

The Role of Madrasah Principal's Managerial Competency and Professional Teacher Competency in Improving Students' Academic Achievement: A Literature Review

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Abstract

Improvements in the quality of education in madrasahs are greatly influenced by the quality of teacher leadership and teacher professionalism, especially in relation to student academic achievement. The reality before us shows that madrasahs face various challenges, such as limited resources, a lack of innovative learning strategies, and differences in quality between facilities. Therefore, this study aims to examine the influence of principal management competence on student academic achievement, describe the role of professional teachers in improving academic achievement, and explore the relationship between these two factors. This study also aims to examine the quality of education in madrasahs. This study applies a literature research method with a content analysis approach to relevant books, articles, and scientific journals. The findings show that principals with good management skills are able to create a conducive learning environment, while professional teachers are a key factor in delivering effective and meaningful teaching. The synergy between the two creates a positive and sustainable academic culture that ultimately leads to improved student achievement. It is hoped that these findings will contribute to the literature on educational management and provide practical contributions to educators, teachers, and policy makers in developing strategies to improve the quality of madrasahs in a global context.

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1. INTRODUCTION.

Education is a fundamental foundation for developing superior, competitive, and character-based human resources. In the context of Islamic education, madrasahs hold a strategic position, not only as institutions providing formal education, but also as forums for moral development, instilling religious values, and developing 21st-century skills (Asmuri, Hidayati, & Fitri, 2025). Achieving these goals requires effective educational management, with the leadership of the madrasah principal and teacher professionalism as key factors.

The principal of an Islamic school plays a crucial role in aligning all components of the institution to align with the vision, mission, and educational goals. Effective leadership encompasses not only administrative aspects but also the ability to set a good example, create a positive work climate, and encourage change within the school (Wika, Nisa, Sabri, & Hidayatullah, 2024). A visionary and transformative principal can create an organizational culture that supports quality learning while improving student achievement.

Furthermore, professional teachers play a crucial role in determining the quality of the learning process. Teacher professionalism is reflected not only in their mastery of the four core competencies—pedagogy, professionalism, personality, and socialism—as mandated by national education standards, but also in their ability to adapt to technological developments and the increasingly complex learning needs of students (Rinto Alexandro, Misnawati, & Wahidin, 2021). This is reflected in teachers' creativity in designing learning, implementing innovative methods, and conducting objective and ongoing evaluations.

Madrasah principal leadership and teacher professionalism are closely related and complementary. (Adam, Nurkolis, & Sumarno, 2025) An effective madrasah principal will provide support, motivation, and space for self-development for teachers, thus enabling them to be more efficient and dedicated in teaching students. Conversely, professional teachers will strengthen the effectiveness of madrasah principal leadership through the quality of performance demonstrated in the classroom. (Tanjung, 2025) Thus, the synergy between madrasah principal leadership and teacher professionalism is the key to improving the quality of education in madrasahs.

Madrasahs, as formal Islamic-based educational institutions, play a crucial role in developing a generation that is not only intellectually intelligent but also possesses religious character and noble morals. Madrasahs are an integral part of the national education system, with the hope of producing graduates who are qualified, competitive, and adaptable to current developments. (Bakar, 2024) However, the reality on the ground shows that the quality of education in madrasahs still faces several challenges, particularly related to students' suboptimal academic achievement.

The low quality of education in madrasahs is reflected in various indicators, such as unsatisfactory student learning outcomes, limited learning facilities and infrastructure, and the suboptimal implementation of creative and innovative learning strategies. (Kadafi, 2024) This condition is further exacerbated by the quality gap between public and private madrasahs, both in terms of human resources and institutional management. (Afkari et al., 2022) As a result, the academic achievements of madrasah students often lag behind those of students in public schools, especially in regional and national academic competitions.

These challenges are influenced by internal and external factors. Internally, low student motivation, stagnant learning methods, and limited teacher skills in learning technology are real obstacles. (Falny et al., 2025) Externally, social environmental factors, family support, and limited access to modern learning resources also influence student academic achievement. Furthermore, the development of the digital era and the need for 21st-century skills require madrasahs to transform to improve the quality of education and the competitiveness of their graduates. (Nurjanah, Bedi, & Fitri, 2024)

Therefore, the low quality of education and challenges to student academic achievement in madrasahs are important issues that require serious attention from all education stakeholders. Improving quality is not enough to only address input and output aspects, but must also address the quality of the learning process, visionary madrasah leadership, and increased teacher professionalism (SYAFII, 2019). Without a comprehensive education management strategy, madrasahs will struggle to meet community expectations and face increasingly competitive global competition.

Research in the field of educational management essentially aims to produce valid, systematic knowledge that can be scientifically justified. One of the key elements in research is a deep understanding of the relationships between the variables studied, including independent variables, dependent variables, and variables that act as moderators or mediators. This understanding cannot rely solely on assumptions or practical experience

but must be based on a strong theoretical foundation. This is why a literature review is highly urgent, as it serves to provide a conceptual framework and clarify the relationships between research variables (Kurniawan, Machdar, Manurung, & Sangapan, 2025).

The focus of this research can be formulated into three main questions. First, how does the managerial competence of madrasah principals influence student academic achievement? Second, what is the role of professional teacher competence in supporting student academic achievement? Third, how is the relationship between the managerial competence of madrasah principals and professional teacher competence in improving the quality of education in madrasahs? These three questions serve as a conceptual foundation for a comprehensive examination of the relationship between leadership, teacher professionalism, and student academic achievement.

Based on the formulation of the problem, the purpose of this study is to analyze in depth the influence of the managerial competence of madrasah principals on student academic achievement, describe the role of professional teacher competence in supporting the improvement of academic achievement, and reveal the synergistic relationship between the two in efforts to improve the quality of education in madrasahs. Thus, this study seeks to provide a complete picture of the strategic role of madrasah principal leadership and teacher professionalism in optimizing student achievement.

The results of this study are expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, this research enriches the body of educational management studies, particularly regarding the relationship between leadership, teacher professionalism, and student academic achievement. Practically, this research can serve as a reference for madrasah principals in developing more effective managerial competencies, while also providing input for teachers to improve their professionalism in teaching. Furthermore, this research is also useful for educational policymakers in formulating strategies to improve the quality of madrasahs so they can compete and meet the demands of 21st-century education.

2. THEORETICAL STUDY

In this study, research theories are examined, some of which are related to the role of the madrasah principal in leadership and teacher professional development in the development of teacher academies, namely:

1. Managerial Competence of Madrasah Principals

The madrasah principal is a central figure in the implementation of education in madrasahs. Wahjosumidjo defines a madrasah principal as a functional teacher who is given additional responsibility to lead the madrasah as the center of the learning process. (Solihin & Fitri, 2023) The managerial competency possessed by the madrasah principal basically reflects the ability to manage all available resources so that educational goals can be achieved effectively, efficiently, and sustainably.

This managerial competence is reflected through a number of important aspects, namely:

- a. Planning, namely the ability to formulate a vision, mission and educational program that is relevant to student needs and the demands of the times.
- b. Organizing, namely the ability to manage human resources, infrastructure, and work systems so that effective coordination is established.
- c. Leadership, namely the skill of influencing, directing, and motivating teachers, staff, and students in achieving common goals.
- d. Supervision, namely efforts to foster, monitor and direct the implementation of

learning to meet quality standards.

- e. Evaluation, namely the ability to assess the effectiveness of a program and measure the extent to which educational goals have been achieved.
- f. Innovation, namely creativity and courage to make improvements, both in management and learning practices, so that madrasahs remain relevant amidst global change. (Hanafie Das & Halik, 2021)

Thus, the role of the madrasah principal is not only that of an administrator, but also that of a manager, leader, and innovator. A madrasah principal with strong managerial competencies will be able to create a conducive learning climate, encourage teacher performance, and contribute directly to improving the quality and academic achievement of students.

2. Professional Teacher Competencies

A professional teacher is an educator who possesses the expertise, skills, and work ethic in accordance with the competency standards stipulated in Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers. According to Sudjana (2010), a professional teacher is an educator who has mastered the theoretical foundations, is able to apply them in practice, and possesses moral integrity in carrying out his or her role. (Masrum, 2021)

Professional teacher competencies cover four main areas (Minister of National Education Regulation No. 16 of 2007), namely:

1. Pedagogical: the ability to design, implement, and evaluate learning according to student characteristics.
2. Professional: in-depth mastery of teaching materials and the ability to relate them to real-life contexts.
3. Social: the ability to interact, communicate and collaborate with various parties in the school and community.
4. Personality: personal integrity reflected in moral integrity, maturity, and exemplary behavior for students. (Umasugi, 2014)

These four competencies are the primary foundation for effective learning. Professional teachers are able to deliver interactive, innovative, and student-centered learning. Ultimately, teacher professionalism significantly impacts student academic achievement, both in terms of mastery of knowledge and skills, and the development of positive learning attitudes.

3. Student Academic Achievement

Academic achievement is a key indicator of educational success. According to Slameto, academic achievement is the knowledge and skills students acquire after going through the learning process, usually manifested in the form of specific grades or achievements. (UTAMA, 2024)

Factors that influence academic achievement can be divided into two categories:

1. Internal factors, such as intellectual abilities, interests, motivation, psychological conditions, and student health.
2. External factors, which include the role of the family, teacher quality, learning facility support, school climate, and community involvement. (Fanggidae, 2021)

Academic achievement can be measured through various indicators, including:

1. Report card grades or exam results reflect mastery of the material.
2. Achievements in national exams or educational standards assessments.
3. Achievements in academic competitions, such as olympiads, debates, and scientific competitions.

4. Mastery of applicable skills relevant to the subject matter. (Yulyani, 2022)

In other words, academic achievement is the result of a complex interaction between individual student factors and the educational environment. In the madrasah context, student success in achieving academic achievement is greatly influenced by the visionary leadership of the madrasah principal and the professionalism of teachers in carrying out their duties. The synergy between the two will create a conducive, quality-oriented learning environment.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a library research approach, which is a form of scientific research conducted by relying on various literature sources as the main analytical material (Adlini, Dinda, Yulinda, Chotimah, & Merliyana, 2022). This approach was chosen because this study focuses on conceptual understanding, strengthening theoretical foundations, and comparing findings from previous studies relevant to the variables studied, namely the managerial competence of madrasah principals, professional teacher competence, and student academic achievement. Data sources were obtained from credible and relevant literature, including:

1. Scientific books that discuss educational management, teacher professionalism, and theories about student learning achievement.
2. Scientific articles and journals, both published nationally and internationally, that have a direct relationship to the research topic.

Data were collected through documentation, literature review, and a systematic review. Each relevant piece of literature was critically reviewed to identify key ideas related to the research variables (Ridwan, Suhar, Ulum, & Muhammad, 2021). Important information from various sources was then recorded, categorized, and grouped into specific themes for easier comprehensive analysis. This allowed researchers to construct a comprehensive picture of the relationships between variables while strengthening the research's theoretical foundation.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the problems presented by the researcher, the following conclusions and discussions can be drawn:

1. The Role of Madrasah Principal's Managerial Competence

Teachers hold a strategic position in determining the direction and quality of education. Management competencies, including the ability to plan, organize, lead, supervise, evaluate, and innovate, are crucial in creating a differentiated learning environment. A visionary school leader is able to formulate a clear vision and mission, optimally manage resources, and create a cooperative work environment. This type of leadership encourages a culture of discipline, order, and open communication among all members of the madrasah community. This creates a pleasant learning environment for students, which ultimately contributes to

2. The Role of Professional Teacher Competence

Professional teachers are at the forefront of the learning process. Mastery of four core competencies—pedagogy, professionalism, social competence, and personality—is a crucial factor in the quality of teaching. Teachers who master their subjects, develop creative learning strategies, and build positive interactions with students can improve their motivation and performance. Furthermore, teacher integrity and exemplary behavior influence the development of student character. Therefore, teacher

professionalism not only influences the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process but also directly contributes to student academic performance, including grades, exam results, and academic achievement.

3. The Relationship between Madrasah Principals and Professional Teachers

The management skills of school leaders and teacher professionalism are interconnected. A school leader who effectively performs their management functions can create systems and guidelines that encourage teacher professional development, for example through academic supervision, training programs, or awards. Conversely, professional teachers are the primary actors who implement these guidelines in daily learning. Collaboration between the two parties creates a positive academic culture, where the quality of institutional management is linked to the quality of classroom teaching. This healthy academic culture forms the foundation for continuous improvement in student performance.

4. Synthesis Analysis

From the above findings, it can be concluded that the leadership quality of a student leader and teacher professionalism are the most important interrelated factors in improving student academic achievement. The principal acts as both a leader and manager, providing a supportive climate and resources, while professional teachers are tasked with translating these policies into effective teaching. The synergy between leadership competencies and teacher professionalism is crucial for a school's success in creating high-quality learning processes, a conducive environment, and optimal academic achievement.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Research in educational management essentially aims to obtain valid, systematic, and scientifically grounded knowledge. A key element of research is a thorough understanding of the relationships between the variables studied, including independent, dependent, and moderator variables. This understanding cannot rely solely on assumptions or practical experience but must be grounded in a solid theoretical foundation. Therefore, a literature review is crucial because it provides a conceptual framework and clarifies the relationships between research variables.

A literature search is not merely a supplement, but a crucial starting point. The findings of this study help formulate hypotheses that are more logical, rational, and more appropriate to the research context in educational management. In this study, the relationships between variables in educational research are often complex. Internal factors such as motivation, leadership quality, and teaching staff professionalism are involved, as are external factors such as educational policy, parental support, and field of study. The urgency of a literature search lies in its role as a conceptual foundation that explains the relationships between research variables.

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