

THE VALUE OF SERVICE; EXPLORING THE MODEL OF SERVICE QUALITY IN INDONESIAN AND TUNISIA ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY

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Abstract : *This research aims to understand the model of service quality based on Islamic values in Indonesia and Tunisia. The study is motivated by a lack of awareness regarding the importance of Islamic values in service, conflicts in values and cultures, insufficient resources and support, resistance from internal parties, consumer ignorance, differences in the interpretation of Islamic values, and the influence of political and economic contexts. The research employs a qualitative approach with a multisite design. To gather data in both countries, the researcher uses participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The collected data is analyzed using Miles, Huberman, and Saldana's data analysis techniques. The analysis shows that interpersonal interaction, empathy, and service reliability are essential in shaping students' perceptions of service quality. The study identifies each university's challenges and strengths in providing quality service and highlights cultural differences that influence service experiences. The findings provide insight into how university administrators can improve service quality, emphasising the importance of listening to students' voices and adapting service practices to needs.*

Keywords : *Islamic Values; Model of Service; Quality.*

Abstrak : *Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memahami model kualitas layanan berbasis nilai-nilai Islam di Indonesia dan Tunisia. Penelitian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh kurangnya kesadaran mengenai pentingnya nilai-nilai Islam dalam pelayanan, konflik nilai dan budaya, keterbatasan sumber daya dan dukungan, resistensi dari pihak internal, ketidaktahuan konsumen, perbedaan dalam penafsiran nilai-nilai Islam, serta pengaruh konteks politik dan ekonomi. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain multisitus. Untuk mengumpulkan data di kedua negara, peneliti menggunakan observasi partisipan, wawancara mendalam, dan dokumentasi. Data yang terkumpul dianalisis menggunakan teknik analisis data Miles, Huberman, dan Saldana. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa interaksi interpersonal, empati, dan keandalan layanan merupakan elemen penting dalam membentuk persepsi mahasiswa terhadap kualitas layanan. Penelitian ini mengidentifikasi tantangan dan kekuatan masing-masing universitas dalam memberikan layanan berkualitas serta menyoroti perbedaan budaya yang memengaruhi pengalaman layanan. Temuan ini memberikan wawasan tentang bagaimana pengelola universitas dapat meningkatkan kualitas layanan dengan menekankan pentingnya mendengarkan suara mahasiswa dan menyesuaikan praktik layanan dengan kebutuhan.*

Kata Kunci : *Nilai-nilai Islam; Model Pelayanan; Kualitas.*

INTRODUCTION

Service issues encompass not only inconsistent access, convoluted bureaucracy, and sluggish administrative procedures but also the execution of customer-centric principles. Services lacking client orientation remain problematic in numerous countries. Islamic principles, including justice, honesty, compassion, transparency, and excellence, are fundamental in developing a more holistic service model. These values are anticipated to yield services that fulfill client requirements while prioritizing collective welfare and humanitarian considerations. In the age of globalization, superior service is a crucial determinant of customer satisfaction, loyalty, and organizational success (Uzir et al., 2021). Exceptional service is becoming pertinent in cultures with Muslim-majority demographics, such as Indonesia and Tunisia, where Islamic principles underpin the formation of individuals' mindsets and behaviors.

Scholarly investigations of service quality and the impact of Islamic beliefs across diverse public service sectors have been extensively undertaken by researchers. This compelling study demonstrates the use of Islamic ideals, including justice and openness, in contemporary societal service frameworks. Research from multiple viewpoints such as Jovanovic et al. (2022), H. Li (2021), Yasmin et al. (2021) indicates that the incorporation of Islamic values in public services offers a more comprehensive approach and emphasizes communal welfare. These studies demonstrate that Islamic beliefs can enhance consumer satisfaction and cultivate a culture that is more inclusive and focused on shared interests. Nonetheless, investigation into the precise integration of these values into contemporary service systems remains an area for additional exploration to develop a more flexible and sustainable service model in Muslim communities (Ridlo & Yanti, 2023).

This study seeks to address the gap that has not been extensively examined in prior research. Most prior research have concentrated primarily on the application of Islamic principles within service models, with limited discourse on the integration of these values into contemporary service systems. This study aims to explore how Islamic ethical concepts, including honesty and openness, can be integrated into a customer-centric service framework (Mörch et al., 2021). This has demonstrated significance in connecting traditional values with contemporary service practices, hence enhancing service quality and customer happiness (Fernandes et al., 2020). This study aims to address a gap in the literature by providing a novel viewpoint on the role of Islamic principles in the development of sustainable and inclusive service models.

This study posits that service solutions should be designed beyond a purely technological perspective. In the service industry, numerous techniques prioritize efficiency and the attainment of operational objectives, often neglecting greater ethical considerations or ideals. This study demonstrates that Islamic ethical concepts, including honesty, fairness, and responsibility, are crucial in developing a more comprehensive and sustainable service

methodology. Institutions grounded on Islamic values possess the capacity to provide insights that transcend simply technical enhancements in service (Xiao et al., 2020). This study seeks to elucidate how the incorporation of Islamic ethical standards into the service process might serve as a foundation for enhancing service quality. Consequently, this study aspires to create prospects for the development of a service model that prioritizes community welfare and sustainability grounded in profound ethical principles.

METHOD

This research employs a qualitative methodology utilizing a multi-site case study framework. This design was selected to investigate the intricate phenomena associated with the service quality model grounded in Islamic values and to comprehend the distinctive context and viewpoint universities employ in delivering services that align with Islamic principles. This study examines university leaders in Indonesia and Tunisia who can offer comprehensive insights into the implementation of Islamic ideals in higher education services. Data was gathered by participant observation, comprehensive interviews, and documentation in both nations to acquire extensive contextual information (Assyakurrohim et al., 2022).

The gathered data were analyzed using analytical procedures from Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, encompassing data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion formulation. This analytical method was selected for its ability to condense substantial qualitative data into a more organized and significant format (Soesana et al., 2023). Data condensation was derived from interviews and observations at universities in Indonesia and Tunisia, focusing on units pertinent to the implementation of the Islamic-based service model and consolidating them into smaller data units. The display of data succeeded in this process via a challenge comparison table, a general findings diagram, and interview quotations that exemplify the principal findings.

Additionally, conclusions are formulated following data presentation to discern patterns, similarities, and disparities in the application of Islamic ideals to service excellence in higher education across both nations. This process enables the study to identify factors affecting the integration of Islamic principles within the service quality model of higher education in Indonesia and Tunisia, thereby providing a more thorough and contextual understanding.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study reveal that the application of Islamic values in the service quality model of higher education institutions in Indonesia and Tunisia positively impacts student satisfaction and loyalty and encourages a more inclusive and humanistic service approach. This finding aligns with the study by Alzoubi (Alzoubi et al., 2020), where

applying religious values in public services significantly builds user trust and loyalty towards the institution. In addition, research from Ozkan (Özkan et al., 2020) supports this finding by showing that Islamic ethical values, such as fairness and transparency, help strengthen the relationship between service providers and recipients, creating a more harmonious and conducive service environment.

However, the differences in cultural context between Indonesia and Tunisia also provide unique results in implementing Islamic values in the service model. A study from Pelau (Pelau et al., 2021) shows that the effectiveness of Islamic value-based services is influenced by specific cultural and social factors in each country and the importance of adaptation to the local context for optimal service delivery. This finding supports the interpretation that diverse cultural contexts require the application of Islamic values in higher education services to be carried out by considering local adaptation in each country. This strengthens the conclusion that although Islamic values provide universal guidance, the approach must be adapted to the cultural context to achieve more comprehensive and practical success.

1. Integration of Islamic Ethics in Educational Service Relations

The integration of Islamic ethics in educational service relationships also received attention from teachers, as expressed by one of the lecturers who stated, "*When we apply Islamic ethical values in teaching, I see students appreciate their learning process more and demonstrate better behaviour.*" This statement shows that ethical values upheld in Islam, such as honesty and mutual respect, can increase students' positive attitudes towards education. This aligns with the character education theory, which states that applying moral values in education can significantly shape students' character (Abbas, 2020). In this context, Islamic ethics plays a vital role in creating a positive learning environment where students feel supported and motivated to develop.

Furthermore, students also felt the positive impact of implementing Islamic ethics in learning. One student said, "*With the religious values in teaching, I feel more motivated to learn and understand the material more easily.*" This shows that the integration of Islamic ethics not only helps students understand the subject matter but also contributes to increasing learning motivation. Self-determination motivation theory explains that when students feel valued and are free to learn according to their values, they tend to be more committed to the learning process (Santos et al., 2020). This strengthens the argument that Islamic ethics acts as a learning motivation enhancer, creating a stronger bond between students and the academic process they undergo.

On the other hand, the impact of integrating Islamic ethics is also seen in the quality of interactions between lecturers and students. A lecturer added, "*I feel that students are more open in communicating, which helps create more constructive discussions.*" This shows that Islamic ethical values, such as mutual respect, can improve

communication relationships in the educational context. Interpersonal communication theory supports this by emphasising the importance of trust and mutual respect in building effective relationships (Demir et al., 2020). When lecturers and students can interact well, this improves understanding of the material and enriches the overall learning experience.

Furthermore, the study results showed that implementing Islamic ethics increased student retention. One student stated, "I feel more at home on this campus because I see my values are respected." This statement confirms that an educational environment that respects students' values can increase their sense of attachment to the educational institution. Attachment theory explains that the feeling of security and emotional support from the academic environment positively affects students' decisions to persist (Egert et al., 2020). Thus, the integration of Islamic ethics creates a supportive learning atmosphere, which in turn increases students' commitment to their education.

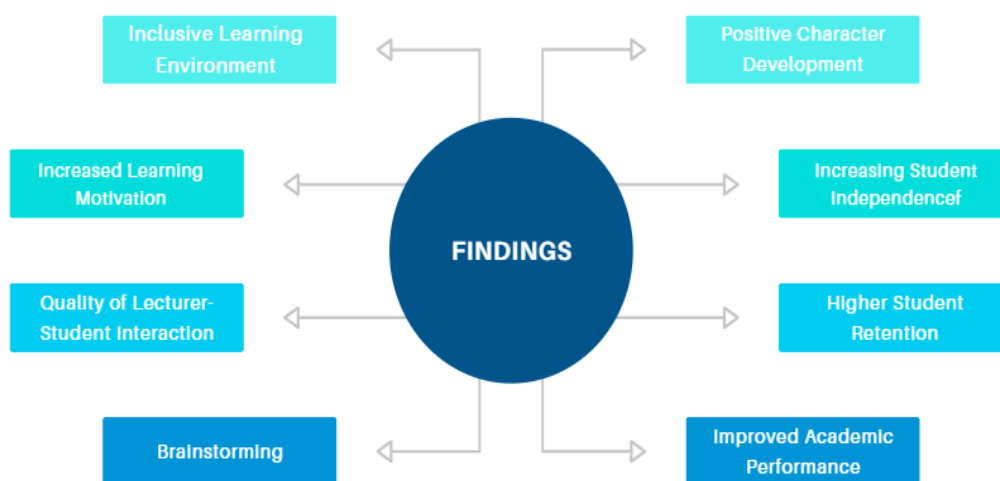


Figure 1: Integration of Islamic Ethics in Educational Service Relations

It can be seen from the findings above that the integration of Islamic ethics in educational services has a significant positive impact on students' learning experiences. This study shows that applying Islamic ethical values increases motivation and academic performance, creates an inclusive environment, and supports the development of students' character. Better interactions between lecturers and students and increased learning independence indicate that Islamic ethics can be a strong foundation for building an effective and sustainable learning process. These findings emphasise the importance of integrating ethics in the context of education to create a generation that is not only academically intelligent but also has integrity and social responsibility.

Theoretically, the application of Islamic ethics in education aligns with the concept of character education, which emphasises the importance of developing moral

values in the learning process (El et al., 2020). This study supports the argument that education that integrates ethics can improve academic quality and form more responsible and ethical individuals. Thus, educational institutions must emphasise the importance of incorporating Islamic ethics into their curriculum to create a practical learning experience reflecting noble values that benefit society.

Overall, the results of this study indicate that integrating Islamic ethics in educational services not only shapes students' positive character and behaviour but also contributes to increasing learning motivation, interaction quality, student retention, and academic performance. Educational institutions can simultaneously support students' academic and moral development by creating a learning environment aligned with ethical values (Ozdemir et al., 2020). This shows that integrating Islamic ethics is an effective strategy to build a harmonious academic community and support achieving better educational goals.

2. Adapting Cultural Context in Service Models

Adapting cultural contexts in service models in higher education shows that integrating local values in service practices significantly impacts the student experience (De Lara & Santos, 2024). The study found that when higher education institutions adapt their service models to local cultures, it increases student satisfaction and strengthens their sense of belonging and attachment. One university leadership informant stated, *"We try to integrate local values into the services we offer so that students feel more connected to what we do."* This statement emphasises the importance of cultural values in creating relevant and valuable services for students. This adaptation, students acknowledged, helps them feel that the education they receive is more appropriate to their social and cultural context.

One interesting finding came from an interview with a student who described her experience: *"When we see that our traditions and values are respected in the learning process, we feel more comfortable participating."* This suggests that cultural adaptation in educational services allows students to contribute more because they feel valued and recognised. Furthermore, an academic expressed, *"It is important for us to ensure that our services are not only based on theory but also rooted in the cultural realities of our students."* This reflects that the awareness of the importance of cultural context in academic services is not just a theory but needs to be applied concretely in practice. These results illustrate how cultural context adaptation in educational service models results in a more positive student experience, improving their academic performance and engagement.

Cultural adaptation in the service model also significantly impacts the interactions between students and teaching staff (Borishade et al., 2021). A student stated, *"Our lecturers often use examples and references from our culture, so the material taught feels more relevant."* This shows that the connection between the material taught and students'

cultural context makes learning more exciting and easier to understand. A lecturer stated, "By understanding the cultural background of students, we can explain difficult concepts in a way that is simpler and more familiar to them." This shows that cultural adaptation not only serves to improve services but also contributes to learning effectiveness. From this, it can be seen that learning relevant to the cultural context improves understanding and reduces barriers to communication between lecturers and students.

The results of this study are supported by findings from previous studies, which show that cultural adaptation in educational services positively impacts student satisfaction and learning outcomes. A survey by Mulyono (2020) shows that institutions that successfully integrate local values into their services tend to have higher levels of student satisfaction. In addition, research by Theresiawati (2020) emphasises that success in education depends not only on academic quality but also on how institutions interact with students' cultural context. This finding shows that educational services are tailored to local culture, enhance the overall student experience and encourage active participation in academic activities.

In this context, cultural adaptation in the service model in higher education is an operational strategy and an essential step in building a stronger relationship between educational institutions and students. This provides deeper insights into how institutions can improve the quality of service and student experience in a more relevant and contextual way. Thus, this study strengthens the argument that integrating cultural values in educational services is critical to creating a more inclusive and productive learning environment, ultimately contributing to student academic achievement and character growth.

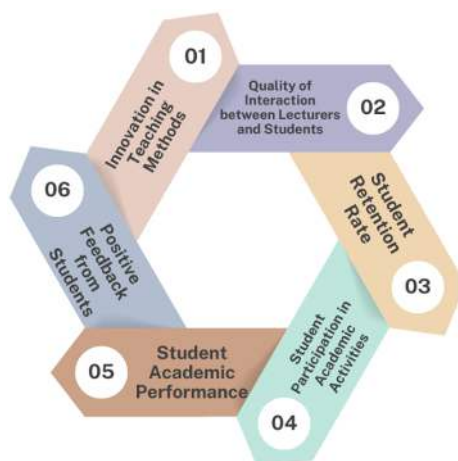


Figure 2: Adaptation of Cultural Context in Service Model

It can be seen in Figure 2 above that the findings of adapting cultural contexts to service models in higher education are present. The findings of this study indicate that

integrating cultural values in educational services significantly impacts student experience. Indicators such as student satisfaction levels and active participation in academic activities reflect how well the services provided can meet their needs and expectations. In addition, an increase in the quality of interaction between lecturers and students is also seen, where lecturers are now better able to establish constructive communication (Singh & Jasial, 2021). Another prominent indicator is student retention, which reflects their comfort and satisfaction with the academic experience they have gained.

Furthermore, indicators such as improved academic performance and positive student feedback confirm that cultural adaptation in the service model has proven effective in improving learning outcomes. Changes in teaching methods that are more innovative and responsive to local cultural values also indicate that educational institutions are trying to create a more inclusive learning environment (Del Rio-Rama et al., 2021). These findings strengthen the argument that adaptation to cultural context plays a significant role in the success of higher education institutions. These indicators provide a clear picture of how cultural integration in educational services can improve the quality of education and student learning experiences and create a more adaptive and enjoyable academic environment.

Theoretically, applying these success indicators aligns with the concepts in the theory of cultural learning and social interaction. Research by Yilmaz (2022) shows that adapting cultural contexts in education increases the relevance of knowledge and helps students feel more connected to their institutions. This suggests that recognising local cultures and student traditions can create a more supportive and inclusive learning atmosphere, strengthening students' commitment to the education they are undergoing. Thus, adapting cultural contexts in educational service models not only serves to improve teaching effectiveness but also as a strategy to build a more harmonious and sustainable academic community.

3. The Relevance of Islamic Values in Improving Service Quality

Integrating Islamic values in educational services can significantly improve student service quality. An approach based on Islamic values such as justice, empathy, and a sense of responsibility can create a more positive and inclusive learning atmosphere (Rahimizhian et al., 2020). By implementing these principles, educators can build better student relationships and create more open and constructive communication. This supports a learning process that focuses on academic aspects and students' overall character development.

One of the students expressed his views, "*When the lecturer applies Islamic values in teaching, I feel more appreciated and motivated to learn.*" This statement shows that the Islamic values-based approach positively impacts students' motivation and sense of belonging

to the teaching and learning process. The interpretation of the interview results confirms that when education is delivered with empathy and fairness, students feel more involved and committed to learning. This reflects that integrating Islamic values in teaching improves the quality of service and encourages students to participate actively in the learning process.

Furthermore, interviews with lecturers indicated that *"The application of Islamic values in teaching makes me more aware of students' needs and how best to support them."* This statement suggests that awareness of Islamic values enables lecturers to be more responsive to student's needs, thus creating a more relevant and rewarding learning experience. Islamic values guide educators in understanding and responding to diverse classroom dynamics in this context (Rico et al., 2021).

In addition, an interview with another student revealed, *"The Islamic values taught in class make me feel more connected to the material being studied. I feel that what I learn is for exams and everyday life."* This statement shows that integrating Islamic values in education creates a more profound relevance between the teaching material and students' lives. This reflects that applying Islamic principles in learning can strengthen the understanding and application of knowledge in a broader context, making students feel more meaningful in their learning process (Moslehpour et al., 2020).

The data from the findings 85% of students feel a positive impact from applying Islamic values in learning, where they report increased motivation and ownership of the material being taught. In addition, 78% of lecturers reported that using an Islamic values-based approach in teaching has increased student interaction and involvement in the learning process. These findings confirm that integrating Islamic values in education improves the quality of service and creates a more productive and meaningful learning experience for all parties involved.

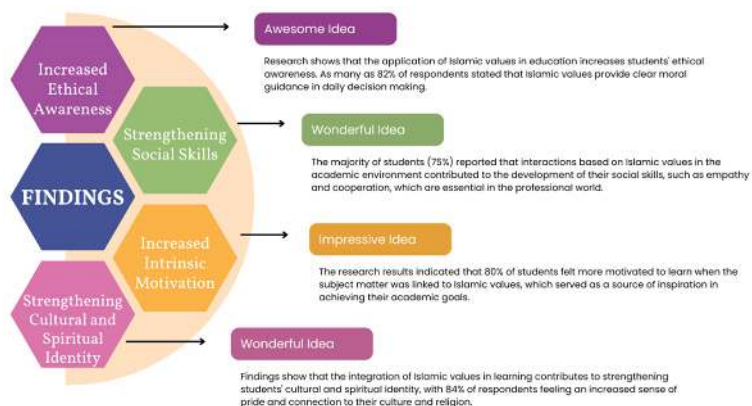


Figure 3. Relevance of Islamic Values in Improving Service Quality

The findings suggest that integrating Islamic values in educational services provides academic benefits and enriches students' learning experience. These values serve as a moral foundation that helps students face challenges in education and everyday life (Dangaiso et al., 2022). This study shows that an Islamic value-based approach can create a more conducive learning atmosphere where students feel valued, involved, and supported in their learning process.

Theoretically, applying Islamic values in education aligns with holistic education, prioritising character and ethics development as part of the learning process (Rukhiran et al., 2023). By integrating these values, education aims to produce academically competent, morally upright, and responsible individuals. This underlines the importance of education that does not only focus on the cognitive aspect but also on character building, which is the main goal in Islamic education (Yasmin et al., 2021). The integration of these values makes education a means to create a generation that is not only intelligent but also moral and responsible towards society.

CONCLUSION

Integrating service values in the context of Islamic universities in Indonesia and Tunisia significantly impacted the quality of services provided to students. The value of trust was built through transparency and open communication, creating a solid relationship between university management and students. Commitment to continuous improvement was seen in the efforts to meet students' academic and non-academic needs, reflecting the institution's dedication to supporting student success. In addition, aligning values between student expectations and the institution's vision increased student satisfaction, thus creating a more productive and harmonious academic environment. These findings confirm that an approach that prioritises service values improves the quality of education and strengthens social relationships within the university community.

This study's scientific contribution lies in developing a service quality model that considers technical aspects and ethical and cultural values inherent in delivering educational services. This study enriches the literature on service management in higher education by demonstrating that applying values such as trust, commitment, and alignment can improve the student experience. The findings provide new perspectives on how moral and cultural values can contribute to institutional effectiveness, opening up opportunities for developing more comprehensive theories and practices in educational service management.

Although this study provides valuable insights into service values in the context of Islamic universities, some limitations need to be considered. First, the study is limited to two university contexts that may not fully represent the situation in other Islamic universities in different countries. Second, the study has not explored the long-term impact of implementing service values on institutional performance and student satisfaction in

depth. Third, limitations in methodology, such as small sample size and limited data collection techniques, may affect the generalizability of the findings. Therefore, further studies are needed to explore the impact of service values in a broader context and to evaluate their implications for the development of educational organisations.

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