



THE SUPERIORITY OF LEADERSHIP IN ISLAMIC EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS AT MADRASAH ALIYAH IN JAMBI PROVINCE

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ABSTRACT

Developing leadership in Madrasah Aliyah (MA) requires a deep understanding of these institutions' unique characteristics and context. This study, conducted in Jambi Province using a qualitative approach, aims to examine the leadership superiority in MA. The primary goal is to gather scientific data to improve leadership practices. The research findings indicate that effective leadership development demands tailored strategies and actions specific to the context of these institutions. Meanwhile, the results of this research show that developing leadership superiority in MA requires specific understanding and actions according to the characteristics and context of this Islamic educational institution. Additionally, the head of the madrasas have taken steps to develop leadership superiority in Islamic educational institutions in Madrasah Aliyah, Jambi province.

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INTRODUCTION

Islam teaches a leadership concept that is centered on service and moral obligation. Leadership is the process of influencing subordinates (Agustin, 2018; Iskandar & Machali, 2020; Praswoto, 2012), or giving an example from a leader to his followers, or it is also the art of directing people through obedience, trust, honor and cooperation. enthusiastic in efforts to achieve organizational goals (Angdreani et al., 2020; Nurzannah et al., 2019). Leadership patterns refer to the ways in which a leader interacts with their followers or subordinates (Marwan, 2022; Nurzannah et al., 2019). Leadership fundamentally arises from human interaction; it cannot be executed in isolation (Devita, 2018; Kraines, 2010; Zahari MS et al., 2020). Leadership is the process of influencing individuals or groups to achieve certain goals in predetermined situations (Latham, 2009; Yukl, 2010; Zakaria, 2015). Leaders in Islam are expected to carry out their duties with integrity, fairness and responsibility (Badrudin & Nurdin,

2019; Sakir, 2016). Leaders must exemplify commendable behavior, lead with wisdom, and ensure that the education provided aligns with Islamic teachings (Muspiroh, 2018; Ridwan, 2018).

Islamic educational institutions face numerous challenges today, including maintaining the sanctity of Islamic teachings in an increasingly secular environment, adapting to digital technology, and addressing various social and cultural issues. Leaders of these institutions must navigate these challenges to ensure that the education they provide remains relevant and meaningful for students (Priatmoko, 2019; Syafaruddin, 2003). Despite these challenges, Islamic educational institutions have the opportunity to cultivate a generation with a strong understanding of religion, ethical leadership, and the skills needed to contribute to society. Leaders can leverage this opportunity to enhance the quality of Islamic education (Assingkily et al., 2019; Nurzannah et al., 2019; Sakir, 2016).

Leadership culture in Indonesia is closely linked to the concept of superiority (Asbari et al., 2019; Iskandar, 2019; Masturaini, 2021). Leaders who consistently act correctly and appropriately are highly respected and followed, with their directives and responsibilities effectively executed by their subordinates. Studying leadership issues is significant because leadership, in essence, involves accountability for one's actions (Alamsyah, 2017). To effectively lead others, an individual must first be capable of self-leadership, ensuring that their own life is well-directed and purposeful. Based on the theoretical framework and the assumptions of the problems outlined, leadership superiority forms the foundation of this research project and must be clearly and specifically defined. The research problem will guide the process of data collection, information analysis, and the generation of relevant results. Therefore, the research is titled "Leadership Superiority of Madrasah Aliyah Islamic Education Institutions in Jambi Province." This title reflects the primary focus and objectives of the study.

METHOD

This research employs a qualitative approach, which seeks to achieve a deep and comprehensive understanding of the subject under study. This approach is essential for addressing research problems and gathering data, which is then analyzed to draw conclusions about specific situations and conditions. This study adopts a qualitative research design to investigate leadership superiority within Madrasah Aliyah Islamic education institutions in Jambi Province. Given that the data are sourced from library research, the study focuses on analyzing existing literature to understand leadership practices and cultural contexts. The data will be analyzed using qualitative content analysis to extract and interpret themes related to leadership superiority. Key themes and concepts from the literature and documents will be coded and categorized to identify patterns related to leadership practices and cultural expectations (Creswell, 2018).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Developing leadership superiority in Madrasah Aliyah (MA) requires specific understanding and actions according to the characteristics and context of this Islamic educational institution (Istiningsih & Rohman, 2022) . The following are several steps taken by the head of Madrasah Aliyah in achieving leadership superiority at Madrasah Aliyah.

Understanding madrasahs Vision and Mission

The vision and mission of Madrasah Aliyah must be consistent with Islamic values, and their madrasahs should be created together with the school community, including teachers, staff, students and parents. This vision and mission must guide all activities and decisions made within the Supreme Court, and they must be announced and updated regularly to all stakeholders to ensure that all parties are involved in making them happen. Apart from that, this vision and mission can also be used to measure the achievements and progress of Madrasah Aliyah in achieving its goals (Iskandar, 2019).

To effectively communicate the vision and mission, the head of madrasa undertakes the task of socializing these core objectives to all stakeholders. In terms of socialization, the madrasa head carries out the following socialization steps:

- a. Deep understanding
Before starting socialization, ensure that madrasa leaders and staff have a deep understanding of the school's vision and mission. They must be able to explain clearly what the madrasah's vision and mission wants to achieve. Deep understanding is very important for the vision and mission to be achieved.
- b. Clear communication
The head of the madrasah makes clear and concise preparations that describe the vision and mission of the madrasah. This message should be easy for everyone to understand, without jargon or ambiguous language.
- c. Training and workshops
Madrasa heads hold special training and workshops to understand the vision and mission, and how they can contribute to achieving them. Discuss how each individual and team plays a role in realizing the school's vision and mission.
- d. Evaluation and feedback
During the socialization process, continue to evaluate to ensure correct understanding and listen to feedback from school members. This can help refine and clarify messages if necessary.

Strengthening the Religious Curriculum

As an Islamic educational institution, Madrasah Aliyah (MA) must emphasize a robust religious curriculum. This entails selecting relevant subject matter, employing effective teaching methods, and fostering students' competence in Islamic knowledge and practices (Iskandar et al.,

2019). Strengthening the religious curriculum in the MA context is an effort to improve the quality and relevance of Islamic religious education provided to students. This can be done with several strategic steps, here are several steps taken by the head of the madrasah to strengthen the religious curriculum at Madrasah Aliyah:

a. Curriculum evaluation

The first step taken by the head of MA was to carry out a thorough evaluation of the existing religious curriculum. Review course materials, teaching methods, and resources used. Identify areas that need improvement or updating (Bahak & By, 2018).

b. Consult with experts

The head of the madrasah provides assistance to obtain input and views from competent religious experts and ulama. They can provide valuable insight into the content and teaching approaches that are in accordance with correct Islamic teachings.

c. Curriculum revision

Based on the evaluation results and input from religious experts, the madrasa head revised the religious curriculum. Make sure the lesson material covers topics that are relevant, important, and in accordance with Islamic values (Banks, 2016).

Participative Leadership

Head of MA always apply a participatory leadership approach that involves various stakeholders, including teachers, staff, students and the community. This will enable them to contribute to decision making and feel like they have a stake in the madrasa (Yustiyawan, 2019). Participative leadership is a leadership style in which the leader engages team members or subordinates in the decision-making process and embraces their active participation in planning, implementing, and evaluating tasks or projects. This is an approach that prioritizes collaboration, participation and involvement of all parties involved.

Islamic Skills Development

Understanding and applying Islamic ethical and moral principles in leadership is key. This involves integrity, honesty, and a humble attitude. Islamic skills development is a process of learning and developing abilities related to the teachings and practices of the Islamic religion. These skills include understanding *aqidah* (beliefs), worship, morals, and various other aspects relevant to the practice of a Muslim's life. Here are some steps in developing Islamic skills:

- a. Al-Quran Study and Learning: Reading, understanding, and studying the Al-Quran are basic skills in Islam. You can take tafsir (interpretation) classes, attend Al-Quran recitations, or read books that discuss the content and meaning of the Al-Quran (Nurmaliyah et al., 2023).
- b. Hadith Study and Learning: Hadith is a collection of sayings and actions of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. Hadith study is a way to understand and follow the sunnah (actions) of the Prophet. You can take hadith courses or read hadith literature.

- c. **Learning Islamic Morals and Ethics:** Understanding Islamic morals and ethics is important in everyday life. You can read books about Islamic ethics or attend classes that cover this topic.
- d. **Developing Worship Skills:** This includes learning how to perform religious acts such as prayer, fasting, zakat, and Hajj properly in accordance with Islamic guidance. You can look for practical guidance or take a worship course.
- e. **Study Islamic History:** Understanding Islamic history and important events in Islam can help you understand the context of the religion's teachings and practices. Read Islamic history books or take Islamic history lectures.
- f. **Arabic Learning:** Arabic is the language of the Koran, so learning this language can help you understand the sacred text and Islamic literature better. You can take Arabic courses or learn on your own through books and online resources.
- g. **Practice of Religious Skills:** Learning the Islamic religion is not only about theoretical knowledge, but also about practice. Practice religious services, practice good morals, and engage in social and charitable activities that reflect Islamic values.
- h. **Discussion and Study Groups:** Joining discussion groups or study groups that cover Islamic topics can deepen your understanding and allow you to share your knowledge with others.
- i. **Mentor or Companion:** Look for a mentor or companion who is more experienced in the field of Islam. They can provide valuable guidance and advice.
- j. **Humble and Continuous Attitude:** It is important to understand that the development of Islamic skills is a continuous process. Always be open to learning and improving your understanding of the Islamic religion.

Student Character Development

Madrasah Aliyah must also focus on developing student character in accordance with Islamic values. MA principals can develop extracurricular programs or social activities that help students understand and apply Islamic values in their lives (Raharjo, 2020; Wati & Sundawa, 2018).

Student character development is a process that aims to form good attitudes, values, ethics and behavior in students. This involves educators, parents, and the school environment in a joint effort to develop positive and responsible character in students. The following are several steps that can be taken in developing student character:

Developing Positive Character and Behaviour

Teachers and adults in the school environment must model good behavior and values. They must demonstrate integrity, humility, empathy, and other values expected of students. Schools can develop character programs that detail the values they want to instill in students. This program may include values such as honesty, discipline, cooperation, and responsibility.

Integrate character lessons into the school curriculum. This can be done by teaching character values in existing lessons or by holding special lessons about character. Eventually, teacher continuously monitor student progress in character development, evaluate the character program periodically and make improvements if necessary.

Use of Latest Technology and Learning Methods

Madrasah Aliyah must also pay attention to the latest technological developments and learning methods, including the application of information technology in teaching Islamic religious material. A teacher must be able to utilize technology to develop the use of technology in learning. Not only that, the head of the madrasah also prepares the technology needed by the head of Madrasah Aliyah. In addition, MA principals collaborate with local religious institutions, such as mosques or other religious educational institutions, to help strengthen religious programs at Madrasah Aliyah.

Empowerment of Teachers and Staff

Principals of Madrasah Aliyah must ensure that teachers and staff have opportunities for continuous professional development and empowerment to innovate in the learning process. Human resources are needed to increase the superiority of leadership in Islamic educational institutions. Empowering teachers and staff not only provide opportunities but must also be able to guarantee their welfare according to their needs. Furthermore, madrasah principals ensure that schools operate with transparency and accountability in the management of resources and decision-making processes. Transparency and accountability are fundamental principles in educational institutions and various aspects of social life. In practice, these concepts are closely interrelated. Transparency serves as the essential first step toward achieving effective accountability. Without sufficient transparency, it is challenging to track and understand the actions or policies implemented by madrasahs. Accountability ensures that actions taken transparently are properly accounted for, requiring individuals or organizations to explain and take responsibility for their decisions and actions when necessary.

These two concepts are very important in maintaining integrity, trust, and efficiency in various contexts, including educational institutions. Head of madrasa always implementing transparency and accountability, teachers and staff can ensure that decisions and actions taken are more in line with ethical principles and the public interest.

Community Involvement

Head of madrasahs should strengthen relationships with the local community and students' parents so that they can help and support Madrasah Aliyah in achieving its vision and mission. Community involvement can also help in mobilizing financial support and other resources (Syafaruddin, 2003). To remember that superior leadership in madrasa must be in line with Islamic principles and religious values. This will help create a balanced educational environment

between strong religious education and quality general education. The role of a leader is very much needed in developing leadership superiority in Islamic educational institutions in madrasa.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion regarding the superiority of leadership in Islamic educational institutions is that effective leadership in this context must focus on religious values, holistic learning, and character development. Leadership superiority in Islamic educational institutions is not about domination, but about providing positive examples and service to the educational community. Leaders in Islamic educational institutions must understand and apply the principles of the Islamic religion in making decisions and in directing education. They should serve as role models for good religious practices and ensure that religious values are reflected in all aspects of learning. Leadership in Islamic educational institutions must also focus on developing student character, such as honesty, integrity, kindness and a sense of responsibility. Superior leadership in this context helps create an educational environment that supports students' spiritual and moral growth. In conclusion, superior leadership in Islamic educational institutions is closely related to respect for religious values, holistic learning, and character formation. Effective leaders in Islamic educational institutions serve as spiritual leaders, dedicated teachers, and moral models for their students and communities.

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