



AN ANALYSIS OF CHARACTERISTICS AND DIFFERENCES: ISLAMIC EDUCATION MANAGEMENT AND CONVENTIONAL EDUCATION MANAGEMENT

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Abstract :

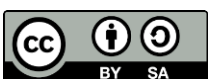
Global educational developments demand that educational institutions adapt their paradigms, methods, and governance to remain relevant and effective. In this context, significant differences emerge between Islamic Education Management (IEM) and Conventional Education Management (CEM), spanning philosophical foundations, goal orientations, and operational practices. This study is designed to identify the characteristics, compare both educational management models, and analyze the opportunities for integration between the two. The research problem covers questions regarding the characteristics of IEM and CEM, their primary differences, and the potential for integrating the modernization of IEM with CEM principles without losing its Islamic value identity. The study employs a qualitative approach with a library research method. Data were gathered from textbooks, accredited scientific journals, and related regulatory documents, then analyzed using content analysis and comparative analysis to highlight the similarities, differences, and relevance of integrating both systems. The results indicate that IEM emphasizes the integration of spiritual values, prophetic leadership, and the goal of shaping insan kamil (the holistic human being), whereas CEM is oriented toward efficiency, effectiveness, productivity, and graduates' readiness to face industrial demands. Comparative analysis reveals that integrating IEM and CEM through the adoption of technology and modern management principles can enhance the quality of Islamic education without sacrificing religious values. These findings offer a balanced managerial framework between moral-spiritual values and the organizational effectiveness of modern education.

Keywords : Quality Management System, ISO 9001:2015, Education Quality Assurance

INTRODUCTION

In an increasingly intense era of globalization, educational systems worldwide are undergoing a fundamental paradigm shift regarding the goals, methods, and governance of education. The globalization of education not only expands access and learning standards but also drives a shift in thinking about what the primary function of education should be. Education is no longer viewed merely as a tool for transmitting technical knowledge, but also as an arena for developing character, cultural values, and global competencies. This paradigm shift can be observed in the push for technology integration, a focus on 21st-century competencies, and an emphasis on universal values such as inclusivity and diversity (Maulana et al., 2026).

This transformation reflects new demands on the governance of educational organizations to become more effective, adaptive, and responsive to global social and economic dynamics. The concept of educational governance now requires a broader understanding of how organizational structures, policies,



and administrative processes can support the achievement of holistic educational goals. Literature reviews indicate that governance in the educational context is multidimensional: it encompasses the distribution of authority, stakeholder participation, and accountability to the wider community (Onia, 2025). This implies that modern education is not just about academic inputs and outputs, but also about how an institution can respond to global pressures while remaining locally relevant.

Within the context of these global changes, a sharp dichotomy emerges between two major educational models: the conventional educational system (often referred to as secular or Western education) and the educational system rooted in Islamic values. These two models have developed historically based on different philosophies, goals, and methodologies. Conventional education, which is dominant in many Western countries, tends to be rooted in secular principles; namely, the separation of religion from the sphere of formal education, alongside an emphasis on rationality, empiricism, and scientific objectivity. Consequently, this model focuses on developing cognitive abilities, logic, and readiness to face the demands of the modern, market-oriented workforce. Values such as critical thinking, scientific debate, and individual achievement serve as its defining characteristics.

Meanwhile, Islamic education is developed through the integration of religious values within its curriculum structure and educational practices. Islamic education does not merely transfer factual knowledge and technical skills, but also instills spiritual, moral, and ethical values derived from the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith. From an axiological perspective, the goals of Islamic education include shaping pious, morally upright Muslim individuals who possess a balanced understanding of both worldly and otherworldly dimensions. This signifies an emphasis on the values of *tawhid* (the oneness of God) and *amanah* (moral trust) as the epistemological foundations of the entire learning process.

The social facts emerging from this paradigmatic difference are highly evident in contemporary educational practices. In many Muslim-majority countries, the interest in preserving religious identity often clashes with the demands of educational globalization, which tends to be secular and promotes liberal values. For instance, Islamic educational institutions in several countries face a dilemma: maintaining the authenticity of traditional teachings while adapting the curriculum to international standards and rapidly evolving digital technologies. This reflects how Islamic education strives to maintain relevance without losing its core internal values.

A shift in values is also occurring within conventional education. Many modern educational systems are beginning to recognize the need to integrate moral and ethical values into educational policies as a response to the value crisis in modern society. For example, an emphasis on character education, appreciation for diversity, and inclusive policies are being adopted in many national curricula as part of a holistic educational strategy. This demonstrates that secular conventional education is no longer solely technically based; it also

recognizes the necessity of value-based approaches to address contemporary social challenges.

Educational theory explains that educational paradigms are not static. According to constructivist and critical approaches to education, educational paradigms transform alongside social changes and community needs. Educational systems theory views education as comprising interacting elements: curriculum, society, policy, and social goals. When one of these elements changes for instance, due to globalization the entire educational paradigm shifts responsively. In this context, Islamic education and conventional education demonstrate different manifestations of this systemic dynamic because each is rooted in a different framework of values and goals.

This paradigm shift provides a strong argument for the necessity of systematic, comparative scientific studies between these two educational management models. Such comparisons are relevant not only for understanding theoretical differences but also for evaluating practical implications in the governance of educational institutions, both in Muslim-majority countries and multicultural societies. Literature critiques suggest that a more comprehensive understanding of these differences can foster a synthesis or alternative models that are more inclusive and humanistic, particularly within an interconnected and complex global context.

Previous research also indicates that the Islamic educational system faces significant challenges in adapting to global expectations without losing its spiritual value orientation. This is evident in efforts to integrate digital learning, competency-based curricula, and value-based leadership within Islamic educational environments. These endeavors represent a response to global demands while maintaining consistency with holistic Islamic principles.

Thus, the global educational paradigm shift and the dichotomy between conventional and Islamic educational systems are not merely theoretical phenomena, but rather social realities that require profound analysis. This study is crucial as it illustrates how both educational models interact with current social, cultural, and economic demands, and how fundamental philosophical differences impact effective and relevant organizational governance in education. Amidst increasingly complex global challenges, a comprehensive understanding of the characteristics and differences between these two models serves as an essential foundation for designing responsive, inclusive, and dignified educational policies.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research design employed in this study is qualitative, with a library research approach as the primary strategy to understand and compare the characteristics of Islamic Education Management (IEM) and Conventional Education Management (CEM). A qualitative approach was selected because this study aims to explore meanings, conceptual patterns, and theoretical relationships within the existing literature, rather than merely counting or testing numerical variables. According to Creswell, qualitative research allows

researchers to understand phenomena based on participant perspectives within natural contexts, while considering the socio-cultural complexity of the analyzed texts (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The data sources consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data are drawn from classical and contemporary textbooks on educational management theory, as well as specific reference books on Islamic education and general education. Secondary data are obtained from national and international accredited scientific journal articles discussing the concepts of IEM and CEM, alongside relevant official regulatory documents, such as curriculum policies and educational assessment standards in Indonesia. These secondary sources serve as an empirical baseline to construct a valid theoretical framework and conceptual understanding. A similar library research approach is outlined in educational research methodologies, where textual sources form the core foundation for constructing theoretical arguments (Riduwan, 2015).

The data collection procedure involves three systematic stages: (1) *searching* navigating literature through electronic databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, and university journal portals; (2) *organizing* categorizing the literature based on themes, relevance, and source quality; and (3) *sub-selecting* choosing the literature that aligns most closely with the research focus. This approach ensures that the analyzed information reflects the latest academic consensus while considering various theoretical perspectives.

For data analysis techniques, the researcher utilizes content analysis to identify central themes, concepts, and key terminology within the literature. This analysis encompasses identifying word patterns, theoretical themes, and interpreting concepts according to their source context. Subsequently, comparative analysis is applied to objectively compare the two management models, highlighting their similarities, differences, and practical implications in education. This stage is supported by data condensation techniques, which involve summarizing and simplifying literature findings to focus strictly on aspects relevant to the research objectives. This analytical framework has been widely utilized in comparative studies of educational theory to generate systematic conceptual syntheses (Schreier, 2012).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Characteristics of Islamic Education Management

Islamic Education Management (IEM) represents an approach to managing educational institutions that focuses not only on administrative and technical aspects but also on religious values rooted in Islamic teachings. Within the Islamic conceptual framework, IEM is understood as an integrated system balancing worldly and otherworldly (*ukhrawi*) goals, where the management process is directed toward achieving holistic and balanced educational objectives. IEM bases all management activities within educational institutions on a robust theological and philosophical foundation namely, the Qur'an and Hadith, alongside classical and contemporary scholarly thought positioning *tawhid* (the oneness of God) as the core of management (Hasibuan & Efendi

Hasibuan, 2024).

This theological foundation has fundamental implications; it requires every educational management process to consider the principles of Islamic law (*sharia*). Consequently, these processes do not merely fulfill administrative functions but also shape students' character in accordance with Islamic values. *Tawhid*, as the acknowledgement of the oneness of God, serves as the primary anchor, asserting that all managerial activities are performed as a form of obedience to Allah rather than for purely worldly achievements. This value drives the integration of conventional management functions (planning, organizing, actuating, and evaluating) with the moral and spiritual values that bind all organizational elements of Islamic education (Nurjanah & Hermawan, 2023).

IEM upholds several core principles that distinguish it from secular education management. First, the principle of *shura* (consultation) is rooted in Quranic teachings that emphasize collective and participatory decision-making, reflecting a consultative value within Islamic educational organizations (Adiningrat et al., 2026). This principle marks a shift from authoritarian models toward more democratic ones, where decisions are made not solely on formal authority but through dialogue and mutual consideration among educational stakeholders.

Second, the principle of *al-'adl* (justice) serves as a vital moral compass in IEM. Justice in this context is both distributive and procedural, ensuring that all components of the educational organization are treated equitably, opportunities are distributed fairly, and educational policies are implemented with moral balance. Justice also entails protecting students' rights to receive quality education without discrimination (Adiningrat et al., 2026).

Third, the principle of *amanah* (trust/spiritual and moral accountability) asserts that every party involved in educational management bears a moral responsibility, not only for work outcomes but also for their spiritual integrity. *Amanah* encompasses honesty, responsibility, and integrity; thus, decision-making and policy implementation must reflect high moral standards in line with Islamic principles (Adiningrat et al., 2026).

Fourth, the principle of *itqan* (thoroughness/professionalism) indicates that the management of Islamic educational institutions must be executed with high work quality, utmost earnestness, and an orientation toward optimal results. Etymologically, *itqan* conveys the meaning of working systematically, orderly, and with maximum effort a value that aligns with *ihsan* (perfection/excellence) in the Islamic tradition, which demands professional skill and perfection in executing duties (Sulasri & Jusu, 2022).

From the perspective of the ultimate goals of Islamic education, IEM does not merely pursue academic achievement or professional competence. Instead, it emphasizes shaping individuals who possess strong character, noble virtues, and high spiritual awareness. This objective is frequently referred to in the literature as the formation of *insan kamil* the holistic human being who possesses a deep understanding of faith, noble character (*akhlak*), intellectual intelligence,

emotional maturity, and professionalism in both social life and the workforce (Darunnajah, 2024). An *insan kamil* in Islamic education is not only professionally productive but also morally pious and socially responsible.

These characteristics demonstrate that IEM operates within a dual dimension: the administrative and the normative. Administratively, IEM applies universal management functions such as planning, organizing, leading, and controlling. Normatively, however, each function is framed by Islamic values that guide managers, teachers, students, and all elements of the educational organization. This framework creates a management model that is not only outcome-oriented but also oriented toward a dignified and meaningful process (Ekowati, Sarpendi & Munirom, 2025).

In practice, the characteristics of IEM encourage Islamic educational institutions to become entities that are not only operationally efficient but also agents of moral and spiritual transformation. The values of *shura*, *al-adl*, *amanah*, and *itqan* are not just abstract concepts; they serve as concrete guidelines influencing decision-making, stakeholder relationships, and the overall organizational culture. These characteristics render IEM relevant not only within religious education but also as a management model capable of contributing to the quality development of education at large.

Characteristics of Conventional Education Management

Conventional Education Management (CEM) represents an approach to managing educational institutions that grew out of secular and modern educational traditions. This model focuses heavily on operational efficiency, the achievement of academic goals, and students' readiness to face the demands of the professional world. Philosophically, CEM is rooted in secularism, positivism, and pragmatism, wherein all decision-making and educational planning processes are carried out rationally, systematically, and empirically.

Classical management theory forms the foundational framework of CEM. Through *Scientific Management*, Frederick Taylor emphasized improving work efficiency through workflow analysis, division of labor, and strict operational standards; these principles can be applied within educational institutions to measure the performance of educators and the effectiveness of resource utilization (Taylor, 1911). Henri Fayol contributed administrative principles such as planning, organizing, commanding, and controlling as systematic managerial guidelines (Fayol, 1916). Max Weber highlighted bureaucracy as a mechanism of hierarchical structures and formal rules designed to create stable and predictable organizations (Weber, 1922).

The core principles of CEM reflect a rational, technical, and secular orientation toward education. First, efficiency emphasizes the optimal utilization of resources, including time, personnel, and budgets, to generate maximum educational output with minimal input (Subair et al., 2023). This efficiency is implemented through systematic schedule planning, teaching staff allocation, and facility management.

Second, effectiveness refers to the degree to which educational goals are achieved, such as student competencies, academic performance, and curriculum

standards. Evaluation is conducted using objective indicators and measurable performance metrics (Subair et al., 2023). Third, work productivity serves as a vital focus, encompassing both teaching staff and administrative personnel. Continuous professional development, workload evaluations, and the implementation of information technology serve as strategies to enhance institutional productivity.

CEM also emphasizes quality standardization through mechanisms such as Total Quality Management (TQM) and ISO certification. TQM drives comprehensive quality improvement, the participation of all stakeholders, and the satisfaction of "educational customers," including students and parents (Journal UNPAS, 2022). The implementation of TQM includes continuous improvement and internal evaluations to ensure consistent and standardized quality.

Furthermore, CEM tends to be market-driven, aligning education with the needs of industry, the economy, and advancements in science and technology. Conventional education emphasizes technical competence, professionalism, and critical thinking skills to ensure graduates are ready to compete in the global workforce (Subair et al., 2023).

The ultimate goal of CEM is to optimize student potential to meet the needs of industry, the economy, and science and technology. Education is conceptualized as a strategic mechanism to produce an innovative, competitive, and productive workforce. CEM emphasizes a balance between academic targets, professional skills, and measurable, results-based evaluation (Subair et al., 2023).

With these characteristics, CEM provides a practical and rational model for managing formal educational institutions. While this model is highly effective in the context of administrative management, it tends to overlook moral and spiritual dimensions. This approach distinguishes CEM from Islamic Education Management, which emphasizes the integration of religious values with managerial functions.

Comparative Analysis: IEM and CEM

The comparison between Islamic Education Management (IEM) and Conventional Education Management (CEM) offers an insightful analysis across various dimensions, as both models reflect distinct paradigms in understanding the goals, practices, and orientation of education. These differences emerge not only at the operational level but also at the deeper philosophical and epistemological levels that ground both frameworks.

In terms of paradigm and epistemology, IEM and CEM originate from different sources of knowledge and truth. In IEM, the epistemological foundation is a combination of divine revelation (the Qur'an and Hadith) and human reason, which is guided to interpret and apply Islamic values within educational practices. This concept asserts that management knowledge is evaluated not merely by rational and empirical metrics, but also by its alignment with transcendental, revelatory values, as underscored in Islamic education literature that integrates *sharia* principles into educational governance (Hasibuan & Efendi Hasibuan, 2024). Conversely, CEM relies entirely on reason and empiricism as

the basis of truth. Here, management theory evolves from the philosophies of positivism and pragmatism, which emphasize observation, generalization, and scientifically testable principles (Taylor, Fayol, and Weber in various management theory studies). Consequently, the conventional model prioritizes objective and measurable methodologies over approaches based on religious principles (Wikipedia, 2025).

Another significant difference lies in work orientation and motivation. Within the context of IEM, managerial activities are driven by the spiritual intention of worship (*lillah*); all efforts, planning, and decision-making are understood as acts of obedience to Allah SWT. Work orientation in IEM is not centered solely on productivity, but rather on making a meaningful spiritual contribution (Nurjanah & Hermawan, 2023). In contrast, CEM emphasizes work motivations that are primarily material and professional. Quality benchmarks, academic achievements, and operational efficiency serve as the main drivers in daily operations, with an orientation rooted in economic needs, technological developments, and market demands (Subair, Ibrahim & Akinola, 2023).

Regarding leadership, IEM emphasizes prophetic and moral value-based leadership, which is often synthesized through the core concepts of *Siddiq* (truthfulness), *Amanah* (trustworthiness), *Tabligh* (advocacy/communication), and *Fathanah* (wisdom/intelligence). These values transform an Islamic educational leader into a moral and spiritual role model rather than a mere administrator (Darunnajah, 2024). Meanwhile, CEM more frequently adopts flexible leadership styles, such as situational or transformational leadership, where a leader adapts their style to the organizational context and drives change through vision, robust communication, and staff empowerment tailored to situational needs (Bass & Riggio, 2006). While secular in nature, this constitutes a widely utilized paradigm in modern management and conventional education.

Further distinctions are evident in curriculum design and organizational culture. IEM explicitly integrates spiritual and moral values into the curriculum structure and institutional policies. In practice, the Islamic education curriculum is designed to intertwine religious teachings with secular disciplines, fostering an organizational culture that balances worship, morality, and intellectual growth (Ekowati, Sarpendi & Munirom, 2025). On the other hand, CEM strictly separates the domain of religion from science and management, utilizing a curriculum orientation that prioritizes the development of academic, technological, and professional skills without embedding religious values as core components (secular educational frameworks in many countries adopt this approach within national curriculum policies).

In summary, this comparative study demonstrates that IEM synthesizes inferential and transcendental sources of truth, spiritually grounded work motivations, and an organizational culture that incorporates Muslim life values into education. Conversely, CEM remains anchored in empirical rationality, professional and economic motivations, and curriculum structures designed to satisfy market demands and industrial requirements. Both models offer distinct strengths and limitations, meaning that in practice, they are often evaluated

contextually based on the values, objectives, and specific needs of each educational institution.

Challenges and Opportunities For Integration

The integration of Islamic Education Management (IEM) and Conventional Education Management (CEM) opens significant opportunities to enhance the quality of educational governance, yet it also presents several challenges that must be addressed strategically. One of the primary problems that frequently arises in the implementation of IEM is the tendency to overemphasize normative-theoretical aspects while remaining less adaptive to the demands of technology-driven modern management. Islamic educational institutions often face a gap in adopting educational technology tools, management information systems, and data-driven managerial practices, which have now become core requirements in the context of educational globalization and digitalization (Munir & Su'ada, 2024). This gap is reflected in limited technological infrastructure and a lack of digital skills among educators and managers in Islamic education, posing obstacles to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of both learning and administrative processes.

Furthermore, weaknesses in technology-based management are often rooted in a resistance to change within Islamic educational institutions, where the organizational culture tends to preserve classical educational traditions, leading to the slow adoption of new technologies. Universally, this digital divide encompasses a lack of technological literacy among teaching staff, budgetary constraints, and a shortage of adequate policy support to integrate comprehensive management information systems.

Nevertheless, these challenges simultaneously present strategic opportunities for IEM to transform through reconciliation with modern management principles represented by CEM. Technological integration, such as the implementation of Management Information Systems (MIS) and the utilization of digital learning platforms, can strengthen the governance of Islamic educational institutions without compromising Islamic values. When implemented contextually, an MIS can improve access to information, enhance the accuracy of educational evaluations, and increase transparency in decision-making.

Furthermore, the concept of the Islamization of management knowledge offers an opportunity for IEM to adopt modern principles of efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability without abandoning fundamental Islamic values. This approach aims to create a balanced governance model between moral-spiritual values and modern operational needs, enabling Islamic educational institutions to become more competitive, adaptive, and viable in the digital era (Pujianto et al., 2025).

Thus, the challenges faced by IEM in adopting technology and modern practices do not merely act as barriers, but rather serve as transformative opportunities to strengthen the quality of Islamic education holistically. Strategic collaboration between profound Islamic values and effective modern management practices will be the key to elevating the performance of

educational institutions in the future.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of the characteristics of Islamic Education Management (IEM) and Conventional Education Management (CEM), it can be concluded that both models possess distinct yet complementary foundations, principles, and goals. IEM emphasizes the integration of Islamic values across all aspects of management, focusing on the holistic development of individuals both morally-spiritually and intellectually through the principles of *shura*, *al-adl*, *amanah*, and *itqan*. Conversely, CEM is grounded in rational, empirical, and professional principles, placing heavy emphasis on efficiency, effectiveness, productivity, quality standardization, and an orientation toward industrial demands alongside advancements in science and technology.

The comparative analysis demonstrates that IEM highlights the sources of knowledge and truth through divine revelation and human reason, worship-based work motivation, prophetic leadership, and the integration of spiritual values into the curriculum and organizational culture. CEM places greater emphasis on empirical sources of truth, professional motivation, situational or transformational leadership, and the separation of the religious domain from science or school management. These differences reflect the respective strengths and focal points of each model in achieving educational objectives.

The primary challenges facing IEM encompass limited technology adoption, cultural resistance to modern management practices, and a lack of data-driven metrics. However, these challenges simultaneously unlock strategic opportunities for integrating IEM with CEM principles through the modernization of management systems, the utilization of digital technology, and the implementation of data-based quality indicators all without compromising Islamic values. This approach enables Islamic educational institutions to become more adaptive, competitive, and relevant in the globalized era, while firmly preserving the spiritual and moral identity that defines them.

In conclusion, the synthesis of Islamic values and modern management practices offers a balanced educational model that harmonizes ethics, spirituality, professionalism, and organizational effectiveness. Consequently, this integrated framework is capable of addressing contemporary educational demands and meeting the holistic needs of students.

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