, but also through student character formation, religious values, leadership capacity, and social responsibility (Baharun et al.,

2025; Ikhwan et al., 2025; Saepurohman et al., 2025; Sumarsono et al., 2025; Tantowi et al., 2025). The thematic synthesis reveals a conceptual relationship in which Islamic values shape leadership orientation, leadership influences governance quality, governance determines the effectiveness of quality management, and quality management contributes to educational quality and institutional sustainability. This pattern indicates that Islamic educational management operates as an interconnected ecosystem rather than as separate administrative components.

Proposed Integrative Model of Islamic Educational Management

The model demonstrates that Islamic values serve as the foundational driver of leadership practices. Leadership then influences governance effectiveness and the implementation of quality management systems, which ultimately determine educational quality, institutional sustainability, and student development outcomes.

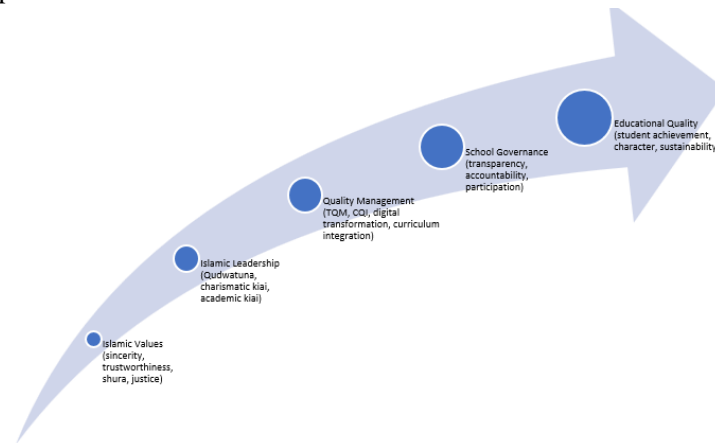


Figure 2. Integrative Model of Islamic Educational Management

Contribution of Management Approach to School Governance and Educational Quality

Islamic-based educational management approaches in schools contribute significantly to strengthening school governance through increased participation, transparency, accountability, coordination, and clarity of institutional roles. Parental involvement strengthens madrasah governance by involving parents in program planning, activity implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and ongoing school-family communication (Sumarsono et al., 2025). Islamic value-based management approaches also strengthen governance through values: sincerity, trustworthiness, fairness, and the principle of shura or deliberation, so that decision-making is more ethical, participatory, and has moral legitimacy (Lateh et al., 2024). In addition, the Qudwatuna leadership model, charismatic leadership of kiai, *academic kiai*, and inclusive and spiritual leadership contribute to building an organizational culture that is disciplined, collaborative, and exemplary (Awad, 2024b; Hariadi & Sumardjoko, 2024; Masuwd, 2026; Romlah et al., 2025). Contributions to the quality of education are evident in the strengthening of the curriculum, the quality of learning, teacher development, character building, and improving the student learning experience. An integrated curriculum management approach helps Islamic-based schools connect religious knowledge and general knowledge, so that students are not only directed towards academic achievement, but also towards mastering moral values, Islamic life skills, leadership, and social responsibility (Lateh et al., 2025; Sumanti, 2024). The implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM), PDCA, and Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) contributes to quality through periodic evaluation, supervision, continuous improvement, teacher competency enhancement, and the use of feedback from students, parents, and staff (Sudirman et al., 2023) (Sudir et al., 2025; Romlah et al., 2025). The tahfidz program, extracurricular activities, the dormitory system, achievement coaching, and the modern boarding school model also strengthen

the quality of education by forming students who are not only academically intelligent but also religious, disciplined, independent, and have a strong social character (Darwanto et al., 2024; Huda et al., 2024; AI Setiawan et al., 2026). In addition, digital approaches and data-driven services make important contributions to modern governance and the quality of educational services. Digitalization through EMIS 4.0, management information systems, e-learning, payment applications, Islamic boarding school digital literacy, PTSP, and digital communication platforms improves administrative efficiency, data accuracy, transparency, student monitoring, and informed decision-making (Baharun et al., 2025; Hidayat & Dhuhani, 2025; Saepurohman et al., 2025; Tantowi et al., 2025). Branding, service quality, user satisfaction, and stakeholder-based management approaches also strengthen the reputation, public trust, parental loyalty, and sustainability of institutions (Baharun et al., 2025; Ikhwan et al., 2025; My et al., 2026). Thus, the educational management approach in Islamic-based schools contributes to two main aspects: first, strengthening governance through participation, transparency, accountability, ethical leadership, digitalization, and institutional sustainability; Second, improving the quality of education through an integrated curriculum, teacher professionalism, character building, educational services, student achievement, and family and community involvement.

Research Gaps in Educational Management Studies in Islamic-Based Schools

The most prominent research gap in the study of educational management in Islamic-based schools is the limited context and generalizability of the findings. Most articles still focus on a single institution, a single region, or a specific type of Islamic school, such as madrasas in Malang, MAN IC Serpong, MTs Negeri 1 Jombang, Islamic boarding schools in Tasikmalaya, Pesantren Sholahuddin Surabaya, or specific Islamic schools in Southern Thailand. As a result, the findings are contextually strong, but they are insufficient to describe general patterns of Islamic education management broadly. This gap is evident in studies of parental involvement in madrasas, the PMDG/Gontor model in Southern Thailand, digital transformation at MAN IC Serpong, charismatic leadership in Islamic boarding schools, tahfidz management, and the *academic model of kiai*, which still require testing in more diverse institutional contexts (Hariadi & Sumardjoko, 2024; Huda et al., 2024; Lateh et al., 2024; Masuwd, 2026; Sumarsono et al., 2025). The second gap relates to methodological limitations and the weak measurement of long-term impact. Many articles use qualitative, case study, historical, or descriptive approaches, resulting in few quantitative measures of how specific management approaches impact academic achievement, student character, teacher performance, parent satisfaction, service quality, administrative effectiveness, school competitiveness, and alumni outcomes. While some studies have demonstrated the contribution of digital management, EMIS 4.0, TQM, service quality, digital literacy, and Islamic school branding, most have not evaluated their impact longitudinally. Therefore, future research needs to strengthen quantitative, *mixed-methods*, comparative, and longitudinal designs so that the effectiveness of Islamic education management approaches can be tested more measurably and not simply explained narratively (Baharun et al., 2025; Hidayat & Dhuhani, 2025; Hidayatullah & Yusuf, 2025; Ikhwan et al., 2025; Saepurohman et al., 2025; Tantowi et al., 2025). The third gap is the lack of a strong integrative model for Islamic education management that connects Islamic values, leadership, curriculum, digitalization, financing, administrative services, student character, and institutional sustainability within a coherent conceptual framework. Several articles still discuss management aspects separately, for example, focusing only on leadership, parental engagement, digitalization, branding, TQM, memorizing the Quran, or conflict management. Furthermore, values such as sincerity, trustworthiness, justice, deliberation, spirituality, and exemplary behavior are often explained normatively, but have not yet been translated into operational indicators that can be measured in school governance practices.

Thus, the main gaps in the study of educational management in Islamic schools lie in limited generalizability, the dominance of single case studies, the lack of quantitative and longitudinal research, the lack of strong operational indicators of Islamic values, and the absence of an integrative management model that can explain the relationship between governance, educational quality, and institutional sustainability comprehensively (Awad, 2024a; Darwanto et al., 2024; Lateh et al., 2025; Romlah et al., 2025; Zakiyyul et al., 2025).

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that educational management in Islamic-based schools has developed into an integrative approach that combines Islamic values, leadership, quality management, digital transformation, and participatory governance. Theoretically, this study contributes by providing a comprehensive conceptual synthesis of educational management approaches in Islamic educational institutions. Practically, the findings offer strategic insights for school leaders and policymakers in strengthening governance, educational quality, and institutional sustainability in madrasahs, pesantren, and integrated Islamic schools. However, existing studies are still dominated by single case studies with limited generalizability. Therefore, future research should develop more measurable and comparative models through quantitative, mixed-methods, and longitudinal approaches to examine the broader impact of Islamic educational management on educational quality and institutional performance.

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