

MANAGING QUALITY FOR MUSLIM MIDDLE-CLASS EXPECTATIONS: A TQM-INFORMED STUDY OF A LEADING ISLAMIC SCHOOL IN INDONESIA

Mukhtar Hadi

UIN Jurai Siwo Metro, Lampung, Indonesia

mukhtar.hadi@metrouniv.ac.id

Tubagus Ali Rachman Puja Kesuma

UIN Jurai Siwo Metro, Lampung, Indonesia

tubagus.ali.rachman@metrouniv.ac.id

Abstract

The development of leading Islamic schools in Indonesia cannot be separated from the growth of the large Muslim middle class, particularly in urban areas. The increasing economic capacity of the Muslim middle class, coupled with strong religious awareness, has led to numerous demands and expectations in the field of education. Therefore, in relation to the current trend, this study aims to determine the expectations of the Muslim middle class regarding the quality management of leading Islamic schools, as well as how their curricula and services are administered. The expectation of school quality is realized through Total Quality Management (TQM), a management system that involves all human resources within the school environment to enhance both the quality of education and the outcome of graduates. The research was conducted in the Islamic Junior High School (SMP) of Muhammadiyah Ahmad Dahlan, a leading Islamic school

in Metro City that implements four effective, internationally standardized curricula. This research employed a qualitative approach with a narrative inquiry method. Data were collected using interviews, observation, and documentation. The primary data sources included the principal, vice-principal, teachers, and students. Secondary data sources included guardians or parents of students, as well as educational stakeholders. The collected data were then analyzed using an inductive approach. Based on the research process and data analysis, the findings of this study indicate that: (1) The Muslim middle class has high expectations for Islamic educational institutions in integrated quality management, particularly in improving religious learning, providing high and competitive academic quality, and developing students' Islamic character and morals. (2) Quality educational institutions also require up-to-date facilities and infrastructure, competent and professional teachers, a comfortable school environment, and stakeholder involvement. (3) In pursuit of its objectives, the school implements integrated quality management through the application of an internationally standardized curriculum based on Islamic values, sustainable human resource management, a transparent and accountable financial system, and the provision of representative learning facilities and infrastructure.

Keywords: Muslim Middle Class, Total Quality Management, Parental Choice, Leading Islamic School.

A. Introduction

Over the last three decades, Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia have seen the emergence of diverse educational institutions. The variety of educational institutions lies in the input, process, and quality of graduates, who are considered better equipped to meet the expectations of society, especially the growing urban Muslim middle class. In terms of admissions, these new educational institutions conduct a rigorous academic selection process, as well as one based on the economic capabilities of parents. In terms of process, learning is carried out with high standards and

taught and guided by good and professional educators. These educators are carefully selected to ensure acceptance and to facilitate a quality learning process.

Meanwhile, in terms of the quality of graduates, these educational institutions maintain high standards not only in terms of knowledge (cognitive), but also in developing strong attitudes and skills, incorporating Islamic values into the graduates' personalities. Islamic educational institutions with the aforementioned characteristics are then referred to by several names, including elite Islamic schools, leading Islamic schools, integrated Islamic schools, *Insan Cendekia*-type of *madrasahs*, Holistic Islamic schools, model schools, and various other types of Islamic-based schools. Whatever term is used to refer to this Islamic educational institution, the essence remains the same: almost all of these institutions share a vision as Islamic educational institutions that aim to produce graduates who excel both academically and non-academically, based on Islamic values. For convenience, in this article, the author refers to the school as a leading Islamic school.

The concept of the Integrated Islamic School Network (JSIT, *Jaringan Sekolah Islam Terpadu*) in Indonesia originated from five elementary schools established in 1993 in the Jakarta area and its surroundings. These five schools were the Integrated Islamic Elementary School (SDIT) Nurul Fikri Depok, SDIT Al-Hikmah South Jakarta, SDIT Iqra Bekasi, SDIT Umul Quro Bogor, and SDIT Al-Khoirat East Jakarta. Since then, integrated Islamic schools have experienced rapid growth throughout Indonesia. By 2003, 426 schools had joined JSIT, and now, fourteen years later, in 2017, the number of JSIT members has reached 2,418 (Pribadi et al., 2024).

Several factors contribute to the emergence of this leading Islamic school. The factors that encourage the emergence of these leading Islamic schools are: *First*, the awareness of some Muslims to design a superior education system, especially from those who have studied abroad (Assegaf et al., 2022; Wilkins et al., 2012); *second*, the decreasing level of trust of the Muslim community in the process and results of education in public schools (state or private) (Berglund, 2015; Wijaya et al., 2023); *third*, the skepticism of some people towards the process and results of education in existing Islamic educational institutions (boarding schools and madrasah) (Kultsum et al., 2022; Malik, 2024); *fourth*, the increasing economic capacity of the “Muslim middle class” (Fazal, 2023; Shaban & Sattar, 2021); *fifth*, government support for the autonomy of private education and government programs in efforts to “internationalize” all levels of education in Indonesia (Anshori & Sahara, 2020; Lambey et al., 2024).

The term ‘elite Islamic school’ or ‘leading Islamic school’ is also not without reason. Many have inquired about the parameters used to classify this school as an elite or leading Islamic institution. Several arguments explain the location of the “elitism” or superiority of this school. A number of reasons why a school can be called an elite Islamic school and madrasah, namely: *first*, students admitted to this type of educational institution and madrasah undergo a rigorous selection process to guarantee that they possess adequate academic qualifications, if not exceptional standards (Asadullah, 2016; Taj et al., 2024); *second*, educational personnel, including principals, administrative staff, teachers, and occasionally psychologists, are selected through a

rigorous and competitive process. This approach ensures that only individuals who meet the established qualifications and requirements are appointed to positions within these schools and madrasahs (Amzat, 2022; Rumatiga et al., 2023); *third*, the education system, especially curriculum design and curriculum implementation processes that are oriented towards creating graduates who have multiple intelligences and noble morals (Ayuningsih et al., 2020; Zevin, 2023); *fourth*, they have relatively complete facilities and infrastructure such as language and computer laboratories, workshops, mosques, and sports facilities (Mulhakim & Sembodo, 2022; Nurhuda et al., 2023).

Many studies have been conducted to understand the phenomenon of this leading Islamic school. Affluent families often choose to enroll their children in prestigious Islamic schools, perceiving these institutions as environments that not only prioritize high academic quality but also form strong character and moral values. As of 2020, the middle-class Muslim demographic in Indonesia is considerable, comprising approximately 57.33 million individuals. However, this figure has shrunk to 47.85 million in 2024 due to the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The number remains considerable, assuming Indonesia's Muslim population is around 87.2% (Carey & Tirtosudarmo, 2024).

Leading Islamic schools typically combine the national curriculum with intensive religious education, providing an environment that fosters balanced spiritual and intellectual development (Asman et al., 2025). Upper-class parents believe that a child's success is determined not only by academic achievement but also by strong morals and integrity. In

addition, leading Islamic schools often have modern facilities, highly qualified teachers, and competitive international programs, making them on par with other elite schools (Jones, 2020; Jones-Morales & Konrad, 2018). Wealthy families view investment in quality Islamic education as a strategic effort to shape the next generation that can compete globally while retaining its Islamic identity. They believe that this religious, exclusive, and high-standard environment can protect their children from the negative influences of free association and educate them to become future leaders who are not only intelligent but also ethical and contribute positively to the community and nation (Abunab et al., 2017).

Based on the reasons mentioned above, one of the advantages of leading Islamic schools lies in the quality of their graduates (output), who possess multidimensional intelligence and a noble personality, as evidenced by their noble character. The educational process in schools with a curriculum design that focuses on forming graduates with multiple intelligences based on Islamic values is one of the attractions of leading Islamic schools (Hendawi et al., 2024). If education and learning are interrelated processes between input, process, and output, then there are many interesting problems to discuss and study. Good input without a good process will not produce good and quality output (graduates). Likewise, good output is determined by the quality of the process and good input. At this level, process management to produce high-quality graduates is a crucial prerequisite that must be carefully considered and implemented.

The Muslim middle class in the Metro City, the research site, exhibits complex expectations for excellent Islamic

schools, which reflect their social, spiritual, and academic aspirations. The majority of parents in this group are “supportive parents” with high involvement in their children’s education, and they have a universalistic value orientation that combines spiritual and emotional values in choosing educational institutions (Abălașei et al., 2017; Bornstein, 2015; Xiao, 2023). This indicates that they are not only seeking strong religious education, but also high academic quality and an environment that fosters the holistic development of their children. From the perspective of Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of cultural reproduction, the choice of excellent Islamic schools by the Muslim middle class can be understood as an effort to transmit and reproduce cultural capital that is in accordance with their class identity (Chiang et al., 2020; Lu et al., 2022; Nur, 2021). These schools offer a curriculum that integrates religious and general education, along with an environment that promotes middle-class values, such as discipline, work ethic, and modern piety. Thus, education in excellent Islamic schools becomes a means for the Muslim middle class to maintain and improve their social position through the accumulation and conversion of cultural capital.

Furthermore, excellent Islamic schools also function as a symbol of the status and identity of the Muslim middle class. Building a school’s reputation through curriculum innovation, teacher dedication, and collaboration with parents is a crucial strategy for attracting the interest of the Muslim middle class. These schools not only offer quality education but also reflect the aspirations of the Muslim middle class towards modernity in line with Islamic values. Thus, the expectations of the Muslim middle class towards excellent Islamic schools reflect

their efforts to combine religious identity with socioeconomic aspirations in the context of an ever-evolving Indonesian society.

This research is important to conduct, as the interest of this group in excellent Islamic schools is increasing. However, research that specifically examines their expectations regarding aspects of quality management, such as leadership, curriculum, and educational services, remains limited. Most studies focus more on aspects of curriculum and learning quality, without exploring in depth how the expectations of the Muslim middle class influence the quality management strategies of Islamic schools. This indicates that understanding the expectations of the Muslim middle class regarding the development of Islamic education quality management is important. From the perspective of Total Quality Management (TQM) theory, education quality management should be oriented towards customer satisfaction, in this case, parents and students. However, the application of TQM in the context of excellent Islamic schools has not fully accommodated the needs and expectations of the Muslim middle class. Including the extent to which this approach is practical in meeting the expectations of the Muslim middle class regarding the quality of Islamic education.

Furthermore, in the context of urban Indonesian society, excellent Islamic schools also function as a symbol of status and identity of the Muslim middle class. However, there has been little research examining how Islamic school quality management can maintain and improve its reputation in the eyes of the Muslim middle class. Existing research tends to focus more on internal aspects of the school, such

as curriculum and teaching quality, without considering the external perceptions and expectations of the Muslim middle class. Thus, a research gap exists that needs to be addressed to understand how Islamic school quality management can be developed holistically, encompassing not only internal aspects but also the expectations and perceptions of the Muslim middle class.

B. Method

This research uses a qualitative approach with a narrative inquiry method to explore and describe the results of understanding or experience (Dimaculangan et al., 2022; Higgins & Misawa, 2021). Previous researchers have conducted extensive research on school management and have experience in fostering the Muhammadiyah Association in Metro City Lampung, Indonesia (Culajara et al., 2022). Researchers obtained data from participants using semi-structured interviews (Karatsareas, 2022) and written interviews (Liu, 2018).

The participants or informants in this study consisted of the principal, vice principal for curriculum, vice principal for student affairs, teachers, students, and parents. Informants were selected purposively based on the data and information needed. The informants were selected based on the data collected in the field, using a snowball sampling approach. Four teacher informants were selected, representing teachers in the regular class program, the international class program, teachers in the boarding program, and teachers in the international boarding program. Meanwhile, four student

informants were selected, each representing four educational programs at SMP Muhammadiyah Ahmad Dahlan, located in Metro City, Lampung, Indonesia.

Data collection was conducted through semi-structured interviews, focusing on educational needs and school management. Semi-structured interviews were conducted by researchers, who created a list of prepared questions. However, the list could be adjusted during the interview by asking follow-up questions or exploring new topics based on the participant's or informant's responses. Interview questions included: What are the educational needs, obstacles in fulfilling these needs, and what quality strategies are carried out to fulfill these needs? Data were classified into four parts: (1) information on the background of students and parents; (2) the abilities of students, parents, and schools related to fulfilling educational needs; (3) school quality development strategies; and (4) parent and school strategies in fulfilling educational needs. In building data trust and maintaining ethics in data collection, lecturers, as participants, were allowed to review the interview data (member checking) before the data were analyzed. (Candela, 2019).

The entire data collection process, using interview and observation techniques, continued until the data no longer yielded significant new information or themes. At this point, the researcher felt they had gained enough insight to draw strong conclusions. To test the validity of the data, the researcher employed source triangulation, confirming the data and information obtained from participants or informants with data and information from other sources or informants.

C. Muslim Middle Class Expectations for Education

Muslim societies in various historical periods have always had a middle class represented, for example, by a certain layer among the ulama and teachers, traders, and artists. Their character is basically different from the modern-contemporary 'Muslim middle class', which has a tendency towards political attitudes and even consumerism. SMP Muhammadiyah Ahmad Dahlan consumers tend to be diverse with conformist, rationalist, and universalist Muslim types. They tend to be knowledgeable, open-minded, and have a global perspective, and have varying degrees of adherence to Islamic values.

The diversity of strong Muslim middle-class types at SMP Muhammadiyah Ahmad Dahlan provides a new dynamic in the issue of education. The character of the Muslim middle class, which is economically strong but also adheres to Islamic principles, demands quality educational services, both Islamic and non-Islamic. The Muslim middle class plays a strategic role in developing educational needs, both as users of educational services and as agents of social change in society.

In a socioeconomic context, the middle class has sufficient purchasing power and access to information, which tends to make them more critical and selective in choosing educational institutions for their children. The attention of the Muslim middle class to education shows a new dynamic in the contemporary Islamic education landscape (Aliwan et al., 2025; Hefner, 2010). In response to the inquiry regarding his decision to choose SMP Muhammadiyah Ahmad Dahlan, one of the parents stated that,

“This school offers an educational program that meets his expectations, namely the development of strong Islamic character through the *tahfidz* (memorization) and character-building programs, quality learning management, a varied selection of extracurricular programs, and comprehensive facilities and infrastructure” (WS, personal communication, January, 2024).

They seek education that not only instills moral and spiritual values but also develops global competencies relevant to the world of work and social life. Therefore, their needs encourage the development of leading Islamic schools, modern madrasahs, and even Islamic-based universities that are oriented towards quality and competitiveness. This demand encourages SMP Muhammadiyah Ahmad Dahlan to innovate in curriculum design, learning methods, and institutional management; thus, they remain relevant and attractive to the Muslim middle class.

From the perspective of educational development, the Muslim middle class contributes to the sustainability of Islamic educational institutions through active participation as donors, foundation administrators, and even as local policymakers. This contribution has a significant impact on strategic decision-making regarding the quality and direction of educational institution development.

In addition, the Muslim middle class also exhibits a strong spirit of social mobility, where education is the primary means of enhancing social and economic standing. This also drives the increasing demand for high-quality education that is oriented towards the development of individual potential as a whole. With this drive, education becomes not only a

tool for cultural reproduction but also a catalyst for social transformation, opening access to economic opportunities, empowering women, and fostering involvement in a broader public space. Therefore, the need for Muslim middle-class education cannot be separated from their aspirations for progress, equality, and modernity that remain rooted in religious values.

Every parent who entrusts their children to study at an educational institution must have certain expectations. The awareness that education holds great value for human life and for one's children leads to choosing a quality educational institution as a step toward fulfilling these ideals. The values that parents believe in will greatly determine which educational institution they will choose. In the Muslim middle-class group, in line with their economic ability, religious awareness, and strong religious orientation, there is a tendency to choose superior and trusted Islamic educational institutions (Chiang et al., 2020; Hefner, 2010; Muheramtahadi & Fataron, 2022).

Based on the data that has been collected and analyzed, the expectations of the Muslim middle class for leading Islamic schools include several aspects, including strong religious education, high-quality academic education, character and moral development, adequate facilities and resources, competent and professional teachers, a safe and comfortable school environment, and parental and community involvement.

The expectations of the middle-class Muslim community towards SMP Muhammadiyah Ahmad Dahlan reflect the demands for a holistic, adaptive, and highly competitive Islamic education model. They seek an educational institution

that can provide intense and in-depth religious education, not only as spiritual strengthening, but also as a moral foundation for navigating the complexities of modern life. At SMP Muhammadiyah Ahmad Dahlan, this is actualized through the integration of the religious curriculum with students' daily practices, worship development, and the strengthening of Islamic values through the tahfidz program, religious mentoring, and the cultivation of manners in the school environment. Religious education is not just cognitive content, but a process of value transformation that aims to form faithful and pious individuals who excel academically.

In addition to religious education, the middle-class Muslim community also has high expectations for the quality of academic education provided. They hope that SMP Muhammadiyah Ahmad Dahlan will be able to compete with other public and private schools in terms of academic achievement, mastery of information technology, and global literacy. Therefore, this school continues to develop a learning system based on national and international standards, supported by competent educators, the use of modern learning technology, and academic activities that encourage critical and creative thinking. In this case, the blended learning approach, competency-based assessment, and cross-disciplinary collaboration are strategies to ensure that graduates possess high competitiveness without compromising their Islamic identity.

Furthermore, the hopes of the middle class also lie in strengthening character, the quality of the learning environment, and social participation in education. They aim for education at SMP Muhammadiyah Ahmad Dahlan

to produce not only intelligent students but also those with noble morals, integrity, and who are prepared to become agents of change in society. Therefore, character and moral development are the primary components, supported by a safe, comfortable, and clean school environment, as well as representative facilities and infrastructure. The involvement of parents and the community in the education process is also a significant concern, as the middle-class views education as a shared responsibility among the school, family, and community. Through this participatory, synergistic, and collaborative approach, SMP Muhammadiyah Ahmad Dahlan is expected to address the complex educational needs of the middle-class Muslim community in a comprehensive and sustainable manner.

D. Educational Management at SMP Muhammadiyah Ahmad Dahlan

The Indonesian government has implemented various strategic efforts to improve the quality of education, aligning it with the dynamics of local, national, and global life, through a series of arrangements for graduate competency standards, content, processes, and educational assessments. The objective is to cultivate students who embody the principles of Pancasila, demonstrate proficiency in literacy and numeracy, and possess the capability to adapt effectively to contemporary circumstances. From the perspective of education management, quality is not just the final result measured by academic achievement, but concerns the entire education process, from planning and implementation to evaluation, which is oriented towards continuous improvement. SMP

Muhammadiyah Ahmad Dahlan emphasized the importance of collective involvement from all parties in maintaining and consistently improving quality, including focusing on students, making decisions based on data, and implementing continuous improvement. Educational institutions tend to experience increased student satisfaction and public trust.

In order to meet the high expectations and trust placed in SMP Muhammadiyah Ahmad Dahlan, the principal stated:

It is truly challenging to meet the expectations and trust of the community. However, by implementing school management that involves all elements, including teachers, educational staff, and parents, we are striving to achieve this. Among the initiatives we are implementing are four curriculum options: the regular curriculum, the Islamic boarding school curriculum, the international Islamic boarding school curriculum, and the Cambridge curriculum. We also strengthen student character through memorization programs, religious observances, and extracurricular activities tailored to students' interests and talents. All our classrooms are air-conditioned, and a sports center has been built to develop athletic talent." (AM, personal communication, June 1, 2024)

Student satisfaction with SMP Muhammadiyah Ahmad Dahlan is greatly influenced by the extent to which the institution is able to meet their expectations and learning needs. Within the framework of the Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory (Duffett & Cromhout, 2022), satisfaction arises when students' learning experiences exceed or at least match their initial expectations. Effective quality management of SMP Muhammadiyah Ahmad Dahlan will ensure that educational

services, including the availability of learning resources, the quality of lecturers or teachers, the learning environment, and supporting services, run optimally and are standardized. Consistent and adaptive service quality to student needs will encourage satisfaction, active involvement in the learning process, and loyalty to educational institutions. Furthermore, public trust in educational institutions is a long-term implication of quality that is managed professionally and accountably. The legitimacy of SMP Muhammadiyah Ahmad Dahlan is established when quality assurance aligns with the values and norms expected by society. This means that institutions that can demonstrate transparency, public responsibility, and competent graduate output will be more trusted by the public. Quality management practices that ensure accountability and deliver tangible results will enhance the public's perception of the institution's credibility and integrity. The application of this principle fosters a culture of two-way communication and inclusive decision-making. As a result, a sense of ownership of the institution increases, and stronger trust is created in the community.

SMP Muhammadiyah Ahmad Dahlan is a junior high school founded by an Islamic organization, which is in high demand due to its fairly strict entrance selection process. Data indicate that students must register one to two years in advance of the school year to be accepted at this school. Prospective students currently studying in elementary school who wish to register at SMP Muhammadiyah Ahmad Dahlan can do so as prospective students when they are in grade four or grade five. The new student registration system, which

begins earlier than other junior high schools, is designed to establish an image that this school is an advanced institution, setting the standard, and not one from which students come from other schools.

SMP Muhammadiyah Ahmad Dahlan's vision is "A school with the nobility of Islamic values, the greatness of noble morals, achieving in knowledge, towards the main life". Informed by its foundational vision, SMP Muhammadiyah Ahmad Dahlan cultivates an educational ecosystem built upon five universal values. This framework aims to establish a campus that is modern, aesthetically pleasing, secure, and dynamic—an environment purposefully designed for a select community of learners and educators. Within this setting, the institution strives to nurture individuals who embody both tradition and modernity: those who are spiritually devoted, compassionate, and environmentally conscious; who possess a deep love for science, technology, and the pursuit of truth; who demonstrate high professional performance; and who are committed to advancing the ideals of the Muhammadiyah movement. Externally, the school aspires to be a trusted exemplar and role model within the broader educational landscape, supported by representative and modern infrastructure.

This coherent value system directly shapes the institution's defined graduate profile, which focuses on five integrated qualities. The first is Islamic and Muhammadiyah Quality, characterized by a strong faith, correct worship practices, proficiency in Quranic recitation, and the memorization of at least three specific *juz* (Qur'anic chapter). The second, Scientific Quality, entails mastery of science and

technology, high academic achievement, and progression to esteemed higher education institutions. Linguistic Quality demands foundational proficiency in formal Indonesian and selected foreign languages, including Arabic and English. Furthermore, Social Quality expects graduates to serve as community role models who provide tangible benefits, while Indonesian Quality instills a robust sense of nationalism. Collectively, this profile articulates a holistic pedagogical ambition to form individuals who are academically competent, spiritually grounded, linguistically skilled, socially responsible, and patriotically minded.

By emphasizing the five qualities of graduates mentioned above, SMP Muhammadiyah Ahmad Dahlan strives to fulfill the community's hopes and expectations for a quality school, while upholding Islamic values. The urban Muslim middle class, who have financial capabilities, think progressively, and strive to base their lives on Islamic values, have high hopes that their children will receive the education they dream of. The image of the educational institution is one of quality, modernity, and Islamic values.

To meet the hopes and expectations of the urban Muslim middle class, SMP Muhammadiyah Ahmad Dahlan offers four types of curricula with optional class groupings. Students can choose the type of class and curriculum that interests them the most. The four types of classes and their corresponding curricula are regular classes, boarding school classes, international boarding classes, and international classes (which adopt the Cambridge curriculum). In the curriculum of international boarding school classes and international classes, for example, the content of Mathematics

and Natural Sciences subjects uses the Cambridge standards. Then, in the Islamic boarding school class, the uniqueness lies in the content of the *Durus al-Lughah* (Arabic language learning) subjects, *Muhadatsah* (Arabic conversation), and *Nahwu* (Arabic grammar). At the same time, the regular class curriculum includes an additional Japanese language subject.

Table 1. *SMP Muhammadiyah Ahmad Dahlan Curriculum Based on Class Options for the 2023/2024 Academic Year*

No	Islamic Boarding School Class	International Islamic Boarding School Class (Middle East)	International Class	Regular Class
1	Science	Science (KM)*	Science (KM)*	Science
2	Al-Islam	Al-Islam	Al-Islam	Al-Islam
3	English	English	English (KM)*	English
4	Social Science	Social Science	Social Science	Social Science
5	Muhadatsah	Muhadatsah	Mathematics (Cambridge)**	
6	Indonesia Language	Indonesia Language	Indonesia Language	Indonesia Language
7	Durus al-Lughah	Durus al-Lughah	Science (Cambridge)**	Japanese Language
8	Nahwu	Nahwu	Arabic	Arabic
9	Civic Education	Civic Education	Civic Education	Civic Education
10			English (Cambridge)**	
12	Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics (KM)*
13	Muhammadiyah Values	Muhammadiyah Values	Muhammadiyah Values	Muhammadiyah Values

14	Lampung Language	Lampung Language	Lampung Language	Lampung Language
14	Art and Culture	Art and Culture	Art and Culture	Art and Culture
15	Sport, Physical, and Health Education (PJOK)**	Sport, Physical, and Health Education (PJOK)**	Sport, Physical, and Health Education (PJOK)**	Sport, Physical, and Health Education (PJOK)**
16	Information Technology	Information Technology	Information Technology	Information Technology
17	Tahfidz	Tahfidz	Tahfidz	Tahfidz

Description:

- *KM : *Kurikulum Merdeka* (Merdeka Curriculum) – Indonesian National Curriculum
- **Cambridge : Cambridge Curriculum
- ***PJOK : *Pendidikan Jasmani, Olah Raga dan Kesehatan*

Based on the table above, students and their parents can choose a learning program or class that suits their interests and the expected quality of graduates. For example, students who want to get a learning experience with the Cambridge curriculum standard can choose an international class. For those seeking a broader and deeper learning experience, as well as mastery of Islamic religious knowledge, they can choose an Islamic boarding school class. All Islamic boarding school classes are required to reside in the dormitory (boarding school) provided by the school. While living at the boarding school, students will receive additional Islamic religious education, as well as character development and an independent spirit.

The learning experience and pride in the elective programs offered by the school are reflected in the statement of one student from the international program,

“The international class program, with its Cambridge curriculum standards, has made me more confident in speaking English and competing globally. Furthermore, my ability to memorize the Quran makes my parents proud” (SI, personal communication, March 2024).

All students are required to memorize at least three chapters of the holy Qur’an during their education at SMP Muhammadiyah Ahmad Dahlan. The school provides time and a tahfidz tutor to achieve the minimum memorization target. To measure students’ memorization abilities, a tahfidz exam is scheduled for each mid-semester exam. Students’ memorization abilities are continuously monitored and evaluated by the tahfidz tutor until the minimum target of three chapters is achieved. In reality, many students can memorize the Qur’an in excess of the minimum number of chapters set or memorize more than three chapters.

The educational management at SMP Muhammadiyah Ahmad Dahlan constitutes a comprehensive and integrated system designed to actualize its institutional mission. This system is anchored in a foundational process of strategic planning, which carefully aligns the school’s vision, mission, and objectives with Muhammadiyah’s core values to ensure philosophical coherence. Central to its operation is curriculum management, which involves the deliberate development of an integrative syllabus that synthesizes general scientific knowledge with Islamic principles and ethics. To support this pedagogical vision, the school employs systematic resource management, encompassing the strategic oversight of human resources, finances, and physical infrastructure to ensure operational efficacy. A key pillar of this framework

is a committed focus on continuous teacher development, implemented through targeted training and professional enhancement programs aimed at elevating instructional competence. Finally, this holistic management model is completed by rigorous mechanisms for supervision and evaluation, which consistently monitor both the learning process and overall institutional performance to guarantee the sustained quality and integrity of the educational output.

SMP Muhammadiyah Ahmad Dahlan, as an educational institution under the Muhammadiyah organization, aims to produce a generation with noble character, knowledge, and competence. With effective education management, schools can achieve their goals and contribute to society (Amzat, 2022; Assegaf et al., 2022; Ensslin et al., 2022; Entrialgo et al., 2000). Strengthening school quality management is also achieved by appointing a qualified principal or leader of an educational institution who has a vision to improve school quality sustainably (Azra, 2015; Hendawi et al., 2024; Hoque et al., 2017). The Principal of SMP Muhammadiyah Ahmad Dahlan drives school quality management in several ways, such as: Establishing a clear school vision and mission that is in line with Muhammadiyah values, building a solid and competent work team to support the learning process, and communicating the goals and expectations of the school to teachers, staff, and students.

In addition, the principal also always supervises and evaluates the learning process and school performance to ensure the quality of education, builds good relationships with parents, the community, and other stakeholders, manages school resources effectively and efficiently to

support the learning process, and develops innovation and creativity in the learning process to improve the quality of education. By implementing these measures, the Principal of SMP Muhammadiyah Ahmad Dahlan can effectively manage the school and enhance the quality of education within the institution.

E. Conclusion

Based on the findings above, it can be concluded that the Muslim middle class has high expectations for Islamic educational institutions, including the need for schools to provide strong religious education, high-quality and competitive academic education, and to develop good and Islamic character and morals in students. They also consider that quality educational institutions are those that have adequate facilities and resources to support the learning process, employ competent and professional teachers, maintain a safe and comfortable school environment, and involve parents and the community in the educational process.

To meet the expectations of the Muslim middle class, SMP Muhammadiyah Ahmad Dahlan strives to implement effective management and quality education by integrating a curriculum that encompasses science and technology, arts, sports, physical education, and character building with Islamic values. The school also implements strategic management through careful planning, formulation of vision and mission, and educational goals with high standards. Sustainable human resource management, orderly and accountable financial arrangements, and the provision of representative learning facilities and infrastructure.

This study has limitations, including its examination of only one case at a single school and its failure to compare it with other schools. Another limitation is that it did not measure the satisfaction of school stakeholders, particularly parents, to determine the extent to which their expectations have been met by the leading Islamic school. Based on these limitations, it is recommended that future research conduct a comparative study of the implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) at several leading Islamic schools, as well as a study that focuses on measuring the satisfaction index of the Muslim middle class towards these schools.

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