Development Of a Quality Management Model Using the Synthesis Framework Approach at The Association of Universities

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the development of a quality management model using the SYNTHESIS Framework approach in association universities. This study was conducted in the province of West Java, an area known as one of the centers of higher education in Indonesia. West Java has a few Association Universities that play an important role in providing quality education for the community. From a planning and implementation perspective, there is a positive trend toward a more systematic, participatory, and values-based quality management system. The quality planning process at institutions such as Halim Sanusi University and STEBI PUI Bogor has begun to be directed beyond meeting administrative demands to become rooted in a holistic and contextual institutional vision. In terms of planning, quality policies have been strategically designed to accommodate the direction of institutional development, stakeholder needs, and national accreditation require the ents. This planning is characterized by the involvement of leaders, quality assurance units, and various elements of the academic community through deliberation forums, quality workshops, and integration into the strategic plan (Renstra) and annual work program. This demonstrates efforts to synchronize quality planning documents with actual implementation in the field. Meanwhile, from an implementation perspective, it was found that quality policies in several units have begun to be implemented using a systems-based approach and a continuous quality improvement cycle. However, implementation still faces challenges such as gaps in human resource capacity, limitations in information technology, and inconsistencies in quality control across all levels. Nevertheless, the collective spirit to implement a culture of quality has grown and continues to be strengthened through training, coaching, and regular monitoring and evaluation. The policy system for integrated quality management at the Association of Higher Education Institutions has shown significant progress, particularly in terms of institutional awareness and strengthening the quality structure. However, the full success of this policy depends heavily on consistent implementation, increased human resource capacity, and a long-term commitment to cultivating quality as an integral part of higher education management.

I. Introduction

In an era of rapidly advancing globalization, integrated quality management has become essential for organizations across different sectors. This is driven by increasing consumer demand for high-quality products and services and growing competition in the marketplace. Integrated Quality Management is not just about upholding quality standards but also involves a comprehensive approach to managing all factors that influence product and service quality (Ijah et al., 2021). Therefore, organizations that adopt integrated quality management can produce products that not only meet consumer expectations but also support long-term sustainability and growth.

According to Dale, (Supare & Kanyal, 2024) in his book entitled "Total Quality Management" states that there are six basic concepts in TQM, namely "A committed and involved management to provide long-term top-to-bottom organizational support, An unwavering focus on the customer, both internally and externally, Effective involvement and utilization of the entire work force, Continuous improvement of the business and production process., Treating suppliers as partners and Establishing performance measures for the processes." (Subandi, 2020).

This concept can be elaborated through three key principles. First, committed and engaged leadership that provides sustained organizational support across all levels is fundamental to fostering a productive and innovative work environment. In this regard, management functions not merely as a regulator but as a leader who inspires and motivates organizational members. Strong managerial commitment to institutional objectives encourages greater employee involvement and reinforces their sense of contribution to achieving the shared vision (Suhono Subandi et al., 2019). Second, a consistent focus on both internal and external customers is essential for establishing mutually beneficial relationships. Internal customers, such as employees, require the same level of attention as external customers. Organizations that effectively recognize and meet the needs of internal customers are more likely to cultivate a positive organizational culture, thereby enhancing external customer satisfaction (Prestiadi et al., 2019). Third, active involvement and optimal utilization of the entire workforce are critical to achieving organizational objectives. Employees who are included in decision-making processes tend to demonstrate higher levels of productivity and commitment. Accordingly, organizations that adopt participatory management practices can significantly enhance employee engagement (Efthymiou & Zarifis, 2021).

Furthermore, in the fourth section, continuous improvement in business and production processes is a strategic step that should not be overlooked. In an increasingly competitive business world, companies must adapt and innovate to remain relevant. According to Nugroho (Sureshchandar, 2023), implementing Lean Management principles can help companies increase efficiency and reduce waste. Fifth, treating suppliers as partners is an increasingly recognized approach in supply chain management.

In this context, mutually beneficial relationships between companies and suppliers can improve product and service quality. Widianto (Dioputra et al., 2022) states that companies that establish strategic partnerships with suppliers tend to have better access to the latest innovations and technologies. Sixth, establishing performance measures for the process is crucial to ensuring that all aspects of management are running according to plan. Clear, measurable performance measures enable management to evaluate the effectiveness of implemented strategies. According to Dwianto (Erlinda et al., 2022), the use of relevant Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) can help organizations monitor progress and identify areas for improvement.

Each of the above aspects is interrelated and contributes to the organization's overall goals. By implementing these principles, companies can not only increase efficiency and productivity but also create a positive and innovative work environment. Therefore, management must remain committed to implementing strategies that support the organization's long-term development.

According to Nasution (Hersusetiyati & Chandra, 2022) Total Quality Management is a holistic philosophy that integrates all management functions, from all parts of the company to individuals, into a single, quality-oriented system. TQM is based on quality, productivity, teamwork, and customer satisfaction. This means that TQM is not just a technical strategy but a comprehensive approach that requires total organizational commitment to creating a sustainable quality culture.

Tjiptono (as cited in Chiarini, 2020) conceptualizes Total Quality Management (TQM) as a managerial approach aimed at enhancing organizational competitiveness through continuous improvement. Such improvements extend across multiple dimensions, including products and services, human resources, operational processes, and the work environment. Accordingly, TQM emphasizes not only outcomes but also the processes and resources that support them, thereby enabling organizations to respond effectively to change within a dynamic business environment.

Feigenbaum (as cited in Sholeh, 2022) describes Total Quality Management (TQM) as a comprehensive management system that integrates all organizational activities, functions, and processes to achieve continuous improvements in quality, cost efficiency, functionality, and delivery performance of products or services. This approach places customer satisfaction at its core, which can be realized only through strong synergy among all organizational components. Accordingly, TQM underscores the importance of involving all levels of the organization in quality improvement efforts (Nurlaili & Wulandari, 2024).

Views TQM as both a philosophy and a methodology that assist organizations in managing change and shaping their own agendas amid complex external pressures. According to him, TQM is not just a tool for improving quality but also a strategic approach to building a resilient, adaptable, and stakeholder-focused organization culture.

Meanwhile, according to Patricia Kovel-Jarboe (Aggarwal et al., 2019), TQM is a comprehensive philosophy for an organization's life and activities. TQM emphasizes continuous improvement to increase quality and productivity and reduce costs. This view emphasizes that TQM is not only about products or services but also concerns the organization's culture, systems, and operations. In other words, TQM is a way of thinking and acting that serves as the basis for all members of the organization in their work.

According to the researcher's perspective, Total Quality Management (TQM) is a comprehensive management philosophy that highlights ongoing improvement, customer and stakeholder satisfaction, and

the involvement of all parts of the organization in creating sustainable quality culture.

Within the language of Total Quality Management (TQM), it consists of three core components: total, quality, and management. The term total refers to the integration of all elements involved in an organization, including staff, suppliers, customers, and other relevant stakeholders (Riad Shams & Belyaeva, 2019). This concept emphasizes that every individual within the organization plays a crucial role in producing goods or delivering services to customers. Therefore, the notion of total in TQM highlights collective responsibility, indicating that organizational success depends on the contribution of all parties throughout the entire work process (Margahana, 2021).

Operationally, quality is determined by two elements: meeting predetermined specifications and meeting expected specifications in accordance with customer needs and expectations. The first quality is known as quality in fact, while the second is called quality in perception (Darimus & Hanif, 2023). In the context of quality in fact, manufacturers indicate that quality is regulated in a system known as a quality assurance system, which enables the production process to produce goods that consistently meet specific standards or specifications.

Thus, a product is considered high quality if it consistently meets the manufacturer's requirements. On the other hand, in perceived quality, quality is defined as something that satisfies or even exceeds customer expectations and needs (Rostini et al., 2022). In this case, the customer determines the quality of a product or service. Therefore, perceived quality is measured by customer or user satisfaction and by increases in customer interest in the product or service.

The next aspect is management, which involves steps such as planning, organizing, controlling, leading, and others. Another definition states that management is the process of planning, organizing, mobilizing, and effectively and efficiently managing human and other resources to achieve goals (Rouli et al., 2022). However, there are differences between traditional management and management within the framework of Total Quality Management (TQM). In traditional management, the focus is on the 7 Ms: man, money, materials, methods, machines, markets, and minutes. Meanwhile, in the TQM concept, what is managed is the quality of the goods and/or services produced. Furthermore, it is essential to understand that the term "management" in the context of Total Quality Management applies to all individuals within the organization. In other words, everyone in the organization, regardless of their status, position, or role, is responsible as a "manager" for their respective responsibilities.

According to Creech, Total Quality Management consists of five pillars: product, process, organization, leadership, and commitment. Each pillar is interconnected with the other four, and if one pillar is weak, all pillars will be affected. On the other hand, Herbert et al. (Frawley et al., 2019) argue that higher education institutions can adopt the principles of Total Quality Management across four main areas. First, the application of TQM to improve administrative and operational functions, or in general, to manage the university. Second, integrating TQM into the curriculum. Third, implementing TQM in classroom teaching methods, and fourth, utilizing TQM to manage research activities at the university.

Integrated Quality Management is essential for managing higher education institutions. Understanding Integrated Quality Management in higher education institutions is crucial, given their vital role in developing high-quality human resources. Integrated Quality Management, commonly known as Total Quality Management, is a comprehensive approach to managing and improving quality across all aspects of an organization. This approach emphasizes the importance of involving all members of the organization in achieving high-quality standards and focuses on customer satisfaction as the primary goal (Wulogening & Timan, 2020).

By applying the principles of Total Quality Management, organizations can create a culture of continuous improvement that enhances not only products and services but also operational efficiency and employee satisfaction. In this context, quality management focuses not only on results but also on the processes that support those results.

The quality of the Higher Education system in Indonesia consists of four main stages, namely: (1) Input; (2) Process; (3) Output; and (4) Outcomes (Nuryana, 2018, p. 120). The process is the key determinant of the output quality and the expected outcome. Components such as curriculum, lecturers, infrastructure, and teaching and learning facilities are an inseparable part of the educational process in higher education. Even if the first to fifth elements are fulfilled, if the sixth element is not fully supported, the quality of the process and results will not be optimal. The availability of adequate infrastructure and learning facilities is the primary key to achieving the desired quality of higher education.

Higher education institutions have implemented the principles of Integrated Quality Management. This is driven by rising public demand for quality education and intensifying competition among educational institutions. For example, with stringent accreditation requirements from national and international accreditation bodies, universities are required to meet not only academic standards but also other aspects such as student services, learning facilities, and research and community service.

Romdloni et al. (as cited in Riinawati, 2022) identified three major challenges faced by higher education

institutions in Indonesia, as acknowledged by observers, academics, the educational community, and researchers. First, the quality of teaching staff remains relatively low, as indicated by the insufficient number of doctoral-degree holders and professors. Second, limited facilities and resources to support students' creativity and innovation in scientific fields persist on several campuses, thereby restricting students' opportunities to develop their interests and talents. Third, the heavy academic workload imposed on both students and lecturers reduces students' opportunities to develop skills beyond the campus and constrains lecturers' ability to conduct research and publish scientific papers.

One of the main challenges facing higher education is the quality of education. This is a shared responsibility, particularly for all stakeholders in higher education in Indonesia. The challenges facing higher education in Indonesia in the future are likely to become increasingly complex, given the need to address emerging issues, both due to ongoing globalization and the challenges the nation faces. Improving the quality of education is influenced not only by scientific developments but also by the role of higher education institutions as agents of change. To achieve high-quality higher education development, a well-planned, integrated strategic plan is required, along with adequate budgetary support to ensure the effective implementation of the Three Pillars of Higher Education.

In the establishment and management of higher education institutions, legal entities such as foundations, associations, and social and religious organizations play a crucial role. One such organization is the Islamic Mass Organization, the Persatuan Ummat Islam (PUI), an Islamic community organization in the Republic of Indonesia based on Islamic teachings, guided by the Qur'an and Sunnah (Joseph et al., 2021).

This organization is committed to shaping individuals, families, communities, nations, and civilizations that God blesses. PUI has established educational institutions encompassing formal, non-formal, and informal education. Since its inception, PUI educational institutions have played a vital role in establishing and developing Islamic values and knowledge. In line with the progress of national development and the challenges posed by the complexity of human life and global competition, PUI must continue to develop formal educational institutions. This includes expanding study programs and disciplines, improving academic quality, and creating various forms and levels of higher education.

Universities in West Java under the auspices of the Islamic Community Association (PUI) comprise six universities: one University in Bandung, one Institute in Sukabumi City, and four Colleges in Majalengka Regency, Ciamis Regency, Cirebon Regency, and Bogor Regency, all of which have good accreditation status. Based on this, it is the target of researchers to provide solutions and acceleration, as well as motivation, for universities under the auspices of the Islamic Community Association to further advance in Integrated Quality Management within their Universities.

The integration of a quality approach with Islamic values, collective culture, and local challenges can be achieved through a planned, continuous process. Islamic values can serve as the moral and ethical foundation for every quality policy, for example, by grounding program planning and evaluation in the principles of trustworthiness, honesty, and responsibility. The collective culture of the academic community also needs to be empowered by encouraging a spirit of togetherness, deliberation, and cooperation, so that every element of the university feels it has a vital role in maintaining and improving quality. Meanwhile, local challenges such as limited resources, resistance to change, or uneven technological development can be addressed through contextual innovation and the adaptation of quality strategies appropriate to the institution's actual conditions. In this way, the quality management approach is not only technical and administrative, but also rich in spiritual values, strengthens social solidarity, and is responsive to the realities of the PUI higher education environment, so that the resulting quality is truly relevant, sustainable, and meaningful (Yang et al., 2022)

The development of an integrated quality management model using a synthetic framework approach goes beyond the conceptual level. The resulting product is a comprehensive and applicable guidebook that includes the model, along with a scientific article published in an accredited journal, as an academic contribution to the development of quality management science in higher education.

This guidebook is designed as a practical tool for association universities to implement integrated quality policies in accordance with their respective values, contexts, and capacities. Meanwhile, the journal's publication aims to disseminate research findings scientifically and to foster academic dialogue to develop broader, more adaptive models (Sugianto, 2024).

The novelty of this research lies in the formulation of the INTISAB-Based Implementation concept, namely an integrated quality management model that combines academic standards with Islamic values in a structured and sustainable manner. INTISAB comes from the Arabic word intisab (انتساب), which means "to attribute oneself" or "to link oneself" to a particular goal, value, or principle. In the context of this research, INTISAB is interpreted as an attitude of full awareness that attributes all academic, managerial, and service activities in higher education to Allah SWT as the goal, making knowledge a path of worship, and integrating Islamic values in every aspect of quality management.

Conceptually, INTISAB is not just a slogan or general orientation, but a framework that demands integration

between the spiritual and technical dimensions in educational quality management. INTISAB emphasizes that the success of a higher education institution is not only measured by the achievement of performance indicators, accreditation, or formal quality standards, but also by the extent to which all these processes are carried out based on the values of sincerity (ikhlas), continuous improvement (islah), trust (amanah), honesty (sidq), compassion (mahabbah), and goodness (ihsan) (Anshori et al., 2022).

In its implementation, INTISAB encompasses six interconnected quality pillars that form a framework for Islamic value-based quality management. First, sincerity, which is the primary foundation that animates the entire integrated quality management process based on Islamic values. In this context, sincerity is understood as the purity of intention in every action, in which all academic, administrative, and service activities are carried out solely for the sake of Allah's pleasure, not for personal gain, public recognition, or prestige.

Second, Islah emphasizes the spirit of continuous improvement, encompassing not only technical aspects but also moral and spiritual ones. Islah means making improvements towards better conditions, avoiding damage, and bringing benefits to all parties involved in the educational process. In the practice of the Internal Quality Assurance System (SPMI), Islah is achieved through routine evaluations of policies, SOPs, and work processes, which serve as a basis for continuous improvement. The Islah-based internal quality audit process not only highlights shortcomings but also offers constructive solutions, ensuring the improvements made have a positive, tangible impact.

Third, trustworthiness, which ensures that all responsibilities, including academic management, administration, and student services, are carried out professionally, transparently, and responsibly. This trustworthiness encompasses the accuracy of quality assurance commitments and the consistency with which public and stakeholder trust is maintained.

Fourth, mahabbah (community), which fosters an atmosphere of love, respect, and caring in every interaction, especially among lecturers, students, and educational staff. With mahabbah, the educational process becomes not just about transferring knowledge but also about building warm, constructive partnerships (Dasmana et al 2022).

Fifth, Sidq emphasizes honesty, integrity, and openness in every quality assurance process. Sidq promotes an organizational culture free from data manipulation, report manipulation, or procedural irregularities, ensuring that every evaluation result truly reflects the actual condition.

Finally, Tawakkal teaches a balance between optimal effort to maintain quality and complete surrender of the results to Allah. Tawakkal does not mean passivity; rather, it strengthens the motivation to work optimally while recognizing human limitations and relying on His help.

The six pillars of INTISAB quality can present a quality management system that not only meets academic standards but also fosters a strong Islamic character across all levels of higher education, ensuring the resulting quality is complete, sustainable, and of religious value.

ith this overall approach, and the novelty of this research, lie in its ability to integrate quality management with Islamic values within the INTISAB-Based Implementation concept, which has not been thoroughly studied in the context of Islamic higher education. This innovation also makes a tangible contribution to the development of Islamic-based theory and practice in quality management for higher education, both nationally and globally..

In addition to developing the INTISAB-Based Implementation concept, this research also contributes to the field by producing a novel product. The quality management model is not only presented conceptually but also concretely outlined in an integrated quality guidebook that institutions can use directly. Furthermore, the output, in the form of scientific articles published in accredited journals, is a significant contribution to the development of science in the field of quality management in higher education (Binyamin et al., 2019).

Within the context of integrated quality management, the SYNTHESIS Framework also plays a vital role in ensuring that educational quality standards are consistently upheld. By implementing an integrated assessment system, every aspect of the learning process can be thoroughly evaluated, for example, with a. A transparent, data-driven accreditation system allows institutions to more easily meet the standards established by accrediting bodies. This not only boosts the institution's reputation but also reassures students and parents that they are receiving a quality education.

The importance of research on the development of, and an integrated quality management model with the SYNTHESIS Framework approach in association universities, aligns with various national policies in higher education. One of the legal bases is Law Number 12 of 2012 concerning.

The novelty of this research lies in three aspects: its integrative and contextual approach, its practical and usable model, and its tangible product for institutions. This research not only enhances theoretical knowledge of higher education quality management but also offers concrete solutions for university associations seeking a quality model that aligns with their need’s identity.

Furthermore, Government Regulation Number 57 of 2021 on National Education Standards emphasizes that higher education must meet national standards, including education quality standards, which encompass planning,

implementation, evaluation, and sustainable development. In this context, integrated quality management is key to ensuring the systematic and sustainable achievement of these standards.

Furthermore, Minister of Education and Culture Regulation No. 3 of 2020 concerning National Higher Education Standards emphasizes the importance of an internal quality assurance system (SPMI), which must be developed and implemented by every higher education institution. Therefore, this research is relevant to support efforts to formulate a more innovative and adaptive quality management model through the SYNTHESIS Framework (Integrative System for Strengthening Quality Based on Islamic Values) in response to demands for accountability, efficiency, and increased competitiveness in the era of digital transformation.

II. Method

This research was conducted in West Java province, a region known as one of Indonesia's centers of higher education. West Java has several universities affiliated with associations that play a vital role in providing quality education to the community. Universities in West Java vary in size, reputation, and areas of expertise, covering a wide range of disciplines that reflect labor market needs and developments in science and technology. The selection of West Java as the research location was based on several strategic considerations. First, West Java has a significant number of association universities, enabling the researcher to obtain rich, varied data. Second, the associated universities in West Java are located across various geographic environments, providing a comprehensive picture of the application of the SYNTHESIS Framework in different contexts. Third, the dynamics of universities in West Java also reflect the challenges and opportunities faced by universities throughout Indonesia, making the findings of this study relevant not only to West Java but also to other regions (Armawati et al., 2018).

This study examines key units within higher education institutions, including faculties, study programs, and both academic and non-academic service units. It also investigates the role of leadership at different levels, from the rectorate to the heads of study programs, in supporting the implementation of the SYNTHESIS Framework. Higher education leaders are vital in driving and maintaining quality improvement efforts through measurable policies, effective communication, and results-focused strategies decision-making.

Furthermore, this study involved lecturers, administrative staff, students, and alumni as key actors who interact directly with the quality management system. Lecturers and administrative staff provided internal perspectives on how the SYNTHESIS. The Framework is implemented in daily activities and the challenges they face in carrying out their roles. Students, as the primary recipients of educational services, provided critical feedback on the effectiveness of this quality management model in improving the quality of their academic experience.

Research design is a systematic framework for planning and implementing research to achieve specific objectives. According to Suharto (2020, p. 45), research design not only includes selecting data collection methods but also selecting an appropriate approach that aligns with the research questions. This study uses qualitative analysis and a case study approach within the ADDIE (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation) framework to examine the application of the SYNTHESIS Framework model in the context of integrated quality management in higher education. This research design was chosen to provide an in-depth understanding of how the SYNTHESIS Framework is applied in real settings and how its key elements interact to influence the quality of education in higher education.

To obtain rich and in-depth qualitative data, this study employed several data collection techniques, including in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. According to Sugiyono (2018), research data collection techniques are crucial steps in ensuring the validity and reliability of research results. In-depth interviews were conducted with university leaders, heads of study programs, lecturers, administrative staff, students, and alumni to understand how each element of the SYNTHESIS Framework is implemented and integrated into daily practice. Participatory observation was conducted to gain a direct understanding of the interactions among framework elements and their impact on the quality of education and services at the university.

Meanwhile, quantitative research was used to obtain objective initial data related to the implementation of quality management at the Association of Higher Education Institutions. The instrument used was a questionnaire compiled from quality indicators, such as leadership, strategic planning, focus on service users, data measurement and analysis, and institutional performance. The questionnaire was distributed to respondents, including higher education leaders, lecturers, and education staff with knowledge and involvement in quality management at their institutions. The findings from this quantitative data were then used as input to the model synthesis stage, which was strengthened and deepened through qualitative data (e.g., interviews or FGDs) within a mixed-methods framework.

Document analysis involved reviewing policies, guidelines, and internal quality management reports from the research university. These documents provide essential historical and institutional context for understanding how the SYNTHESIS Framework was implemented and developed over time (Esmaeili et al., 2018).

In the data analysis, researchers used thematic analysis to identify key themes. These themes were then organized to give a comprehensive overview of the implementation of the SYNTHESIS Framework in higher education. This analysis also helped researchers explore relationships among the framework's elements and identify factors that support or hinder its successful adoption implementation.

This research employed qualitative methods and a mixed methods approach. The purpose of the qualitative approach was to gain a deeper understanding of current quality management practices in higher education and the challenges and opportunities encountered in implementing them. Researchers collected contextual data through observation and in-depth interviews. Meanwhile, the mixed methods approach combined qualitative and quantitative data. This was conducted through a survey to gauge stakeholders' perceptions of the current quality management system (Din, 2020).

Researchers can ensure that the developed model is not only theoretical but also practical and relevant to real-world needs. Using a synthesis framework, researchers can integrate existing quality management elements and identify best practices from models implemented at other universities. This research is expected to make a significant contribution to advancing quality management in higher education and to provide evidence-based recommendations for continuous improvement (Mpungose, 2023).

Research by Smith et al. (Saeed et al., 2018) shows that strong social support can reduce the risk of adolescents engaging in deviant behavior, highlighting the importance of social interaction in their development. Next, researchers will conduct theoretical modeling, using the results of data analysis to develop a theory that explains the phenomenon under study. In case studies, researchers can create models that illustrate the relationships among factors influencing adolescent behavior. For example, researchers can show how economic factors, education, and emotional support interact and influence adolescents' decisions in facing life challenges. Research by Jones et al. (2020, p. 95) emphasizes that a deep understanding of adolescents' social and economic contexts is crucial in formulating effective interventions.

A. Data was collected using several techniques, namely:

1) In-depth Interviews

In-depth interviews are a highly effective data collection technique. Researchers will conduct semi-structured interviews with university leaders (rectors, deans, heads of study programs), lecturers, administrative staff, and students. These interviews aim to understand their perspectives and experiences with the implementation of the SYNTHESIS Framework, and to identify challenges and supporting factors.

2) Participant Observation

Participant observation is another important method in qualitative research, where the researcher is directly involved in the environment being studied. Researchers will conduct direct observations within the university environment to examine how the elements of the SYNTHESIS Framework are applied in daily activities, including teaching and learning, administration, and student services. These observations will provide empirical data that supports the interview results and helps understand the dynamics in the field.

3) Document Analysis

Document analysis is a method for examining written materials to understand their context and meaning. Researchers will gather and analyze related documents, including quality policies, operational guidelines, evaluation reports, and other relevant materials. This analysis aims to identify how the SYNTHESIS Framework is formally developed, implemented, and evaluated at the university being studied.

4) Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

FGDs are conducted by involving a small group of respondents with an interest or experience in implementing quality management within the association's higher education institutions. This group discussion aims to gain a collective understanding and various perspectives on the elements of the SYNTHESIS Framework. Procedure: Invite representatives from multiple units and levels within the higher education institution, including leaders, lecturers, and administrative staff. Develop an agenda and a discussion guide covering the essential topics of the SYNTHESIS Framework. Facilitate the discussion and ensure active participation from all group members. Record and note the results of the discussion for further analysis. Objective: To gain collective insights and views on the challenges, opportunities, and impacts of implementing the SYNTHESIS Framework in higher education institutions.

5) Snowball Sampling

In qualitative research, snowball sampling is a sampling technique in which researchers start with a small number of relevant respondents and then ask them to recommend others who meet the research criteria.

Snowball sampling can be used in higher education research to identify students or alumni who have specific experiences, such as using social media to choose a college or develop a program of study. For example, in a study examining how freshmen use Instagram to select a college, researchers might begin by identifying students who use Instagram to make that decision (Rachmat et al., 2022).

The advantage of snowball sampling is that it can reach individuals who may not be reached with traditional sampling methods. This is especially important for research focused on specific populations, such as students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds or members of university groups. However, it is essential to remember

that this method may introduce bias because the recommended individuals may share characteristics with the initial respondents, resulting in a less diverse sample. Data from interviews, observations, and documents will be analyzed using thematic analysis. John Creswell (Aziz et al., 2021) explains that thematic analysis is an approach for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns or themes in qualitative data.

III. Results and Discussion

This research was conducted at two higher education institutions under the auspices of the Islamic Community Association (PUI): Halim Sanusi University (UHS) in Bandung and the Islamic Economics and Business College (STEBI) PUI in Bogor. The selection of these two locations was a strategic decision based on a scientific rationale, aimed at enriching the development of an integrated quality management model through a synthesis framework (Rahmat et al., 2022). The two institutions were chosen because they have different yet complementary institutional characteristics. Halim Sanusi University offers a variety of interdisciplinary study programs, while STEBI PUI Bogor focuses more on Islamic economics and business. This difference is a key strength, enabling a comprehensive view of quality needs across various dimensions and perspectives.

The research conducted in two locations also enabled a more thorough mapping of quality gaps. By comparing actual conditions and quality expectations at both institutions, researchers identified key areas for improvement and developed solutions relevant to real-world situations. Furthermore, the research sites, situated in two major cities in West Java, Bandung and Bogor, reflect the geographic and structural scope of the PUI network itself. This makes the research findings more relevant and applicable to similar institutions under PUI's auspices and other Islamic educational systems institutions.

From a methodological perspective, conducting research in two locations provides advantages for the validity and reliability of the findings. Data and information from two institutions enable researchers to triangulate, ensuring the developed model is not subjective or confined to a single context. Instead, the model is tested in two environments, increasing confidence in the results.

Equally important, both Halim Sanusi University and STEBI PUI Bogor have shown a strong commitment to fostering a culture of quality. While their methods and challenges differ, they share a passion for improving institutional governance and enhancing the quality of higher education services. Therefore, the research conducted at these two institutions is not only scientifically relevant but also reflects the real needs and collective drive of PUI institutions to establish an integrated, Islamic, and practical quality management system model.

Through this cross-location approach, it is hoped that the integrated quality management model developed will serve as a strategic solution to improve the quality of PUI's higher education and as a reference for other institutions that wish to integrate Islamic values into their higher education quality assurance systems on an ongoing basis.

A. Student Questionnaire Results

Research Questionnaire on the Development of an Integrated Quality Management Model Using a Synthesis Framework Approach at the Association of Higher Education Institutions.

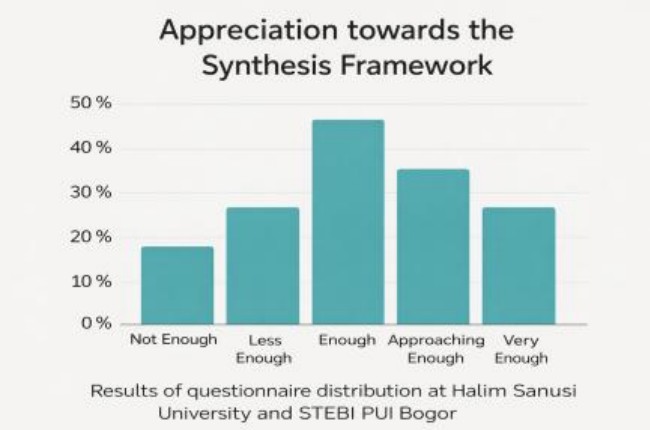

Fig. 1. Questionnaire Results of Halim Sanusi University Students and STEBI PUI Bogor

The results of questionnaires distributed to two universities, Halim Sanusi University and STEBI PUI Bogor, show that respondents generally expressed positive appreciation for the proposed synthesis framework approach to developing integrated quality management. The average respondent's response ranged from "sufficient" to "close to very sufficient," indicating that this approach is considered relevant, acceptable, and potentially feasible for implementation at each institution. This appreciation reflects the academic community's awareness and acceptance of the importance of innovation in a quality system that relies not only on a technocratic approach but also incorporates Islamic values, institutional character, and the real needs of community-based universities like PUI (Fitriyah & Santosa 2020).

B. Initial Construction of the Model Based on Empirical Findings

The initial construction of an integrated quality management model, based on a synthesis framework, was grounded in empirical findings from two higher education institutions under the auspices of the Islamic Community Association (PUI), namely Halim Sanusi University and

STEBI PUI Bogor. This construction process began with a series of systematic steps that included data collection through observation, in-depth interviews, documentation studies, and the distribution of questionnaires to various stakeholders, including leaders,

lecturers, education staff, students, and internal quality assurance units. The data obtained were analyzed thematically and combined with gap analysis to map actual quality needs and the gap between ideal and existing conditions.

Empirical findings show that, despite institutional commitment to quality improvement, there are still weaknesses in the systematic and sustainable planning, implementation, evaluation, and follow-up of quality management. Additionally, the current quality approach tends to be administrative and has not been fully embedded in the daily work culture. However, there is significant potential for growth, such as leadership openness to quality innovation, deeply rooted Islamic values in institutional governance, and the collective spirit of the academic community in creating a campus based on community values.

Starting from this condition, the initial development of the model was designed to create a framework that combines technical quality dimensions (such as the PDCA cycle, quality standards, and internal audits) with a value-based approach rooted in Islamic principles and PUI ethics.

This model was developed as a systemic framework consisting of several main components: institutional quality vision, quality organizational structure, internal quality standards, continuous monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, and the integration of Islamic values as an ethical and spiritual foundation.

This model not only emphasizes the importance of a robust, structured internal quality assurance system but also encourages the development of a quality culture grounded in faith and morals. One distinguishing aspect of this initial construction is the inclusion of the principle of synthesis as an integrative method that links modern quality management approaches to PUI's distinctive values. This principle allows the model to adapt to each institution's specific needs while maintaining alignment with national quality standards and the community's mission.

This initial construction was also designed to respond to the dynamics of the university's external and internal environments by actively involving all components of the institution, from top leadership to technical implementation units. Each element of the model is linked in an interconnected cycle, forming a sustainable, evaluative quality system capable of continuous improvement.

This model also creates a participatory space for external stakeholders such as alumni, graduate users, and strategic partners in the quality evaluation process. The initial construction of this model resulted from a direct interaction between theory and reality, between required quality standards and empirical conditions in the field.

This construction is the initial foundation whose reliability will later be tested through an expert validation process and limited trials, before being widely operationalized in the implementation of PUI-based higher education quality management (Hambali, 2021).

C. Summary of Key Research Findings

This research aims to develop an Integrated Quality Management (IQM) model using a relevant and applicable synthetic framework approach for implementation in higher education institutions under the auspices of the Association. Based on the research process, which included literature review, needs analysis, field data collection, expert validation, and limited implementation testing, several key findings were identified that underpin the formulation of a comprehensive model (Mayasari et al., 2021).

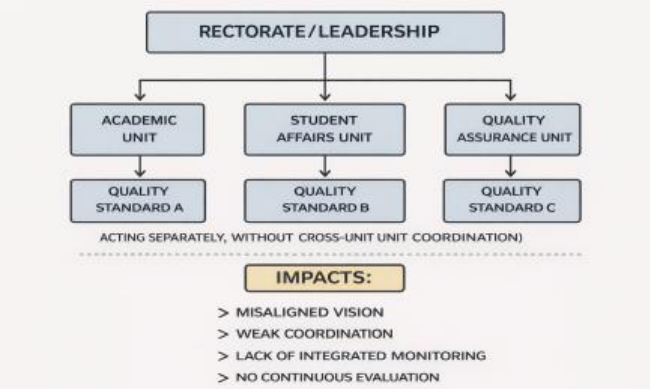

Fig. 2. Partial Quality Management System Flowchart, Adapted from field research results, 2025.

The first finding shows that the quality management system across the association's universities is currently fragmented and not yet fully integrated. Each work unit or section tends to implement quality standards in a sectoral manner, without a shared vision and strong coordination mechanisms between units. This has led to inconsistencies in the implementation of academic and non-academic quality assurance, as well as weak ongoing monitoring and evaluation system.

Fig. 3. Diagram of Determining Factors of Quality Management Effectiveness, Adapted from the results of field research, 2025.

The second finding revealed that organizational culture, leadership, and commitment to quality significantly influence the effectiveness of quality management. Most of the universities studied indicated that the success of quality implementation depends heavily on institutional leadership in fostering a culture of quality, open internal communication, and empowering human resources in the continuous improvement process.

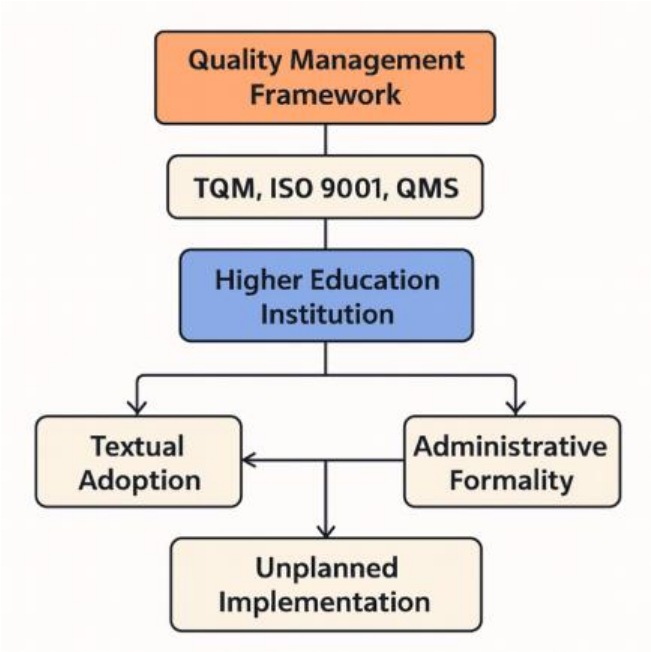

Fig. 4. Challenges of Implementing the Quality Management Framework at PT Perhimpunan, Adapted from the results of field research, 2025.

The third finding indicates that current quality management frameworks, like TQM, ISO 21001, and SPMI, do not fully address the unique characteristics and strategic needs of the Association's Universities. These models are often adopted verbatim without adapting to the context, leading to unsustainable implementation or just an administrative formality (Gungnaidi & Assyahri 2024).

In response to these findings, this study successfully formulated an Integrated Quality Management Model based on the Synthesis Framework, combining the best elements of various quality management approaches while being contextually adapted to the characteristics of the Association of Higher Education Institutions. This model consists of five main pillars, namely: Strategic Quality Leadership, Integration of Academic and Non-academic Systems, Quality Culture Based on Association Values, Continuous and Data-Driven Evaluation Cycles, and Technology-Based Innovation and Transformation. This model is designed not only as a theoretical framework but also as a practical guide that higher education institutions can implement to manage, develop, and sustain quality. Validation by experts and initial trials indicate that this model has high relevance, flexibility, and potential to improve overall quality performance in the Association of Higher Education Institutions environment (Deming, W.E., 2019).

D. Contextual Analysis of Findings on the Association of Higher Education Institutions

The main findings of this study require deeper analysis within the unique context of the Higher Education Institutions under the Association's auspices. The Association of Higher Education Institutions, as educational institutions with a religious identity, ideological values, and collective-based leadership, possesses characteristics that distinguish them from other public higher education institutions. Therefore, the quality management model developed must account for these contextual dimensions to ensure its relevance and applicability. The following diagram illustrates the relationship between the Association of Higher Education Institutions' contextual characteristics and the need for a relevant, adaptive quality management model. Factors such as a collegial organizational structure, limited professional human resources, and a community-based mission orientation influence the implementation of the internal quality system (Hutajulu et al., 2024). Therefore, the quality management model must accommodate this complexity through a contextual and integrative approach.

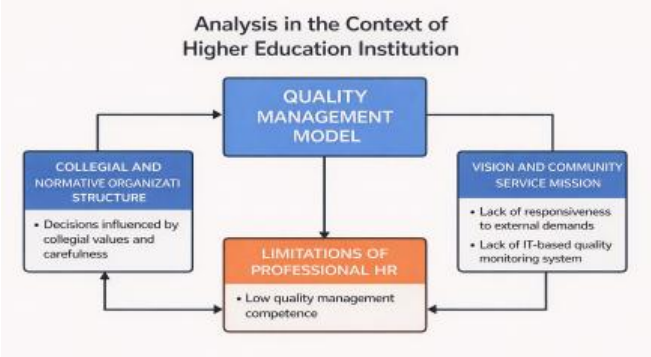

Fig. 5. Contextual Analysis of Findings on Association of Higher Education Institutions, Adapted from field research results, 2025.

One important contextual factor affecting the research results is that the organizational structures of many Association Universities tend to be collaborative and value-based. Strategic decisions are not always driven by performance metrics or quantitative data but are often influenced by family values, moral considerations, and a desire to preserve internal harmony. The finding regarding the weak integration of quality systems suggests that a data-driven, systematic approach to quality management has not yet become the prevailing culture. Therefore, the developed model must bridge the gap between traditional and modern management practices and techniques.

E. Strategic Significance of the Resulting Integrated Quality Management Model.

The Integrated Quality Management (IQM) model developed in this research has significant strategic importance for the comprehensive and sustainable enhancement of the quality of the Association's Higher Education Institutions. This model functions not only as a managerial tool for quality management but also as a strategic framework that aligns the institution's vision with operational practices across organizational levels (Arifudin 2019).

F. The Role of the Synthesis Framework Approach in Model Development

The synthesis framework approach plays a key role in developing the Integrated Quality Management Model (IQM) in this study. It was selected as a methodological strategy to develop a comprehensive, contextually relevant, and applicable quality model, especially suitable for higher education environments with unique features (Sagala, S., 2018). The primary purpose of this approach is to establish a strong, diverse theoretical foundation. In this study, synthesis is used to develop a conceptual framework that combines five main aspects: quality leadership, organizational governance, evaluation systems, quality culture, and information technology. Using the synthesis approach, the developed model does not rely on a single paradigm but merges the strengths of multiple quality paradigms, offering a more holistic view solution.

The second role is to bridge theory and practice. Quality management implementation often faces operational challenges, including limited human resources, resistance to change, and low literacy levels. The synthetic framework approach enables flexible, adaptive model development, as synthesis results rely not only on conceptual structures but also on field dynamics, as captured by empirical data from field studies and expert validation.

The third role of this approach is to tailor the model to the association's institutional context and values. Many traditional quality approaches are technocratic and tend to overlook local, ideological, or religious beliefs. The synthesis framework in this study, however, incorporates the Association's unique values of Higher Education, such as spirituality, community service, togetherness, and intellectual outreach, into the model design. Therefore, values become an integral part of the quality system, not just an additional benefit (Afridoni et al 2022).

The fourth role is to encourage innovation in model design. By not being fixated on a single approach, the synthesis framework provides space to create new structures that are more relevant to current needs and future projections. An example is integrating digital transformation into a quality evaluation system, an innovative response to the demands of the technological era. The synthesis approach allows for the integration of these ideas without compromising system alignment.

The synthetic framework approach used in this research serves not only as an analytical method but also as a model development strategy that generates contextual, innovative, and institutionally identified quality management solutions. This approach ensures that the resulting model is not simply a replica of a global quality system, but rather a locally relevant, scientifically engineered product that still meets national and internationally competitive quality standards.

G. ADDIE (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation) Framework SYNTHESIS model

The ADDIE framework, which consists of five main stages of analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation in the Synthesis Framework model, is an approach to learning development designed to produce a systematic, adaptive, and sustainable process. This model views each stage not as a rigid, separate step but as part of an integrated, interconnected system, where the results of one stage influence and provide feedback to the other stages (Irpan, 2022).

The process begins with the analysis phase, which focuses on in-depth identification of learning needs, student characteristics, learning objectives, and available conditions and resources. Within the Synthesis Framework, this analysis is conducted comprehensively, encompassing performance gap analysis, assessment of socio-cultural context, and evaluation of organizational or institutional readiness. The data and information obtained at this stage not only serve as the basis for planning but are also synthesized to ensure that the learning design aligns with realities and needs on the ground.

Based on the analysis results, the next step is to design. In this stage, all analysis findings are turned into a structured learning plan. Design involves setting clear, measurable learning objectives; creating relevant learning strategies; choosing appropriate methods and media; and selecting evaluation tools. In the Synthesis Framework model, the design is flexible; it is developed with alternatives in mind to adapt to changing conditions during implementation.

The development phase then becomes the actual process of realizing the design. Learning content, media, and evaluation tools are developed in accordance with the established design. The Synthesis Framework model emphasizes iterative development, where work is tested in stages through initial trials to obtain user feedback, then refined before widespread implementation. This approach enables a repeatable cycle of improvement, ensuring optimal quality and high relevance of learning products.

Once the development process is complete, the next stage is implementation, which involves applying the

learning to real-world situations. Within the synthesis framework, implementation is seen as a dynamic stage in which the instructor or facilitator not only delivers the material according to plan but also adjusts in real time based on student responses, resource availability, and field conditions. Implementation also serves as a platform for collecting empirical data valuable for evaluation and refinement.

The final stage, evaluation, measures how well the developed learning meets the stated objectives. In the Synthesis Framework model, evaluation is conducted formatively at each stage to provide immediate feedback and summatively at the end of the cycle to determine overall effectiveness. The results of this evaluation not only conclude the process but also serve as a gateway to the next ADDIE cycle, making learning development an iterative process that is continuously refined and adapted to evolving needs.

By integrating ADDIE into the Synthesis Framework, the learning development process becomes more structured yet flexible, grounded in thorough analysis, strategically designed, iteratively developed, adaptively implemented, and continuously evaluated. This ensures that the resulting learning is not only practical but also relevant and responsive to change.

H. Relevance of the Synthesis Framework to Customer Loyalty

The Synthesis Framework is powerfully relevant to the formation of customer loyalty within the Association of Higher Education Institutions. In higher education, customer loyalty refers not only to students as users of educational services but also to parents, alumni, the community, and even institutional partners. This loyalty is a strategic factor that determines the sustainability and competitiveness of institutions amid global competition.

Based on Islamic values, the Synthesis Framework presents a quality approach that is not only administrative but also spiritual and ethical. Students, for example, perceive that the campus focuses not only on academic achievement but also on the development of morals, honesty, social responsibility, and justice. This fosters a strong emotional bond, creating a sense of pride and connection with the institution. This emotional bond is key to promoting long-term loyalty.

I. Relationship between Research Results and Objectives and Problem Formulation

1) The Policy System for Integrated Quality Management in the Association of Higher Education Institutions is seen from the planning and implementation aspects.

The integrated quality management policy system at the Association of Higher Education Institutions (HAU), Halim Sanusi University, and the Islamic Economics and Business College (STEBI) PUI Bogor, reflects the institutions' serious efforts to strengthen their commitment to quality higher education aligned with Islamic, communal, and national values. However, in practice, both during planning and implementation, these quality policies still face several challenges that require systematic review and refinement (Suhartiningsih et al., 2024).

From a planning perspective, quality policies at the Association of Higher Education Institutions are generally outlined in formal documents such as institutional strategic plans, educational quality standards, and operational quality assurance guidelines. However, these plans are often developed solely administratively, rather than integrated into the institution's overall formulation of its vision and strategy. Quality plans tend to be reactive, created to meet accreditation requirements or external regulations, rather than as part of a long-term planning cycle oriented toward strengthening the institution's competitiveness (Sitompul et al., 2024).

This situation arises from several factors, including low-quality literacy among policymakers, suboptimal stakeholder involvement in quality planning, and weak integration of quality planning with valid academic and non-academic performance data. As a result, the quality plans often do not reflect actual needs on the ground and do not serve as a shared reference for implementing institutional activities in a measurable, sustainable manner.

Meanwhile, regarding implementation, the quality policy system at the Association of Higher Education Institutions has not yet been fully and effectively implemented. Although policy documents such as standard operating procedures, quality manuals, and self-evaluation systems are available, their implementation at the faculty, study program, and support unit levels is often inconsistent (Rawat et al 2022).

This is evident in the large gap between the policies that are created and how things work in practice. In many cases, quality is still seen as just an administrative task rather than part of a work culture that encompasses all aspects of the academic environment.

An ineffective internal monitoring and evaluation system worsens these implementation issues. Internal quality audits, which should be reflective and corrective, are often seen as routine tasks that do not promote performance improvement. Additionally, low motivation and a lack of recognition for implementing quality standards also lead to a diminished commitment to consistently following quality policies. In this context, a culture of quality has not yet fully developed into a collective awareness that encourages institutional behavioral change (Khairi et al 2023).

This situation is not without hope. The potential to enhance the quality policy system is significant, especially if a more integrative and transformative approach guides its planning and implementation. This means that quality planning is no longer designed merely to meet document requirements but instead becomes a genuinely guiding tool capable of identifying the institution's strengths and

weaknesses and developing effective quality improvement strategies (Fauzan et al 2020).

IV. Conclusion

In conclusion, the transformation of the quality management system within the Association of Higher Education Institutions has progressed positively, marked by strategic planning, leadership dedication, and increasing participation from the academic community. Despite hurdles related to human resource capacity, resistance to change, and technological constraints, collective efforts continue to foster a culture of sustainable quality. The SYNTHESIS Framework offers a contextual, integrated approach that connects policy and practice, combining both quantitative and qualitative evaluation and aligning with national standards and local values. Success depends not only on meeting formal indicators but also on embedding quality principles into the institutional identity, supported by visionary leadership, open communication, and consistent practices training. Thus, quality management is evolving beyond administrative compliance into a transformative institutional movement rooted in vision, values, and collective participation.

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