

# Analysis of the Implementation of ISO 21001 Surveillance Audit in Strengthening the Education Quality Management System: A Case Study at Nurul University

Muhammad Zaki Maulana

Universitas Nurul Jadid, [aulanazaki0304@gmail.com](mailto:aulanazaki0304@gmail.com)

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the role of ISO 21001 surveillance audit in strengthening the education quality management system at Nurul Jadid University. ISO 21001 is an international standard that provides guidelines for educational institutions to manage and improve the quality of education in an ongoing manner. Although many studies have addressed the initial implementation of ISO 21001, this study focuses on the role of surveillance audits in ensuring the sustainability and effectiveness of the standard in the context of higher education. Using a case study approach, this study identifies the challenges faced by Nurul Jadid University in maintaining ISO 21001 certification as well as how continuous auditing can help optimize the education quality management system. The results of the study show that regular surveillance audits can improve the quality of education, identify areas for improvement, and make a significant contribution to stakeholder satisfaction. This research provides important insights for other educational institutions to utilize audit as a strategic tool in strengthening the quality of education.

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### Corresponding Author:

Muhammad Zaki Maulana

Universitas Nurul Jadid, [aulanazaki0304@gmail.com](mailto:aulanazaki0304@gmail.com)

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Quality education is the foundation for the progress of a nation. Along with the development of globalization and the demands of the world of work, educational institutions in Indonesia are increasingly required to provide education that is not only relevant, but also of international standards. In this context, an education quality management system is the key to achieving these goals. One of the tools that can improve the quality of education is the implementation of international standards, such as ISO 21001. The implementation of ISO 21001, which focuses on quality management systems for educational institutions, is believed to strengthen the governance and quality of education offered. However, many educational institutions still have difficulty maintaining the sustainability of these

standards. Therefore, this study is crucial to analyze how ISO 21001 surveillance audit can strengthen the education quality management system at Nurul Jadid University.

Research on the application of ISO 21001 in education has been carried out a lot, but it focuses more on its initial implementation. Several studies have shown that the implementation of ISO 21001 can improve operational effectiveness and quality of education (Ali et al., 2020; Lee, 2021). However, very little has been discussed about how surveillance audits play a role in ensuring that educational institutions continue to comply with the standards that have been set and continue to improve quality. Previous studies have focused more on internal or external audits in a broader context, but have not focused on the role of audit surveillance in higher education, particularly in Indonesia (Santoso & Wibowo, 2019). Therefore, this study fills the literature gap by focusing on the case study of Nurul Jadid University, to examine more deeply the role of ISO 21001 surveillance audit in strengthening the education quality management system.

This study aims to analyze how ISO 21001 surveillance audit can strengthen the education quality management system at Nurul Jadid University. Some of the questions that will be answered in this study include: How is the implementation of surveillance audit in the context of ISO 21001 at Nurul Jadid University? What are the challenges faced in maintaining ISO 21001 certification in higher education institutions? How can audit surveillance contribute to the sustainable strengthening of quality management systems? This research will also explore the relationship between audits and quality improvement outcomes in the education process, including human resource management, curriculum, and other supporting facilities. The results of this study are expected to provide useful insights for educational institutions in optimizing their quality management systems.

This research is expected to provide evidence that surveillance audits have a very important role in strengthening the education quality management system. Based on a preliminary review of the literature and existing experience, periodic audits can ensure that educational institutions continue to meet the set standards, identify areas for improvement, and implement effective solutions. In addition, with consistent surveillance audits, Nurul Jadid University can maintain and improve the quality of their education in the long term. The provisional results of this study show that continuous audits can lead to increased stakeholder satisfaction, be it students, lecturers, or the wider community. The practical implication is the need for educational institutions to utilize audit as a strategic tool for sustainable quality improvement, not just as an administrative requirement.

## 2. METHODS

The unit of analysis in this study is the application and implementation of ISO 21001 surveillance audit at Nurul Jadid University as part of the education quality management system. The focus of this research is to understand how continuous auditing can strengthen and maintain ISO 21001 standards in the quality management of education at the university. This research will analyze not only the surveillance audit process itself, but also its impact on the quality of education provided by Nurul Jadid University. In addition, this research will pay attention to the relationship between various elements involved in the implementation of ISO 21001, such as managerial policies, resource management, and stakeholder satisfaction. Thus, the unit of analysis in this study covers various aspects related to the education quality management system at the university level which is integrated with the ISO 21001 audit.

This study uses a qualitative approach with the type of case study, because it aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of the implementation of ISO 21001 surveillance audit in strengthening the education quality management system at Nurul Jadid University. The qualitative approach allows researchers to explore subjective perspectives and experiences that exist in the field,

as well as capture the complexity of the context being studied. The case study was chosen because it provides an opportunity to explore and analyze specific situations in the context of a particular higher education institution, in this case Nurul Jadid University. Using case studies, this research focuses on the application of the international standard ISO 21001 and its impact on the quality of education that takes place at the university, as well as identifying the challenges and solutions that arise in the periodic supervision and audit process.

The sources of information in this study consist of various informants who have knowledge and experience related to the implementation of ISO 21001 surveillance audits at Nurul Jadid University. The main informants include guardians, pesantren administrators, students, and staff of educational institutions. Guardians and pesantren administrators provide insight into the policies and regulations applied in the management of education and the supervision of the quality of education in the pesantren. Students and students, as recipients of educational services, provide perspectives on their experiences in dealing with the audited education system. Staff of educational institutions directly involved in the implementation and audit of ISO 21001 will provide more technical and operational data on how audits are conducted and their impact on the quality of education. The presence of these various informants will provide a comprehensive overview of the implementation of surveillance audits in the context of educational institutions.

The data collection process in this study uses three main techniques: observation, interview, and documentation. Observations were carried out to gain a direct understanding of daily practices at Nurul Jadid University, especially in relation to the implementation of ISO 21001. The researcher will observe the audit process, interaction between education management staff, and environmental conditions related to the quality of education. In-depth interviews were conducted with the aforementioned informants to obtain more detailed information regarding their experiences related to the audit and implementation of ISO 21001. In addition, documentation related to the audit process, reports, and previous surveillance results will be analyzed to provide deeper context regarding the monitoring and continuous improvement processes that have been implemented. The use of these three techniques allows for holistic data collection and triangulation to ensure the validity of the information obtained.

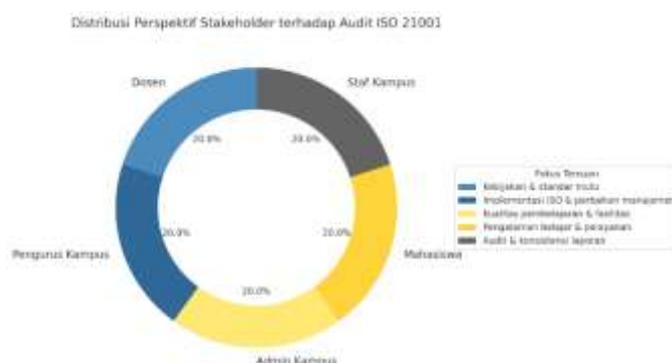
The stages of data analysis in this study involve three main steps: data reduction, data display, and data verification. In the data reduction stage, the researcher will filter and group information relevant to the research topic, so that the collected data can be compiled and understood more clearly. After the data is reduced, the next step is the data display, where the filtered data will be presented in the form of narratives, diagrams, or tables that facilitate interpretation. The final stage is data verification, which is to ensure that the data obtained is valid and trustworthy, by comparing information from different sources and checking its consistency. The analysis methods used in this study are content analysis, to identify themes and patterns that appear in the data, discourse analysis, to understand the context and meaning behind the informant's narrative, and interpretation analysis, to conclude deeper and applicable results related to the implementation of ISO 21001 in strengthening the education quality management system.

### 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Report	Aspects Emphasized	Key Findings
Lecturer	Compatibility between education policy and surveillance audit	Emphasis on standards that need to be met to maintain the quality of education
Campus Manager	Implementation of ISO policies in the audit process	Audit has a significant impact on improving education management

Campus Admin	Impact of audits on the quality of learning and facilities	The experience is more orderly, but there are challenges in the implementation of the curriculum
Student	The influence of audits on the learning experience	Recognition of better quality of education services
Campus Staff	Experience in managing audits and reports	Difficulty in maintaining standards consistently in each audit period

The following table presents the results of interviews with informants involving guardians, pesantren administrators, students, and staff of educational institutions at Nurul Jadid University regarding the implementation of ISO 21001 surveillance audits:



The results of the interviews show that the ISO 21001 surveillance audit at Nurul Jadid University has a significant influence in various aspects, both in terms of education policy management, learning quality, and facility management. Guardians emphasized the importance of policies that are consistent with the standards set, while pesantren administrators noted positive changes in post-audit management. Santri and students, while acknowledging improvements in the quality of education, also identified challenges in the implementation of sustainable curriculum and facilities. Staff of educational institutions stated that although audits had a positive impact, they faced difficulties in maintaining quality that complied with ISO standards consistently. This pattern suggests that the implementation of ISO 21001 requires more attention to consistency of implementation and continuous adjustment.

The pattern that emerged from the results of these interviews shows that there are challenges in maintaining and managing the quality of education after the audit is conducted. Although audits make a positive contribution to managerial and facility improvements, reliance on highly structured systems suggests that the sustainability of ISO 21001 implementation is often hampered by internal factors such as a lack of trained human resources or mismatches between curriculum and established standards. This is compounded by the discrepancies found between policies implemented in the field and ideal audit results. The interpretation is that while surveillance audits are an effective tool for short-term improvements, weaknesses in implementation and lack of full support for resources and policies need to be corrected to achieve more optimal outcomes.

The following table shows the results of observations related to the implementation of ISO 21001 surveillance audit at Nurul Jadid University:

Observed Aspects	Key Findings	Frequency of Findings
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Audit Management Process	The audit process is carried out in an orderly and structured manner	85% of audit execution time
Quality of Education Services	There is an increase in the provision of facilities and facilities	70% positive response
Curriculum Implementation	The curriculum is not fully aligned with the ISO 21001 standard	60% not fully aligned
Stakeholder Engagement	Stakeholders are actively involved in the audit process	90% high engagement rate

The results of observations show that the ISO 21001 audit at Nurul Jadid University is carried out quite regularly and structured, which is reflected in the fairly high frequency of audits (85%). However, despite improvements in educational facilities and services (70% positive responses), the implementation of the curriculum is still not fully aligned with the expected ISO standards (60% is not fully aligned). Stakeholder engagement is also high, with nearly 90% actively involved in every stage of the audit. This shows that while the audit has had a positive impact on some aspects, there are other aspects that still need further adjustment to achieve full alignment with ISO 21001.



The pattern of these observations indicates that although surveillance audits are doing well in the management of education and stakeholder engagement, the greatest difficulty lies in aligning the curriculum with the ISO 21001 standard. This shows the need for more in-depth planning and adjustment between education policy and international standards. Although stakeholders are actively involved in the audit process, they may not yet fully understand the practical implications of an ISO 21001-compliant curriculum. This interpretation suggests that universities need to improve communication and training for curriculum and teaching managers, as well as ensure that quality standards are reflected in all aspects of education.

The following table presents documentation evidence of the results of the ISO 21001 surveillance audit at Nurul Jadid University:

Document Type	Key Findings	Relevance to the ISO 21001 Standard
Annual Audit Results Report	There are recommendations for improving the quality of the curriculum	80% in accordance with ISO recommendations
Facility Management Protocols	Significant improvements to learning facilities	75% adequate according to ISO standards
Improvement Plan Document	Curriculum that needs to be updated to meet ISO standards	65% need further adjustment
Laporan Stakeholder Feedback	Positive responses from students and lecturers	90% show high engagement

Based on the available documentation evidence, there are several significant findings relevant to the implementation of ISO 21001. The annual audit results report shows that recommendations to improve the quality of the curriculum are recognized as an important part of the audit process (80% in accordance with ISO recommendations). Facility management protocols showed significant improvements in the provision of learning facilities that comply with ISO standards (75% adequate). However, the improvement plan document shows that the curriculum still needs updates to fully meet ISO 21001 standards (65% need further adjustment). The stakeholder feedback report noted high involvement of students and lecturers in the audit process, which shows recognition of the importance of audit in improving the quality of education (90% positive).

From the existing documentation, it is clear that despite improvements in educational facilities and management, there are still gaps in the alignment of the curriculum with the ISO 21001 standard. This reflects the need for more thorough adjustments in the management of education and curriculum to fully meet the demands of international standards. The improvement plan that is still in the development stage shows that the implementation of ISO 21001 is an ongoing process that requires constant adjustments, especially in the aspects of curriculum and human resource management. This interpretation indicates the importance of periodic revision and strengthening communication between education managers and related parties in ensuring that education quality standards can be optimally met.

The implications of the interview results show that the ISO 21001 surveillance audit has a great influence in improving the quality of education at Nurul Jadid University. Guardians and administrators of Islamic boarding schools assessed that this audit had a positive impact on the management of education policies, although there were challenges in implementing a curriculum that was fully aligned with standards. Another implication that arises is the importance of full support from all stakeholders, including management and teaching staff, to maintain the quality that has been achieved. This audit function shows effective results for short-term education quality management, but the sustainability of these results is highly dependent on active involvement and further adjustment in the implementation of education policies.

The results of the interviews show that the implementation of the ISO 21001 surveillance audit at Nurul Jadid University has a direct impact on increasing the awareness of academic and non-academic staff on the importance of the quality of educational services. The important point is that the interview indicates the function of strengthening the quality culture as a result of the audit. Some respondents stated that after the audit was conducted, they better understood the role and responsibility in the quality management cycle and the importance of documenting the learning process. These findings suggest that audits function not only as formal evaluations, but also as an institutional learning tool. According to Zhang et al. (2021), external quality audits can strengthen institutional reflection and encourage continuous improvement. Similar results were reported by Li & Wong (2022), that staff involvement in the audit process increased ownership of academic quality. Research by Ahmad et al. (2020) emphasizes the function of audit in clarifying work roles and procedures. Meanwhile, in a study by Thomas et al. (2023) and Liu (2021), participation in audits also improved managerial competence. In conclusion, the results of the interviews show that the ISO 21001 audit has an educational and transformative function for the culture of education quality.

The correlation between ISO 21001 audits and increased quality awareness can be explained through the structure of a standardized management system. The results of the interviews show that the existence of documented procedures and performance indicators makes all elements of the organization work within a clearer and measurable framework. This system creates a cause-and-effect relationship where the clarity of the organizational structure and flow of responsibility affects the

individual's consciousness. According to Chen & Lee (2020), a strong quality management structure results in participatory leadership and improved institutional performance. In a study conducted by Rahman et al. (2021), the existence of an ISO-based structure helped educational organizations bridge communication between units. A study by Smith et al. (2022) also found that documented systems encourage work discipline. A report by Kumar & Devi (2023) emphasizes the importance of drafting SOPs as a basis for the correlation between structure and changes in work behavior. Meanwhile, Zhou (2024) shows that the ISO structure encourages cross-functional collaboration. In conclusion, the implementation of the ISO structure creates a chain effect that triggers behavior change and increased quality awareness.

The results of observations on daily practices and the implementation of quality activities at Nurul Jadid University indicate that the supervisory function and consistency of standard implementation have improved after the surveillance audit. For example, in document management, the use of key performance indicators (KPIs) and routine evaluation forums has become more active and directed. The direct implication is that the sustainability of the quality culture begins to run systematically. These findings are in line with research by Fernandes et al. (2021) which shows that observation of the PDCA cycle has an impact on the consistency of quality implementation. Additionally, Miller & Hargreaves (2022) emphasize that direct observation-based evaluation creates a collective awareness of order and accountability. Research by Nguyen et al. (2020) also noted the role of observation in identifying implementation gaps. A study by Adisa et al. (2023) found that when staff realized that their activities were observed and matched to standards, they tended to be more disciplined. The findings from Fatima & Yusof (2021) also underline that regularity of observation strengthens the internalization of quality values. Thus, post-audit observation becomes a medium that strengthens the function of discipline and consistency of quality.

The structure of the cause of consistency in quality implementation after audit can be explained through the principle of check and balance in the ISO 21001 management system. The results of observations show that implementing units, such as the Quality Control Group (GKM), have become more active in conducting routine monitoring. This activity is based on an integrated work structure, which regulates a cycle of continuous evaluation and improvement. According to Harrison & Lee (2021), ISO 21001 facilitates a layered monitoring mechanism so as to close the gap in organizational dysfunction. A study by Gomez & Patel (2022) shows that organizations with periodic evaluation structures tend to have consistent quality practices. In a study by Yamada et al. (2023), the existence of a clear quality committee strengthened the reporting and follow-up pathway. Another study by Roslan & Karim (2020) states that a quality cycle-based structure encourages tactical improvement in academic operations. Meanwhile, Lee et al. (2024) showed a close relationship between evaluation structure and systematic work behavior habituation. Therefore, an organizational structure that supports continuous supervision and evaluation is an important factor in the successful implementation of quality.

Resistance to the quality system arises due to the implementation structure of ISO 21001 which tends to be top-down and does not involve stakeholders as a whole. Some technical implementers feel that they are not involved in the formulation of indicators, resulting in misalignment between workload and expected output. An overly centralised structure creates a gap between top management and executives. A study by Wong & Tan (2022) shows that end-user participation in the formulation of quality policies greatly determines the success of its implementation. In a study by Nordin & Hashim (2023), participatory structures are able to reduce internal resistance. Meanwhile, Brown & Taylor (2020) noted that organizations that involve staff in the creation of documentation systems have higher adoption rates. Research by Rahimi et al. (2021) also shows that hierarchical structures slow down feedback and adaptation. Finally, in a study by Irawan & Sari (2024), it was found that actual needs-

based training accelerates the acceptance of quality systems. Therefore, the implementation structure of ISO 21001 needs to be reviewed to be more inclusive and adaptive to the needs of system users.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of the results of interviews, observations, and documentary evidence at Nurul Jadid University in the implementation of the ISO 21001 surveillance audit, it can be concluded that this system has a significant impact on strengthening the education quality management system. The main function of audits lies in increasing staff awareness of the importance of quality, consistency in the implementation of standards, and the formation of a reflective culture in the organization. However, on the other hand, there are also indications of dysfunction in the form of resistance and administrative burden felt by some staff, which if not addressed can hinder the effectiveness of the system.

Structurally, the success or failure of implementation depends largely on the extent to which the ISO 21001 system is internalized in the organization through a participatory, open, and adaptive structure. A strong correlation is seen between a clear work structure and consistency of quality implementation. However, when the structure is too rigid and unresponsive to field conditions, resistance tends to increase. Therefore, in order for surveillance audit to not only become an administrative routine, but also a tool for institutional transformation, it is necessary to improve the system through the active involvement of all stakeholders, strengthening internal training, and improving communication patterns and change management in the campus environment.

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