

Total Quality Management as a Strategic Framework for Improving Teacher Professionalism and Student Outcome

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how Total Quality Management (TQM) functions as a strategic framework for improving teacher professionalism and student learning outcomes. Educational institutions increasingly struggle to align management practice with effective teaching and meaningful student development. The study employed a qualitative case study design at an Islamic high school to explore TQM implementation in depth. Data were collected through observation, interviews with teachers and school leaders, and document analysis, then analyzed using an interactive model of data reduction, display, and verification. The findings indicate that the transformation of teaching practice under TQM is reflected in student-centered planning, reflective teaching, and a collaborative culture among educators. TQM also strengthens teacher professionalism through continuous learning, peer collaboration, and greater accountability in teaching. The study further finds that TQM fosters student character development, particularly discipline, responsibility, and independent learning. Taken together, these three findings show that TQM operates as an integrated system linking management practice with pedagogical improvement and student development. The main implication of this study for educational management is that teacher professionalism is the decisive pathway through which quality management reaches students, so schools seeking durable improvement should invest in the professional systems that mediate quality rather than in procedural compliance alone.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received : 08 April 2026

Revised : 30 May 2026

Accepted : 11 June 2026

KEYWORDS

Total Quality Management, Teacher Professionalism, Teaching Practices, Student Outcomes, Character Development

How to Cite:

Norman, E., Anwar, S., Marliani, L., Hasbian, Y., & Wahid, J. (2026). Total Quality Management as a Strategic Framework for Improving Teacher Professionalism and Student Outcome. *JUMPA: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan*, 7(1), 73–85.

INTRODUCTION

Education quality remains a central issue in contemporary educational systems, particularly in developing contexts where disparities between policy and practice persist (Menteşoğulları, 2023). Many schools are expected to deliver high-quality learning outcomes, yet in reality, instructional practices often remain traditional and less responsive to student needs, creating a gap between expected standards and actual implementation (Dadi, 2021; Demir, 2021; Meng, 2023). This condition reflects a broader challenge in aligning educational management strategies with classroom practices, especially in terms of continuous improvement and stakeholder involvement. In many cases, teachers still rely on conventional teaching approaches, despite the growing demand for student-centered learning and competency-based education (Huang et al., 2022; Lasaiba, 2023; Ouyang et al., 2023).



The concept of Total Quality Management has been widely discussed as a strategic approach to improving organizational performance, including in the field of education. TQM emphasizes principles such as customer focus, continuous improvement, and total involvement, which are considered essential for achieving sustainable quality (Qodri et al., 2022; Suandi, 2023). In educational settings, these principles are expected to enhance teaching practices, promote teacher professionalism, and improve student outcomes. Several scholars argue that TQM provides a comprehensive framework for managing educational institutions effectively by aligning organizational goals with instructional processes (Jami & Muharam, 2022; Muhith et al., 2022; Sood & Ghoniem, 2022). However, the application of TQM in schools often varies depending on institutional context and leadership practices. While some schools successfully implement TQM principles, others struggle to integrate them into daily teaching practices. This variation suggests that further investigation is needed to understand how TQM operates in specific educational contexts. Therefore, exploring the implementation of TQM in schools can provide valuable insights into its effectiveness in improving educational quality.

The integration of TQM principles is expected to influence not only teaching practices but also teacher professionalism and student character development (Busahdiar et al., 2023; Najiah & Baharun, 2025). The scope of this study includes analyzing how TQM is implemented in the school, how it affects teachers' professional practices, and how it contributes to student outcomes. By focusing on a single institution, this study aims to provide an in-depth understanding of the processes and mechanisms involved in TQM implementation. This approach allows for a detailed exploration of the relationship between management strategies and educational outcomes.

Previous research has explored the role of TQM in education from various perspectives, highlighting its potential to improve institutional performance and learning outcomes. Menteşoğulları (2023) found that TQM enhances school management effectiveness through systematic planning and evaluation. TQM contributes to teacher professional development by promoting continuous learning (Jasti et al., 2022; Ridwan et al., 2022). School culture has been identified as a key supporting factor in sustaining quality improvement efforts (Heenan et al., 2023; Reinius et al., 2022). Empirical evidence also shows that the application of TQM practices has a positive relationship with student achievement, indicating its impact on learning outcomes (Busahdiar et al., 2023; Wawak et al., 2024). Furthermore, TQM has been found to influence classroom dynamics, particularly in enhancing classroom management and increasing student engagement (Alauddin & Yamada, 2022; Puebla & Alvarez Aros, 2024). From the perspective of human resource development, collaborative practices fostered through TQM contribute significantly to improving teacher performance (Jasti et al., 2022). Despite these contributions, most studies focus on quantitative outcomes or organizational aspects, with limited attention to the qualitative processes underlying TQM implementation. Therefore, there is a need for research that provides a deeper understanding of how TQM influences teaching practices, teacher professionalism, and student development.

Although prior studies have demonstrated the benefits of TQM in education, a gap remains in understanding how its principles are translated into daily teaching practice and learning experience. Much of the literature emphasizes outcomes such as performance and achievement, while far fewer studies trace the processes through which TQM reshapes teacher behavior and student development. The gap grows sharper in Islamic educational contexts, where the simultaneous pursuit of academic excellence and character formation poses demands that generic quality models do not address. Existing research compounds the problem by treating teacher professionalism and student outcomes as separate constructs, rather than examining how the two are linked within a single quality management framework. What remains unexplained is not whether TQM benefits schools but how a management framework comes to operate as a pedagogical and formative force in a setting where academic and religious aims must be served at once.

This study investigates the role of TQM in improving teacher professionalism and student outcomes at Islamic Senior High School Darunnajah. It is guided by three questions: how is TQM implemented in teaching practice, how does it influence teacher professionalism, and how does it contribute to student character development. The three questions deliberately pair process with outcome, since the study's concern is not only what TQM produces but how it produces that result. By holding process and outcome together, the inquiry avoids the common tendency to read quality management through its indicators alone and instead follows it into the classroom, where its effects are actually formed. Answering these questions yields a detailed account of the relationship between quality management and educational practice and locates the specific mechanisms through which TQM acts on teaching and learning within one institutional setting.

The value of this study to educational management lies in an in-depth analysis of TQM implementation within a specific institutional context. Its novelty is not the pairing of teaching practice, teacher professionalism, and student development as a list, but the argument that the three are bound by a single mechanism: TQM reaches students through the professional growth of teachers, who convert systemic principles into daily classroom practice. On this reading TQM is not merely an instrument of organizational control but a strategic framework that transforms teaching practice and learning experience, with teacher professionalism serving as the pathway that carries quality management through to students. The argument rests on a premise the study makes explicit, that quality management principles must be adapted to educational settings rather than transplanted from industry unchanged. This is what makes the research consequential for schools where academic and religious formation are pursued together.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study focuses on Islamic Senior High School Darunnajah as the primary unit of analysis, representing a specific educational institution where quality management practices are implemented. The school is selected as a case study due to its commitment to integrating academic excellence with character and religious education, making it a relevant context for examining the application of Total Quality Management. The object of analysis includes institutional practices, teaching activities, professional development programs, and student learning behaviors within the school environment.

This study employs a qualitative research design using a case study approach to explore the implementation of TQM in depth. The qualitative approach is chosen because it allows for a comprehensive understanding of social phenomena within their natural context. The case study design enables the researcher to investigate the processes (Leko et al., 2021), interactions, and meanings associated with TQM implementation in the school. This approach is particularly suitable for examining complex relationships between management practices, teacher professionalism, and student outcomes. The study adopts an interpretive paradigm, which emphasizes understanding participants' perspectives and experiences. Through this approach, the research seeks to uncover how TQM principles are interpreted and applied by different stakeholders in the school. The use of a single case study provides detailed and context-specific insights, although it may limit generalizability. Nevertheless, the depth of analysis offers valuable contributions to the understanding of quality management in education. Therefore, the chosen design aligns with the research objectives and questions.

The sources of information in this study consist of respondents, informants, and relevant documents (Chand, 2025). Respondents include teachers, school leaders, and students who are directly involved in teaching and learning processes. Informants are selected based on their roles and experiences related to TQM implementation, including the principal and senior teachers. In addition, textual data such as lesson plans, evaluation reports, and school policy documents are used to support the analysis. Data collection is conducted through multiple techniques, including desk review, observation, and interviews.

Desk review involves analyzing documents to understand institutional policies and practices. Observations are carried out in classrooms and school activities to capture real-time teaching and learning processes. Interviews are conducted using semi-structured guidelines to explore participants' perspectives. **Table 1** summarizes these data sources, the rationale for selecting each, and the technique applied to it.

Table 1. Data Sources, Selection Rationale, and Collection Techniques

No.	Data Source	Role in the Study	Basis for Selection	Collection Technique
1	Principal	Institutional decision-maker on quality policy	Holds full authority over TQM implementation	Semi-structured interview
2	Senior teachers	Implementers and models of instructional quality	Direct experience applying TQM in teaching	Semi-structured interview, observation
3	Teachers	Frontline actors in teaching and learning	Daily engagement with quality-oriented practice	Observation, semi-structured interview
4	Students	Recipients of instructional and character outcomes	Directly affected by TQM-driven practices	Observation
5	School documents	Evidence of policy and institutional practice	Lesson plans, evaluation reports, policy records	Desk review

Source: Processed by the authors from field data, 2025.

Data analysis in this study follows the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, which consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification (Taherdoost, 2022). Data reduction involves selecting, simplifying, and organizing raw data obtained from interviews, observations, and documents. This process helps to focus on relevant information related to TQM implementation, teacher professionalism, and student outcomes. Data display is conducted by presenting the organized data in the form of tables, matrices, and narrative descriptions, allowing for easier interpretation and pattern identification. The final stage involves drawing conclusions and verifying findings through continuous comparison and validation of data sources. In terms of analytical methods, this study employs content analysis to examine textual data, discourse analysis to understand communication patterns, and interpretive analysis to derive meanings from participants' experiences.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

TQM-Driven Transformation of Teaching Practices

The implementation of Total Quality Management at Islamic Senior High School has significantly transformed teaching practices. This transformation is primarily driven by three core principles: customer focus, continuous improvement, and total involvement. Teachers increasingly perceive students, parents, and the broader community as key stakeholders whose needs must be addressed through responsive instructional planning. As a result, lesson preparation is no longer routine but adaptive and student-centered. Furthermore, continuous improvement is embedded through regular reflection and evaluation of teaching outcomes, allowing teachers to refine their pedagogical approaches. The involvement of all stakeholders, including school leaders and parents, creates a collaborative environment that supports instructional quality. This systemic approach ensures that teaching practices are aligned with institutional quality goals. Therefore, the application of TQM not only introduces managerial changes but also reshapes the pedagogical mindset of teachers toward a quality-oriented approach.

Observational data indicate that classroom practices have evolved toward more structured and reflective teaching processes. Teachers were observed designing lesson plans that explicitly consider students' learning needs and feedback. In several classes, teachers incorporated formative assessments at different stages of instruction, demonstrating an

ongoing commitment to improvement. Additionally, reflective practices were evident through post-teaching discussions among teachers, where they evaluated instructional effectiveness and shared insights. The presence of collaborative planning sessions further illustrates the principle of total involvement, as teachers regularly engage with peers and school leaders to enhance teaching quality. Classroom interactions also reflected a shift toward student-centered learning, with increased student participation and engagement. These observations suggest that TQM principles are not merely theoretical but actively practiced within the school environment. Consequently, teaching practices are becoming more dynamic, data-informed, and responsive to student needs, reinforcing the role of TQM as a catalyst for pedagogical transformation.

Table 2. The Transformation of Teaching Practices

TQM Principle	Teaching Practice Indicator	Observed Evidence
Customer Focus	Student-centered lesson planning	Adaptive lesson design based on feedback
Continuous Improvement	Reflective teaching practices	Post-teaching evaluation sessions
Total Involvement	Collaborative teaching culture	Peer discussions and joint planning

Table 2 illustrates how each TQM principle is translated into observable teaching practices. Customer focus leads to adaptive instructional design, continuous improvement encourages reflective teaching, and total involvement fosters collaboration among educators. The alignment between principles and practices demonstrates the operationalization of TQM within the classroom context. As such, the transformation of teaching practices is systematic rather than incidental, reflecting a structured approach to quality improvement.

TQM implementation has redefined teaching practices by embedding quality-oriented behaviors into daily instructional activities. Teachers no longer operate in isolation but engage in reflective and collaborative processes that enhance instructional effectiveness. This shift suggests that TQM functions as both a managerial and pedagogical framework, influencing not only institutional policies but also classroom dynamics. The emphasis on continuous improvement fosters a culture of self-evaluation, while customer focus ensures that teaching remains relevant to student needs. Moreover, total involvement strengthens collective responsibility for educational quality. Interpreting these findings, it becomes evident that TQM facilitates a transition from traditional teaching to a more adaptive and reflective model. This transformation highlights the interconnectedness between management principles and pedagogical practices, suggesting that quality management can directly influence instructional outcomes.

The transformation of teaching practices demonstrates that TQM serves as an effective framework for enhancing instructional quality. The integration of customer focus, continuous improvement, and total involvement creates a sustainable system for pedagogical development. These findings suggest that when TQM is consistently implemented, it can lead to systematic improvements in teaching practices across different educational contexts. Therefore, TQM can be generalized as a strategic approach that bridges management and pedagogy, ultimately contributing to educational excellence.

Enhancing Teacher Professionalism

The second finding highlights that TQM implementation contributes significantly to enhancing teacher professionalism. This enhancement is reflected in improved pedagogical competence, increased commitment to professional development, and stronger collaborative practices. Teachers demonstrate a higher level of instructional planning, classroom management, and assessment design. Moreover, the culture of continuous improvement encourages teachers to engage in self-reflection and lifelong learning. Professionalism is no longer viewed as an individual attribute but as a collective responsibility supported by

institutional systems. Consequently, TQM fosters an environment where teachers are motivated to improve their competencies and align their practices with quality standards.

Interview data further support this finding. A senior teacher stated, “We are encouraged to evaluate our teaching regularly and share our experiences with colleagues.” Another teacher noted, “The school provides opportunities for training and discussions that help us improve our teaching strategies.” Meanwhile, the principal emphasized, “Teacher professionalism is strengthened through collaboration and continuous feedback.” These statements indicate that professional development is actively supported by both individual initiative and institutional structures. The consistency across multiple perspectives suggests that TQM has created a shared understanding of professionalism within the school.

A senior teacher emphasized the importance of reflective practice by stating that teachers are encouraged to regularly evaluate their teaching and share insights with colleagues. This indicates the presence of a reflective and collaborative learning environment. Another teacher highlighted the role of institutional support, noting that the school actively provides training programs and professional discussions that enhance instructional strategies. This suggests that professional development is not incidental but systematically facilitated. In addition, the principal underlined the importance of collaboration and continuous feedback as core mechanisms for strengthening professionalism. These perspectives collectively illustrate that teacher development is supported through both individual initiative and structured organizational systems. The consistency across different stakeholders—teachers and school leadership—indicates a shared understanding of professionalism as a dynamic and collaborative process. This alignment strengthens the validity of the findings, showing that TQM has successfully fostered a professional culture rooted in shared responsibility and continuous growth.

Teacher professionalism has improved as a direct result of the systematic implementation of TQM principles. Teachers demonstrate higher levels of competence, accountability, and collaboration in carrying out their professional roles. Importantly, these improvements do not occur in isolation but are embedded within a supportive organizational framework that reinforces quality-oriented behaviors. From a theoretical perspective, this enhancement can be understood as the outcome of a quality-driven organizational culture that prioritizes continuous professional growth. TQM introduces structured mechanisms such as feedback loops, peer collaboration, and reflective practices, all of which are essential components in the development of professional competence. Consequently, professionalism is no longer static but evolves as a continuous and collective process influenced by organizational culture. These findings contribute to the broader discourse on educational management by demonstrating that institutional strategies such as TQM can effectively transform individual competencies into collective professional excellence. Thus, professionalism becomes both an individual achievement and an organizational outcome.

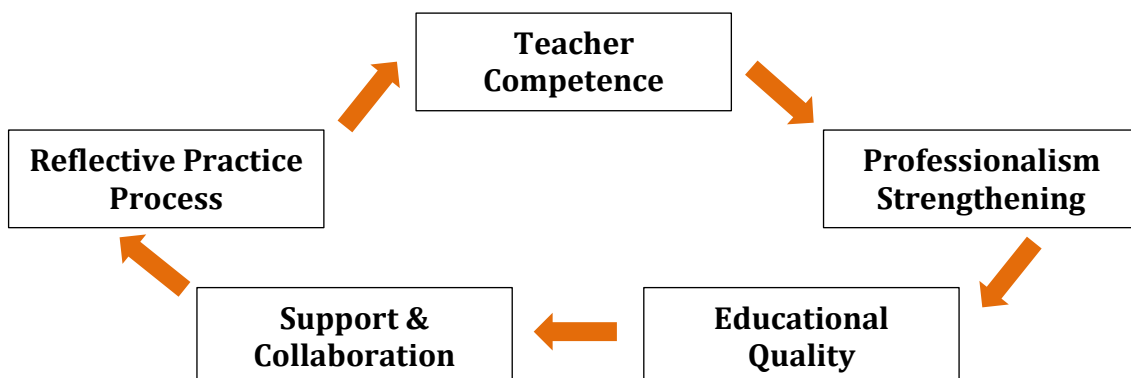


Figure 1. TQM Implementation

The study suggests that TQM functions as an effective strategic framework for enhancing teacher professionalism through a structured and continuous process. Rather than operating as isolated initiatives, TQM integrates institutional support, collaboration, and reflective practices into a cohesive system that drives professional growth. This process illustrates how organizational strategies are translated into individual competencies and collective professionalism within the school environment. The simplification of this process highlights the essential transformation pathway from quality management implementation to educational outcomes. By focusing on core stages, the model becomes more adaptable for visualization in academic publications. The streamlined flow also emphasizes that professionalism is not an endpoint but part of a continuous cycle of improvement supported by organizational culture. Therefore, TQM not only strengthens teacher competence but also ensures sustainability in educational quality through systemic alignment and ongoing development.

Fostering Student Character Development

The third finding indicates that TQM implementation contributes to fostering student character development. This development is reflected in increased discipline, responsibility, and independence among students. These character traits are cultivated through structured learning environments and consistent teacher practices. The integration of quality principles into teaching encourages students to adopt positive behaviors that support their learning process.

student character development emerges as a systemic outcome of TQM rather than a direct instructional objective. This suggests that character formation is embedded within the hidden curriculum, where values such as discipline, responsibility, and independence are internalized through repeated exposure to structured routines and consistent expectations. In this context, TQM operates as a cultural mechanism that shapes behavior through standardization, monitoring, and continuous reinforcement. The emphasis on quality standards and accountability indirectly conditions students to align their actions with institutional norms. Moreover, the role of teachers becomes pivotal as they act not only as instructors but also as behavioral models who consistently demonstrate and reinforce desired values. This alignment between organizational culture and pedagogical practice creates a congruent learning environment, where students learn to regulate their behavior autonomously. Thus, character development can be understood as a form of behavioral adaptation driven by systemic consistency rather than isolated moral instruction.

Observations show that students demonstrate punctuality, active participation, and responsibility in completing tasks. Classroom routines emphasize discipline, while group activities encourage collaboration and independence. Teachers consistently reinforce positive behavior, creating an environment that supports character development. These observations indicate that character formation is embedded within daily learning activities.

Table 3. The Development of Student Character

Character Aspect	Behavioral Indicator	Observed Evidence
Discipline	Punctuality and rule adherence	Timely attendance
Responsibility	Task completion	Consistent assignment submission
Independence	Self-directed learning	Active participation

Table 3 highlights the alignment between character aspects and observable student behaviors. The findings suggest that student character development is an indirect outcome of TQM implementation. By creating a structured and supportive learning environment, TQM influences student behavior. Character development is not taught explicitly but emerges through consistent practice and reinforcement. TQM contributes to fostering student character development by shaping the learning environment and teaching practices.

This finding suggests that quality management can play a significant role in developing both academic and non-academic aspects of student outcomes.

TQM contributes to character education by integrating affective outcomes into the operational structure of schooling. The development of discipline, responsibility, and independence reflects the successful internalization of norms facilitated by continuous practice and feedback mechanisms. This supports the view that sustainable character development requires an enabling environment rather than sporadic interventions. TQM, with its principles of continuous improvement and process orientation, ensures that character-building practices are embedded in everyday learning activities, making them more enduring and measurable. Additionally, the indirect nature of this process strengthens its impact, as students develop character organically without feeling subjected to formal moral instruction. This has important implications for educational management, suggesting that character education should not be treated as a separate program but integrated into institutional systems and routines. Therefore, TQM provides a strategic framework that bridges academic quality and character formation, positioning schools as environments that cultivate holistic student development.

Discussion

The transformation of teaching practices driven by Total Quality Management has significant implications for instructional effectiveness and classroom quality. The findings indicate that when teaching is guided by customer focus, continuous improvement, and total involvement, learning becomes more responsive and adaptive to student needs. This implies that TQM functions as a practical mechanism for improving instructional relevance and engagement. Previous studies have also shown that quality-oriented teaching practices enhance student participation and learning satisfaction (Alenezi et al., 2023; Sungkowo et al., 2024). In this context, the shift toward student-centered instruction allows teachers to tailor their strategies based on feedback and performance data. However, a potential dysfunction may arise if teachers perceive these changes as additional workload rather than professional growth opportunities. Despite this, the overall implication remains positive, as TQM fosters a culture where teaching quality is continuously evaluated and improved. Therefore, the implementation of TQM not only improves teaching practices but also strengthens the alignment between instructional processes and student expectations.

The transformation of teaching practices can be explained by the structural integration of TQM principles into the school's organizational culture. The emphasis on continuous improvement creates a system where reflection and evaluation are embedded in daily teaching routines. This aligns with the argument that organizational culture plays a crucial role in shaping teacher behavior (Arghode et al., 2022; Ataman & Safitri, 2024; Virgiawan et al., 2021). Furthermore, the principle of total involvement encourages collaboration among teachers, which facilitates the exchange of knowledge and best practices. The causal relationship lies in the systematic reinforcement of quality values, which gradually influence teachers' attitudes and practices. When teachers are consistently exposed to reflective and collaborative environments, they are more likely to adopt innovative teaching methods. Additionally, customer focus ensures that instructional decisions are guided by student needs, creating a feedback loop that sustains improvement. Thus, the transformation is not incidental but structurally driven by the integration of TQM principles into both organizational and pedagogical processes.

The enhancement of teacher professionalism as a result of TQM implementation has important implications for educational quality. The findings suggest that professional growth becomes more systematic and sustainable when supported by a quality management framework. This implies that teacher professionalism is no longer dependent solely on individual initiative but is reinforced by institutional structures. Research has demonstrated that structured professional development programs significantly improve teaching

competence and student outcomes (Atabik et al., 2024; Mutmainnah et al., 2024). In this study, teachers exhibited improved pedagogical skills, reflective practices, and collaborative engagement. These improvements contribute to more effective teaching and better learning experiences for students. However, a potential challenge is the need for continuous institutional support to maintain this level of professionalism. Without such support, the gains may not be sustained. Therefore, the implication of this finding is that TQM provides a strategic approach to institutionalizing teacher professionalism, ensuring that it becomes an integral part of the school culture.

The enhancement of teacher professionalism can be understood through the structural mechanisms embedded in TQM. The emphasis on feedback, collaboration, and continuous learning creates an environment conducive to professional growth. According to educational management theory, professional competence develops through ongoing reflection and interaction with peers (Junusi et al., 2021; Muharom, 2023). The presence of collaborative forums and reflective practices enabled teachers to identify and address their weaknesses. The causal relationship is evident in the way TQM structures professional development as a continuous process rather than a one-time activity. Moreover, the accountability mechanisms inherent in TQM encourage teachers to take responsibility for their performance. This combination of support and accountability creates a balanced system that promotes professionalism. Therefore, the underlying structure of TQM provides both the motivation and the means for teachers to improve their competencies, resulting in enhanced professional performance.

The fostering of student character development as an outcome of TQM implementation has significant implications for holistic education. The findings indicate that discipline, responsibility, and independence can be developed through structured and quality-oriented learning environments. This suggests that character education does not need to be delivered solely through explicit instruction but can emerge from consistent teaching practices. Previous research supports this view, highlighting that school culture plays a crucial role in shaping student character (Damayanti & Farihah, 2023; Diab & Green, 2024). In this study, students demonstrated positive behaviors such as punctuality and active participation, which are essential for academic success. The implication is that TQM contributes to both cognitive and non-cognitive outcomes, making it a comprehensive approach to education. However, the effectiveness of this approach depends on the consistency of its implementation. Therefore, TQM can be seen as a strategic framework for integrating character development into everyday learning processes.

The development of student character can be explained by the indirect influence of TQM on the learning environment. The structured routines, consistent expectations, and positive reinforcement created by TQM principles shape student behavior over time. This aligns with the theory that behavior is influenced by environmental factors and repeated practices (Manshur et al., 2025; Nazilah et al., 2024). The causal mechanism lies in the interaction between teaching practices and student experiences. When teachers consistently apply quality-oriented approaches, students internalize the associated values and behaviors. Additionally, the collaborative and supportive environment fosters a sense of responsibility and independence among students. Thus, character development is not an isolated outcome but a product of the overall educational ecosystem shaped by TQM. This explains why the impact of TQM extends beyond academic achievement to include behavioral and attitudinal changes.

The specific contribution of this study to educational management lies in reframing Total Quality Management. Much of the existing literature treats it as an administrative or accreditation instrument. This study instead positions it as a pedagogical architecture that acts on teaching quality, teacher professionalism, and student character through one integrated mechanism rather than three separate programs. The study identifies teacher professionalism as the mediating variable that converts institutional quality structures into

classroom and student outcomes. This specifies a causal pathway that prior TQM-in-education research has largely left implicit. Quality management does not reach students directly. It reaches them through the professional growth of teachers, who translate systemic principles such as continuous improvement, customer focus, and total involvement into daily instructional practice. The study also positions character formation as a systemic by-product of organizational culture rather than an explicit curricular target. A management framework conventionally tied to measurable performance indicators can therefore cultivate affective and moral outcomes through the hidden curriculum. For theory the study extends TQM from a model of process control toward a model of professional and value formation. For practice it indicates that schools seeking durable improvement should invest in the professional systems that mediate quality rather than in compliance mechanisms alone. It is teacher professionalism and not procedural conformity that carries quality management through to student outcomes.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) at Darunnajah Islamic High School provides important lessons that quality-oriented management can systematically transform teaching practices, enhance teacher professionalism, and foster student character development as integrated outcomes. Key findings highlight that continuous improvement, stakeholder engagement, and customer focus are not merely managerial principles but serve as pedagogical drivers that shape a reflective, collaborative, and student-centered learning environment. The strength of this study lies in its contribution to educational scholarship by offering an integrative perspective that connects management frameworks with classroom practices, positions teacher professionalism as a mediating variable, and emphasizes the link between teaching quality and character formation. Furthermore, the use of a qualitative case study approach enriches the understanding of how TQM operates in a real-life educational context, thus expanding the existing literature that focuses solely on quantitative outcomes. However, this study is limited to a single institutional setting, with specific contextual characteristics related to location, institutional culture, and participant variation, which may limit broader generalizability. Therefore, further research is recommended to involve diverse educational settings, consider variables such as gender and age, and use mixed or survey-based methods to produce more comprehensive findings that can form the basis for more targeted and effective educational policies.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to the leadership, teachers, and students of Islamic Senior High School Darunnajah for their openness and cooperation throughout the research process. We are equally grateful to the colleagues and reviewers whose thoughtful feedback strengthened this work, and to our institutions for the support that made the study possible. Our thanks also go to all parties who contributed in various ways to the completion of this article.

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