

Impact of Quality Assurance Systems on Learning Outcomes and Graduate Competence in Islamic Education Management Programs

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ABSTRACT

Background. The Quality Assurance System (QAS) is a crucial tool for improving the quality of higher education; however, findings from previous research on its impact on graduate quality have yet to yield consistent results, particularly in the Islamic Education Management (MPI) program. This study aims to analyze the impact of the QAS on the quality of learning and graduate quality in the MPI program at IAIN Curup.

Methods. This study employed a quantitative approach with an explanatory survey design. The sample consisted of 85 alumni selected from a population of 108 graduates. Data were collected using a Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson's correlation, simple linear regression, and multiple linear regression.

Results. The results of the study indicate that SPM has a positive and significant effect on the quality of learning, with a contribution of 65.0%. SPM also has a positive and significant effect on the quality of graduates, with a contribution of 61.6%. In addition, SPM makes a significant contribution to improving the overall quality of learning and the quality of graduates, with a coefficient of determination of 65.6%.

Conclusion. This study confirms that the consistent implementation of SPM through the PPEPP cycle, curriculum management, resource development, and ongoing evaluation contributes to improvements in the quality of learning and the quality of graduates. Therefore, strengthening internal quality audits, utilizing the results of tracer studies, developing a KPI-based monitoring system, and increasing stakeholder engagement are necessary to support the continuous improvement of educational quality

1. INTRODUCTION

Higher education plays a strategic role in producing high-quality human resources capable of meeting the demands of the workforce and contributing to national development. In the context of Islamic higher education, the Islamic Education Management (MPI) program has a mandate that focuses not only on mastering the theory and practice of educational management but also on internalizing Islamic values in the management of educational institutions. Therefore, the quality of MPI graduates serves as a key indicator of the success of

Islamic higher education. One factor believed to play a role in improving graduate quality is the implementation of an effective and sustainable Quality Assurance System (SPM) (Fathurrochman, 2021).

The Quality Assurance System (QAS) in higher education is designed to ensure that all academic and non-academic processes are conducted in accordance with established standards, thereby producing high-quality graduates. The implementation of the QAS encompasses various aspects, including curriculum management, teaching and learning, human resource development, quality evaluation, and continuous improvement of all educational processes (Duarte & Vardasca, 2023; Herlambang et al., 2021). In the Islamic Education Management Program, the implementation of the SPM is not only intended to ensure that academic standards are met, but also to ensure the development of educational management competencies grounded in Islamic values and relevant to the needs of society and the workforce (Abelha et al., 2020). Through the effective implementation of SPM, higher education institutions are expected to improve the effectiveness of learning, strengthen institutional competitiveness, gain recognition through accreditation, and produce graduates with adequate academic and professional competencies (Ban et al., 2024; Ciuchi et al., 2024; Makki et al., 2023).

Theoretically, the relationship between the implementation of SPM, the quality of learning, and the quality of graduates can be explained through the perspectives of Total Quality Management (TQM), Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI), and the Input–Process–Output (IPO) model (Alawag et al., 2023). TQM views quality as the responsibility of all elements of the organization, which must be achieved through the active involvement of all stakeholders and a focus on the satisfaction of users of educational services (Yahiaoui et al., 2022). CQI emphasizes that quality improvement must be carried out systematically through a continuous cycle of planning, implementation, evaluation, and follow-up (Endalamaw, 2024). Meanwhile, the IPO model explains that the quality of educational output—that is, graduates—is influenced by the quality of inputs and the processes that take place within educational institutions (Alawag et al., 2023). Within this framework, the implementation of SPM serves as a quality management mechanism that influences the quality of the learning process, which in turn contributes to improving the quality of graduates.

This perspective is consistent with the view that a quality assurance system is a cycle that encompasses planning, implementation, evaluation, and continuous improvement to ensure that established educational standards are met (Benz-Camino et al., 2022; Naveed Bin Rais et al., 2021; Pham et al., 2022). Previous research has also shown that the implementation of SPM in Islamic education can improve the quality of learning when supported by strong leadership, teacher participation, and structured evaluation (Idris et al., 2022). In addition, the collaborative and sustained implementation of the SPM has proven effective in improving the

quality of instruction and the learning outcomes of both students and graduates (Kang et al., 2025; B. M. Wong & Headrick, 2021). In the context of higher education, the existence of internal quality assurance institutions is a key factor in ensuring that quality standards are consistently applied, although there are still various challenges, such as gaps between the planned system and accreditation results or graduate outcomes (Vykydal et al., 2020).

Research on the implementation of SPM in the MPI Study Program has revealed several important findings. Van Berkum et al. (2024) found that effective implementation of SPM has a significant impact on improving graduates' academic competencies and professional skills through curriculum management and continuous evaluation (Van Berkum et al., 2024). Nugraha (2023) They also emphasized the importance of implementing the SPM in improving the quality of graduates, even though they encountered various obstacles, such as a mismatch between the curriculum and the needs of the workforce and a lack of development of students' practical skills (Nugraha et al., 2023). On the other hand, Javed and Alenezi (2023) highlight the importance of key performance indicators (KPIs), data management, and long-term planning in ensuring the sustainability of quality assurance systems in higher education institutions (Javed & Alenezi, 2023). These findings indicate that the SPM is an important tool for improving the quality of higher education, but its effectiveness is still influenced by various implementation factors.

Nevertheless, the existing literature still leaves several important knowledge gaps that warrant further study. Although the implementation of Quality Assurance Systems (QAS) has been extensively studied, there are still several research gaps that need to be addressed. First, findings regarding the impact of QAS on graduate quality remain inconsistent. Some studies indicate that the implementation of QAS can significantly improve the quality of learning and graduate competencies (Herlambang et al., 2021). Meanwhile, other studies have found that the existence of SPM does not always lead to improved graduate outcomes, as these are influenced by factors such as curriculum relevance, human resource competencies, and the use of quality evaluation results (Vykydal et al., 2020). This finding highlights the need for further empirical research on the relationship between the implementation of SPM and graduate quality.

Second, previous research has generally focused on the direct impact of SPM on accreditation, institutional performance, or graduate quality; consequently, the mechanisms explaining how SPM produces high-quality graduates have not yet been extensively studied. From the perspectives of TQM, CQI, and IPO, the implementation of SPM should improve the quality of the learning process, which ultimately contributes to graduate quality. However, the role of learning quality in this relationship has rarely been empirically tested. Third, most of the empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of SPM comes from the context of general higher education institutions, while research on Islamic Education Management Study

Programs remains limited (Badr, 2025). In fact, the MPI program is distinguished by its integration of modern educational management with Islamic values in the learning process and academic governance (Arar et al., 22). Therefore, findings from the context of general higher education institutions cannot necessarily be directly generalized to the Islamic Education Management Study Program.

In addition, most research on graduate quality still focuses on academic aspects, whereas graduate quality in today's era also encompasses practical skills, professional ethics, adaptability, and work readiness that align with the needs of society and the workforce (Abelha et al., 2020; García-Álvarez et al., 2022; Jiaxin et al., 2024; B. Wong et al., 2022). In the context of Islamic higher education, these dimensions are becoming increasingly important because graduates are expected not only to possess professional competencies but also the ability to integrate Islamic values into their leadership and educational management practices.

This research gap forms the basis for the novelty of this study. Theoretically, this study develops a conceptual model that integrates the perspectives of TQM, CQI, and IPO to explain the relationship between the implementation of the Quality Assurance System, the quality of learning, and the quality of graduates in the context of Islamic higher education. Unlike most previous studies, which only examined the direct impact of the QAS on institutional outcomes or graduate quality, this study positions the quality of learning as both a key consequence of QAS implementation and a factor explaining improvements in graduate quality. Empirically, this study expands the literature on quality assurance systems by providing evidence from the Islamic Education Management Study Program a context that has received relatively little attention in higher education research.

In the context of the MPI Study Program at IAIN Curup, the implementation of the SPM still faces various challenges, particularly in the areas of curriculum management, human resource development, the utilization of learning assessment results, and the implementation of ongoing quality assessments (Fathurrochman, 2022). In addition, limited infrastructure and learning facilities also pose obstacles to the optimal implementation of the Quality Assurance System (Fathurrochman, 2021). These conditions have the potential to affect the quality of the learning process and graduates' achievement of competencies, particularly in meeting professional needs in the field of Islamic Education Management.

Based on the theoretical frameworks of TQM, CQI, and IPO, this study develops a conceptual model that positions the implementation of the Quality Assurance System as a variable influencing the quality of learning and the quality of graduates. Learning quality is viewed as an indicator of the success of the educational process as well as a pathway that explains how the implementation of the QAS contributes to improving graduate quality. Thus, this study assumes that effective implementation of the QAS will simultaneously improve

learning quality and graduate quality in the context of the Islamic Education Management Study Program.

Based on the above discussion, this study aims to analyze the effect of the implementation of the Quality Assurance System on the quality of learning and the quality of graduates in the Islamic Education Management Study Program at IAIN Curup, both partially and simultaneously. The results of this study are expected to contribute theoretically to the development of research on quality assurance in Islamic higher education and to provide practical recommendations for strengthening the quality assurance system and improving graduate quality at Islamic religious universities.

2. METHODS

This study employs a quantitative approach using an explanatory survey design and a cross-sectional approach to analyze the impact of the Quality Assurance System (SPM) on the quality of learning and the quality of graduates in the Islamic Education Management (MPI) program at IAIN Curup (Sugiyono, 2019). An explanatory survey design was chosen because this study aims to examine the relationships and influences among variables based on quantitative data obtained from respondents through a survey conducted during a specific time period. The cross-sectional approach allows researchers to efficiently gain an understanding of alumni perceptions regarding the implementation of the SPM, the quality of learning, and the quality of graduates during a single data collection period.

The study population consisted of all alumni of the Islamic Education Management Program at IAIN Curup who had completed their studies during the 2020–2024 graduation periods, totaling 108 individuals. The sample size was determined using the Slovin formula with an error tolerance of 5% (Sugiyono, 2016), as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Notes:

n = Required sample size

N = Population size

e = Desired error rate

Based on the calculations, the minimum sample size was determined to be 85 respondents. The distribution of the population and the study sample is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of the Study Population and Sample

Class	Year of Graduation	Population	Sample
2016	2020	15	10
2017	2021	16	10
2018	2022	18	18
2019	2023	24	21
2020	2024	35	26
Total		108	85

This study involves one independent variable and two dependent variables. The independent variable is the Quality Assurance System (SPM), while the dependent variables consist of the quality of learning and the quality of graduates. The operational definitions of the research variables are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Operationalization of Research Variables

Variable	Indicator
Quality Assurance System (X)	Implementation of a quality-based curriculum, human resource management (faculty, facilities, and administration), and learning assessment and feedback
Quality of Learning (Y ₁)	Student engagement in learning, the quality of faculty instruction, the use of learning strategies, and a conducive learning environment
Quality of Graduates (Y ₂)	Academic competencies, practical skills, professional attitudes, and career readiness

Research data were collected using a questionnaire distributed online via Google Forms to all respondents in the study sample. The research instrument was designed based on the indicators for each research variable and used a five-point Likert scale: Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), and Strongly Agree (5) (Sugiyono, 2016). The use of a Likert scale aims to systematically and objectively measure respondents' perceptions of the implementation of the Quality Assurance System, the quality of learning, and the quality of graduates.

Data analysis was conducted in stages using statistical software. The first stage involved descriptive statistics to characterize the respondents and identify trends in the research data. The second stage involved a normality test to ensure that the data met the assumptions of parametric analysis. Next, the relationships among the variables were analyzed using Pearson's product-moment correlation.

To test the effect of the Quality Assurance System on the quality of learning and the quality of graduates, simple linear regression analysis was used with the following model:

$$Y = a + bX$$

Notes :

Y = Dependent variable

X = Independent variable

- a = Constant (the value of Y when X = 0)
 b = Regression coefficient (positive or negative effect)

Hypothesis testing was conducted at a significance level of 0.05. A hypothesis is accepted if the significance value is less than 0.05, indicating a significant relationship between the variables under test (Sugiyono, 2016)

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

This study involved 85 respondents who are alumni of the Islamic Education Management (MPI) program at IAIN Curup. A descriptive analysis was conducted to obtain a general overview of the respondents' perceptions regarding the implementation of the Quality Assurance System (SPM), the quality of learning, and the quality of graduates.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of the Research Variables

Variable	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Score Range
Quality Assurance System (X)	85	82,45	6,72	65–95
Quality of Learning (Y ₁)	85	84,30	7,15	68–98
Quality of Graduates (Y ₂)	85	83,15	6,88	66–96

These descriptive statistics show that all three variables fall into the “high” category. These findings indicate that alumni have a positive perception of the implementation of the Quality Assurance System (SPM), the quality of learning, and the quality of graduates in the MPI Study Program at IAIN Curup.

Table 4. Results of the Simple Linear Regression Analysis of SPM on Learning Quality

Parameter	Coefficient	Std. Error	t	Sig.
Constant	25,614	4,812	5,324	0,000
SPM	0,712	0,056	12,714	0,000

The regression equation obtained is:

$$Y_1 = 25.614 + 0.712X$$

The coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.650 indicates that 65.0% of the variation in learning quality can be explained by the implementation of the Quality Assurance System. The significance value of 0.000 (<0.05) indicates that the Quality Assurance System has a positive and significant effect on learning quality.

Table 5. Results of the Simple Linear Regression Analysis of SPM on Graduate Quality

Parameter	Coefficient	Std. Error	t	Sig.
Konstan	27.812	5.126	5.429	0.000
SPM (b)	0.670	0,058	11.552	0.000

The regression equation obtained is:

$$Y_2 = 27.812 + 0.670X$$

The coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.616 indicates that 61.6% of the variation in graduate quality can be explained by the implementation of the Quality Assurance System. The significance value of 0.000 (<0.05) indicates that the Quality Assurance System has a positive and significant effect on graduate quality.

Table 6. Results of the Simultaneous Test (F-Test)

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F- Value	Sig.
Regression	2.486,75	2	1.243,38	69,472	0,000
Residual	1.478,25	82	18,02		
Total	3.965,00	84			

The coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.656 indicates that 65.6% of the variation in learning quality and graduate quality can be explained by the implementation of the Quality Assurance System. The significance value of 0.000 (<0.05) indicates that the Quality Assurance System has a significant effect on both variables.

DISCUSSION

The Impact of Quality Assurance Systems on the Quality of Learning

The results of this study indicate that the Quality Assurance System has a positive and significant effect on the quality of learning. These findings indicate that the implementation of the QAS not only serves as an administrative mechanism to meet accreditation standards but also acts as a strategic instrument in improving the quality of the learning process. Through the establishment of the PPEPP system (Planning, Implementation, Evaluation, Control, and Improvement), academic programs have a mechanism that enables the continuous evaluation and improvement of learning (Hasbi et al., 2025).

From the perspective of Total Quality Management (TQM) and Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI), the quality of learning improves when every academic process is systematically planned, implemented, evaluated, and improved (B. M. Wong & Headrick, 2021). Therefore, the effective implementation of the SPM can improve the quality of faculty teaching, the relevance of the curriculum, the effectiveness of teaching methods, and create a more conducive learning environment. These findings are consistent with those of Van Berkum et al. (2024) and Stalmeijer et al. (2022) demonstrated that internal quality assurance systems enhance the quality of educational processes through continuous evaluation, stakeholder engagement, and the development of a strong quality culture (Stalmeijer et al., 2023 ; Van Berkum et al., 2024).

In the context of the Islamic Education Management (MPI) program at IAIN Curup, this influence can be explained by the program's characteristic of integrating modern

educational management with Islamic educational values. The implementation of the SPM is not only aimed at achieving academic standards but also at developing students' professional competencies and Islamic character (Achruh & Sukirman, 2024). Thus, improved learning quality is a result of integrated quality management that combines academic aspects with institutional values.

The Impact of Quality Assurance Systems on Graduate Quality

This study also shows that the Quality Assurance System has a positive and significant impact on graduate quality. These findings indicate that the success of the quality assurance system is reflected not only in the learning process but also in the final outcomes produced by the study program. Based on the Input–Process–Output (IPO) Model perspective, graduate quality is the result of effective management of educational inputs and processes (Toosi et al., 2021; Yildirim & Sahin, 2025). The implementation of SPM ensures that the curriculum, human resources, learning processes, and evaluation systems operate in accordance with established quality standards (Alharbi, 2024; Berg et al., 2025; Hasanah et al., 2023).

When all of these components function consistently, the graduates tend to possess better academic competence, professional skills, work ethic, and job readiness. These findings are consistent with research (Van Berkum et al., 2024), as well as various studies on quality assurance in higher education, which show that the effectiveness of quality assurance systems contributes to improvements in graduate competencies. However, the results of this study also indicate that approximately 38.4% of the variation in graduate quality is explained by factors outside the research model, such as student organization experience, work environment, individual motivation, and institutional support after graduation.

In the context of the MPI program, graduate quality has a more complex dimension than that of general degree programs because it encompasses managerial skills, academic competencies, and the internalization of Islamic values. Therefore, the successful implementation of the SPM is a key factor in ensuring that the graduate profile aligns with the needs of the workforce and society.

The Impact of Quality Assurance Systems on the Quality of Learning and the Quality of Graduates

The results of the simultaneous tests indicate that the Quality Assurance System has a significant effect on both the quality of learning and the quality of graduates. These findings reinforce the view that the quality assurance system serves as a mechanism linking the quality of the educational process to the quality of educational outcomes. (Meisuri et al., 2024). Conceptually, the results of this study support the Input–Process–Output (IPO) framework used in this study (Alawag et al., 2023). In this model, the implementation of SPM serves as a quality management mechanism that influences the quality of the learning process, which ultimately contributes to improving the quality of graduates. In other words, the quality of graduates

cannot be separated from the quality of the learning process that takes place during their studies.

This finding is also consistent with the Quality Culture theory, which emphasizes that the success of a quality assurance system depends not only on the existence of formal procedures, but also on the commitment of the entire academic community to a culture of quality (Naveed Bin Rais et al., 2021; Umbase, 2023; Verschueren et al., 2023). When a culture of quality becomes an integral part of academic governance, improvements in the quality of learning and the quality of graduates can occur on a sustainable basis. In the context of the MPI Study Program at IAIN Curup, these results indicate that the implementation of the SPM plays a strategic role in supporting the institution's goal of producing graduates who are competent in the field of Islamic education management and capable of adapting to the ever-evolving needs of the workforce.

Practical Implications

Based on the research findings, several steps that can be taken by the MPI Study Program at IAIN Curup include: strengthening periodic internal quality audit mechanisms to ensure consistent implementation of quality standards; integrating the results of alumni tracer studies into the PPEPP cycle as a basis for improving the curriculum and learning processes; developing a measurable quality monitoring system based on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs); increasing the involvement of alumni, employers of graduates, and stakeholders in the curriculum evaluation and development process; and strengthening the use of quality evaluation results as a basis for academic decision-making and program development.

Theoretical Contributions of the Research

In addition to confirming the positive relationship between the Quality Assurance System and graduate quality, this study contributes to the development of the literature on higher education quality assurance in several aspects. First, this study demonstrates that the implementation of a Quality Assurance System is not only related to graduate quality as the final output but is also linked to the quality of learning as the primary process in higher education. Second, this study expands upon previous literature—which has largely focused on institutional achievements and accreditation—by presenting empirical evidence regarding the relationship between the quality of educational processes and the quality of educational outcomes. Third, this study provides empirical evidence from the context of the Islamic Education Management Study Program, a field that has been relatively under-researched, thereby enriching our understanding of the implementation of quality assurance systems in study programs that integrate Islamic educational values with modern educational management practices.

Limitations of the Study and Future Research Directions

Nevertheless, this study has several limitations. First, the study was conducted at only one institution—the MPI Study Program at IAIN Curup—so the results should be generalized with caution. Second, the number of respondents was relatively small ($n = 85$). Third, the data were collected via a perception-based questionnaire (self-reported data), which may introduce perceptual bias and common method variance (CMV). Fourth, the study used a cross-sectional design, so causal relationships between variables could not be observed longitudinally. Future research is recommended to involve several Islamic universities, use a larger sample size, integrate alumni tracer study data, and apply more comprehensive analytical approaches such as Path Analysis or SEM-PLS to test direct and indirect relationships between variables in the higher education quality assurance system.

In addition, this study used correlation and linear regression analyses to test the direct effects between variables. This approach aligns with the study's objective of focusing on testing direct relationships; however, it is not yet capable of identifying mediating relationships or more complex structural relationships among constructs. Therefore, future research is recommended to use Path Analysis, Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), or Covariance-Based Structural Equation Modeling (CB-SEM) to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms through which the Quality Assurance System influences the quality of learning and the quality of graduates.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the Quality Assurance System (SPM) has a positive and significant impact on the quality of learning and the quality of graduates in the Islamic Education Management (MPI) Study Program at IAIN Curup. The implementation of the SPM through curriculum management, human resource development, and continuous evaluation and improvement has been proven to support improvements in the quality of the learning process and graduate outcomes. These findings reinforce the Input–Process–Output (IPO), Total Quality Management (TQM), and Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) perspectives, which position the quality assurance system as a crucial instrument in improving the quality of higher education. Theoretically, this study contributes by expanding the literature on the effectiveness of Quality Assurance Systems through empirical evidence showing that the implementation of the QAS is not only related to graduate quality as an output but also to the quality of learning as a process that supports the production of high-quality graduates. Selain itu, penelitian ini memperkaya literatur penjaminan mutu pada konteks Program Research on Islamic Education Management remains relatively limited. In practical terms, the research findings highlight the importance of strengthening internal quality audits, utilizing the results of tracer studies, developing a monitoring system based on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs),

and increasing stakeholder involvement in curriculum evaluation and development to support the continuous improvement of graduate quality.

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