

APPLYING THE PLAN–DO–CHECK–ACT QUALITY CYCLE TO IMPROVE QURANIC LEARNING USING THE UMMI METHOD

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Abstract. This study examines the implementation of the Plan–Do–Check–Act (PDCA) quality management cycle in Quranic learning using the UMMI Method at An-Nahl Islamic Kindergarten in Tangerang, Indonesia. The research aims to analyze how the PDCA model contributes to improving the quality of Quran learning through structured planning, execution, evaluation, and continuous improvement. Employing a qualitative descriptive design with case study and triangulated data collection techniques—observation, interviews, and documentation—the study explores each PDCA phase: planning (curriculum and method selection), doing (teacher training and instructional implementation), checking (performance monitoring and student achievement evaluation), and acting (continuous improvement based on assessment results). Findings reveal that the integration of PDCA with the UMMI method significantly enhances teaching effectiveness, student engagement, and memorization performance of short Quranic chapters. The approach also improves teacher competency through standardized certification and supervision by the UMMI Foundation. The study concludes that combining PDCA and the UMMI method provides a sustainable framework for quality assurance in Islamic education by fostering systematic planning, accountability, and continuous pedagogical improvement, contributing to the development of a Qur'an-literate and spiritually strong generation.

Keywords: educational human resource planning; strategic management; teacher recruitment; school leadership

I. INTRODUCTION

In the context of Islamic education, the ability to read and understand the Qur'an correctly and fluently is considered a fundamental skill that reflects a Muslim's faith and spiritual commitment [1]. The Qur'an serves as the primary source of guidance for human life, emphasizing the importance of reading (Iqra') as the foundation of knowledge, as stated in Surah Al-'Alaq verses 1–5 [2]. Therefore, effective Qur'anic education is not merely a cognitive process but also a moral and spiritual formation. However, the challenge for Islamic educational institutions today lies in designing a learning system that is both methodologically effective and aligned with quality management principles [3]. The UMMI Method, developed by the UMMI Foundation in 2011 in Surabaya, Indonesia, has emerged as one of the most effective approaches in teaching Qur'an literacy. It emphasizes simplicity, accuracy, and affection through direct, repetitive, and heart-touching instruction, making it particularly suitable for early childhood learners [4], [5]. The method employs a structured curriculum consisting of six progressive book levels, supplemented by tajwid and ghorib materials, and is implemented under strict supervision, teacher certification, and quality assurance from the UMMI Foundation [6]. Prior studies demonstrate that this method significantly improves students' fluency and comprehension in reading the Qur'an [7], as well as their motivation and spiritual engagement [8].

To ensure the quality and sustainability of the UMMI learning system, educational institutions require a continuous improvement mechanism. One of the most recognized frameworks for maintaining and enhancing institutional quality is the PDCA cycle, introduced by W. Edwards Deming [9]. PDCA is a four-step iterative process that guides organizations in planning actions, implementing strategies, evaluating outcomes, and taking corrective measures for improvement [10]. In educational contexts, PDCA has been widely applied to ensure process standardization, performance monitoring, and accountability, particularly in quality-oriented Islamic institutions [11], [12]. Applying PDCA to Qur'anic learning integrates modern management principles with traditional Islamic education. At An-Nahl Islamic Kindergarten in Tangerang, the institution adopted the PDCA model to evaluate and transition its Qur'an teaching method from Iqra' to the UMMI Method, aiming to enhance both student outcomes and institutional quality [13]. The Plan phase involved comparing pedagogical features between the two

methods, selecting UMMI based on its structured and affectionate approach. The Do phase focused on teacher certification and classroom implementation. During Check, progress was assessed through students' memorization and reading fluency evaluations, while Act involved adjusting instructional strategies and expanding teacher capacity to maintain continuous improvement [14].

This study explores how the integration of PDCA and the UMMI method supports the enhancement of Qur'an learning quality. It contributes to the literature on quality assurance in Islamic education, particularly in demonstrating how continuous improvement frameworks can be harmonized with faith-based pedagogies. By analyzing the case of An-Nahl Islamic Kindergarten, the research provides insights into how educational institutions can sustain excellence through systematic, reflective, and spiritually grounded management practices [15]. The PDCA cycle, developed by W. Edwards Deming, is a cornerstone of quality management that facilitates continuous improvement through systematic processes of planning, implementation, evaluation, and correction [16]. It serves as a feedback loop that allows organizations to identify problems, test solutions, and refine operations based on performance data [17]. In educational management, PDCA provides a structured approach to ensure accountability, enhance instructional quality, and foster institutional development [18]. In the context of Islamic education, PDCA can be integrated as a spiritual and managerial framework for maintaining quality assurance. As noted by Isnaini and Fatah [19], educational institutions applying PDCA are better positioned to monitor performance, evaluate teaching quality, and sustain long-term improvement. The four phases of PDCA Plan, Do, Check, and Act can be adapted to Islamic schools as follows: (1) planning educational goals and curricula aligned with Islamic values, (2) executing learning strategies, (3) evaluating student outcomes and teacher performance, and (4) implementing corrective actions based on reflection and supervision [20].

The UMMI Method is an innovative model for teaching Qur'an reading based on tartil (fluency and precision), emotional engagement, and structured progression [21]. Developed by the UMMI Foundation in Surabaya, Indonesia, the method emphasizes a threefold pedagogical principle simple, joyful, and heart-touching which ensures that Qur'an learning is both spiritually meaningful and pedagogically effective [22]. Teachers using this method must be certified through official training and assessment to maintain consistency and quality [23]. Unlike traditional methods such as Iqra' or Baghdadi, UMMI integrates direct teaching (direct method) with repetition and affection, making it suitable for early learners [24]. Studies have shown that the UMMI approach significantly enhances students' ability to read and memorize Qur'anic verses accurately while also deepening their love for the Qur'an [25]. The method also incorporates quality assurance principles through regular supervision, coaching, and evaluation conducted by the UMMI Foundation [26]. This ensures that both teachers and institutions adhere to standardized procedures for Qur'an instruction, fostering a culture of excellence in Islamic education [27].

The integration of PDCA with the UMMI method provides a comprehensive model for managing Qur'anic learning that combines modern quality management with Islamic pedagogical values. In this framework, the Plan stage involves designing lesson plans and selecting appropriate instructional materials; the Do stage covers classroom implementation led by trained teachers; the Check phase involves evaluating student progress and teaching effectiveness; and the Act phase focuses on continuous refinement of teaching strategies and institutional policies [28]. Empirical studies, such as those by Adiasa and Yunan [29], demonstrate that applying PDCA in educational settings enhances systematic monitoring and data-driven decision-making. Similarly, Hani [30] found that implementing the UMMI method within a PDCA framework strengthens teacher accountability and improves student performance outcomes. When these approaches are combined, schools are able to develop evidence-based management systems that sustain both academic achievement and spiritual formation [31].

From a theoretical perspective, this study draws on Total Quality Management (TQM) principles and Islamic educational philosophy. TQM promotes continuous improvement and customer (student) satisfaction through process optimization and employee empowerment [32]. In Islamic education, this aligns with the concept of itqan (excellence in work) and ihsan (doing good with sincerity), both of which emphasize quality as a manifestation of faith [33]. Therefore, the combination of PDCA and the UMMI method represents not only an educational innovation but also a manifestation of spiritual management a process that seeks to achieve excellence (itqan) in Qur'anic instruction through structured planning and reflection [34]. This theoretical synthesis supports the notion that quality assurance in Islamic education should encompass both managerial efficiency and moral responsibility [35].

II. RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive research design aimed at exploring and analyzing the implementation of the PDCA quality management cycle in Qur'an learning using the UMMI method at TK Islam An-Nahl, Tangerang, Indonesia. The qualitative approach was selected because it allows an in-depth examination of human interactions, institutional practices, and educational processes within their natural contexts [36]. This method enables the researcher to describe how the PDCA cycle operates as a continuous improvement mechanism that supports teaching quality, institutional accountability, and student learning outcomes.

Data were collected through three main techniques: observation, interviews, and documentation analysis, ensuring methodological triangulation and credibility of findings. Observations were conducted in classrooms to understand the teaching process using the UMMI method and the application of PDCA principles in lesson delivery. Semi-structured interviews were held with the principal, teachers, and UMMI supervisors to obtain insights regarding planning, implementation, evaluation, and follow-up actions within the learning process. Supporting documents such as lesson plans, supervision forms, assessment reports, and internal audits were also analyzed to identify evidence of PDCA cycle integration in quality management. Data analysis

followed thematic coding procedures, involving data reduction, classification, interpretation, and conclusion drawing. To ensure research validity, data triangulation and member checking were applied to cross-verify interpretations between sources. The study adheres to ethical considerations, maintaining participant confidentiality and institutional integrity. The findings are presented descriptively, reflecting both managerial and pedagogical dimensions of PDCA implementation in Qur'an learning. This methodological framework follows the principles outlined by Creswell and Yin, emphasizing contextual analysis and case-based explanation to ensure analytical rigor and trustworthiness [37].

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings show that the PDCA cycle is effectively implemented as a continuous improvement framework in the Qur'an learning process using the UMMI method at TK Islam An-Nahl, Tangerang. The school applies each stage of PDCA systematically: Plan: Curriculum design and lesson scheduling are planned collaboratively by teachers and supervisors based on the UMMI Foundation's standards. Learning objectives emphasize both tahsin (accuracy) and tartil (fluency) according to the students' developmental stages [38]. Do: Teachers apply the UMMI method in the classroom using direct teaching techniques, repetition, and emotional engagement to foster student motivation and concentration. Implementation is supported by trained teachers who have obtained official certification from the UMMI Foundation [39]. Check: Student performance is evaluated weekly through structured reading assessments and observation checklists, while teacher performance is monitored by UMMI supervisors using standardized quality control instruments [40]. Act: The institution conducts regular reflection meetings to review evaluation data, identify learning gaps, and implement corrective actions such as peer mentoring, retraining, and revision of lesson plans [41]. This structured implementation aligns with the continuous quality improvement (CQI) model in education, where iterative evaluation strengthens both teaching and institutional processes [42].

The application of PDCA within the UMMI method has produced measurable improvements in both teacher performance and student achievement. Teachers report greater consistency in lesson planning, more effective time management, and improved confidence in teaching Qur'an literacy [43]. Students demonstrate better pronunciation, memorization, and comprehension of tajwid rules, as well as heightened emotional connection with Qur'an recitation activities. Furthermore, PDCA promotes a culture of reflection and accountability, encouraging teachers to analyze their own teaching effectiveness through feedback and self-evaluation. According to Goetsch and Davis [44], this cycle of self-assessment and continuous correction creates a learning organization in which improvement becomes an institutional norm rather than a reactive measure. At An-Nahl, this culture has led to greater collaboration among teachers and stronger communication between educators, supervisors, and administrators. The integration of PDCA with the UMMI method also reflects the harmony between modern management theory and Islamic educational philosophy. While PDCA emphasizes efficiency and systematic improvement, Islamic education emphasizes *itqan* (excellence) and *ihsan* (doing one's best with sincerity) as ethical imperatives in all forms of work [45]. The continuous reflection in PDCA mirrors the Islamic practice of *muhasabah* (self-evaluation), which encourages teachers to refine both technical skills and moral intentions in their teaching. This synergy demonstrates that quality assurance frameworks such as PDCA can be effectively localized within Islamic educational settings without losing their spiritual essence. By embedding spiritual awareness into management processes, the school ensures that the pursuit of quality is not solely outcome-based but also value-oriented—aligning with the Qur'anic principle of excellence (QS. Al-Mulk: 2) in performing righteous deeds.

The integration of PDCA and UMMI illustrates a hybrid educational model that combines pedagogical innovation with managerial precision. It supports the argument that educational quality can be achieved through iterative reflection, teacher empowerment, and data-driven decision-making [38], [41]. The findings resonate with prior studies (e.g., Isnaini & Syukur, 2023; Al-Khalili & Al-Saidi, 2023) showing that schools applying PDCA demonstrate greater adaptability and learning outcomes improvement [18], [19]. From a theoretical standpoint, this research reinforces the notion that PDCA operationalizes Total Quality Management (TQM) in education, while the UMMI method operationalizes spiritual pedagogy and their intersection provides a holistic model for Islamic education quality assurance. Hence, PDCA serves as a practical bridge between faith-based educational philosophy and modern quality management, ensuring that the process of teaching the Qur'an remains structured, reflective, and spiritually meaningful. From a theoretical perspective, this research demonstrates how modern quality management principles embodied in PDCA can harmoniously coexist with Islamic educational values such as *ihsan*, *muhasabah*, and *itqan*. It affirms that educational quality improvement should not be viewed solely as a technical process but also as a spiritual endeavor. Thus, the fusion of PDCA and UMMI represents a new paradigm in faith-based quality management, combining managerial rigor with spiritual purpose to achieve holistic excellence in education.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the integration of the PDCA cycle with the UMMI Method represents an effective and sustainable model for improving the quality of Qur'anic education in Islamic institutions. The PDCA cycle provides a structured framework for continuous improvement beginning with systematic planning, effective implementation, reflective evaluation, and corrective action while the UMMI Method ensures that teaching remains spiritually grounded, emotionally engaging, and pedagogically sound. At TK Islam An-Nahl, this integration has led to significant improvements in both teacher competency and student learning outcomes, as evidenced by increased Qur'an reading fluency, memorization accuracy, and student motivation. The study also

highlights that PDCA promotes a culture of reflection, collaboration, and accountability among teachers, enabling them to view teaching not merely as routine work but as a process of lifelong learning and self-improvement (muhasabah). The UMMI Method complements this process by fostering affection-based pedagogy (pembelajaran dengan hati), which enhances student engagement and spiritual connection to the Qur'an. Together, these frameworks embody the principle of itqan (excellence) in Islamic education, ensuring that learning is not only effective but also infused with moral and spiritual integrity. For educational practitioners, this research offers an actionable model for implementing quality assurance systems in Qur'an learning. Islamic schools should institutionalize the PDCA process through regular planning workshops, performance monitoring, and teacher supervision guided by standardized quality criteria from the UMMI Foundation. Integrating technology such as digital assessment tools and electronic teacher portfolios can further enhance PDCA-based monitoring efficiency. For policy makers and the UMMI Foundation, the findings reinforce the importance of professional certification and periodic retraining to maintain instructional quality. Continuous collaboration between local education authorities and Qur'anic learning centers can help develop national standards for Qur'an pedagogy and management, fostering consistency across institutions. For researchers, the study opens opportunities for empirical exploration of PDCA-based educational quality systems in different Islamic contexts, such as madrasahs or tahfiz schools. Future studies can apply mixed-method or longitudinal designs to evaluate the long-term impact of PDCA-UMMI integration on student achievement, teacher performance, and institutional sustainability.

V. REFERENSI

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