



## Original Article

## STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT OF MADRASAH PRINCIPALS IN IMPROVING INSTITUTIONAL MANAGEMENT QUALITY

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## ABSTRACT

**Background.** Improving the quality of education in madrasahs greatly depends on the leadership style adopted by the principal. The principal plays a central role in shaping and directing the organizational culture, as well as in empowering and enhancing teacher performance.

**Research Purpose.** This study aimed to describe and analyze the strategic management implemented by madrasah principals to improve the quality of human resources (HR), infrastructure, and finance.

**Research Method.** This research adopts a qualitative approach using a case study method. Data collection techniques include observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Multisite Study at Madrasah Aliyah Al Rosyid Ngumpakdalem Dander Bojonegoro and Madrasah Aliyah Al Munawwar Kunci Dander Bojonegoro.

**Findings.** The findings reveal that the principals apply strategic management through three main stages: strategy formulation, implementation, and evaluation. During formulation, the principals develop the vision, mission, and development programs. Implementation includes HR development through training and coaching, infrastructure management through inventory and maintenance, and financial management based on transparency and optimal funding sources. Evaluation is conducted periodically to ensure continuous improvement.

**Conclusion.** The principals play a central role in driving effective and sustainable strategic management, directly impacting the quality improvement of the institutions.

**Keywords:** Strategic Management, Madrasah Principal, Human Resources, Infrastructure, Finance.

## BACKGROUND

Education aims to prepare human resources to face the future in order to live a prosperous life [1]. The progress of a nation is determined by the quality of its people. Efforts to create high-quality human beings are one of the main tasks and responsibilities of the field of education. Therefore, educational reforms must continuously be enhanced and carried out to improve the quality of education.

The success of an educational institution greatly depends on the leadership of the principal. As the leader of the institution, the principal must be able to guide the school toward achieving its established goals, recognize changes, and anticipate a better future in an increasingly globalized world.

The study of institutional management in madrasahs becomes particularly important when considering the reality that educational institutions-especially Islamic educational institutions-face various challenges arising in society. Most Islamic schools still struggle with internal problems and their ability to respond to ongoing developments.

The strategic management of a madrasa principal in leading an educational institution is strongly linked to the institution's goals. Strategy is a crucial component of leadership because it is necessary not only to achieve institutional objectives but also to maintain the quality and standards of education within the madrasa. Therefore, an effective strategy is essential. An effective leadership strategy by the principal is needed to achieve quality educational goals in managing institutional administration.

With effective leadership strategies, a madrasa principal can guide the institution toward greater success. They can create a conducive learning environment, support student development, and foster a strong and positive organizational culture. All of these aspects contribute to achieving quality and sustainable educational outcomes in the madrasah [2].

The above description shows that the strategies implemented by madrasa principals in improving the quality of institutional management significantly influence the development and progress of the madrasa itself. The preliminary study was conducted in Madrasah Aliyah Al Rosyid and Madrasah Aliyah Al Munawwar about the quality of institutional management. Although it was only established in 2007, the madrasa has shown rapid progress in a relatively short period of time. The increasing achievements of its students, the expansion of classroom buildings, and the improvement of other educational facilities serve as indicators of such progress. But the strategic management that madrasah principal implemented still need more research. Although it was only established in 2007, the madrasa has shown rapid progress in a relatively short period of time. The increasing achievements of its students, the expansion of classroom buildings, and the improvement of other educational facilities serve as indicators of such progress.

In addition, many alumni from these two institutions have made significant contributions to society, such as becoming religious leaders, members of the armed forces or police, members of the House of Representatives, teachers, traders, farmers, and more. This demonstrates that the strategies implemented by madrasa principals in institutional management have had a significant impact on the development and success of these educational institutions.

Based on these considerations, the researcher decided to select these two madrasahs as research sites with the aim of understanding the strategies applied by the principals in improving the quality of institutional management, namely at Madrasah Aliyah Al Rosyid in Ngumpakdalem, Dander, Bojonegoro, and Madrasah Aliyah Al Munawwar in Kunci, Dander, Bojonegoro. This decision was based on the observation that both madrasahs have demonstrated significant progress in their institutional management and have the potential to serve as compelling and informative case studies. The researcher seeks to further explore how the principals of these two institutions implement effective strategies in improving educational quality, managing resources, and overseeing institutional finance.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study aims to reveal the strategic management applied by madrasah principals in improving the quality of institutional management at Madrasah Aliyah Al Rosyid Ngumpakdalem Dander Bojonegoro and Madrasah Aliyah Al Munawwar Kunci Dander Bojonegoro. To achieve this objective and to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study, this research employed a qualitative approach, which allows for the exploration of data within a natural and authentic context.

A qualitative approach was chosen since the data to be analyzed and presented are descriptive in nature. In this research, the researcher acted as the key instrument in collecting data from the natural setting. Therefore, the proposed research approach is qualitative, aiming to uncover phenomena holistically and contextually [3].

The research design adopted in this study is multisite. The multisite approach was selected with the consideration that this design allows for the development of more general theories. By synthesizing data from various but comparable contexts, this study seeks to produce findings that can be applied to broader situations.

A multisite or multiple-case study is a research strategy that involves conducting case studies at several different locations [4]. This type of research focuses on understanding how different contexts may influence the outcomes of the same phenomenon. The method enables researchers to compare and contrast findings from multiple sites to gain a more comprehensive and holistic understanding of the phenomenon being investigated.

This approach is highly useful for strengthening the validity and reliability of research findings, as it involves multiple sources of data across various sites.

Primary data in this study were obtained from the verbal statements of informants regarding the strategies employed by madrasah principals in improving the quality of institutional management at Madrasah Aliyah Al Rosyid Ngumpakdalem Dander Bojonegoro and Madrasah Aliyah Al Munawwar Kunci Dander Bojonegoro. These verbal data consisted of words and expressions that directly reflected the perceptions and experiences of the informants concerning the research topic. Study Madrasah Aliyah Al Rosyid, located at Jl. KH. R. Moch. Rosyid No. 86 RT. 002 RW. 001, Ngumpakdalem Village, Dander District, Bojonegoro Regency, East Java Province, 62171. This madrasa operates under the auspices of Pondok Pesantren Al Rosyid Ngumpakdalem Dander Bojonegoro.

Furthermore, research was also conducted on the principal of another madrasa, Madrasah Aliyah Al Munawwar, which operates under the auspices of Yayasan Pondok Pesantren Al Munawwar, Kunci, Dander, Bojonegoro. This madrasa is located at Jl. Raya Kunci Km. 17 Dander RT. 023 RW. 001, Kunci Village, Dander District, Bojonegoro Regency, East Java Province, 62171.

The snowball sampling technique was employed in this research. This method began with the selection of key informants who possessed in-depth knowledge of the issues under investigation. The key informants then recommended other relevant individuals as additional data sources. This chain process continued until an adequate number of informants was obtained or until the collected data reached a sufficient level of saturation [5].

Secondary data refer to information that has already been processed and presented by primary data collectors or related institutions. The sources of secondary data in this study included scientific publications (books, journals, and articles), previous research reports, and internal madrasa documents such as archives and activity reports.

In this study, the following data collection procedures were employed: 1) Interviews, conducted through direct questioning and answering sessions with informants; 2) Observation, carried out through systematic monitoring of the phenomena or research objects; 3) Documentation, a qualitative data collection technique conducted by analyzing documents relevant to the research objects.

The data analysis techniques employed in this research to produce accurate and comprehensive findings were as follows: 1) Data Reduction, the purpose of data reduction

is to organize complex data into smaller, manageable units of analysis; 2) Data Display, a process of visualizing data aimed at presenting information in a form that is easier to understand and interpret; 3) Conclusion Drawing and Verification, the final stage of qualitative data analysis, intended to provide meaning and interpretation of the data that have been collected [6].

## FINDINGS

The summary of research findings from Site I is as follows: 1) Corporate Strategy, implemented through the following steps: a) Developing development programs/plans; b) Needs identification, at Madrasah Aliyah Al Rosyid Kendal Dander Bojonegoro, needs are determined through analysis that considers both current and future requirements, while also taking budget adequacy into account; c) Target determination; d) Program establishment; e) Identification of learning principles; f) Program implementation; g) Evaluation of program implementation. 2) Functional Strategy, the strategic management of the principal at Madrasah Aliyah Al Rosyid Kendal Dander Bojonegoro in improving human resource quality was also carried out through a functional approach, which was divided into two main types of programs: a) On-the-Job Training, such as job rotation; b) Off-the-Job Training, such as courses, formal education, workshops, seminars, participation in Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran (Subject Teacher Discussion Forums/MGMP), and comparative study activities [6].

The strategic steps for managing educational infrastructure at Madrasah Aliyah Al Rosyid Kendal Dander Bojonegoro are as follows: 1) Corporate Strategy, which includes: a) Infrastructure planning; b) Procurement of educational infrastructure. 2) Business Strategy, which includes: a) Utilization and maintenance of educational infrastructure; b) Inventory of educational infrastructure [7].

The strategic management of the principal in improving financial management at Madrasah Aliyah Al Rosyid Kendal Dander Bojonegoro is described as follows: 1) Business Strategy, Efforts to increase funding sources were carried out through various strategies, including collecting contributions from student tuition (syahriyah), obtaining social assistance, and submitting proposals to government institutions. 2) Corporate Strategy, The financial management planning and implementation process in the madrasa was conducted through systematic stages, beginning with the implementation of the Madrasa Self-Evaluation (Evaluasi Diri Madrasah / EDM), the preparation of the Madrasa Annual Activity Plan (Rencana Kegiatan Tahunan Madrasah / RKTm), and the drafting of the Madrasa Activity and Budget Plan (Rencana Kegiatan dan Anggaran Madrasah / RKAM) for each budget line. In the financial supervision and evaluation stage, the objective was to ensure that financial resources were used accountably and in accordance with the plan. Regular reporting was carried out quarterly, semi-annually, and annually, followed by routine audits conducted by supervisory teams from the Bojonegoro Regency Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. 3) Functional Strategy, The functional strategy in financial management at Madrasah Aliyah Al Rosyid was implemented through accountability and financial reporting activities, covering stages according to each revenue and expenditure category. Reporting was conducted at the end of each academic year and supported by clear and verified records and transaction evidence [8].

Madrasah Aliyah Al Munawwar Kunci Dander Bojonegoro demonstrated that the principal implemented various strategies to improve the quality of institutional management, including: 1) Corporate Strategy, which consists of: a) Program development and planning; b) Needs assessment – the process of determining needs at Madrasah Aliyah Al Munawwar

Kunci Dander Bojonegoro was based on both short-term and long-term needs analysis, aligned with budget availability; c) Target determination; d) Program establishment, the principal of Madrasah Aliyah Al Munawwar Kunci Dander Bojonegoro applied managerial principles in institutional management by initiating annual program planning forums; e) Identification of learning principles, the madrasa conducted identification of learning principles as a reference to assess the appropriateness of their application in the development programs being implemented; f) Program implementation, human resource development programs at Madrasah Aliyah Al Munawwar Kunci Dander Bojonegoro were carried out situationally, taking into account existing needs and urgencies; g) Program evaluation, the madrasa organized development programs, particularly those related to improving the quality of educators and education staff, and evaluations were conducted at the end of the activities to assess their effectiveness and outcomes. 2) Functional Strategy, which consists of: a) On-the-Job Training, this strategy included job rotation that engaged teachers (asatidz) in moving from one task to another, training held at least twice a year for educators, as well as mentoring or counseling that provided guidance related to routine task implementation; b) Off-the-Job Training, these efforts were implemented through various activities such as courses, formal education, workshops, seminars, participation in Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran (Subject Teacher Discussion Forums / MGMP), and comparative study programs [9].

Strategic Management of the Madrasa Principal in Improving the Quality of Infrastructure The stages undertaken included: 1) Corporate Strategy, which consisted of: a) Infrastructure planning; b) Procurement of educational infrastructure. 2) Business Strategy, which consisted of: a) Utilization and maintenance of educational infrastructure; b) Inventory of educational infrastructure; c) Disposal of infrastructure [10].

The managerial strategies implemented by the principal of Madrasah Aliyah Al Munawwar Kunci Dander Bojonegoro in managing financial resources are described as follows: 1) Business Strategy, carried out by expanding and enhancing various funding sources, such as the School Operational Assistance (Bantuan Operasional Sekolah / BOS) funds, contributions from sympathizers, support from alumni and the local community, social assistance, donations from benefactors, as well as submitting proposals to government institutions. 2) Corporate Strategy, during the planning stage, the madrasa conducted a self-evaluation based on the needs assessment of the previous year through the Evaluasi Diri Madrasah (EDM), followed by the preparation of the Madrasa Annual Activity Plan (Rencana Kegiatan Tahunan Madrasah / RKTm). In financial management, the principal established a financial management team consisting of a treasurer, administrative staff, and a senior supervisory teacher. During the implementation stage, the allocated budget was realized according to the predetermined Rencana Anggaran Belanja (RAB). In the supervision and evaluation stage, financial resources were required to be utilized in accordance with the prior planning. Regular financial reporting was conducted as a form of accountability, prepared quarterly at the internal level, and semi-annually or annually under the supervision of the inspection team from the Bojonegoro Regency Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. 3) Functional Strategy, implemented through financial reporting and accountability processes, adjusted to the structure of the madrasa's revenues and expenditures. Financial reports were prepared at the end of each academic year and supported by complete documentation and verified transaction records [11].

## **DISCUSSIONS**

After conducting data analysis, the next step was to present the research findings in accordance with the objectives and formulation of the study, namely to identify and describe the strategic management of the madrasa principals in developing institutional management.

The discussion of the results is presented as follows: 1) The Principal's Strategies in Improving Human Resource Quality; a) Corporate Strategy, In program planning, MA Al Rosyid implemented an integrated and comprehensive human resource development program with clear and flexible targets, regular evaluations, and dissemination to all institutional elements. Meanwhile, MA Al Munawwar designed a systematic and holistic human resource development plan that included both long-term and short-term goals through annual program planning forums involving all educators and staff. In needs assessment, MA Al Rosyid involved the management team, principal, deputies, teachers, and education personnel, while MA Al Munawwar based its needs assessment on both short- and long-term analyses aligned with the budget, involving the HR management unit and all staff members. In target setting, MA Al Rosyid established targets as benchmarks for program success and as the foundation for designing content and development methods. Meanwhile, MA Al Munawwar used targets as evaluation indicators of success as well as the basis for formulating appropriate steps and methods of development. In program implementation, MA Al Rosyid applied situational approaches according to needs, with activities such as MGMP, workshops, training, regular evaluations, and supervision. Meanwhile, MA Al Munawwar also conducted situational implementation, focusing on training, workshops, MGMP, evaluations, supervision, and regular coaching. In program evaluation, MA Al Rosyid assessed the program based on improvements in skills, changes in attitudes, and work ethic, with evaluations conducted at the end of each program. Meanwhile, MA Al Munawwar conducted evaluations at the end of programs to measure effectiveness and changes in work behavior, skills, and work ethic of participants. b) Functional Strategy, The functional strategy was carried out in two ways: On-the-Job Training, both MA Al Rosyid and MA Al Munawwar conducted job rotations, regular training at least twice a year, mentoring, demonstrations, and temporary assignments. Off-the-Job Training, both institutions also organized courses, formal education, workshops, seminars, MGMP, and comparative studies as part of human resource development [12].

2) The Principal's Strategies in Improving Infrastructure; a) Corporate Strategy, There were two stages in corporate strategy: Infrastructure Planning, at MA Al Rosyid, planning was conducted by analyzing the types of learning experiences designed by the madrasa, involving needs surveys through questionnaires distributed to teachers. At MA Al Munawwar, planning also began with an analysis of learning experiences and the distribution of questionnaires regarding required tools/media to teachers. Infrastructure Procurement, at MA Al Rosyid, procurement followed plans agreed upon in institutional planning meetings. At MA Al Munawwar, procurement was also based on the agreed plan but remained flexible to accept external contributions of facilities during the academic year. b) Business Strategy, There were three stages in this business strategy: Utilization and Maintenance of Infrastructure, at both MA Al Rosyid and MA Al Munawwar, once procured, facilities were distributed to units, and responsibility for usage was delegated to each unit under the principles of effectiveness and efficiency. Infrastructure Inventory, at both institutions, asset recording was conducted continuously in a systematic and orderly manner in accordance with applicable regulations. Disposal of Infrastructure, MA Al Rosyid managed the disposal of damaged goods, while MA Al Munawwar managed the disposal of damaged, obsolete, or excess items from the inventory list [13-14].

3) The Principal's Strategies in Improving Financial Management, a) Business Strategy; There were three stages in this business strategy: Revenue Diversification, MA Al Rosyid actively sought funding from donors, alumni, madrasa cooperatives, and paid activities. Meanwhile, MA Al Munawwar relied mainly on BOS funds and student contributions. Optimization of Internal Sources, MA Al Rosyid developed business units

such as canteens and photocopy services as additional income for the madrasah, while MA Al Munawwar had not yet developed business units and relied on traditional funding sources. Financial Transparency, MA Al Rosyid regularly involved the school committee, with open financial reporting, while MA Al Munawwar carried out internal reporting with minimal involvement of external stakeholders. b) Corporate Strategy, There were three main points in the corporate strategy of financial management: External Partnerships, MA Al Rosyid established partnerships with local donors, community leaders, and philanthropic organizations, while MA Al Munawwar relied solely on routine government assistance. Decentralized Management, MA Al Rosyid delegated financial management authority to business units and the treasurer under supervision, while MA Al Munawwar maintained centralized management under the principal and treasurer. Long-Term Financial Policy, MA Al Rosyid formulated a financial vision as part of its strategic plan, while MA Al Munawwar had not yet developed a long-term financial direction. c) Functional Strategy, There were four stages in the functional strategy of financial management: Budget Planning, at MA Al Rosyid, budget plans (RAPBM) were developed collaboratively with the team and the madrasa committee, while at MA Al Munawwar, planning was dominated by the principal and treasurer. Budget Implementation, at MA Al Rosyid, implementation was carried out based on priority scales with strict expenditure controls, while at MA Al Munawwar, implementation followed routine practices with little innovation in fund utilization. Financial Supervision, MA Al Rosyid implemented internal audits and regular reporting to the committee, while MA Al Munawwar supervision was only internal, without external evaluation. Financial Reporting, at MA Al Rosyid, financial reports were presented periodically to stakeholders through formal forums, while at MA Al Munawwar, financial reports were limited to administrative purposes and remained closed.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussions, several conclusions can be drawn as follows: 1) Human Resource Management in Developing Teacher and Staff Capabilities; The principals of MA Al Rosyid and MA Al Munawwar applied both corporate and functional strategies to improve the quality of human resources. These strategies included developing the vision and mission of the madrasa to support teacher competency enhancement, conducting regular training, professional development programs, and periodic evaluations of the performance of teachers and education staff. This approach has proven effective in improving the quality of teaching and the professionalism of educators in both institutions. 2) Infrastructure Management in Enhancing the Quality of Institutional Management; The procurement and development of infrastructure were carried out through corporate and business strategies. At MA Al Rosyid, the principal focused on strengthening digital facilities and laboratories, while at MA Al Munawwar, the strategy was more centered on acquiring physical and religious facilities. Both institutions demonstrated careful planning and effective utilization of external collaborations to support the improvement of madrasa facilities. 3) Financial Management in Improving Institutional Quality; The principals implemented business, corporate, and functional strategies in managing madrasa finances. MA Al Rosyid was more advanced in financial innovation, such as establishing business units and managing productive assets, while MA Al Munawwar emphasized transparency, community participation, and straightforward yet effective fund management. These strategies supported the sustainability of educational programs and the operational continuity of the institutions. In general, the success of madrasa principals in these three aspects was influenced by their ability to design and implement strategies that are integrated, collaborative, and adaptive to the specific needs of their respective institutions.

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