

## CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT IN ISLAMIC EDUCATION: RETHINKING TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT AT MA AL-HIKMAH BANDAR LAMPUNG

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### ABSTRACT (10 PT)

This study examines the implementation of continuous improvement within Total Quality Management (TQM) at MA Al-Hikmah Bandar Lampung. The study employed a descriptive qualitative field research approach, with data collected through interviews, observation, and documentation. The findings indicate that continuous improvement is implemented across five interconnected areas: curriculum planning, learning processes, learning evaluation, human resource development, and educational facilities and infrastructure. In curriculum planning, the madrasah adapts national educational policies to its pesantren-based institutional characteristics through the integration of Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta (KBC), deep-learning approaches, and Aswaja content. Learning quality is improved through periodic evaluation meetings, the use of varied learning media, and efforts to address instructional challenges. Learning evaluation is conducted regularly and followed by remedial and enrichment programs for students who have not achieved established standards. Continuous improvement is also supported through teacher workshops, curriculum training, KKG activities, and routine maintenance and development of educational facilities. The study concludes that continuous improvement at MA Al-Hikmah operates as an ongoing cycle of planning, implementation, evaluation, and adjustment. Rather than functioning as a separate quality-assurance program, TQM is embedded within the madrasah's core educational processes and institutional capacity development. These practices provide a foundation for sustaining educational quality while remaining responsive to changing educational policies, institutional characteristics, and student needs.

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### Introduction

Educational quality has become a central concern in contemporary education as institutions are increasingly expected to provide learning services that are responsive, sustainable, and capable of adapting to changing social and educational demands. Quality, however, cannot be understood solely through students' academic outcomes. It is also shaped by the quality of curriculum planning, teaching and learning processes, assessment systems, human resource development, leadership, and the availability of educational facilities. This broader understanding has encouraged educational institutions to adopt management approaches that treat quality as an organizational responsibility rather than as the task of individual teachers alone. Among these approaches, Total Quality Management (TQM) has gained attention because it emphasizes

systematic quality improvement, stakeholder involvement, organizational commitment, and continuous improvement (Sallis, 2002; Hasnadi, 2021).

In educational settings, TQM represents more than the transfer of business-management principles into schools. It provides a framework for developing an institutional culture in which quality is continuously examined, evaluated, and improved. Sallis (2002) argues that quality in education requires a long-term organizational commitment involving leadership, teamwork, evaluation, professional development, and continuous improvement. Similarly, Harvey and Green (1993) conceptualize educational quality through multiple dimensions, including excellence, fitness for purpose, transformation, and value for money. Such perspectives suggest that quality should not be reduced to predetermined standards but should be understood as an ongoing process of institutional development. Consequently, continuous improvement becomes one of the most important principles through which educational organizations can translate quality aspirations into everyday practices.

The relevance of continuous improvement is particularly evident because educational institutions operate within changing contexts. Curriculum policies, technological developments, pedagogical approaches, student characteristics, and community expectations continually evolve. Educational improvement therefore cannot depend on one-time interventions. Barrenechea et al. (2023), through a systematic review of education-system improvement research, emphasize that sustainable improvement requires attention to the interaction between institutional conditions, professional practices, leadership, and broader system factors. Similarly, research on sustaining educational reforms indicates that initial implementation does not automatically guarantee long-term change; institutional capacity, leadership, teacher involvement, and contextual adaptation influence whether improvement efforts can be sustained (Datnow et al., 2023). Continuous improvement should therefore be understood as an organizational habit of reflection, adjustment, and renewal rather than as a temporary quality program.

The literature on TQM in education also demonstrates the importance of integrating multiple institutional dimensions. Nasim's (2020) systematic review of two decades of TQM research in higher education found that previous studies have often concentrated on teaching and learning while giving comparatively less attention to the interaction among other organizational factors, including facilities and broader institutional processes. This observation is important because educational quality is produced through interconnected systems. Teacher competence, curriculum design, assessment, learning processes, and physical resources cannot always be separated when examining how an institution attempts to improve its overall quality. Quality

culture research similarly emphasizes the interaction between structural or managerial mechanisms and cultural or psychological dimensions in sustaining continuous improvement (Bendermacher et al., 2017).

Within the Indonesian Islamic education context, these issues become particularly significant because madrasahs operate at the intersection of national educational policy, institutional identity, and Islamic educational traditions. Madrasahs are required to respond to national curriculum developments while maintaining characteristics rooted in their institutional and religious environments. This creates a distinctive context for examining TQM because quality improvement may involve not only compliance with external educational policies but also adaptation to the values, needs, and characteristics of the institution. Recent discussions of TQM in Indonesian education likewise identify continuous improvement, stakeholder involvement, quality leadership, and quality culture as important dimensions of educational quality management (Widiastuti et al., 2025).

MA Al-Hikmah Bandar Lampung provides an important empirical context for examining this process. The research underlying this article focuses specifically on continuous improvement in the implementation of TQM and examines five interconnected areas: curriculum planning, the learning process, learning evaluation, human resource development, and facilities and infrastructure. These dimensions demonstrate that quality improvement at the madrasah is not concentrated in a single administrative unit but distributed across core educational processes and supporting institutional resources.

In curriculum planning, the madrasah follows central educational policies while adapting them to its institutional characteristics. The research indicates that the institution uses Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta (KBC) and the deep-learning approach while incorporating religious content such as Aswaja to reflect its pesantren-based identity. Curriculum planning involves the head of the madrasah, vice principal for curriculum, and teachers through institutional meetings. This practice illustrates continuous improvement as contextual adaptation rather than simple policy implementation.

The same orientation appears in the learning process. The head of the madrasah explained that meetings are conducted periodically, including after the mid-semester period and before the promotion of students, as part of efforts to improve the learning process. In learning evaluation, the institution applies differentiated KKM standards—70 for Grade X, 80 for Grade XI, and 85 for Grade XII—and provides remedial and enrichment activities for students who have not achieved

the required standards. These practices indicate the presence of an improvement cycle in which learning outcomes are reviewed and followed by appropriate intervention.

Continuous improvement also extends to teachers and institutional resources. Teachers participate in workshops on Kurikulum Merdeka and KBC as well as KKG activities, with the research indicating benefits for teachers' understanding of curriculum, teaching methodologies, and learning media. Meanwhile, the madrasah conducts routine maintenance and renewal of facilities, including desks, chairs, classrooms, teachers' rooms, and sanitation facilities. The institution also has supporting facilities such as science, computer, and language laboratories, a library, and sports facilities.

Despite the growing literature on TQM and continuous improvement, there remains a need for contextually grounded qualitative studies that examine how these principles are enacted across multiple dimensions of educational management within Islamic secondary education. Much existing TQM literature has concentrated on higher education or conceptual discussions, while the concrete interaction among curriculum, instruction, assessment, teacher development, and facilities in madrasah contexts remains comparatively underexplored (Nasim, 2020). This study addresses that gap by examining how continuous improvement is operationalized across these interconnected domains at MA Al-Hikmah Bandar Lampung. Rather than treating TQM as a formal management label, the study examines it as an institutional practice through which the madrasah continuously adapts, evaluates, develops, and maintains its educational processes. Accordingly, this article aims to explore how continuous improvement is implemented within TQM at MA Al-Hikmah Bandar Lampung and how such practices contribute to the institution's efforts to sustain and enhance educational quality.

### **Research Method**

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach using field research to examine the implementation of continuous improvement within Total Quality Management (TQM) at MA Al-Hikmah Bandar Lampung. The qualitative approach was selected because the study aimed to describe and interpret institutional practices, policies, experiences, and processes associated with educational quality improvement in their natural context. The original research explicitly describes the study as qualitative field research using a descriptive design, with observation, interviews, and documentation employed through triangulation. This approach is appropriate for investigating educational management practices because qualitative research enables researchers to

understand phenomena from the perspectives of participants and within the institutional contexts in which they occur (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

The research was conducted at MA Al-Hikmah Bandar Lampung, an Islamic educational institution under the Yayasan Pendidikan dan Perguruan Islam (YPPI) Al-Hikmah. The research focused on continuous improvement as a principle of TQM and examined five areas of educational management: curriculum planning, the learning process, learning evaluation, human resource development, and facilities and infrastructure management. These five areas were explicitly established as the subfocuses of the original study and therefore served as the principal analytical domains in this article.

The study used primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained directly from institutional actors who were involved in educational management and decision-making. The principal informants included Muhtaruddin, S.Pd.I., as the head of the madrasah, the vice principal for curriculum, and teaching staff. The selection of these informants was based on their responsibilities in formulating institutional strategies, making policies, managing curriculum and learning, and implementing educational programs. Secondary data consisted of institutional documents, archives, relevant literature, and the school profile. The combination of primary and secondary sources enabled the research to examine continuous improvement from both participants' accounts and available institutional evidence.

Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. Interviews constituted an important source of information because the research sought to understand how continuous improvement was planned, implemented, evaluated, and developed within the madrasah. The original study used face-to-face in-depth interviews, with the researcher employing questions or general interview guidelines to explore information relevant to TQM and continuous improvement. The interview process included the head of the madrasah, Muhtaruddin, S.Pd.I., as one of the principal sources of information. The use of in-depth interviews allowed the researcher to obtain explanations concerning institutional policies and practices that could not be adequately captured through observation alone (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015).

Observation was used to obtain direct information concerning the conditions and activities associated with educational quality improvement. The research design treated observation as a systematic process of examining the phenomenon in its natural setting and recording relevant empirical conditions. Through observation, the researcher was able to complement information obtained from participants with evidence concerning actual institutional practices. This is

particularly important in qualitative educational research because observed practices can provide contextual evidence for interpreting participants' statements (Patton, 2015).

Documentation was used as a complementary data source. The research involved examining institutional documents and archives related to MA Al-Hikmah Bandar Lampung. The documentation process included exploring relevant materials, organizing them according to the needs of the research, interpreting their content, and analysing their relationship with the phenomena under investigation. The documentary materials functioned as supporting evidence for information obtained through interviews and observation. This approach is consistent with Bowen's (2009) argument that documents can provide valuable contextual and corroborative evidence in qualitative research.

The collected data were analysed through an interactive qualitative process consisting of data reduction, data presentation, and verification or conclusion drawing. During data reduction, information was selected, focused, and organized according to the research questions and five dimensions of continuous improvement. The process enabled the researcher to identify relevant themes while removing information that was not directly related to the research focus. Data presentation was then used to organize the reduced information into a structured form so that patterns, relationships, and meanings could be identified. Finally, conclusions were drawn and continuously verified against the available evidence. This analytical process follows the interactive model of qualitative data analysis proposed by Miles et al. (2014), which emphasizes the interconnected processes of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification.

The credibility of the findings was strengthened through triangulation. The research applied source triangulation, time triangulation, and theoretical triangulation. Source triangulation involved comparing information obtained from different participants and documentary materials. Time triangulation involved examining information obtained at different points in the research process to determine consistency. Theoretical triangulation involved interpreting the empirical findings through relevant theoretical perspectives, particularly the concept of continuous improvement associated with Edward Sallis's TQM framework. These procedures were employed to reduce potential bias and strengthen the credibility and dependability of the interpretation. The use of multiple sources, methods, and theoretical perspectives is consistent with established principles of qualitative trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

Overall, the methodological design enabled the study to examine continuous improvement as an institutional process rather than as an isolated management activity. By combining interviews,

observation, and documentation and analysing the evidence through an interactive qualitative process, the study was able to explore how MA Al-Hikmah Bandar Lampung implements continuous improvement across curriculum planning, learning, evaluation, teacher development, and facilities management. The methodological structure therefore provides a basis for interpreting TQM not simply as a formal management concept but as a set of practices embedded within the everyday management and educational processes of the madrasah.

## **Research Finding**

### **Continuous Improvement in Core Educational Processes: Curriculum, Learning, and Assessment**

The findings at MA Al-Hikmah Bandar Lampung indicate that continuous improvement is embedded in the core educational processes of curriculum planning, learning implementation, and assessment. These three dimensions do not operate as isolated administrative activities; rather, they form an interconnected process through which the madrasah responds to policy changes, institutional needs, student characteristics, and challenges emerging during learning. This pattern is consistent with the quality-management perspective that views educational quality as an ongoing process of planning, implementation, evaluation, and improvement rather than as a final condition that can be achieved once and maintained without further intervention (Sallis, 2002). From this perspective, continuous improvement becomes meaningful when institutions routinely examine existing practices, identify limitations, and make adjustments based on available evidence.

In curriculum planning, MA Al-Hikmah demonstrates an effort to balance national educational policies with its particular institutional identity. The findings show that the madrasah follows curriculum directions originating from the Ministry of Religious Affairs and educational authorities while adapting them to the characteristics of the institution as a pesantren-based Islamic school. Muhtaruddin, S.Pd.I., the head of the madrasah, explained that “untuk kurikulum ada 2 dari kemenag KBC dan dari dinas deep learning,” indicating that the institution accommodates the Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta (KBC) and the deep-learning orientation while maintaining the central curriculum framework. This practice reflects the principle that curriculum quality requires responsiveness to both external standards and internal educational purposes (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Fullan, 2016).

The adaptation becomes more visible in the inclusion of Aswaja content. Muhtaruddin explained that because MA Al-Hikmah is a private institution under a pesantren foundation with an NU orientation, the curriculum is modified by incorporating Aswaja lessons. He further stated that curriculum development involves meetings with structural personnel to determine which subjects

should be included or adjusted to improve the curriculum. The modification demonstrates that curriculum implementation is not treated as a mechanical process of applying external regulations. Instead, the madrasah interprets those regulations in accordance with its educational identity. This finding corresponds with the view that successful educational improvement requires adaptation to local contexts rather than simple replication of externally developed models (Datnow & Park, 2018; Harris, 2013).

Teacher participation further strengthens this process. The interview data show that teachers are involved in curriculum planning through meetings with the head of the madrasah and the vice principal for curriculum. One teacher explained that these meetings discuss subjects and curriculum arrangements so that learning can become more effective and correspond to students' needs. The involvement of teachers is important because curriculum improvement ultimately depends on the capacity of practitioners to interpret and implement curriculum decisions in classrooms. In TQM, quality improvement requires participation across organizational levels rather than concentration of responsibility within senior management alone (Oakland, 2014; Sallis, 2002). Teacher involvement therefore represents an important organizational mechanism through which curriculum planning can remain connected to classroom realities.

The findings also demonstrate that curriculum development at MA Al-Hikmah is influenced by the changing educational environment. The research identifies the use of KBC and deep learning alongside the incorporation of pesantren-based content, demonstrating an attempt to combine contemporary educational developments with institutional identity. The original analysis concludes that curriculum planning involves adaptation to educational developments, institutional characteristics, and students' needs. This process can be interpreted as contextualized continuous improvement, in which quality is pursued through gradual adaptation rather than through radical replacement of existing educational structures.

Continuous improvement continues into the learning process. The madrasah establishes regular evaluation meetings to review the implementation of teaching and learning. Vestiana Anistasia, S.Pd., the vice principal for curriculum, explained that evaluation meetings are generally conducted every six months, particularly after the mid-semester period and before the promotion of students. The meetings discuss the implementation of classroom learning and seek solutions to problems encountered during the teaching and learning process. Yudi Prayoga, M.Ag., similarly stated that these meetings are used to examine learning development and identify solutions to problems occurring during classroom instruction.

This mechanism illustrates an important feature of continuous improvement: learning practices are periodically reviewed rather than assumed to be permanently effective. The head of the madrasah confirmed that meetings are conducted every six months, including after mid-semester and before the end-of-year promotion process, with the purpose of making classroom learning operate more effectively. Such an arrangement creates an institutional feedback loop. Problems identified during teaching can be discussed collectively, and possible solutions can be considered before the next stage of educational implementation. In organizational improvement literature, feedback mechanisms are essential because improvement depends on the ability of institutions to learn from their own practices (Deming, 1986; Fullan, 2016).

The use of instructional media represents another aspect of the madrasah's effort to improve learning. The research documents teachers' use of PowerPoint presentations, videos, and other media to support instructional delivery and student understanding. However, the findings also identify challenges in implementing different instructional methods and media. Muhtaruddin noted that difficulties may arise when teachers use PPT or video-based learning, while other interview evidence indicates that media readiness and student conditions can influence implementation. This is important analytically because continuous improvement does not imply that every innovation immediately produces optimal results. Rather, new practices can generate new challenges that subsequently become objects of evaluation and adjustment.

The third component, learning assessment, completes the improvement cycle. At MA Al-Hikmah, assessment is conducted periodically to monitor student learning development. Interview data indicate that mid-semester assessments are conducted approximately every three months, with results distributed to students in printed form, while semester results are communicated through report cards. Assessment consequently provides information about students' learning progress and enables the institution and teachers to determine whether students have achieved established standards. The role of assessment in this context extends beyond certification because the information obtained becomes a basis for subsequent educational action.

The madrasah applies different KKM standards according to grade level: 70 for Grade X, 80 for Grade XI, and 85 for Grade XII. Students whose results do not reach the required standard receive remedial activities and enrichment so that they have opportunities to achieve the established target. This practice is particularly relevant to the concept of continuous improvement because assessment results are followed by intervention. Instead of treating an unsuccessful assessment as a final judgment, the institution uses it to identify students requiring additional learning support. This corresponds with formative assessment perspectives that emphasize the use

of evidence about learning to inform subsequent instructional decisions (Black & Wiliam, 2009; Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

The relationship among curriculum, learning, and assessment is therefore central to understanding continuous improvement at MA Al-Hikmah. Curriculum planning establishes the direction of learning, classroom implementation translates that direction into practice, and assessment provides information regarding the extent to which learning objectives are being achieved. The information generated through learning and assessment can then inform subsequent planning and instructional adjustments. This cyclical relationship is consistent with quality-improvement models that emphasize iterative processes rather than linear implementation (Deming, 1986; Oakland, 2014).

Importantly, the findings do not indicate that the improvement process has eliminated all challenges. Difficulties in adapting national curriculum policies to the specific characteristics of the pesantren-based institution, limitations in the use of certain learning media, and variations in student conditions remain part of the educational process. These challenges should not necessarily be interpreted as evidence of ineffective management. Within a continuous-improvement framework, the existence of problems provides opportunities for institutional learning. The critical issue is whether the institution possesses mechanisms through which problems can be recognized, discussed, and addressed.

Overall, the evidence suggests that MA Al-Hikmah Bandar Lampung operationalizes continuous improvement through an interconnected cycle of curriculum adaptation, learning evaluation, instructional adjustment, and assessment-based intervention. Curriculum planning combines government policy with the madrasah's pesantren identity; learning processes are periodically reviewed through institutional meetings and supported by varied instructional media; while assessment is conducted systematically and followed by remedial or enrichment activities when necessary. The findings therefore position continuous improvement not as a separate quality-assurance program but as a recurring practice embedded within the everyday educational processes of the madrasah. This provides an important empirical illustration of how TQM can be enacted in Islamic secondary education through the continuous refinement of core educational processes.

#### **Developing Institutional Capacity: Human Resources and Educational Infrastructure**

Continuous improvement in educational quality cannot be sustained only through curriculum revision and classroom-level interventions. It also requires an institution to strengthen the people, resources, and organizational conditions that make educational improvement possible.

At MA Al-Hikmah Bandar Lampung, this institutional capacity is reflected particularly in two interconnected areas: human resource development and educational infrastructure. The research findings show that the madrasah develops teacher competence through workshops, curriculum training, learning-related activities, and Kelompok Kerja Guru (KKG), while infrastructure is maintained and renewed through routine management and improvement. These practices indicate that continuous improvement operates not only as a mechanism for correcting weaknesses in educational processes but also as a strategy for strengthening the institutional capacity required to sustain quality over time. Recent research similarly emphasizes that teacher professional development and well-managed educational facilities are important components of quality education, although their contribution depends on continuity, relevance, leadership, and effective utilization rather than on the mere availability of programs or resources (Ambon et al., 2024; Tuanany et al., 2025).

The first dimension concerns the continuous development of teachers and educational personnel. At MA Al-Hikmah, professional development is conducted through activities organized by the school and foundation, particularly at the beginning of the academic year. The research documents workshops on Kurikulum Merdeka, Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta (KBC), learning, and other professional activities, including KKG. Vestiana Anistasia, S.Pd., the vice principal for curriculum, explained that the foundation usually organizes training for teachers and educational personnel every new academic year. She specifically mentioned workshops on Kurikulum Merdeka and KBC and emphasized that although the madrasah uses Kurikulum Merdeka, KBC values continue to be incorporated into the learning process.

The statement illustrates that professional development at MA Al-Hikmah is closely connected to institutional curriculum policy. Training is not simply conducted as a routine administrative activity, but functions as a mechanism for preparing teachers to respond to changes in curriculum and educational expectations. Yudi Prayoga, M.Ag., a teacher at the madrasah, provided a similar account, explaining that the school and foundation conduct training at the beginning of the academic year, particularly workshops concerning Kurikulum Merdeka and KBC. He noted that teachers remain directed to integrate KBC values into their learning even while implementing Kurikulum Merdeka. This demonstrates an important feature of continuous improvement: institutional development is connected to the changing requirements of educational practice.

The relevance of this practice is supported by recent literature on teacher professional development. A systematic review by Hennessy et al. (2022) found that technology-supported

professional development can expand opportunities for teacher learning in low- and middle-income contexts, although human interaction, coaching, and contextual support remain essential. Similarly, Salmerón Aroca et al. (2023) emphasize the importance of aligning professional development with teachers' actual professional needs, while Graham et al. (2024) identify sustained participation, collaboration, reflection, practical relevance, and alignment with teaching objectives among the principles associated with effective teacher professional development. These perspectives help explain why the professional development activities documented at MA Al-Hikmah should be understood as part of institutional quality improvement rather than merely as isolated training events.

The findings further indicate that professional development has practical implications for teachers' instructional capacity. According to the research data, participation in workshops enables teachers to understand curriculum requirements more clearly and to develop more effective approaches to teaching. Teachers also gain opportunities to learn about instructional methods and learning media that can make classroom learning more engaging. This finding corresponds with a systematic review of 125 studies showing that training, ongoing coaching, and collaborative professional development can support teachers' learning and, under appropriate conditions, student learning outcomes. The review also suggests that professional development conducted frequently and over longer periods is generally more promising than isolated interventions (Sims et al., 2023).

The importance of continuity is particularly relevant to the TQM perspective adopted in this study. Continuous improvement requires the institution to develop mechanisms through which teachers repeatedly acquire, apply, reflect on, and refine professional knowledge. A single workshop cannot guarantee sustained changes in teaching practice. Instead, professional development needs to be connected with subsequent implementation and reflection. Recent systematic evidence indicates that effective professional development tends to involve active learning, practical application, feedback, collaboration, and sustained engagement (Graham et al., 2024; Ambon et al., 2024). The MA Al-Hikmah practice of combining workshops with periodic evaluation of learning processes therefore provides an important institutional mechanism for linking professional learning with continuous improvement.

KKG activities provide another dimension of this process. The research records curriculum workshops, learning training, and KKG as among the professional development activities undertaken by teachers. Such collaborative activities are important because professional capacity develops not only through formal instruction but also through interaction among educators. Recent

research indicates that collaborative and sustained professional learning can strengthen teachers' knowledge, pedagogical practice, and collective efficacy (Salas-Rodríguez & Lara, 2023). In this sense, KKG can be understood as part of the institutional infrastructure for professional learning because it provides a space in which teachers can exchange experiences and address instructional issues collectively.

The second dimension concerns educational infrastructure. MA Al-Hikmah manages facilities and infrastructure through routine maintenance and improvement. The findings indicate that maintenance and renewal are undertaken particularly at the beginning of each academic year, including the replacement or improvement of tables and chairs, repainting classrooms and teachers' rooms, and maintaining sanitation facilities. The madrasah also possesses supporting facilities such as a science laboratory, computer laboratory, language laboratory, library, and sports field. These practices demonstrate that infrastructure management is treated as an ongoing institutional responsibility rather than as a one-time procurement activity.

This orientation is consistent with recent research emphasizing that educational facilities should be managed through interconnected processes of planning, procurement, utilization, maintenance, and supervision. A recent systematic review of infrastructure management in schools identifies these processes as important for supporting learning effectiveness and educational service quality (Sutisna et al., 2026). Another recent Indonesian review identifies continuing challenges involving disparities in infrastructure, inadequate learning and sanitation facilities, weak maintenance, and fragmented management practices (Athallah et al., 2026). The maintenance activities documented at MA Al-Hikmah therefore represent an important component of continuous improvement because facilities must remain functional and aligned with the needs of the educational process.

The relationship between infrastructure and learning quality is also supported by recent empirical research. Andrade et al. (2024), for example, found significant relationships between several types of school infrastructure and student achievement, while emphasizing that the effects vary according to the type and scale of infrastructure investment. Similarly, a systematic review of educational quality across 50 countries identified reliable teaching staff and adequate facilities and infrastructure among frequently used indicators of education quality (Lubis & Aryansah, 2024). These findings reinforce the interpretation that infrastructure should not be considered merely as a physical complement to teaching. Its quality, accessibility, maintenance, and utilization form part of the conditions through which educational services are delivered.

At MA Al-Hikmah, human resources and infrastructure should consequently be understood as mutually reinforcing dimensions of institutional capacity. Teachers who receive professional development may acquire greater knowledge of curriculum, instructional methods, and learning media, but their ability to implement these competencies is also influenced by the resources available within the institution. Conversely, the availability of laboratories, libraries, technology, classrooms, and other facilities does not automatically produce educational improvement without teachers who can use them effectively. Tuanany et al. (2025) similarly identify teacher qualifications, infrastructure, and technology as interconnected factors in discussions of sustainable learning outcomes. This relationship is important for interpreting TQM because quality improvement requires the coordination of human and material resources rather than the isolated optimization of one component.

The findings also indicate that institutional capacity development remains an ongoing process. The existence of workshops does not mean that teacher development has reached completion, just as the availability of facilities does not eliminate the need for maintenance, renewal, and adaptation. Recent research on professional development emphasizes the importance of sustained and contextually relevant learning, while research on Indonesian school facilities continues to identify maintenance, equitable access, and sustainability as important challenges (Ambon et al., 2024; Athallah et al., 2026). Thus, the principle of continuous improvement requires MA Al-Hikmah to continue examining whether existing professional development programs and facilities remain responsive to emerging educational needs.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that MA Al-Hikmah Bandar Lampung develops institutional capacity through two complementary strategies: strengthening human resources and maintaining educational infrastructure. Human resource development is implemented through workshops, KBC and Kurikulum Merdeka training, learning-related activities, and KKG, while infrastructure development is pursued through routine maintenance, renewal, and provision of learning facilities. Viewed through the TQM framework, these practices indicate that continuous improvement extends beyond the immediate classroom. It encompasses the systematic strengthening of the institutional conditions that allow teachers to perform effectively and students to learn within an adequately supported environment. The case of MA Al-Hikmah therefore illustrates that sustaining educational quality requires not only improving what happens in the classroom but also continuously developing the human and material capacity that makes such improvement possible.

## **Conclusion**

This study concludes that classroom management at MA Al-Hikmah Bandar Lampung is implemented. This study concludes that continuous improvement at MA Al-Hikmah Bandar Lampung is implemented as an ongoing institutional process within the framework of Total Quality Management (TQM). The findings demonstrate that improvement is not concentrated in a single aspect of educational management but operates across interconnected educational processes and institutional capacities.

In the core educational processes, continuous improvement is reflected in curriculum planning, learning implementation, and assessment. The madrasah adapts national curriculum policies to its institutional characteristics by incorporating Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta (KBC), deep-learning approaches, and Aswaja content within its pesantren-based context. Learning processes are periodically reviewed through institutional meetings, while assessment is conducted systematically and followed by remedial and enrichment activities for students who have not achieved the established standards.

Continuous improvement is also supported through institutional capacity development. Teachers participate in workshops, curriculum training, learning-related programs, and KKG activities, while school facilities are routinely maintained and improved. These practices demonstrate that educational quality depends not only on the refinement of classroom processes but also on the continuous development of teachers and the institutional resources that support learning.

Overall, the case of MA Al-Hikmah Bandar Lampung shows that TQM can be operationalized through a recurring cycle of planning, implementation, evaluation, and improvement. The madrasah's experience illustrates that continuous improvement is most meaningful when curriculum, learning, assessment, human resources, and infrastructure are treated as interconnected components of educational quality. Although challenges remain, particularly in adapting educational policies, instructional practices, and institutional resources to changing needs, the existing mechanisms provide a foundation for sustaining further quality improvement.

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