

IMPLEMENTATION OF LEADERSHIP STRATEGY IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract: *Leadership in educational institutions has a strategic role in determining the success of an institution in achieving its vision and mission. Education leaders are not only responsible for administration and management, but also play a role in creating a conducive learning environment and encouraging innovation and improving the quality of education. This article discusses the concept of leadership in the context of educational institutions, including effective leadership styles, challenges faced, and strategies for improving leadership quality. With the right approach, leadership in educational institutions can contribute to improving the quality of learning, professional development of educators, and improving student performance. Therefore, it is important for education leaders to have managerial skills, effective communication, and the ability to adapt to changes in the world of education.*

Keywords: Strategy; Leadership; Educational Institution.

Introduction

A leader is an individual who has the ability to control, direct, and coordinate activities in a group. In English terms, a leader is called a leader, which shows a role as a figure who is able to influence and be a role model for his members. A leader is not only in charge of giving instructions, but also actively involved in the process of achieving common goals. In the context of educational institutions, the principal's role as a leader is very important, because he must meet a number of criteria, including having followers, authority, and certain skills more excellence (S. Sutikno, 2018).

Leadership in educational institutions can be differentiated into two main forms, namely personal leadership and positional leadership. Personal leadership refers to an individual's ability to lead himself, including managing emotions and making decisions. Meanwhile, positional leadership is a form of leadership that is carried out within the framework of a formal structure, where the principal is expected to be able to direct and influence his members to achieve common goals. Kouzes and Posner stated that "Leadership is a relationship, one between constituent and leader based on mutual needs and interest," which asserts that leadership is a reciprocal relationship between leaders and followers, formed on the basis of common needs and interests (Mesiono, 2012).

Leadership in educational institutions is ideally administrative and managerial, because these two approaches play an important role in ensuring the smoothness and success of the entire process that takes place. Administrative leadership focuses on the implementation of systematic rules and procedures, while managerial leadership focuses more on strategic planning and resource organization. The combination of these two forms of leadership allows educational institutions to translate vision and mission into concrete and measurable work programs (Burhanuddin, 2019).

Educational institutions have a responsibility in the process of learning and intellectual development of individuals, both formally and informally. In this context, Islamic educational institutions, such as Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI), play an important role in molding a generation with morals and knowledge. Islamic educational institutions have distinctive characteristics that distinguish them from public educational institutions, namely the application of Islamic values and teachings in the entire learning process (Rahman, 2018).

In an educational institution, the principal holds a central role as a leader where the Principal at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) holds a central role as a leader who is responsible for all activities in the school environment. In addition to carrying out administrative duties, the principal also plays a role in realizing the school's vision and

mission by developing various innovations that are able to improve the quality of education. Through the implementation of effective leadership strategies, the principal strives to create a conducive learning environment and encourage the organization's progress sustainably (Y. Sutikno et al., 2022).

Strategy is a plan designed for the long term with the main goal to achieve certain goals effectively and efficiently. In the context of educational institutions, strategy functions as a guide in making decisions and managing various activities so that the desired results can be achieved optimally. This research will focus on Ibtidaiyah Madrasah in Kasemen District, Banten Province, which is the only elementary level madrasah in the area. This research aims to explore leadership strategies applied by principals in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) and how these strategies contribute to improving the quality of education and character development of students (Arifudin et al., 2020).

This research is important because Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) as the only elementary Islamic education institution faces various challenges, such as limited facilities, unoptimal human resource management, and demands for improving the quality of education based on Islamic values. An effective leadership strategy is the key to overcoming these problems and maintaining the characteristics of Islamic education. MI in Kasemen, Banten, not only has to meet national education standards, but also maintains its Islamic identity in the midst of modernization. Therefore, the head of the madrasah needs to design a comprehensive leadership strategy, combining a formal administrative approach with the cultural values of the local community.

By analyzing in depth the leadership strategy applied in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) Kasemen Banten, this research will provide a concrete model of how effective leadership can improve the quality of learning while strengthening the Islamic character of students. The resulting recommendations can be a reference for similar madrasahs in other regions that face similar challenges.

Method

The method used by the author in this research is a qualitative approach with a descriptive form. The word "method" itself comes from the Greek language, namely *methodos*, which means a way or path to achieve a goal. While the term "research" in English is known as *research*, which is a systematic process to investigate a certain phenomenon or problem. The research process includes careful data collection, data processing, in-depth analysis, and presentation of results in the form of structured and objective writing. The main purpose of the research is to gain a clearer understanding and the right solution to the problem that is being studied (Abubakar, 2021).

Qualitative research method is an approach used to explore the relative truth by emphasizing a deep understanding of the behavior and mindset of individuals or groups. This approach prioritizes observation and analysis that is contextual and natural, so that the research process is carried out in natural or natural conditions without excessive manipulation. Thus, qualitative methods try to capture the meaning and subjective experience as a whole, so that the research results can provide a richer and more comprehensive picture of the phenomenon being studied (Abdussamad, 2021). Meanwhile, the descriptive method is an approach that focuses on collecting information or data regarding the condition or status of a symptom or variable that is being studied.

In the early stages, researchers collect various relevant data and information, both obtained orally and in writing, such as from books, journals, and scientific articles. After the data is collected thoroughly, the researcher then conducts the analysis process by classifying the variables or respondents that have been obtained according to the research needs (Hikmawati, 2015). At this stage, the researcher compiled the questions with the direct interview method with the head of the Ibtidaiyah Madrasah (MI) Kasemen Banten. In the final stage, the results of the analysis are compiled and presented in the form of a systematic and structured research report, in order to provide a clear picture of the implementation of the leadership style and strategies in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) Banten.

Findings and Discussion

Findings

Implementation of Ibtidaiyah Madrasah Leadership (MI) Kasemen Banten

Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) is a formal educational institution under the auspices of the Ministry of Religion which is equivalent to Elementary School (SD). Madrasah Ibtidaiyah is led by the principal or madrasah. Leadership in MI Banten tends to implement a participatory or democratic leadership style where leaders often involve teachers' councils, staff, and madrasah committees in decision-making because the madrasah itself is not only a place for learning for students, but also a forum for the development process of teachers and educational personnel. Thus, teachers and educators feel appreciated and motivated in carrying out their work better, besides that the implementation of a participatory style can create a harmonious and open working atmosphere.

The challenges in the implementation of participatory and democratic leadership applied by the head of MI Banten of course experienced differences of opinion which were then resolved by the deliberation of the opinions of either community leaders or madrasah supervisors and still prioritising mutual good and trying not to harm students. In the implementation of this leadership has a good impact on teachers, students and guardians of students. Where the teacher council works more enthusiastically, the students are more disciplined and orderly, and the relationship between the student guardians is also ideally established. So that MI Banten received several awards starting from the sub-district level and the city level. Not to forget, the head of MI Banten continues to try to give appreciation both verbally and in the form of small awards as well as holding training activities or workshops to improve the competence of the teacher council and education staff so that they continue to be enthusiastic. Besides that, the head of the madrasah builds communication through an open space to filter ideas, messages, suggestions and complaints from teachers or madrasah staff.

The participatory and democratic leadership applied to MI Banten is based on effective Islamic values in creating a conducive work atmosphere by emphasising the behaviour of trust, sincerity, deliberation, and *ukhuwah*. The leader of the madrasah has a responsibility for his leadership where the head of the madrasah must be a good *tauladan* queen with the hope that the leadership can realise a madrasah that is superior, has character, and is loved by the surrounding community. To ensure the quality of Education, leadership strategies are needed in learning so that it can produce outputs in accordance with the goals that have been determined.

Leadership Strategy

Every institution or organization of course has strategies in achieving goals. The word strategy itself comes from the Greek language, which is a combination of the words "stratos" which means military and "ag" which means to lead, so it can be interpreted as "military leadership" or actions carried out by generals in designing plans to achieve victory in war. In general, strategy refers to a method or approach used to achieve a goal. This is a long-term plan designed to achieve the goals that have been set. In this case, the strategy has five aspects, including: arena circle or area in producing, services, distributors and so on which are the course of plans from an organization or Institution, facilities and infrastructure, differentiators made or differentiators, staging or a plan step that will be carried out, as well as econical and logical thinking (Arifudin et al., 2020). Strategy is an approach that is arranged systematically and planned to achieve certain goals, by considering the conditions and context of the environment behind it (Acciarini et al., 2020).

The principal's leadership strategy plays a key role in carrying out complex tasks. Based on Permendiknas No. 6 Year 2018, the principal is a teacher who is given a mandate to lead, manage, foster, and solve problems in the school environment. This leadership is not only administrative, but also includes a strategic role in shaping the character of students through accuracy and motivation in facing the dynamics of Education (Syaipuddin Ashari, Asrin, Fahrudin, A. Hari Witono, 2024).

In general, strategy is understood as a draft outline of actions used to achieve predetermined goals. In the context of learning, strategy refers to a systematic pattern of interaction between educators and learners in the implementation of the teaching and learning process to achieve the formulated instructional goals. In the teaching and learning process, there are four basic strategies that need to be applied, namely: (1) formulating specifications for changes in the expected behavior and personality of learners, (2) choosing a learning approach that is in accordance with the values and aspirations of the community, (3) determining the most effective procedures, methods, and learning techniques to support the teaching process, and (4) setting standards and success criteria as an evaluation reference, which can then be used as feedback in improving the learning system (Seknum, 2013).

In implementing character education strategies in schools, there are a number of basic principles that need to be considered by teachers, not only as teachers, but also as educators. These principles include: (1) integration, which is the integration between cognitive, affective, spiritual, rational, and physical aspects in the learning process; (2) continuity and holistic approach, which emphasizes that character education must be carried out continuously, not incidentally; and (3) synchronization, which is the harmony between the values taught with real behavior in the school, home, and community environment (Ahmad Suriansyah, 2015).

Educational strategies are divided into four types, namely facilitative strategies, educational strategies, persuasion strategies, and coercive strategies.

1. Facilitative Strategy. The implementation of social change programs with facilitative strategies emphasizes the provision of supportive facilities so that the change process can run smoothly according to the goals that have been set
2. Education Strategy. According to Wina Sanjaya, strategy in education is a planning that includes a series of activities designed to achieve certain educational goals

3. Persuasion Strategy. Persuasion strategies in social change are carried out by persuading or seducing the target of change to be willing to follow the change through giving reasons, encouragement, or examples shown
4. Coercion Strategy. Coercive strategy involves the act of forcing the target of change to achieve the desired goals in the social change program (Burhan & Putri, 2022).

Southworth (2002), through qualitative research on elementary school principals in England and Wales, proposed three effective learning leadership strategies in improving the quality of learning, namely: (1) modeling, namely the principal acts as a role model that can be imitated by teachers; (2) monitoring, which is directly supervising teacher performance during the learning process and using the results of these observations as a basis for coaching; and (3) professional dialogue and discussion, which is an active, interactive, and reflective dialogue regarding the results of performance evaluation and follow-up planning to improve the quality of learning democratically and evidence-based (Husaini Usman, 2013). According to Raihani (2010), to improve teacher performance, school principals need to set various strategies or compile programs that include preconditional, academic, non-academic, supportive, and evaluative strategies.

1. Preconditional Strategy. Includes efforts to enforce discipline, provide motivation, and build trust among teachers and students
2. Academic Strategy. Related to curriculum management and school program development that aims to expand the insight and competence of teachers
3. Non-Academic Strategy. Focus on the management of extracurricular activities, where teachers are responsible for coordinating the implementation of those activities
4. Supporting Strategy. Supporting the implementation of academic and non-academic programs through the development of school facilities and the provision of supporting programs for teachers and students
5. Evaluative Strategy. Principals routinely evaluate school programs, including annual evaluations involving surveys from students regarding the principal's program and leadership (Ade Kurnia, Abd. Basit, Anis Setiyanti, 2018).

The strategy implemented by the principal in an effort to improve the quality of education includes several main steps, namely: (1) preparation of school planning and development; (2) implementation of the strategy that has been designed; (3) continuous improvement of national exam results; (4) implementation of extracurricular activities; (5) building good cooperation with all school residents, committees, student guardians, alumni, and related government agencies; and (6) routine evaluation of the implementation of these programs (Nopian Nur, 2024).

Inclusive and communicative leadership is the key to success in the management of Islamic educational institutions at the basic level. With that, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Banten has strategies that include academic, religious, managerial, and social approaches with the aim of realising a madrasah that excels both in general and religious education, as well as relevant to the needs of the times. The following is the implementation of the main strategies in the ibtidaiyah madrasah of Banten:

1. Strategies for Strengthening Islamic Values
General and Religious Curriculum Integration: Learning is developed by instilling Islamic values in every subject. Habituation of Daily Worship: Such as dhuha prayer, morning dhikr, tadarus Al-Qur'an, and congregational prayer. Tahfidz Qur'an Program: MI usually has a memorisation target that is adjusted to the grade level
2. Active And Contextual Learning Strategies
Active Learning Model (Active Learning): Using approaches such as group discussion, role play, and direct practice. Integrative Thematic Learning: Combining various subjects in one theme that is relevant to students' lives. Educational Media and Technology: Utilisation of digital media, learning applications, and audiovisuals to increase learning interest
3. Teacher Quality Increase Strategy
Periodic Training and Workshop: Teachers participate in pedagogical competence training, digitalisation, and religious moderation. Teacher Performance Assessment (PKG): Conducted to assess and improve the quality of teacher professionalism. Academic and Clinical Supervision: The head of the madrasah or supervisor provides direct assistance to the teaching-learning process
4. Collaborative Leadership Strategy
Participatory Leadership: Involving all madrasah residents in decision making. Teacher Consultation and Madrasah Committee: Routinely carried out to compile a joint work program and evaluate activities. Periodic Evaluation: Madrasah conducts evaluations of programs and policies by involving stakeholders
5. Character and Discipline Enhancement Strategy

Islamic School Literacy Movement: Cultivating the culture of reading Al-Qur'an and Islamic books from an early age. Application of Reward and Punishment: To instill discipline and noble morals to students. Moral Development: BK teachers or homeroom teachers monitor and nurture students' attitudes and morals periodically

6. Partnership Strategy with Parents and Community

Islamic Parenting Program: Educating parents about how to educate children according to Islamic values. Madrasah Committee Involvement: In supporting financing, facility development, and social activities. Community Based Madrasah: Building a harmonious relationship between madrasah and the surrounding environment

7. Strategy for Improving Facilities and Infrastructure

Madrasah Digitalisation: Developing madrasah information system, e-report, and online learning. Physical Development: Renovation of decent and comfortable classrooms, libraries, ablution places, and prayer rooms. Utilisation of BOS and BOP Assistance: Appropriately for the procurement of learning tools and operational needs

8. Extracurricular Development Strategy

Madrasah Scout Activities: Building the spirit of leadership and student independence. Religious Extracurricular: Such as hadrah, calligraphy, Islamic speech, and tilawah. Sports and Arts: To balance the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects of students

In facing the challenges of the digital 4.0 era, principals need to implement adaptive and progressive leadership strategies. The strategy includes: (1) improving the quality of human resources in the field of information and communication technology (ICT), including strengthening supporting facilities and infrastructure; (2) openness to technological developments and changes that occur in the digital era; (3) the ability to respond to changes quickly and appropriately; (4) focussing on processes and results in every educational program; and (5) mastering 21st century skills through the 4C formula, namely critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration. These five strategies are an important foundation for school principals in improving the quality of education that is relevant to the demands of the times. The effectiveness of the principal's strategy in facing the digital 4.0 era is highly dependent on the conditions and internal situation of the school. A strategy can be said to be effective if it is in harmony with the needs, resources, and characteristics of the school environment. On the other hand, if the strategy is not in accordance with the school context, then the implementation tends to be not optimal and has the potential to experience obstacles in its implementation in the field (Wening & Santosa, 2020).

Discussion

A leader is an individual who is specially chosen to organize, influence, and direct the course of an activity in a group with full responsibility and trust. The role of a leader is not only limited to giving direction, but also ensuring that the process runs effectively in order to achieve common goals. Meanwhile, leadership is a branch of applied science that comes from the social science discipline, where the principles and concepts are formulated with the aim of making a real contribution to the improvement of human welfare as a whole. Through the application of leadership science, it is expected to create a harmonious relationship between leaders and group members that supports the achievement of optimal and sustainable results (Faris, 2015). Leadership, which in English is called leadership, according to Stogdill quoted in Grint (1997:114), is defined as a process or action that affects the activities of an organized group in an effort to set and achieve common goals. That is, leadership emphasizes a person's role in directing and influencing group activities to run effectively in accordance with previously designed goals. Leadership also involves various important components as well as a strong orientation towards responsibility for the performance of the group members. The influence of leadership greatly determines the quality and success of a group or institution, because through good leadership, goals that have been formulated in a planned manner can be realized by providing the right direction in every stage and implementation step. Thus, leadership becomes a crucial factor in moving the organization towards achieving optimal results (Mesiono, 2012).

According to Edwin A. Locke, a leader is an individual engaged in a process of influencing others to collectively realize a predetermined vision and mission with shared objectives. In Locke's view, leadership is not merely a matter of holding a position or title; rather, it is a dynamic interaction that involves influencing and motivating group members so they can move in alignment toward common goals. Thus, the role of a leader is crucial in directing and integrating collective efforts to ensure that the organization's vision and mission are achieved effectively and efficiently (Dewi, 2009). In the context of leadership, there are three important meanings contained in the role of a leader, including the following:

1. Leaders function as figures who design and develop ideas and thoughts that become the basis for the direction of group or organization activities.
2. A leader is an actor in a process that directs strategic steps to achieve goals that have been set together.
3. Leaders strive to gain support and trust from members, so that they can move them to take the necessary actions for the progress and success of the group. These three aspects complement each other, making leadership an art as well as a science in managing and motivating others effectively (Amin & Siregar, 2015).

As for the theories related to leadership competence, among others are as follows:

1. Nature Theory
Nature Theory explains that leadership is something that is naturally inherent in a person, which is obtained through genetic factors or inheritance from the previous generation. This theory emphasizes that physical characteristics, personality traits, and behaviors that are inherited biologically become characteristics that form the leader figure in the individual.
2. Behavioral Theory
This theory focuses on the habits and interaction patterns of a person in treating and relating to others, including the way a leader delegates tasks and trusts to his members. In this view, leadership is not something that is solely inherited genetically, but can be formed and developed through experiences and practices lived by the individual.
3. Environmental Theory
This theory emphasizes that leadership is formed and developed based on certain conditions that include the situation, time, and place where the leadership is carried out. This approach is known as situational leadership, which considers that the leadership style and model must be adapted to the surrounding environment and the needs that arise at that time.
4. Implicit Theory
This theory is based on individual beliefs and views on the characteristics possessed by an effective leader. Known as implicit theory, this approach involves certain stereotypes and prototypes related to traits, skills, and behaviors that are considered relevant and important in leadership. Through this theory, leaders are prepared with characteristics appropriate for various roles, such as managers, politicians, or military officers, all of which are based on real and actual experience in carrying out leadership duties.
5. Great Man Theory
This theory is known as the great leader theory, which states that a superior leader is born with distinctive personal characteristics and different from others. The leader usually has the characteristics of charisma, high intelligence, wisdom, strong attraction, and effective communication skills.
6. Transformation Theory
This theory is visionary and focuses on leadership behavior that is able to inspire and encourage significant changes in the organization or group that is led. Leadership according to this theory not only focuses on achieving the goals that have been set, but also produces a greater impact than the initial planned target.
7. Neocharismatic Theory
This theory focuses on the role of a leader as a figure who has a strong emotional appeal and is able to build a high commitment among his followers. In this approach, the emotional aspect becomes the center of attention, where the leader not only relies on formal authority, but also the ability to inspire, motivate, and create deep relationships with group members.
8. Charismatic Theory
This theory describes how group members collectively form and create characteristics that reflect superior leadership skills. In this view, leadership is not only the result of individual ability alone, but also influenced by interaction, contribution, and active participation of group members (Syahril, 2019).

Kartini Kartono stated that the ideal leader must be mentally and physically strong, always focus on the goal, and show attention and affection to the people he leads. Leaders must also have high integrity, be able to overcome problems firmly, intelligently, skillfully, and can be trusted by their group members. Soekarno is known to have a strong mental and physical in leading the nation, always focusing on the vision of Indonesia's independence and progress, and showing attention and affection to his people. His high integrity, the ability to overcome various challenges, firm attitude, intelligence, skills in speech and negotiation, and great trust from the people made him an influential and respected leader (Nur fadillah, 2024). Selain itu, kepemimpinan juga memiliki macam-macam dan gaya, antara lain sebagai berikut :

1. Autocratic
Autocratic, according to Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (2008), comes from the term autocracy which means

unlimited power, where this form of government gives absolute power to one individual, which is often interpreted as dictatorship. Another term that is often used to describe autocracy is authoritarian, which means a ruler who has his own power and acts arbitrarily. In the autocratic leadership system, the leader acts like a dictator who becomes the mover as well as the sole ruler in the group or organization. Subordinates or members are only required to follow orders and carry out instructions without being allowed to question, argue, or give advice to the leader. This leadership model places full authority on the leader and limits the space for members' participation in decision-making (Agus, 2016).

2. Democratic

Democratic leadership is based on the principle that the smoothness of activities in an organization and the achievement of the set goals will be more effective if every problem that arises is solved together between the leaders and members of the organization. Leaders with a democratic leadership style realize the importance of building a clear and organized organizational structure, which describes in detail the various tasks and responsibilities that must be carried out by each member (Turmono, 2020).

3. Laissez Faire

The laissez-faire leadership style, also known as free control, is the opposite of the autocratic leadership style. If in autocratic leadership the leader tends to dominate and control all organizational activities, then in laissez-faire leadership, the leader gives full freedom to members or subordinates to carry out their duties and responsibilities independently. Leaders with this style believe that giving the widest possible flexibility to members will accelerate the achievement of organizational goals. However, the success of an organization or institution led by a laissez-faire style usually depends on the awareness and dedication of the group members themselves, not solely because of the role or direct influence of the leader. Thus, laissez-faire leadership places members as the main driver in the implementation of tasks and the achievement of results (Robi Yanto, 2025).

4. Paternalistic

Leaders with a paternalistic style always prioritize common interests and the spirit of togetherness in the organization. This type of leader tries to treat every individual or work unit in the organization equally without giving preferential treatment to anyone (Mona Inayah Pratiwi, Indi Djastuti, 2020). In practice, paternalistic leaders place the principle of justice and equal distribution as the main foundation in fostering working relationships, so that no party feels more favored or marginalized. Thus, this leadership style emphasizes fair and equitable treatment for all members of the organization in order to create a harmonious and cohesive working atmosphere (Indartinah et al., 2023).

5. Karismatik

A charismatic leader is a figure who has wide admiration from many of his followers, although those followers often have difficulty explaining in detail the reasons behind their admiration. The main characteristic of a charismatic leader lies in a very strong and alluring personal attraction, so that it is able to attract the attention and loyalty of a large number of followers. The charm and uniqueness that this leader has creates a deep emotional bond with his followers, making them willing to follow and support his leadership unconditionally. Thus, charismatic leadership is very effective in gathering support and building broad influence within groups or organizations.

To be a good leader, leaders need to implement a leadership style as part of the characteristics of a leader. Here are the leadership styles that can be applied by leaders, namely: persuasive style, repressive style, participatory style, innovative style, motivative style, and educational style (Mubin & Masruri, 2020).

Educational Institution

Education has a purpose that is regulated by law and can be understood more broadly as a system of shaping individual behavior in his role as a good and responsible citizen. Education aims to guide human development so that it grows and develops towards achieving certain ideals that are expected by the community and the nation. Therefore, the main aspect in education is the existence of planned and systematic actions or processes to realize these goals effectively. Therefore, education is not just a transfer of knowledge, but also an effort to form a character and attitude that is in line with the norms and values that apply in the life of the nation and the state (Aziizu, 2015).

Institution, also known as a body or organization, is an entity formed with a certain purpose, both in order to develop science and carry out various businesses and activities. The institution functions as a forum that regulates and manages activities related to the achievement of these goals systematically and structured. In general, institutions can be classified into six main types, namely family institutions, cultural institutions, economic institutions, religious institutions, political institutions, and educational institutions, each of which has an important role in social and community life.

Educational institutions function as the main means of carrying out the learning process that involves active interaction between students and teachers. Through structured teaching and learning activities, educational institutions aim to shape and develop the potential of individuals and groups so that they can become a superior and quality generation. This educational process not only focuses on the transfer of knowledge, but also on the formation of character, skills, and attitudes needed to face future challenges better and responsibly (Khairul & Jazuli, 2022). Educational institutions are divided into three, including :

1. Formal Education

Formal education is a learning process that is carried out in a planned and systematic manner, usually taking place in a relatively long and structured time span. In Indonesia, formal education generally lasts for at least 12 years, as stipulated in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System (Sisdiknas). The law explains that formal education consists of several sequential levels, namely basic education (SD and SMP), secondary education (SMA and SMK), and higher education. One of the main characteristics of formal education is the existence of a teaching and learning process that takes place in classrooms that are indeed provided by educational institutions, by using an official curriculum that has been designed to achieve specific learning goals (Juanda, 2013).

2. Non formal Education

Non-formal education is a type of education that focuses on skill development and training in a relatively shorter period of time compared to formal education. This education is usually held through various activities such as training in the form of in-service training, which includes organizing, courses, upgrading, refreshing materials, workshops, discussions, seminars, and so on. In addition, non-formal education also includes skill courses aimed at various community groups such as youth, women, farmers, and others, with the aim of improving practical skills that can be directly applied in daily life and the world of work (Hidayat et al., 2017).

3. Informal Education

Informal education is a learning process that occurs naturally without any formal planning or structure. This education takes place unintentionally and often without realizing it, usually occurs in the family environment or in daily interaction with the social environment around the individual. Through informal education, a person acquires values, norms, habits, and basic knowledge that shapes his personality and attitude towards life, so that informal education becomes an important foundation in shaping a person's character and behavior from an early age (Tagela, 2006).

In addition, there are also various supporting educational institutions that play an important role in the overall education process. Family education institutions, led by parents, focus on parenting and character formation of children through daily interaction at home. While community education institutions also play an important role, which are usually managed and nurtured by volunteers who are committed to helping improve the knowledge and skills of community members through various non-formal education programs (Marlina Gazali, 2019).

In Indonesia, Islamic educational institutions are one of the largest educational institutions and have an important role in the national education system. An Islamic educational institution is a place or organization that specifically organizes a learning process based on Islamic teachings, with a clear organizational structure and full responsibility for the implementation of the education. This institution aims to create a conducive environment and atmosphere so that the Islamic education process can run effectively and in accordance with Islamic values. The main examples of Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia are madrasahs and Islamic boarding schools, both of which play a role as religious teaching centers as well as character development and Islamic-based science (Zainuddin & Siti Nurhidayatul Hasanah, 2022).

Islamic educational institutions apply seven learning methods that become the basis in the process of teaching and coaching students. These methods include exemplary methods, where teachers or education leaders show examples of good behavior and attitudes to be imitated by students. In addition, there is a method of stories that uses stories as a means of conveying values and moral lessons. The advisory method is also used to provide direct guidance to students so that they are able to make the right decisions. Furthermore, the habituation method focuses on the formation of positive habits through continuous practice and repetition. Legal and reward methods are used to teach the consequences of actions through rules and rewards or punishments. The lecture method is used to convey the material verbally to a large group, and finally the discussion method that involves two-way interaction between educators and learners to deepen understanding and develop critical thinking skills (Muhtarom et al., 2023).

Islamic boarding school as an Islamic education institution has strong social roots because its existence is very integrated with the surrounding community. In general, Islamic boarding schools grow and develop thanks

to the direct support of the community, living together, and serving the educational and religious needs of the community (Yaqin, 2019). In educational institutions, there are two nicknames for leaders, namely:

Principal: Principal is one of the key elements in the world of education that has a very important role in improving the overall quality of education. As the leader of the school organization, the principal is fully responsible for managing and carrying out all activities and systems in the school. In addition to acting as a manager who manages school operations, the principal also functions as a strategic thinker and developer who always tries to find innovative ways to advance the school. In carrying out his duties, the principal is required to have high professionalism and deep mastery of his field of work, even must surpass the average ability of other staff in the school environment. A strong moral commitment to his responsibilities, which is in line with his professional code of ethics, is also an absolute requirement that must be possessed. As a leader figure, the principal not only leads formally, but also must be able to transform his abilities and capabilities and encourage all members of the school community through guidance, direction, empowerment, and motivation so that the goals of educational institutions can be achieved effectively and efficiently (Hayati et al., 2023).

Kyai: Kyai is the name of a leader in an educational institution within the scope of Islamic boarding schools aimed at a figure who has a deep knowledge of Islam, as well as practicing and showing morals that are in harmony with his knowledge. The role of kyai is very diverse, including functions as educators who guide students in learning religion, religious leaders who give religious direction to the community, social servants who actively help the needs of the community, caregivers and mentors who take care of the overall well-being of the students, and as a recitation teacher who teaches religion directly to his students or their students (Setiawan, 2013).

Leaders of good educational institutions have one of the main goals of improving the quality and quality of education as a whole. The quality of this education can be measured relatively through the level of satisfaction and the needs of parents who want the education their children receive to be able to form a clear picture of their identity. Thus, the education given is not only the transfer of knowledge, but also becomes an important provision that prepares children to face the future with confidence and the right direction (Helmina Dewi & Lazwardi, 2022). Quality is the main factor in determining success and competitiveness in various fields, including the world of education. To ensure the optimal quality of education, quality standardization is implemented which includes several important aspects, namely: Graduate Competency Standards that regulate the abilities that students must achieve, Content Standards that include learning materials, Process Standards that regulate the procedures for implementing learning, Educator and Educational Personnel Standards that ensure the quality of teaching and support staff, Facilities and Infrastructure Standards that guarantee educational support facilities, Management Standards that regulate the governance of educational institutions, Financing Standards that regulate educational funding, and Educational Assessment Standards that ensure the evaluation of learning outcomes are effective and objective. All these standards together play a role in creating quality and sustainable education (Muararifatunni'mah, 2021)

Conclusion

Leadership at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) in Kasemen District, Banten, has a very important role in improving the quality of education and character development of students. The principal as a leader in this educational institution implements a participatory and democratic leadership style, which involves a teacher council, staff, and madrasah committee in decision-making. This approach not only creates a harmonious work atmosphere, but also increases the motivation and work spirit of teachers and students' discipline.

The challenges faced by MI Banten, such as limited facilities and human resource management, require a comprehensive and adaptive leadership strategy. Through the implementation of various strategies, including strengthening Islamic values, active learning, improving the quality of teachers, and partnerships with parents and the community, MI can create a conducive learning environment and relevant to the development of the times.

In addition, school principals also need to develop 21st century skills and utilise information technology to improve the quality of education. The successful implementation of the leadership strategy is highly dependent on the alignment between the applied strategy and the conditions and characteristics of the school environment. Thus, this research provides valuable insight for leadership development in Islamic educational institutions, as well as recommendations for other madrasahs that face similar challenges. Through effective leadership and the right strategy, MI in Kasemen can continue to contribute in moulding a generation that is moral and knowledgeable, in accordance with Islamic values.

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