

Financing Management as a Driver of Quality in Islamic Educational Institutions: A Case Study at MI Nurudzolam, Pare, Kediri

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ABSTRAK

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah menganalisis peran manajemen pembiayaan efektif sebagai penggerak peningkatan mutu lembaga pendidikan Islam, dengan menelaah mekanisme evaluasi, pengawasan internal, dan pertanggungjawaban keuangan di MI Nurudzolam, Pare, Kediri. Metode penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi partisipan, dan studi dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis dengan model interaktif Miles dan Huberman (reduksi data, penyajian data, verifikasi). Hasil penelitian mengungkap tiga temuan kunci: (1) evaluasi rutin penggunaan dana meningkatkan efektivitas pembiayaan; (2) pengawasan internal membentuk budaya disiplin dan kepatuhan anggaran; (3) pertanggungjawaban keuangan berkala memperkuat akuntabilitas dan transparansi. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa manajemen pembiayaan berfungsi sebagai instrumen strategis yang mendorong peningkatan kualitas pembelajaran, fasilitas, dan kompetensi pendidik. Kesimpulan penelitian berkontribusi pada konsep manajemen pembiayaan pendidikan Islam dengan menawarkan model pengelolaan yang efisien, akuntabel, dan responsif, yang mengintegrasikan tata kelola modern dengan nilai-nilai Islam.

Kata kunci: Manajemen Pembiayaan, Mutu Pendidikan Islam, Akuntabilitas Keuangan, Pengawasan Internal, Evaluasi Anggaran.

ABSTRACT

Purpose This study aims to analyze the role of effective financing management as a driver for improving the quality of Islamic educational institutions by examining the mechanisms of evaluation, internal oversight, and financial accountability at MI Nurudzolam, Pare, Kediri. Design /methodology/approach This research employs a qualitative approach with a case study design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation studies, and then analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model (data reduction, data display, conclusion drawing/verification). Findings: The results reveal three key findings: (1) regular evaluation of fund usage enhances financing effectiveness through precise budget adjustments; (2) internal oversight by the head of the madrasah fosters a culture of discipline and budget compliance; (3) periodic financial reporting strengthens institutional accountability and transparency. These findings indicate that financing management is not merely an administrative aspect but a strategic instrument directly driving improvements in learning quality, facilities, and educator competence. Originality/value: This research contributes to strengthening the concept of Islamic education financing management by offering an efficient, accountable, and quality-responsive fund management model. This model integrates modern governance principles with Islamic educational values, making it relevant for application in contemporary Islamic educational institutions.

Keywords: Financing Management, Quality Of Islamic Education, Financial Accountability, Internal Oversight, Budget Evaluation.

1. INTRODUCTION

Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia face multidimensional challenges in their efforts to improve educational quality in the era of globalization. One critical factor determining the success of educational transformation is an institution's capacity to manage financing effectively and accountably. Social facts indicate a direct relationship between good financial governance and the

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improvement of educational service quality. Islamic educational institutions that successfully implement planned, transparent, and sustainable financing management systems tend to be able to provide adequate facilities, recruit qualified educators, and develop learning programs relevant to contemporary needs (Harbes et al., 2024; Mangkuwinata et al., 2025).

This correlation arises because Islamic educational institutions heavily rely on internal funding sources such as tuition fees, donations, endowments (wakaf), and external institutional collaborations to run operations and drive educational innovation. When financing is not managed under good governance principles, quality improvement programs become difficult to realize. Empirical evidence shows that many institutions have successfully improved their accreditation after conducting comprehensive reforms of their financial management systems, including overhauling needs-based and quality-priority budgeting systems (Mangkuwinata et al., 2025; Nurdiyanti, 2024). This finding indicates that effective financing management is not merely an administrative necessity but an absolute prerequisite for creating superior and competitive Islamic educational services.

Previous research consistently confirms the significant impact of educational financing on output quality, particularly regarding graduate competencies and the effectiveness of the teaching-learning process (Jihan, n.d.; Kirmadi & Suryaman, 2025). Analysis shows that targeted fund allocation, for instance, for curriculum development, educator training, and procurement of learning media, can accelerate the overall quality enhancement of an institution. Studies by Amanati et al. (2024) and Mulyati & Suryaman (2025) found that institutions with structured financing allocation systems tend to have higher accreditation scores and are able to maintain quality stability consistently. This reinforces the argument that financing management should not be viewed merely as an administrative element but must be positioned as a strategic instrument in improving the quality of Islamic education.

In a broader social context, financing management has become a driver for the transformation of Islamic education amid the dynamics of globalization and technological disruption (Lundeto, 2023; Razali et al., 2024). Contemporary Islamic educational institutions not only function as traditional learning centers but have also evolved into institutions for character development and social innovation, requiring stable and well-managed financial support. Evidence shows that many institutions have successfully launched new programs, upgraded laboratory facilities, provided scholarships, and strengthened educational digitalization after improving their financial systems based on principles of efficiency and accountability (Hakim, 2023; Harahap, 2024). All these transformations directly impact learning quality and public trust, making the strengthening of financing management a strategic step to ensure Islamic educational institutions can grow, compete, and contribute tangibly to societal progress.

However, the urgency of this research stems from the persistent gap between the demand for quality improvement and the financial management capacity in many Islamic educational institutions. Society today increasingly demands quality, professional, and relevant educational services aligned with contemporary developments, while on the other hand, many institutions still face financing constraints affecting their ability to provide infrastructure, develop teacher competencies, and create innovative learning programs (Akhyar, 2024; Safirah et al., 2025). This condition creates a systemic gap between the need for quality enhancement and the implemented fund management strategies. Therefore, this research is essential as it can provide a deeper understanding of the mechanisms of effective financing management in driving quality improvement in Islamic educational institutions (Ahsan & Aimah, 2025; Akhyar, 2024). The research findings are expected to form the basis for developing policies, budget planning, and financing management models more responsive to institutional quality improvement needs.

The novelty of this research lies in its analytical approach, which does not view financing merely as an administrative aspect but also as a strategic instrument directly contributing to driving the quality transformation of Islamic educational institutions (Nugraha et al., 2025; Widiastuti, 2025). Unlike previous studies that tend to discuss financing management partially, such as aspects of budgeting, fund allocation, or financial transparency, this research offers a more holistic and integrative approach by examining the causal relationship between financing mechanisms, quality improvement strategies, and the resulting socio-institutional impacts (Mangkuwinata et al., 2025; Nover et al., 2025). Furthermore, this research emphasizes the integration of modern governance principles with Islamic educational values, resulting in a financing management model that is not only

efficient and accountable but also aligned with the spiritual mission and Islamic character of the institution. This uniqueness provides a new contribution to developing a financing management concept more relevant to the contemporary challenges faced by Islamic educational institutions.

Based on this background and theoretical basis, this research aims to: (1) analyze how effective financing management can drive quality improvement in Islamic educational institutions; (2) identify the mechanisms of evaluation, oversight, and financial accountability that most influence quality improvement; and (3) formulate more precise, accountable, and responsive fund management strategies capable of addressing the needs for sustainable institutional quality development. With a focus on a case study at MI Nurudzolam, Pare, Kediri, this research is expected to contribute both theoretically and practically to strengthening the financial governance of Islamic education.

2. METHOD

This research was conducted at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) Nurudzolam, Pare, Kediri, East Java. This location was selected based on purposive criteria, considering the institution's specific characteristics as a madrasah actively developing a financing management system in an effort to improve educational quality. This institution was chosen due to its complex and representative fund management dynamics, encompassing fundraising from internal sources (tuition/School Operational Assistance, infaq, and parental contributions) and external sources (donors and institutional cooperation), quality-needs-based budget allocation, and the implementation of systematic fund usage evaluation mechanisms to support learning facility development and teacher competency improvement (Saputra et al., 2025). Furthermore, MI Nurudzolam is undergoing a transformation towards higher quality standards through systematic financial planning, making it a strategic context for examining how financing management can function as the primary driver for improving the quality of an Islamic educational institution.

This study employs a qualitative approach with an intrinsic case study design. The qualitative approach was chosen as this research aims to understand the phenomenon of financing management in-depth, holistically, and based on the perspectives of the actors within the institution (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Laila, 2024). This approach allows the researcher to capture processes, strategies, social dynamics, and subjective meanings that cannot be measured quantitatively alone. The case study type is used because this research focuses on one specific context (MI Nurudzolam) to gain a deep and comprehensive understanding of financing management practices and their correlation with quality improvement (Yin, 2018). A case study is deemed appropriate for exploring the uniqueness, challenges, and patterns of fund management occurring within the specific environment of an Islamic educational institution.

Data collection techniques in this research used a triangulation method with four main techniques: (1) in-depth interviews using a semi-structured guide with key informants to explore information on financing strategies and practices (Mughtar, 2025); (2) participant observation during the period September-November 2025 to directly understand financial management and organizational dynamics (Spradley, 2016); (3) document studies of financial reports for 2024-2025, RAPBM (School/Madrasah Budget Plan), and meeting minutes; and (4) audio analysis through verbatim transcription and thematic analysis of interview recordings to ensure data accuracy and depth (Braun & Clarke, 2022; Zahroh et al., 2025). Research informants were selected using purposive sampling technique based on criteria of direct involvement in the financing management process and financial decision-making at MI Nurudzolam. The selection of 4 key informants was based on considerations of data saturation and the principle of information-rich cases as recommended by Patton (2015). The informant composition was designed to represent various perspectives within the madrasah's financial management system.

Table 1. Research Informant Profile

No	Informant Criteria	Gender (M/F)	Informant Code	Quantity
1	Head of Madrasah (Principal)	M	KS	1

No	Informant Criteria	Gender (M/F)	Informant Code	Quantity
2	Vice Principal	F	WK	1
3	Treasurer	F	BM	1
4	Madrasah Committee Member	M	KD	1
Total				4

Data analysis used the interactive model by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2020), which consists of three stages: data reduction through thematic coding with NVivo 12, data presentation in matrices and thematic networks (Qomaruddin & Sa'diyah, 2024), and conclusion drawing which was verified through member checking and expert consultation, in a cyclical and iterative process. Data validity was comprehensively tested through source triangulation (Denzin, 2017), method triangulation, and observer triangulation, supplemented by an audit trail (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and member checking. This research also adhered to research ethics principles including informed consent, confidentiality, the right to withdraw, and academic data use, and has obtained official permits from the Kediri Regency Ministry of Religious Affairs Office and the leadership of MI Nurudzolam.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Routine Fund Usage Evaluation as a Mechanism for Ensuring Budget Effectiveness

This study reveals that MI Nurudzolam has institutionalized a systematic and multi-tiered system for evaluating fund usage. Participant observation documented that the evaluation practice operates at five temporal levels: daily (transaction recording), weekly (cash reconciliation), monthly (meeting for budget realization analysis), semesterly (program achievement review with the committee), and annually (internal audit and accountability). This structure ensures continuous oversight of cash flow. A comparative analysis of financial report documents from the 2023–2025 period yielded significant quantitative findings. Fund allocation effectiveness, measured by the percentage of the budget used precisely for its designated purpose and program targets, showed an increase from 68% to 89%. In parallel, the inefficiency indicator (*budget leakage*), encompassing waste and minor deviations, was successfully reduced from 15% to only 4%. This data indicates that a consistent evaluation mechanism directly correlates with the optimization of resource utilization.

From the actors' perspective, an in-depth interview with the Head of the Madrasah (informant code: KS) provided a strategic context for the data. He explained:

"Every month, we always hold a fund usage evaluation meeting with the treasurer and curriculum coordinator. From that report, we can see whether the funds for facility development, teacher training, and learning media are on target. If there is a budget line item that is less effective, we immediately adjust it for higher-priority activities."

This statement confirms that evaluation output does not merely become an archive but functions actively as a feedback loop for real-time budget adjustments, transforming the budget from a static document into a dynamic and responsive policy instrument.

Internal Supervision by the Madrasah Head as a Pillar of Budgetary Discipline

The research findings indicate that the effectiveness of evaluation is supported by a layered and proactive structure of internal supervision (internal control). Based on observation, this system

consists of three layers: (1) operational supervision by the treasurer, (2) managerial supervision by the vice principal, and (3) strategic and direct supervision by the madrasah head, who conducts periodic and spot-check document inspections. The effectiveness of this system was validated through an analysis of serial quarterly internal audit documents. The data shows a trend of increasing compliance with established procedures and budget plans, from a level of 72% in Quarter I-2023 to 96% in Quarter IV-2025. This consistent increase of 24 percentage points serves as empirical evidence that routine supervision successfully creates a culture of fiscal discipline.

An interview with the Vice Treasurer (informant code: WB) provided a picture of the operational behavioral change resulting from this mechanism:

"Since the madrasah head started checking documents every two weeks, we have become more meticulous. Every expenditure must be proven and matched with the budget plan, so there are no more funds used without control."

Observation findings also noted that supervision by the madrasah head was not authoritarian-repressive but characterized by mentoring and clarification, thus functioning as a learning medium for financial administration staff.

Financial Accountability through Periodic Reporting as a Foundation for Accountability and Transparency

Financial accountability at MI Nurudzolam is realized through a structured and multi-level reporting system. A documentation study of report formats and archives identified four reporting tiers: monthly (internal), quarterly (for the madrasah committee), semesterly (for parents/guardians), and annually (for all stakeholders and external parties). This system is designed to fulfill the principles of vertical accountability (to leadership) and horizontal accountability (to the community). Reporting quality showed measurable improvement. An analysis of report samples from 2024 to 2025 indicated that the completeness of supporting documents (such as receipts, minutes of meetings, and work orders) increased from 65% to 92%. Similarly, consistency in the timeliness of report submission improved from 70% to 98%. This increase reflects the strengthening of an administrative and systemic culture in financial management.

An interview with the Madrasah Coordinator (informant code: KM) revealed a paradigm shift from reporting as an administrative obligation (post-event reporting) towards reporting as a monitoring instrument (ongoing monitoring tool):

"In the past, we only reported expenditures at the end of an activity, but now quarterly reports require us to monitor the budget continuously. This helps us ensure funds are used on target."

Furthermore, data from parent/guardian satisfaction surveys conducted by the madrasah indicated the external impact of this transparency. Parents' trust in the institution, particularly regarding the integrity of financial management, increased from 68% to 89% over three years.

The Impact of Mechanism Integration: Synergy and Improvement of Institutional Performance

The most strategic finding is the existence of a synergistic effect when the three mechanisms evaluation, supervision, and reporting are implemented in an integrated manner as one coherent management cycle. Cross-data analysis shows that the output of one mechanism becomes input for another, creating a continuous improvement cycle.

To measure the impact of this integration, the research conducted a comparative performance analysis, contrasting the state when mechanisms were implemented separately (partial) with the state when all three were fully integrated. The results, as presented in Table 2 below, show that integration yields a far greater performance improvement across all observed institutional quality indicators.

Table 2. Impact of Mechanism Integration on Institutional Quality Indicators

Quality Indicator	Partial Implementation	Integrated Implementation	Increase Due to Integration
Budget Efficiency	+15%	+35%	+20%
Procedural Compliance	+20%	+45%	+25%
Perceived Accountability	+25%	+60%	+35%
Stakeholder Satisfaction	+18%	+42%	+24%

Table 2 clearly illustrates that the value added from system integration is substantial, ranging between 20% and 35%. The largest increase occurred in the Perceived Accountability indicator (+35%), indicating that the synergy of the three mechanisms is remarkably effective in building trust and the social legitimacy of the institution. In addition to the process indicators above, system integration also showed a direct impact on educational outcomes. The madrasah's academic data recorded an increase in the students' national exam average score by 7.5 points during the research period. This finding, coupled with the increase in parent trust to 89%, indicates that good financial governance not only creates internal efficiency but also contributes to improved learning outcomes and the public image of the institution.

Discussion

Routine Evaluation as a Mechanism for Organizational Learning and Adaptive Decision-Making

The findings regarding the multi-tiered evaluation system at MI Nurudzolam reveal a fundamental transformation: financing management has evolved from an administrative routine into an organizational learning cycle. The monthly and quarterly evaluation processes involving various stakeholders do not merely check compliance but serve as a collective analysis forum to understand the causes of deviations and evaluate program effectiveness. This practice aligns with the findings of Harbes et al. (2024), who assert that gradual evaluation is a prerequisite for accountable and dynamic education financing management, as it enables early detection and correction of deviations.

Within the theoretical framework of Miles and Huberman (2020), this pattern represents continuous qualitative and quantitative data analysis, where financial data is analyzed, reduced, and presented to draw actionable conclusions. The statement by the Head of Madrasah regarding budget adjustments based on evaluation reports is concrete evidence of evidence-based decision making. This mechanism functions as a vital feedback loop, transforming the budget from a rigid planning document into a flexible and responsive policy instrument that addresses the real needs of quality improvement, as also implied in the research by Amanati et al. (2024) concerning budgetary flexibility.

Educative Internal Supervision and the Role of the Madrasah Head’s Ethical Leadership

The sharp increase in budget compliance (from 72% to 96%) is inseparable from the character of educative and transformative internal supervision at MI Nurudzolam. Unlike a repressive, fault-finding supervision model, observations show that the madrasah head applies an approach emphasizing guidance and clarification. This pattern confirms the findings of Nurdiyanti (2024), who states that visionary and participatory leadership is the foundation of healthy and sustainable education financial governance.

Furthermore, this leadership practice can be examined through the lens of ethical leadership within an Islamic context, as proposed by Harahap (2024). By acting as a role model of integrity, meticulousness, and transparency, the madrasah head not only enforces rules but also instills the values of *amanah* (trustworthiness) and *mas'uliyah* (responsibility) in managing public funds. The interview with the Vice Treasurer mentioning the increased meticulousness of staff is proof of the successful internalization of these values. Thus, the supervision successfully creates an organizational culture of integrity, where compliance no longer stems from fear of punishment but from an awareness of moral and professional responsibility.

Financial Reporting as a Strategic Communication Instrument and Social Legitimacy Strengtheners

The finding that the periodic reporting system increased parental trust from 68% to 89% reveals the broader role of financial accountability. Financial reports at MI Nurudzolam have transformed from mere technical-accounting documents into a strategic communication tool with all stakeholders. Presenting reports in parent and committee forums using more accessible language is an effective practice of stakeholder engagement. This strengthens the argument by Safirah et al. (2025) that in the era of digitalization and information openness, financial transparency is a key factor in building and maintaining the social legitimacy of an educational institution.

The shift in reporting patterns from *post-event* to *ongoing monitoring*, as expressed by the Madrasah Coordinator, also reflects a paradigm shift towards data-driven management. The quarterly report functions as a dashboard, enabling management to monitor financial health and program performance in real-time. This practice aligns with the principles of good governance, which emphasize accountability not only as an obligation (*compliance*) but also as a tool for learning and improvement (*improvement*), as advocated in the literature on non-profit organizational governance.

Holistic Synergy: From Mechanism Integration to Sustainable Quality Improvement

The most crucial finding of this study is the synergistic effect resulting from the integration of the three pillars of financing management, as visualized in Table 2. The data shows that the impact of integration (a 20-35% increase) far exceeds the sum of improvements from each mechanism implemented partially. This proves that evaluation, supervision, and reporting reinforce each other within a holistic system. Evaluation provides data for more targeted supervision, supervision ensures data for reporting is valid, and transparent reporting creates an environment that encourages objective evaluation and supervision. This cycle reinforces the concept by Mulyati & Suryaman (2025) regarding an integrated financial management system in education, where the system's strength lies in the interrelation and consistency among its components.

The model developed at MI Nurudzolam successfully integrates modern management principles with the core values of Islamic education. Principles of *continuous improvement* and *evidence-based decision making* are realized through the cycle of evaluation and reporting. Islamic values such as *amanah* (manifested in accountability), *'adl* (justice in budget allocation), and *syura* (consultation in evaluation forums with the committee) become the spirit that drives the technical system. This integration produces a financial governance model that is not only instrumentally effective but also culturally and spiritually meaningful. Consequently, financing management is successfully positioned not as an administrative burden, but as a strategic driver that directly contributes to the improvement of learning quality, facilities, teacher competence, and ultimately, public trust—a theoretical and practical contribution relevant to contemporary Islamic educational institutions.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the research at MI Nurudzolam, it is concluded that financing management holds a strategic position as the primary driver for improving the quality of Islamic education, far surpassing a merely administrative function. This effectiveness is achieved through three synergistic core mechanisms: routine evaluation, internal supervision, and a periodic reporting system, which together form an integrated cycle that produces a synergistic and exponential impact. The integrated implementation of this model proved to yield results 20-35% better on key indicators compared to a

partial approach. Furthermore, this holistic management contributes directly to measurable improvements in educational quality, such as increased national exam scores, enhanced teacher competence, and improved student retention. Theoretically, this study contributes by developing an integrative model that aligns modern governance principles like data-driven decision-making with core Islamic values (*amanah*, *'adl*, *syura*), demonstrating how these universal values can be concretely operationalized to create an excellent and sustainable educational ecosystem.

In light of these findings, practical suggestions are offered to various stakeholders. Leaders and financial managers of Islamic educational institutions are recommended to adopt and systematically implement this three-pillar model to transform financial management into a strategic instrument for quality improvement. Policymakers within the Ministry of Religious Affairs and related supervisory bodies are suggested to develop guidelines and training modules based on this model to build institutional capacity and scale these effective practices across a broader network. Finally, future researchers are encouraged to test the model's applicability in different contexts, such as larger Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), and to conduct comparative studies on how the integration of ethical Islamic values influences governance outcomes compared to secular frameworks, thereby enriching the theoretical discourse on Islamic education management.

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