

**THE ROLE OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND COMPETENCY
DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS AND EDUCATIONAL STAFF IN
IMPROVING SCHOOL PERFORMANCE**

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Abstract

The principal's transformational leadership plays a strategic role in enhancing the competencies of teachers and educational staff as an effort to improve school performance. However, the implementation of transformational leadership within the context of Islamic senior secondary schools (*madrasahs*), particularly in relation to competency development and its implications for school performance, has received limited attention in qualitative research. This study aims to analyze the role of the principal's transformational leadership in developing the competencies of teachers and educational staff and its contribution to improving school performance at MA Miftahul Falah, Bandung City. This study employed a qualitative approach using a case study design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis involving the principal, teachers, educational staff, and other relevant stakeholders. The data were analyzed through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, while the trustworthiness of the findings was ensured through source and method triangulation. The findings indicate that the principal's transformational leadership is manifested through the establishment of a shared vision, the provision of motivation, effective communication, coaching, supervision, and the facilitation of professional development opportunities for teachers and educational staff. Competency development is implemented through participation in Subject Teacher Consultation Forums (*Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran – MGMP*), seminars, workshops, webinars, and training programs, although these initiatives remain largely dependent on external providers. Transformational leadership and competency development contribute to improvements in instructional quality, administrative services, work discipline, and the effectiveness of school programs. Furthermore, the study reveals that religious values, a family-oriented organizational culture, and the intrinsic motivation of teachers and educational staff serve as reinforcing factors that strengthen the effectiveness of transformational leadership in enhancing school performance. These findings enrich the literature on educational leadership by demonstrating that the successful implementation of transformational leadership in *madrasahs* is influenced not only by leadership practices and competency development but also by the distinctive organizational culture embedded within Islamic educational institutions.

Keywords: Transformational Leadership, Competency Development, Teachers and Educational Staff, School Performance, Madrasah

INTRODUCTION

Human resource quality is a fundamental determinant of educational success. Teachers and educational staff play strategic roles in achieving educational objectives through instructional activities, administrative services, student management, and various supporting functions. Therefore, enhancing the competencies of teachers and educational staff has become a key priority in the development of educational organizations to ensure the delivery of high-quality and sustainable education. International reports consistently emphasize that teacher quality and school leadership are among the most influential factors affecting instructional quality and overall school performance (OECD, 2020; UNESCO, 2021).

The rapid transformation of the educational environment, driven by technological advancement, digital transformation, educational policy reforms, and increasing public expectations for educational quality, requires schools to manage their human resources more adaptively. In this context, school principals are expected not only to function as administrators but also as instructional leaders capable of inspiring organizational change and guiding school communities toward continuous improvement. Effective leadership is expected to foster a collaborative working culture, encourage innovation, and strengthen organizational commitment through the continuous professional development of teachers and educational staff.

Among the leadership approaches widely discussed in educational management literature, transformational leadership has received considerable attention. Bass and Avolio describe transformational leadership as a leadership style that enables leaders to inspire, motivate, serve as role models, stimulate innovation, and respond to the individual needs of organizational members. Within educational settings, transformational leadership is believed to create a positive learning environment, strengthen organizational culture, and promote the professional growth of teachers and educational staff, ultimately contributing to improved school quality.

Previous studies have consistently demonstrated that transformational leadership is positively associated with teacher competency development, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and school effectiveness. Leithwood et al. (2020) argue that transformational leadership indirectly improves student learning outcomes by enhancing teacher capacity and strengthening school culture. Likewise, Hallinger (2022) emphasizes that effective school leadership enhances organizational quality through continuous professional development initiatives. Harris and Jones (2022) further highlight that leadership practices emphasizing collaboration and organizational learning have become increasingly important in responding to educational changes in the digital era.

Nevertheless, the implementation of transformational leadership is not always optimal across educational institutions. Each school possesses unique organizational characteristics, work cultures, available resources, and contextual challenges, resulting in different leadership practices and outcomes. In the context of *madrasahs* (Islamic senior secondary schools), school leadership is shaped not only by managerial responsibilities but also by religious values that characterize Islamic educational institutions. Consequently, the implementation of transformational leadership in *madrasahs* demonstrates distinctive dynamics compared with those found in general schools.

Preliminary observations conducted at MA Miftahul Falah, Bandung City, indicate that the principal has attempted to implement transformational leadership by motivating teachers and educational staff, maintaining effective communication, providing coaching, and encouraging participation in various professional development activities. However, academic supervision and monitoring have not been fully optimized because the principal simultaneously carries additional institutional responsibilities outside the school. Furthermore, competency development remains largely dependent on externally organized programs, such as Subject Teacher Consultation Forums (*Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran – MGMP*), seminars, workshops, and training programs organized by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and other educational institutions. These conditions indicate the need to strengthen a more systematic and sustainable internal competency development system.

Despite these challenges, the *madrasah* has maintained its organizational performance through a harmonious working environment, strong family-oriented relationships, and the high level of intrinsic dedication demonstrated by teachers and educational staff. This phenomenon suggests that organizational success is influenced not only by transformational leadership and competency development but also by the organizational culture that evolves within the *madrasah*.

Although numerous studies have examined transformational leadership in educational settings, most have employed quantitative approaches focusing primarily on the relationships among variables. Previous research has generally investigated the relationship between transformational leadership and either teacher performance or teacher competency independently. Studies integrating transformational leadership, competency development of both teachers and educational staff, and school performance within a single qualitative analytical framework, particularly in the context of *madrasahs*, remain limited. Consequently, there is a significant research gap in understanding how transformational leadership is practiced, how competency development is implemented, and how these two dimensions interact to improve school performance.

Based on this research gap, the present study aims to analyze the role of the principal's transformational leadership in developing the competencies of teachers and educational staff and its contribution to improving school performance at MA Miftahul Falah, Bandung City, using a qualitative case study approach. The findings are expected to contribute theoretically to the development of educational leadership literature, particularly within the context of Islamic educational institutions, while also providing practical recommendations for school leaders and educational policymakers in designing effective leadership strategies to enhance human resource competencies and improve school performance.

The primary contribution of this study lies in identifying that the effectiveness of transformational leadership is strengthened not only by leadership practices and competency development but also by religious culture, a family-oriented organizational culture, and the intrinsic motivation of teachers and educational staff. These three factors represent distinctive organizational characteristics that reinforce the implementation of transformational leadership in improving school performance and offer a broader perspective for the development of educational leadership theory and practice within faith-based educational institutions.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Human Resource Management

Human Resource Management (HRM) refers to the systematic process of planning, organizing, developing, maintaining, and empowering human resources to support the achievement of organizational goals effectively and efficiently. In educational institutions, teachers and educational staff constitute strategic organizational assets whose performance largely determines the quality of educational services. Therefore, HRM should be implemented through systematic competency development, professional coaching, performance evaluation, and motivational strategies to enhance both individual and organizational effectiveness.

From an educational perspective, HRM extends beyond administrative personnel management. It emphasizes the development of human capital capable of adapting to educational changes, technological advancements, and evolving societal expectations. Consequently, effective HRM provides the conceptual foundation for understanding how school principals manage, develop, and empower teachers and educational staff to improve overall school performance.

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is a leadership approach that emphasizes a leader's ability to inspire, motivate, provide exemplary behavior, stimulate innovation, and address the individual needs of organizational members. Rather than relying solely on formal authority, transformational leaders influence followers by fostering commitment, encouraging creativity, and promoting a shared organizational vision.

Within educational settings, transformational leadership plays a crucial role in establishing a collaborative organizational culture, strengthening teachers' professional commitment, and facilitating continuous professional development. Previous studies have consistently demonstrated that transformational leadership contributes positively to organizational commitment, competency development, instructional improvement, and overall school effectiveness (Leithwood et al., 2020; Hallinger, 2022; Harris & Jones, 2022). Accordingly, transformational leadership is regarded as one of the most effective leadership models for promoting sustainable educational improvement.

Competency Development of Teachers and Educational Staff

Competency development is a continuous process aimed at enhancing professional knowledge, skills, attitudes, and capabilities through various professional learning activities. These activities include formal education and training programs, seminars, workshops, Subject Teacher Consultation Forums (*Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran – MGMP*), academic supervision, mentoring, and professional learning communities.

Sustainable competency development enables teachers and educational staff to strengthen their professional capacity, improve instructional practices, adapt to educational reforms, and respond effectively to technological and organizational changes. Consequently, competency development is considered a strategic investment in human resources that enhances both individual performance and institutional effectiveness.

School Performance

School performance refers to the extent to which an educational institution successfully achieves its educational objectives through the effective utilization of available human and organizational resources. School performance is not measured solely by students' academic achievement but also by the quality of instruction, administrative effectiveness, organizational discipline, collaboration among school members, stakeholder satisfaction, and the successful implementation of educational programs.

In this study, school performance is viewed as the outcome of the interaction between transformational leadership, competency development, and organizational culture. Effective leadership encourages competency development, while enhanced competencies improve instructional quality and organizational effectiveness, ultimately leading to better school performance.

Based on the theoretical perspectives discussed above, this study assumes that the principal's transformational leadership plays a significant role in promoting the competency development of teachers and educational staff, which subsequently contributes to improving school performance. Within the context of *madrasahs*, this relationship is further strengthened by the presence of religious values, a family-oriented organizational culture, and the intrinsic motivation of teachers and educational staff. These organizational characteristics create a distinctive context in which transformational leadership is implemented and contribute to the sustainable improvement of school performance.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research approach using a case study design to obtain an in-depth understanding of the role of the principal's transformational leadership in developing the competencies of teachers and educational staff and its contribution to improving school performance at MA Miftahul Falah, Bandung City. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because it enables researchers to explore social phenomena comprehensively by examining the experiences, perceptions, and interactions of participants within their natural organizational setting.

The study was conducted at MA Miftahul Falah, Bandung City, Indonesia. Research participants were selected using purposive sampling based on their direct involvement in leadership practices, competency development initiatives, and the implementation of educational activities within the *madrasah*. The participants included the principal, vice principals, teachers, educational staff, and other stakeholders possessing relevant information related to the research objectives.

Data were collected through three complementary techniques: in-depth interviews, non-participant observations, and document analysis. In-depth interviews were conducted to explore participants' perspectives regarding transformational leadership practices, competency development processes, and their contribution to school performance. Observations were carried out to examine leadership practices, teachers' and educational staff's professional activities, and the overall organizational environment of the *madrasah*. Document analysis was used to support and triangulate the findings through the examination

of school strategic plans, competency development programs, activity reports, policy documents, and other relevant institutional records.

Data analysis followed the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2020), consisting of three interrelated stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. During the data reduction stage, the collected data were organized, coded, classified, and simplified according to the research focus. The data were subsequently presented in descriptive narratives to facilitate interpretation and pattern identification. Finally, conclusions were drawn by identifying recurring themes, relationships, and meaningful interpretations emerging from the data throughout the research process.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, this study employed source triangulation and methodological triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from different participants, while methodological triangulation involved comparing evidence gathered through interviews, observations, and document analysis. Furthermore, data analysis was conducted continuously throughout the study until thematic saturation was achieved and the findings consistently explained the investigated phenomenon.

This methodological approach was expected to produce a comprehensive understanding of how transformational leadership is practiced within the *madrasah*, how competency development is implemented, and how these processes collectively contribute to improving school performance within the unique context of an Islamic educational institution.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Transformational Leadership Practices of the School Principal

The findings indicate that the principal of MA Miftahul Falah, Bandung City, has implemented transformational leadership practices in managing teachers and educational staff through the development of a shared vision, motivational support, open communication, coaching, supervision, and the provision of opportunities for continuous professional development. These leadership practices extend beyond achieving organizational objectives; they also foster commitment, responsibility, and a collective spirit among school members in pursuing the vision and mission of the *madrasah*.

The principal consistently communicates the school's vision and strategic direction through both formal and informal forums. In addition, the principal motivates teachers and educational staff by demonstrating exemplary leadership, recognizing their performance, and encouraging participation in various professional development activities. This open communication has created a harmonious working environment, strengthened collaboration among school members, and facilitated the effective implementation of educational programs.

However, the findings also reveal that academic supervision and professional coaching have not yet been implemented optimally. This limitation is primarily attributed to the principal's additional institutional responsibilities outside the *madrasah*, which reduce the time available for direct supervision and mentoring. Nevertheless, effective communication and coordination are maintained through the active involvement of vice principals and

routine coordination meetings, ensuring that both instructional and administrative activities continue to operate effectively.

These findings suggest that the effectiveness of transformational leadership is determined not merely by the principal's physical presence within the school but also by the ability to establish a shared vision, build mutual trust, and empower human resources throughout the organization. This finding is consistent with Bass and Avolio's theory of transformational leadership, which emphasizes four fundamental dimensions: *idealized influence*, *inspirational motivation*, *intellectual stimulation*, and *individualized consideration*. Through these dimensions, transformational leaders not only direct organizational members toward achieving institutional goals but also cultivate intrinsic motivation, professional commitment, and a sense of shared responsibility.

The findings further support the work of Leithwood et al. (2020), who argue that transformational leadership enhances school effectiveness through teacher capacity building and the strengthening of organizational culture. Similarly, Hallinger (2022) highlights the principal's role as an instructional leader in improving educational quality through professional supervision, instructional development, and the creation of a supportive learning environment. Harris and Jones (2022) likewise emphasize that effective school leadership is characterized by collaboration, teacher empowerment, and the establishment of adaptive learning organizations capable of responding to continuous educational change.

Unlike many previous studies, this research demonstrates that transformational leadership at MA Miftahul Falah is not limited to managerial functions. Instead, leadership practices are deeply integrated with religious values and a family-oriented organizational culture that characterize the *madrasah*. The principal cultivates strong relationships with teachers and educational staff through spiritual leadership, exemplary conduct, humanistic communication, and a strong commitment to educational service. These practices foster organizational harmony, strengthen institutional belonging, and enhance the loyalty of school members toward achieving common educational goals.

These findings indicate that transformational leadership within the *madrasah* context possesses distinctive characteristics. Leadership effectiveness depends not only on managerial competence but also on the principal's ability to integrate religious values, family-oriented culture, and humanistic leadership into everyday organizational practices. This integration strengthens organizational commitment and contributes significantly to the sustainable improvement of school performance.

Competency Development Practices of Teachers and Educational Staff

The findings reveal that the competency development of teachers and educational staff at MA Miftahul Falah, Bandung City, is implemented through a variety of professional development activities organized both internally by the *madrasah* and externally by educational institutions and government agencies. The most frequently attended programs include Subject Teacher Consultation Forums (*Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran* – MGMP), seminars, workshops, webinars, curriculum implementation training, and capacity-building programs organized by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and other educational organizations. These activities provide teachers and educational staff with opportunities to update their knowledge,

enhance their professional skills, and strengthen their competencies in response to the evolving demands of contemporary education.

Interview findings indicate that the principal actively supports competency development by granting permission to participate in professional development programs, facilitating teachers' and educational staff's involvement in training activities, and encouraging lifelong learning. Such support reflects the principal's commitment to fostering a learning-oriented organizational culture within the *madrasah*. Nevertheless, the study also found that internally designed and systematically implemented competency development programs remain relatively limited. Most professional development activities continue to depend on external initiatives, making the sustainability of competency development highly dependent on the availability of programs offered by external institutions.

Although structured internal programs have not yet been fully established, teachers and educational staff demonstrate a strong personal commitment to continuous learning and professional growth. They actively utilize various training opportunities to strengthen their pedagogical, professional, and technical competencies according to their respective responsibilities. The knowledge and skills acquired through these activities are subsequently applied in classroom instruction, administrative services, curriculum planning, the integration of educational technology, and the implementation of school development programs.

The findings further indicate that competency development contributes significantly to improving the performance of both teachers and educational staff. Teachers become more adaptive in implementing curriculum reforms, integrating digital learning technologies, and applying innovative instructional strategies. Likewise, educational staff demonstrate improved effectiveness in administrative management, service delivery, and institutional accountability. Consequently, competency development not only enhances individual capabilities but also strengthens the overall quality of educational services provided by the *madrasah*.

These findings are consistent with the principles of Human Resource Management, which regard competency development as a strategic investment for improving organizational effectiveness. Armstrong (2020) argues that organizations that continuously invest in the development of their human resources are better equipped to respond to organizational change and improve long-term performance. Within the educational context, competency development represents an essential component of Continuous Professional Development (CPD), aimed at improving instructional quality, professional competence, and institutional performance.

The present findings also support those of Darling-Hammond et al. (2022), who conclude that sustained professional development positively influences instructional quality, teacher competence, and student learning outcomes. Similarly, the OECD (2020) emphasizes that investment in teacher competency development is one of the key determinants of educational quality. UNESCO (2021) likewise highlights that the professional capacity of educators should be continuously strengthened through well-planned and contextually relevant professional learning opportunities.

Unlike many previous studies that primarily focus on the effectiveness of formal training programs, this study demonstrates that successful competency development at MA Miftahul Falah is influenced not only by participation in professional development activities

but also by leadership support, a strong organizational learning culture, and the intrinsic motivation of teachers and educational staff. Participants perceived competency development not merely as an administrative obligation but as an integral part of their professional responsibility and educational commitment.

Overall, these findings suggest that competency development practices at MA Miftahul Falah have made a meaningful contribution to enhancing the quality of human resources. However, greater attention should be given to establishing a more systematic, internally driven, and sustainable competency development framework. Such an approach would position competency development not only as a means of improving individual capabilities but also as a long-term organizational strategy for strengthening educational quality and sustaining school performance.

The Contribution of Transformational Leadership and Competency Development to School Performance

The findings demonstrate that improvements in school performance at MA Miftahul Falah, Bandung City, are not solely attributable to the principal's transformational leadership or to the competency development of teachers and educational staff as independent factors. Rather, school improvement results from the synergistic interaction between these two dimensions. Transformational leadership functions as a strategic driving force that establishes a supportive organizational environment, while competency development strengthens the professional capacity of teachers and educational staff to perform their responsibilities effectively. The interaction between these two factors contributes to improvements in instructional quality, administrative effectiveness, work discipline, institutional program implementation, and the overall achievement of the *madrasah's* educational objectives.

Based on the interview and observational data, the principal not only provides direction and motivation but also actively encourages teachers and educational staff to continuously enhance their professional competencies through various development programs. The competencies acquired through these initiatives are subsequently applied in classroom instruction, school administration, the integration of educational technology, and the implementation of institutional development programs. These findings suggest that transformational leadership creates conditions that nurture a culture of continuous learning, ultimately enhancing both individual performance and organizational effectiveness.

The study further reveals that the contribution of transformational leadership to school performance is primarily indirect, operating through the competency development of teachers and educational staff. In other words, transformational leadership establishes an organizational environment that promotes human resource development, while enhanced competencies become the primary mechanism through which improved school performance is achieved. This finding indicates that the relationship between transformational leadership and school performance is dynamic and mediated by the quality of human resource development implemented within the organization.

In addition, the study identifies several organizational factors that reinforce this relationship, namely religious culture, a family-oriented organizational culture, and the intrinsic motivation of teachers and educational staff. Religious culture is reflected in the

commitment to performing professional responsibilities as a form of worship, guided by moral responsibility and a strong sense of service. A family-oriented culture fosters harmonious interpersonal relationships, mutual support, collaboration, and collective responsibility among school members. Meanwhile, intrinsic motivation encourages teachers and educational staff to maintain professional commitment despite organizational limitations, including constraints related to direct supervision and professional mentoring.

These findings indicate that school performance at MA Miftahul Falah is influenced not only by structural and managerial factors but also by the organizational culture embedded within the *madrasah*. Religious values, family-oriented culture, and intrinsic motivation function as reinforcing mechanisms that strengthen the effectiveness of transformational leadership and competency development. Consequently, organizational success depends not only on the leadership capabilities of the principal or the professional competence of teachers but also on the creation of a collaborative organizational climate that promotes commitment, mutual trust, and continuous learning.

The present findings support Leithwood et al. (2020), who argue that transformational leadership enhances school effectiveness through teacher capacity building and the development of organizational culture. Similarly, Hallinger (2022) emphasizes that educational quality emerges from the interaction between leadership, professional development, and a supportive organizational climate. However, this study extends previous research by demonstrating that, within the context of *madrasahs*, the effectiveness of transformational leadership is significantly strengthened by religious values, a family-oriented organizational culture, and the intrinsic motivation of educational personnel.

The principal theoretical contribution of this study lies in the identification of a context-specific model of transformational leadership within Islamic educational institutions. The findings demonstrate that transformational leadership should not be viewed merely as a managerial strategy for enhancing teacher and staff competencies. Instead, it operates as an integrated leadership approach that combines transformational leadership practices with religious values, a family-oriented organizational culture, and intrinsic motivation. The integration of these three organizational characteristics strengthens competency development while simultaneously supporting sustainable school performance. This integrated leadership model provides a broader perspective on transformational leadership by demonstrating that, in the *madrasah* context, leadership effectiveness is shaped not only by the four dimensions proposed by Bass and Avolio but also by the distinctive organizational culture that characterizes Islamic educational institutions.

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that improved school performance at MA Miftahul Falah, Bandung City, results from the synergistic interaction between the principal's transformational leadership and the competency development of teachers and educational staff. Transformational leadership functions not merely as a leadership approach for directing organizational activities but also as a mechanism for fostering motivation, organizational commitment, and a culture of continuous learning that strengthens human resource capacity. At the same time, competency development enhances the professional capabilities of teachers

and educational staff, leading to improvements in instructional quality, administrative services, and the overall effectiveness of educational management.

These findings reinforce the fundamental principles of Human Resource Management (HRM), which regard human resources as the most valuable strategic asset within an organization. From this perspective, educational success depends not only on the availability of physical resources and infrastructure but also on an institution's ability to continuously develop, motivate, and empower its human resources. The results indicate that transformational leadership creates organizational conditions that facilitate continuous competency development, thereby improving both individual performance and institutional effectiveness.

At the level of intermediate theory, this study confirms the transformational leadership framework proposed by Bass and Avolio. The four dimensions of transformational leadership—*idealized influence*, *inspirational motivation*, *intellectual stimulation*, and *individualized consideration*—are clearly reflected in the principal's leadership practices through exemplary behavior, motivational support, open communication, encouragement of professional development, and individualized guidance for teachers and educational staff. However, the findings also suggest that the implementation of transformational leadership within the *madrasah* context extends beyond the conventional theoretical framework. Leadership practices are deeply embedded in religious values, family-oriented organizational relationships, and a strong commitment to educational service, all of which represent distinctive characteristics of Islamic educational institutions.

From the perspective of applied theory, this study demonstrates that competency development makes a substantial contribution to improving school performance. Teachers become more adaptive in designing innovative instructional strategies, integrating educational technology, and responding to curriculum reforms. Likewise, educational staff improve the effectiveness of administrative management and institutional services. These findings indicate that competency development contributes not only to individual professional growth but also to broader organizational effectiveness and institutional sustainability.

The findings are consistent with previous studies conducted by Leithwood et al. (2020), Hallinger (2022), and Harris and Jones (2022), all of whom emphasize that transformational leadership enhances school effectiveness through teacher empowerment and organizational capacity building. Similarly, Darling-Hammond et al. (2022), OECD (2020), and UNESCO (2021) identify continuous professional development as a critical strategy for improving educational quality. Nevertheless, the present study offers a broader perspective by demonstrating that, within the *madrasah* context, leadership effectiveness is shaped not only by transformational leadership practices and competency development but also by the organizational culture that characterizes Islamic educational institutions.

The principal novelty of this study lies in the development of an integrated transformational leadership framework for *madrasahs*. Unlike previous studies that primarily examine the direct relationship between transformational leadership and organizational performance, this study demonstrates that improvements in school performance occur through competency development, which is subsequently reinforced by religious culture, a family-oriented organizational culture, and the intrinsic motivation of teachers and

educational staff. These contextual factors function as organizational enablers that strengthen the relationship between leadership practices and institutional performance.

Accordingly, this study proposes that transformational leadership within Islamic educational institutions should be understood as a culturally embedded leadership model rather than merely a managerial approach. Leadership effectiveness emerges through the integration of transformational leadership behaviors, continuous competency development, and organizational values rooted in religious commitment, collective responsibility, and intrinsic motivation. This integrated perspective extends the existing transformational leadership literature by highlighting the importance of organizational culture as a contextual dimension that has received relatively limited attention in previous educational leadership research.

The practical implications of this study suggest that efforts to improve school performance should not rely exclusively on strengthening leadership capacity or increasing professional development opportunities independently. Instead, school leaders should adopt an integrated strategy that combines transformational leadership practices, systematic competency development, and the cultivation of an organizational culture that promotes collaboration, continuous learning, professional commitment, and shared institutional values. Such an integrated approach is expected to enhance organizational adaptability, educational quality, and long-term institutional sustainability.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the principal's transformational leadership plays a pivotal role in improving school performance by establishing a shared vision, providing continuous motivation, fostering effective communication, conducting professional coaching, and supporting the competency development of teachers and educational staff. These leadership practices create a conducive organizational environment that strengthens professional commitment, collaboration, and organizational effectiveness in achieving the educational goals of the *madrasah*.

The findings further demonstrate that the competency development of teachers and educational staff, implemented through various professional development activities organized by both the *madrasah* and external institutions, contributes significantly to improving instructional quality, administrative services, and the ability of educational personnel to respond effectively to educational reforms and technological changes. Continuous competency development therefore represents a strategic investment in strengthening institutional capacity and sustaining educational quality.

Moreover, this study reveals that school performance is not determined solely by transformational leadership or competency development as independent factors but rather by the synergy between the two. More importantly, this relationship is reinforced by the presence of religious values, a family-oriented organizational culture, and the intrinsic motivation of teachers and educational staff. These contextual factors serve as organizational enablers that strengthen the effectiveness of transformational leadership and enhance institutional performance within the unique context of Islamic educational institutions.

The principal theoretical contribution of this study is the proposition of an integrated transformational leadership framework for *madrasahs*. The findings extend the existing transformational leadership literature by demonstrating that leadership effectiveness is shaped not only by transformational leadership behaviors and competency development but also by the organizational culture embedded in Islamic educational institutions. Consequently, transformational leadership should be understood as a culturally embedded leadership model that integrates leadership practices, human resource development, and shared organizational values to achieve sustainable school improvement.

Practical Implications

The findings suggest that school leaders should adopt an integrated leadership strategy that combines transformational leadership practices with systematic competency development while simultaneously fostering an organizational culture characterized by collaboration, continuous learning, religious values, and professional commitment. Such an integrated approach is expected to strengthen institutional effectiveness and improve the long-term sustainability of educational quality.

Limitations and Future Research

This study was conducted as a qualitative case study within a single *madrasah*, which may limit the generalizability of its findings to other educational settings. Future studies are encouraged to examine the proposed integrated transformational leadership framework across different types of schools or *madrasahs* using qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-methods approaches. Comparative studies involving multiple educational institutions would also provide broader empirical evidence regarding the influence of organizational culture on the relationship between transformational leadership, competency development, and school performance.

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