DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.29240/jsmp.v9i2.15150

The Influence of Transformational Leadership and Managerial Competence of Madrasah Principle on the Quality of Madrasah Education at Purwakarta

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the influence of transformational leadership and the managerial competence of head of madrasah on the quality of madrasah education in Purwakarta Regency. The research is grounded in the understanding that the quality of madrasah education largely depends on the effectiveness of leadership and the capacity of madrasah heads to manage institutional resources professionally. An explanatory quantitative approach was employed, using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) method based on Partial Least Squares (SmartPLS). The study involved madrasah heads, teachers, and education personnel as the research population, with a sample of 80 respondents. Data were collected using a five-point Likert scale questionnaire that had undergone validity and reliability testing. The findings show that managerial competence significantly and dominantly affects the quality of madrasahs (β = (0.489) and positively influences transformational leadership ($\beta = 0.236$). Conversely, transformational leadership demonstrates a weak direct effect on madrasah quality ($\beta = 0.066$) and does not function as a significant mediating variable. Theoretically, these results indicate that improving the quality of madrasah is more effective when emphasizing the strengthening of managerial competencies, which should be integrated with the values of Islamic transformational leadership. Overall, this study contributes to the development of leadership theories and practices in Islamic education by highlighting the importance of strategic management capabilities supported by spiritual and value-based leadership.

Keywords: Transformational Leadership, Managerial Competence, Madrasah Quality, Islamic Education.

INTRODUCTION

The problem of the quality of education in mbecause of be seen as a stand-alone phenomenon (Rifqi Nashrul Fuad Amrulloh & Ahmadi Ahmadi, 2022; Suarni & Suparhun, 2022), but rather as a result of the interaction of

various components in the education system that influence each other. The quality of output is highly determined by the quality of input and the quality of the process that takes place in the educational institution (Hartanto, 2017). Although the potential of madrasah students in Indonesia is quite high as evidenced by their achievements in various national and international academic competitions, reality shows that not all madrasas are able to optimize this potential (Ratih Permata Sari & Ahmad, 2020). This quality inequality is often caused by the weak leadership of madrasah heads (Anggraeni, 2017) and by low managerial competence in managing educational resources effectively and sustainably.

Leadership is a fundamental factor in determining the direction, success, and quality of organizations, including educational institutions. Various modern theories state that leadership is a key variable in influencing the effectiveness of an organization (L. Parmer & E. Dillard, 2019; Peter G. Northouse, 2019). In the context of Islamic education, leadership is not only administrative, but also moral and transformational, based on Qur'anic values. Tavfelin (2018) stated that the transformational leadership model is a promising paradigm in managing change and improving the performance of public service organizations, including education. Transformational leaders are able to inspire, motivate, and build a collective commitment to achieve a vision of excellence and character education (Richter et al., 2018).

Previous research has shown a positive relationship between transformational leadership and improving the quality of education. For example, research by Basirun (2022) and Sofiah (2021) emphasized that transformational leadership plays an important role in creating a quality-oriented organizational culture change (Basirun & Turimah, 2022; Sofiah Sinaga et al., 2021). In the context of madrasas, a study conducted by Marlina et al (2025) found that madrasah heads with a transformational leadership style are able to increase teacher motivation and the effectiveness of the learning process (Marlina et al., 2025). However, most of the research still focuses on the influence of leadership on teacher performance or work climate (A'yun, 2022; Romadhon & MS, 2021), not directly on the quality of madrasah education as a systemic result involving various managerial dimensions.

In addition to the leadership aspect, the managerial competence of the head of the madrasah also plays a central role in ensuring the sustainability of the quality of education(Dudiono, 2020; Nurhayati et al., 2020). Madrasah heads are required to have skills in planning, organizing, mobilizing, and supervising all existing resources. According to Mulyasa in Soffianningrum (2022), managerial competence includes the ability of madrasah heads to formulate policies, develop human resources, and create a work culture that is conducive to

learning(Soffianningrum et al., 2022). Research conducted by several researchers, including by Ainur Alam (2020), Fatimah et al Sites (2023) and Syuryana et al (2023) affirms that strong managerial competence correlates with increased effectiveness of educational organizations (Ainur Alam Budi Utomo, 2020; Siti Fatimah et al., 2023; Syuryana et al., 2023). However, in many madrasas, this ability has not been optimized, especially in areas where human resources are still limited.

The novelty of this study lies in the integration of analysis between transformational leadership and the managerial competence of madrasah heads in influencing the quality of madrasah education in the millennial era. Previous studies have generally examined these two variables separately. This study tries to combine them in one comprehensive conceptual model, considering the dynamics of social change and the demands of 21st century education. In addition, this research also takes the geographical context of Purwakarta Regency which has a vision of the development of "Purwakarta Istimewa" as an example of a region that is trying to develop the quality of Islamic education through managerial reform and school leadership.

The research problems proposed in this study are: (1) the extent of the influence of transformational leadership of madrasah heads on the quality of madrasah education; (2) how the managerial competence of the head of the madrasah affects the improvement of the quality of madrasah education; and (3) whether the combination of transformational leadership and managerial competence simultaneously has a significant effect on the quality of madrasah education. Based on these problems, the hypothesis formulated is that transformational leadership and managerial competence of madrasah heads have a positive and significant effect on the quality of madrasah education.

The purpose of this study is to analyze and empirically prove the influence of transformational leadership and managerial competence of madrasah heads on the quality of madrasah education in Purwakarta Regency. The results of this research are expected to make a theoretical contribution to the development of Islamic education management studies, as well as become a practical basis in formulating policies for the development of madrasah heads that are oriented towards transformational leadership and superior managerial competence. Thus, madrasas are expected to be able to become an adaptive, competitive, and characterful Islamic educational institution during the challenges of the global era and the industrial revolution 4.0.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses an explanatory quantitative approach (Marlina et al., 2023) with the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) method based on Partial Least Squares (SmartPLS) to analyze the causal relationships between transformational leadership, the managerial competence of madrasah heads, and the quality of madrasah education. This approach was selected because it can test complex latent-variable models with relatively small sample sizes and can accommodate both formative and reflective constructs. The research was conducted in Purwakarta Regency, an area with 85 active madrasahs that vary by level (MI, MTs, MA) and organizational type (public and private), making it a relevant locus for studying variations in leadership and educational quality.

The research population consisted of all madrasah heads, teachers, and education personnel in the region. A proportional stratified random sampling technique was used based on educational level to ensure adequate representation. Following Hair et al. (2019), the minimum required sample is 5–10 times the number of indicators; with 30 indicators in the model, the minimum sample size ranges from 150–300. However, because the PLS-SEM approach tolerates smaller samples and the target population for madrasah heads is limited, the final sample consisted of 80 respondents, comprising 41 madrasah principals and 39 teachers (Finthariasari et al., 2020). Participant demographic characteristics included gender, age, educational background, years of service, and madrasah level, allowing characterization of the respondent profile and enhancing interpretation of findings. Although the sample meets PLS-SEM minimum statistical power, it still represents a methodological limitation in terms of generalizability to broader regional or national contexts.

Data were collected using a five-point Likert scale questionnaire (1–5) (Tomei et al., 2021) developed from well-established theoretical models: Bass and Avolio (2021) for transformational leadership (Nassif et al., 2021), Mulyasa (2018) for managerial competence (Sunardi et al., 2019), and the national education quality standards defined by the Ministry of National Education (2010) (Yasiman & Falah, 2024). Questionnaire development proceeded through multiple stages, including content validation by experts in Islamic educational management, item refinement, and pilot testing with 30 respondents. Psychometric evaluation included tests of construct validity, convergent validity (factor loadings \geq 0.70, AVE \geq 0.50), discriminant validity (Fornell-Larcker and HTMT criteria), and reliability using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (\geq 0.70). These steps ensured that all measurement instruments met established psychometric properties prior to full-scale deployment.

The research procedure began with expert validation and a pilot study, followed by the distribution of the questionnaires both online and offline over a three-month period (January–March 2025). After data collection, responses were screened for completeness and accuracy before being processed using SmartPLS version 4.0. Data analysis was carried out in two main stages:

measurement model evaluation (outer model) and structural model evaluation (inner model). Bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples was applied to obtain tstatistics and p-values, enabling assessment of the significance of direct, indirect, and mediating effects. Model fit was evaluated using R² to measure explained variance and Q² (Stone-Geisser) to assess predictive relevance (Takona, 2024; Weyant, 2022).

To ensure reliability and validity, several safeguards were applied, including expert judgment, psychometric evaluation, anonymity assurance, and random distribution techniques to minimize potential respondent bias. Assumptions for the study included the expectation that respondents understood the questionnaire and answered honestly based on actual conditions in their institutions. Despite thorough methodology, limitations remain, particularly the possibility of perception bias due to self-reported data and restricted generalizability because the study was conducted solely in Purwakarta Regency. Nonetheless, the results of this study offer valuable theoretical and practical contributions to the development of leadership and management models for improving the quality of Islamic education in madrasahs.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

These outputs encompass the evaluation of the measurement and structural models, as well as hypothesis testing, all of which provide empirical support for assessing the effects of transformational leadership and managerial competence on the quality of madrasah education.

Tabel 1. Path Coefficients between Variables

	Path coefficients
Managerial > Quality Madrasah	0.489
Transformational > Managerial	0.236
Transformational - Madrasah Quality >	0.066

Source; SEM PLs

The results of the above research analyzed using SmartPLS show that there is a strong relationship between the managerial competence of madrasah heads and the quality of madrasah education in Purwakarta Regency. The path coefficient value of 0.489-0.504 shows that the higher the managerial ability of the head of the madrasah in planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating educational programs, the higher the quality of the madrasah produced. These

results confirm the first hypothesis that managerial competence has a direct and significant effect on the quality of madrasah education. These findings are also consistent with education management theory which emphasizes the importance of the role of madrasah heads as managers, strategic decision-makers, and directors of quality policies of educational institutions.

Furthermore, the results of the study show that managerial competence has a positive influence on transformational leadership with a path coefficient of 0.236. This proves that the higher the level of managerial competence, the greater the ability of madrasah heads to apply transformational leadership styles that include inspiration, motivation, individual attention, and innovation encouragement. Thus, the second hypothesis that states that there is a positive influence between managerial competence on transformational leadership is also proven. Although the statistical power is not great, this relationship indicates that good managerial skills are an important foundation for the creation of effective transformational leadership.

The results of the test on the direct influence of transformational leadership on the quality of madrassas showed a path coefficient value of 0.066 to 0.182, with a low level of significance. These findings mean that although transformational leadership has a positive influence, its contribution to improving the quality of madrassas is not directly significant. Thus, the third hypothesis that states that transformational leadership has a direct effect on the quality of madrassas is only partially proven. Managerial factors have proven to be more dominant than transformational leadership in determining the quality of the institution. However, transformational leadership remains important as a supporting factor that creates an inspiring work climate and a conducive organizational culture.

Tabel 2. Total Indirect Effect

	Managerial	Quality of Madrasah	Transformational
Managerial		0.016	
Quality of Madrasah			
Transformational			

Source; SEM PLs

The matrix 2 shows the correlation values between the three main variables studied: managerial competence, transformational leadership, and the quality of madrasah education. The value of 0.016 represents the correlation between managerial competence and transformational leadership, indicating a very weak relationship. This suggests that improvements in managerial competence do not strongly correspond with changes in transformational leadership behaviors within the sampled madrasahs. Meanwhile, the absence of values in the other cells implies either non-significant relationships or that these correlations were not calculated in this specific table. Overall, the matrix highlights that managerial competence and transformational leadership operate as largely independent constructs, each potentially influencing the quality of the madrasah through different pathways.

Table 3. R-Square

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Quality of Madrasah	0.258	0.218
Transformational	0.056	0.031

Source; SEM PLs

The R-square value of 0.258 indicates that 25.8% of the variation in madrasah quality can be explained by managerial competence and transformational leadership. Meanwhile, the R-square value of 0.056 for the transformational variable indicates that only 5.6% of transformational leadership variations can be explained by managerial competence. Although the predictive contribution of this model is still moderate, these results provide an empirical picture that the two variables together have an important role in improving the quality of madrasas, with managerial competence as the dominant variable.

Overall, the findings of this study successfully address all hypotheses proposed in the introduction. Managerial competence is demonstrated as the most significant determinant of madrasah educational quality, exerting both a strong direct effect and an enhancing influence on transformational leadership. In contrast, the role of transformational leadership remains indirect and comparatively weak. These results indicate that efforts to improve madrasah quality in Purwakarta Regency should prioritize the systematic strengthening of managerial competence among madrasah heads, while simultaneously cultivating Islamic transformational leadership values. Educational policymakers and institutional leaders are therefore encouraged to design comprehensive professional development programs focused strategic planning, on organizational management, instructional supervision, data-driven decisionmaking, and value-based leadership. Leadership training tailored to the madrasah environment—such as coaching clinics, competency-based workshops, in-service certification programs, and peer-learning communities will help ensure that madrasah heads develop both the managerial proficiency and the transformative vision required for effective, inspiring, and sustainable educational governance.

Discussion

The results of this study show that the managerial competence of madrasah heads has the most dominant influence on the quality of madrasah education. This finding is in line with the theory of Islamic education management which places the head of the madrasah as a central figure in the planning, organization, mobilization, and supervision of all educational resources. According to Mulyasa (2018), madrasah heads with high managerial competence are able to realize effective and quality-oriented educational governance, because every policy taken is based on data, evaluation, and participatory principles. In this context, managerial ability is not just administrative, but reflects the ability of the head of the madrasah in mobilizing all the potential of the institution to achieve a superior vision of Islamic education.

These empirical findings also strengthen the research results of Ariyanti et al (2020) and Pratama (2023) which show that managerial competence has a strong relationship with the effectiveness of school organizations and teacher performance(Ariyanti et al., 2020; Stuart & Stuart, 2023). Madrasah heads who are able to combine strategic vision with managerial technical skills can create a productive, collaborative, and results-oriented work culture. In the context of madrasas, these abilities become more meaningful when integrated with spiritual values such as sincerity, trust, and responsibility, which are part of Islamic leadership ethics. Thus, the improvement of the quality of madrassas is not only the result of efficient resource management, but also a reflection of leadership rooted in the values of monotheism and morality.

Meanwhile, transformational leadership in this study showed a positive but not significant influence on the quality of madrasas. These results show that transformational practices have not been fully internalized in the madrasah leadership system in Purwakarta Regency. In fact, according to Bass and Avolio (2004), transformational leaders are able to inspire change, foster commitment, and improve motivation and performance of organizational members through

four main dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulationand individualized consideration. From an Islamic perspective, this principle is in line with the concept of qiyadah bi al-qudwah (leadership by example), where leaders are a source of moral and spiritual inspiration for their followers(Rahayuning Tyas, 2019).

The limited influence of transformational leadership on the quality of madrasas in this study indicates that its implementation is still normative and not optimal in daily practice. Madrasah heads may already understand the concept of transformational theoretically, but have not been able to translate it into concrete patterns of communication, motivation, and learning innovation. Therefore, improving the quality of transformational leadership in madrassas requires continuous coaching that integrates managerial training with the spiritual dimension and Islamic values. This is in line with the view of Tavfelin (2013) who states that the success of transformational leadership is highly dependent on the context of the organization and the values that underlie it.

In terms of the relationship between variables, this study also shows that transformational leadership does not play a strong role as a mediator between managerial competence and madrasah quality. This finding provides a theoretical meaning that in the context of Islamic educational institutions, managerial factors play a more direct role in shaping the quality of education than the motivational effect of leadership. However, transformational leadership still has a strategic position as a catalyst that strengthens the vision and spirit of change in the madrasah environment. In other words, transformational leadership based on managerial competence will be more effective in encouraging institutional quality improvement.

Theoretically, the results of this study support the integrative leadership model of Islamic education, in which the managerial dimension (rationalinstrumental) and the transformational dimension (emotional-spiritual) are not separated, but synergized. The ideal madrasah head is a figure who has strong managerial competence while displaying a moral and spiritual example as an Islamic leader. In the perspective of the Qur'an, the ideal leader is one who is just, trustworthy, fathanah, and tabligh values that are also the foundation for Islamic transformational leadership as illustrated below.

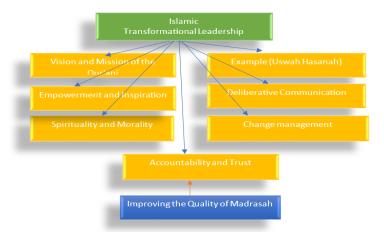


Figure 1. Conceptual Islamic Leadership

Thus, the results of this study not only make an empirical contribution to the development of Islamic education leadership theory and management, but also offer practical direction for madrasah development policies. Madrasah quality improvement programs should be focused on strengthening the managerial competence of madrasah heads through strategic and spiritual leadership-based training. At the same time, transformational leadership values need to be internalized in the organizational culture of the madrasah so that the process of quality improvement is not only technically efficient, but also morally and religiously meaningful.

So,based on the results of the research and discussions that have been carried out, it can be concluded that the managerial competence of madrasah heads has the most dominant and significant influence on the quality of madrasah education in Purwakarta Regency. This result proves that the higher the ability of madrasah heads to manage resources, formulate strategic policies, and create an efficient and participatory work system, the higher the quality of education produced. Thus, the first hypothesis that states that there is a positive influence between managerial competences on the quality of madrassas is empirically proven.

In addition, the study also found that managerial competence had a positive effect on transformational leadership, albeit with moderate power of influence. This shows that good managerial skills support madrasah heads in implementing an inspiring, communicative, and positive change-oriented leadership style. However, the direct influence of transformational leadership on

the quality of madrasas has proven to be weak, so that quality improvement occurs more through managerial channels than independent transformational leadership. This means that the success of transformational leadership depends heavily on a strong managerial foundation, not just on motivational aspects or moral exemplars.

Furthermore, the results of the mediation test showed that transformational leadership did not play a significant role as a mediator between managerial competence and the quality of the madrasah. This indicates that in the context of madrasas, managerial leadership has a greater direct contribution to the quality of the institution than indirect influence through transformational leadership. Nevertheless, the integration between the two aspects remains important to create effective and spiritually valuable educational governance, where the madrasah head acts as a competent manager as well as a visionary and inspirational leader.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the quality of madrasah education is strongly shaped by the synergy between managerial competence and transformational leadership rooted in Islamic values. The findings reinforce an integrative leadership model in Islamic education, demonstrating that effective leadership is determined not only by administrative capacity but also by moral, spiritual, and value-driven qualities that cultivate a culture of excellence. Practically, the results highlight the urgency for policymakers and institutions to strengthen the managerial competencies of head of madrasah through strategic leadership training, quality management programs, and data-driven governance, while simultaneously developing Islamic transformational leadership through spiritual coaching and professional ethics. The novelty of this research lies in positioning managerial competence as the dominant driver of educational quality within a value-based leadership framework, offering a refined theoretical lens for Islamic educational leadership. Future research is encouraged to broaden this framework by incorporating variables such as organizational culture, teacher motivation, community engagement, and digital learning innovation, supported by mixed-method approaches to deepen the understanding of spiritual and cultural dynamics in madrasah leadership.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The researcher sincerely thanks the heads of madrasah and teachers in Purwakarta for their valuable participation and support throughout this study. Deep appreciation is also extended to the promotor for guidance,

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This page belongs to the Tadbir : Jurnal Studi Manajemen Pendidikan Tadbir : Jurnal Studi Manajemen Pendidikan Vol. 9, No.2, November 2025 IAIN Curup –Bengkulu | p-ISSN 2580-3581; e-ISSN 2580-5037