

# Effective Principal Leadership Strategy in Managing Integrated Islamic School Organisation at SMA IT Yarsi Mataram, Indonesia

Roziana<sup>1</sup>, Untung Waluyo<sup>1</sup>, Mansur Hakim<sup>1</sup>, Lalu Sumardi<sup>1</sup>, Dedi Setiadi<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *University of Mataram*

Jl. Majapahit No 62 Mataram, Nusa Tenggara Barat, Indonesia

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Corresponding Author:

Roziana

[rozianasafari@gmail.com](mailto:rozianasafari@gmail.com)

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**Abstract.** The purpose of this study was to determine the effective principal leadership strategy in managing an integrated Islamic school organisation at SMA IT YARSI Mataram and the supporting and inhibiting factors of the effective principal leadership strategy in managing an integrated Islamic school organisation at SMA IT YARSI Mataram. This study employs a qualitative approach, utilising a case study research design. The data collection techniques employed are interviews and documentation. The data analysis technique employed is the Miles and Huberman model, which involves data reduction, data presentation, and data analysis to conclude. The results of this study indicate that the effective principal leadership strategy carried out is to develop the school's vision and mission based on the integration of holistic intelligence (intellectual-spiritual) and the principles of the Qur'an, align all components of the school, carry out recruitment and development of human resources, implement curriculum standards, and integrate Islamic values with everyday life. Internal supporting factors are the principal's experience in managing SIT and the condition of human resources following JSIT. External supporting factors are good relations with the foundation, cooperation with the committee and parents, adequate facilities and infrastructure and available educational funding. Meanwhile, inhibiting factors include the condition of teaching and educational personnel, the availability of facilities and infrastructure, and obstacles in managing school organisations.

**Keywords:** leadership; integrated Islamic school; strategy; principal.

## INTRODUCTION

Schools are an educational organisation that is considered a vehicle for achieving national development goals, especially in education. Education is one of the basic needs, which aims to create a quality society. Educational organisations require effective management. As stated in Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 2 of 1989, Article 10, § 2, which states that schools are a place to organise the teaching and learning process. Schools, as formal education is structured and hierarchical, start from elementary, junior high, middle, and higher education. Formal education, also known as schools, certainly requires leaders who play a significant role [1].

The principal is the highest position in a school. The education system in schools is largely determined by the principal's ability to manage the existing system within the school, including in-

teractions with teachers, education staff, and students. This means that the principal plays a crucial role in improving the quality of education in the school they lead. Therefore, the principal plays a major role in advancing a school [1, 2].

The main challenges faced by Islamic education include three main aspects: 1) Separation between religious studies and general studies; 2) The purpose and role of Islamic educational institutions; and 3) Lesson plans and learning materials [3]. The integration of general studies and Islamic religion is the primary goal of modern educational institutions desired by Muslim society. The impact of this phenomenon is that it can produce separate understandings of the world and religion, ultimately hindering the integration of knowledge and a holistic understanding.

Additionally, this phenomenon can lead to confusion in setting direction and educational goals for students. Lack of understanding of the role of Islamic educational institutions can also hinder the development of educational models that are by the needs of Muslim society, can hinder the relevance of Islamic education in facing global challenges, Lack of integration between teaching general studies and Islamic religion can also result in a less comprehensive curriculum, can deepen divisions in society and increase misunderstanding between groups, and can trigger innovation in curriculum, teaching methods, and understanding of the role of Islamic educational institutions in modern society.

This integrated Islamic education model is expected to overcome the dualism that exists in the Indonesian education system. Therefore, it is expected that students who complete educational programs in Indonesia will possess abilities in various fields of knowledge, including general knowledge studies and religious knowledge studies, and be able to cover both fields, as well as have a good understanding and practical application of religion [4].

Leadership in integrated Islamic educational institutions plays a crucial role as a motivator, mediator, person in charge, and catalyst for community movements. Leadership in Islamic education can be defined as the skills required to manage, influence, and direct Islamic education in terms of regulation, influence, and operations. At the same time, ethics reflect behaviour in the form of moral standards (values), norms, and good things [5].

Based on data obtained from the results of initial observations, the Islamic educational institution SMA IT YARSI Mataram is a school with a *conceptislamic fullday school*, is committed to producing a generation that is spiritually, intellectually and emotionally intelligent and living a life based on the values of the Qur'an by implementing a comfortable, fun, interesting, creative, effective and enjoyable learning system. The school has been planned to be an educational institution that not only focuses on the general education curriculum but also pays attention to religious aspects. In a relatively short period, spanning from 2020, this school has achieved various notable successes, including winning the student olympiad at both national and international levels. This school received an A accreditation within 3 years of its management. The principal of

SMAIT YARSI Mataram is the head of the Integrated Islamic School Network (JSIT) in West Lombok; therefore, his leadership must also adhere to the integrated Islamic standards. The achievements of SMA IT YARSI Mataram are also inseparable from the role of the foundation that manages the school. The role of the foundation in this case is to be directly involved in forming the school curriculum, recruiting teachers and school facilities and infrastructure. The foundation established educational programs, including SDIT, SMP IT, SMAIT, SMK YARSI, and STIKES YARSI Mataram. Each educational unit is managed by its respective principal.

Understanding and implementing effective leadership strategies in managing school organisations by the Principal at SMA IT YARSI Mataram is crucial because not all principals possess the same ability to carry out their leadership responsibilities effectively, especially when they are under the auspices of a foundation.

## METHODS

This study employs a qualitative method, specifically a case study approach. The data sources used in this study include both primary and secondary data. Primary data sources are the principal, the curriculum vice principal, the homeroom teacher, and the teacher council. Meanwhile, secondary data sources will be taken from the archives owned by the school. These secondary data sources will be utilised as supplementary sources of information to enrich the data obtained from primary sources. Data collection techniques include observation, interviews, and documentation. The data that has been collected is then analysed using the Miles and Huberman model, which includes three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. Checking the validity of the data involves tests for credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *1. Effective principal leadership strategies in managing integrated Islamic school organisations at SMA IT YARSI Mataram*

1.1. Developing the school's vision and mission based on the integration of holistic intelligence (intellectual-spiritual) and the principles of the Qur'an. The principal's leadership strategy is

based on the vision "Smart and Quranic," which at SMA IT Yarsi Mataram plays a central role in creating an excellent educational ecosystem, both academically and in the development of Islamic character. This vision is not just a formal statement but rather becomes the main guide that influences every aspect of school management. Leadership strategies that focus on vision and mission are evident in the principal's efforts to integrate both Smart and Quranic values into the curriculum and school culture. This is achieved through excellent programs, such as Memorising the Qur'an, morning halaqah, congregational prayers, and Islamic character building through Personal Infrastructure (IPI).

Each of these programs is designed not only to enhance students' intellectual abilities but also to foster their spiritual and moral development. The principal's commitment to this vision is evident in the consistent implementation of these programs, accompanied by continuous evaluation and development. For example, in the program *Memorising the Qur'an*, the principal ensures that students receive intensive guidance and a conducive environment for memorising the Qur'an. Likewise, in academic learning, each subject is developed with an approach that aligns with Islamic values, so that students not only gain knowledge but also learn how to apply it to their everyday lives through Islamic teachings.

The leadership of a principal who is committed to the vision is also evident in how school resources are optimally managed to support the achievement of educational goals. The principal ensures that every teacher and educator receives training and professional development tailored to the school's needs. For example, teachers are not only trained in academic teaching methodology but are also equipped with strategies for integrating Islamic values in learning. In addition, the principal also encourages the use of technology in learning, so that the vision "*Smart and Quranic*" remain relevant to the demands of the times.

The principal's leadership strategy, based on commitment to the school's vision and mission, is a major factor in the successful management of SMA IT Yarsi Mataram. Effective leadership is not only about managing administration or supervising the performance of teachers and students, but also about how the principal directs all elements of the school to achieve the set goals jointly.

1.2. Coordinate all school components. Principal leadership can be analysed through the perspective of organisational synergy and internalisation of values as the main factors for the success of Islamic-based education. The integration of Islamic values in learning is not just about technical instructions, but a systematic effort to shape students' mindsets and characters. By aligning general subjects with Islamic values, the principal is creating a holistic educational approach that integrates science and spirituality. This approach has profound strategic implications, namely forming a paradigm of student thinking so that they understand that science is not something secular, but part of the greatness of God that must be studied with spiritual awareness. This also reinforces the understanding that Islam is not only studied in religious subjects but also forms the foundation for various aspects of life and science.

The role of the principal in creating harmony among school elements also needs to be analysed from a democratic leadership perspective. Involving teachers, staff, and students in the decision-making process not only creates a sense of ownership but also increases the effectiveness of policy implementation. This is by the theory of participatory leadership, which emphasises that the active involvement of everyone in an organisation will increase their loyalty and commitment to a shared vision. When teachers are given space to contribute to determining the direction of school policy, they not only act as implementers but also as agents of change, participating in the development of a more effective learning environment. This strategy also increases teachers' intrinsic motivation, because they feel that their ideas and expertise are valued in decision-making. In the long term, this leadership model creates organisational dynamics that are more stable and adaptive to change.

1.3. Carrying out HR recruitment. The recruitment process for teaching and education personnel at SMA IT Yarsi Mataram is not merely an administrative effort to fill the workforce gap. Still, it is a strategy oriented towards the formation of quality human resources in line with the school's vision and mission, as well as the internalisation of Islamic values that are the identity of the Integrated Islamic School (SIT). This process refers to the quality standards of the Integrated Islamic School Network (JSIT), which emphasises that teaching staff must not only have academic and pedagogical competence, but

also an Islamic personality that aligns with the character of the school. This means that teachers at SMA IT Yarsi Mataram do not only act as teachers, but also as role models, who can shape the character of students through exemplary behaviour, discipline, and spirituality.

The recruitment approach at SMA IT Yarsi Mataram can be linked to the concept of person-organisation fit, where individuals recruited must not only meet technical qualifications but also align with the organisation's values, culture, and goals. In this case, requirements such as wearing a long hijab, not smoking, and having the ability to read and memorise the Qur'an are not just formal rules, but a selection mechanism to ensure that educators possess the character necessary to consistently build an Islamic-based education ecosystem.

Additional selection stages, such as the Quran reading test and Islamic discipline criteria, demonstrate that SMA IT Yarsi Mataram strives to uphold the quality standards of educators, ensuring they are not only transmitters of knowledge but also educators who provide moral and spiritual examples. This concept is relevant to the theory of cultural reproduction, as outlined by Pierre Bourdieu, who explains how educational institutions contribute to the reproduction of certain cultural values in society. By ensuring that educational staff align with the Islamic values upheld by the school, the ongoing educational process will be more effective in forming students who are in line with the school's identity.

1.4. Implementation of curriculum standards. The curriculum at SMA IT Yarsi Mataram combines the Merdeka Curriculum, the 2013 Curriculum, and the Integrated Islamic School Network (JSIT) Curriculum, demonstrating a layered approach where formal education, based on national standards, is aligned with Islamic values. This is not just administrative integration, but a form of holistic education strategy that balances academic needs and moral formation.

The curriculum approach applied at SMA IT Yarsi Mataram reflects the idea of an integrated curriculum, namely a curriculum that is not only oriented towards academic achievement but also connects various aspects of education to form a unified whole. With a combination of national and Islamic-based curricula, schools not only adhere to national education policies but also ensure that students receive an education in line

with the Islamic vision. This aligns with the view of Toto Suharto, who emphasised that the Islamic education curriculum must prioritise religion and morals, cover broad aspects, and strike a balance between science and moral values. This strategy enables students to develop intellectually without compromising their spiritual roots and Islamic culture, which are integral to their identity.

Based on a pedagogical perspective, the application of the SIT learning principle – Present, Internalise, and Apply – shows that SMA IT Yarsi Mataram not only focuses on transferring knowledge but also on the process of internalising Islamic values in the lives of its students. This approach emphasises that education is not just about delivering material in the classroom, but must encourage students to understand, internalise, and apply Islamic values in everyday life.

1.5. Human resource development. The principal conducts human resource (HR) development for both educators and students to improve the quality of education, which is oriented towards achieving the vision of "Smart and Qur'anic", enhancing academic quality, and fostering Islamic character. Development for educators is carried out through regular weekly meeting forums, which aim to strengthen the understanding and practice of Islamic values in the learning process. Weekly evaluation meetings also serve as a forum for providing positive and constructive feedback to teachers, ensuring that all teaching remains aligned with the Islamic values that are the hallmark of the school.

Meanwhile, coaching for students at SMA IT Yarsi Mataram focuses on developing Islamic character through various programs, including Bina Pribadi Islam (BPI), an Al-Qur'an halaqah every morning, and the practice of praying in congregation. Through these activities, students are trained to develop their intellectual, emotional, and spiritual intelligence. This coaching is not only aimed at strengthening academic knowledge, but also at cultivating individuals with noble morals and the ability to resist negative influences that contradict Islamic values.

This strategy aligns with the principles of Islamic education, which prioritise riyadah (training), habituation, and mujahadah (striving hard) in developing students' intelligence. Through this approach, the principal not only focuses on achieving academic results but also pays attention to aspects of character development that are

integral to the school's vision. By fostering human resources holistically, both teachers and students, the principal ensures that every individual in the school is not only academically intelligent but also possesses morals and a personality that align with Islamic values.

1.6. Integrating Islamic values with everyday life. By integrating Islamic values into every activity and program of the school, the principal creates an environment that supports the formation of individuals who are not only intelligent but also possess noble character. This aligns with the primary objective of SMA IT Yarsi Mataram to produce graduates who are not only academically excellent but also possess personal qualities that reflect Islamic teachings. This leadership strategy also helps create alignment between the school's vision and daily practices, builds a positive and Islamic school culture, and encourages active involvement from all elements of the school to achieve common goals.

The integration of Islamic values also includes the adoption of Islamic manners in daily life, such as praying in congregation, proper speech manners, dressing according to Islamic law, and respecting teachers. These principles are consistently applied in school routines, with the aim of not only developing students' intellectual abilities but also cultivating characters based on the teachings of the Qur'an and the Hadith.

A concrete example of this strategy is the implementation of morning halaqah activities and the Tahfidzul Qur'an program, which is run at SMA IT Yarsi Mataram. Morning halaqah activities, where students gather daily before teaching and learning activities to study and review verses from the Qur'an, aim to strengthen their religious understanding and foster a strong spiritual relationship with Allah SWT. In addition, the Tahfidzul Qur'an program aims to instil positive habits in students, namely memorising and practising the Qur'an as a guide to daily life.

## *2. Supporting factors for effective principal leadership strategies in managing integrated Islamic school organisations at SMA IT YARSI Mataram*

### 2.1. Supporting Internal Factors

A. Principal experience, specifically the principal's experience in managing an Integrated Islamic school, is a crucial factor in the success of SMA IT Yarsi Mataram's management. This experience encompasses not only teaching but also managing well-planned school programs. This

follows the quality standards of educational personnel in Integrated Islamic schools, which require the principal to have at least three years of experience as an educator in an Integrated Islamic school (SIT) or five years in another educational setting.

B. The condition of human resources that meets the standards, most teachers at SMA IT Yarsi Mataram have competencies that meet the quality standards applied by the Integrated Islamic school. The teachers at this school not only have professional skills in their fields but also have Islamic social personalities. Most teachers, especially Al-Quran teachers, have memorised 30 juz as evidenced by a diploma, which is an added value in integrating Islamic religious education in every aspect of teaching. Additionally, most students are graduates of Islamic boarding schools, which means they possess a strong Islamic educational foundation. This condition is the capital for the principal to run programs based on deep Islamic values.

### 2.2. Supporting External Factors

A. The foundation has a good relationship with the school, playing a crucial role in providing support, motivation, and resources necessary for its smooth operation. The harmony of this relationship enables the principal to develop and run school programs following the established vision and mission, as the foundation consistently provides full support for every school activity carried out.

B. Cooperation with the committee and parents, as well as the involvement of parents in every school program, is also an external factor that supports school management. The trust given by parents and the school committee provides moral and material support for the principal in implementing educational policies and programs. This increases student participation in school activities and ensures the sustainability and success of the educational programs implemented.

C. Adequate facilities and infrastructure. Good facilities enable the teaching and learning process to run smoothly, supporting extracurricular activities and character-building initiatives carried out at school. Additionally, the presence of these facilities can facilitate religious activities, such as morning halaqah and tahfidzul Qur'an, which are flagship programs of SMA IT Yarsi Mataram.

D. Available educational funding is a crucial factor in managing schools, especially Integrated Islamic schools. SMA IT Yarsi Mataram receives funding from various sources, including foundations, BOS (School Operational Assistance) Funds from the Government, and SPP contributions from students. With adequate funding, schools can provide facilities that support the learning process, improve teacher quality through training and development, and finance character development programs for students based on Islamic values.

2.3. The relationship between internal and external factors. These two factors complement each other and strengthen the principal's leadership in managing SMA IT Yarsi Mataram as a quality Integrated Islamic school. With these supporting factors, the principal of SMA IT Yarsi Mataram can effectively lead the school, manage it well, and continue to develop programs that enhance the quality of education and foster student character in accordance with Islamic values.

2.4. Inhibiting factors of effective principal leadership strategies in managing integrated Islamic school organisations at SMA IT YARSI Mataram.

A. To overcome this problem, the principal of SMA IT Yarsi Mataram applies a democratic leadership style. This leadership style emphasises the active participation of all teaching staff and educational personnel in decision-making and task allocation. The principal provides efficient guidance, establishes good coordination between subordinates, and emphasises a sense of internal responsibility and solid cooperation among team members.

B. Although the school already has facilities that support most activities, there are significant deficiencies in several main facilities, such as computer laboratories and science learning laboratories. These deficiencies pose obstacles to improving the quality of teaching, particularly for subjects that require practical facilities or the use of advanced technology.

C. Licensing of teaching staff, one of the main inhibiting factors identified in this study, refers to the permission granted by teaching and education staff to pursue further education or take leave from their school duties. When teachers

apply for permission to continue their education or take leave, this can cause a gap in teaching and learning activities. This gap certainly disrupts the smoothness of the planned learning process.

D. Several factors, both in terms of teaching staff and infrastructure, inhibit the principal's ability to maintain the smooth running of planned programs. When there is a gap in teaching and limited facilities for practical learning, the principal must work harder to find solutions so that the program continues to run well without sacrificing the quality of education.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results, data and discussion above, it can be concluded that:

1. The effective leadership strategy of the principal in managing the integrated Islamic school organisation at SMA IT Yarsi Mataram consists of six key components, as outlined in the findings and discussions. The strategies are: 1) Developing the school's vision and mission based on the integration of holistic intelligence (intellectual-spiritual) and the principles of the Al-Quran; 2) Aligning all school components; 3) Recruiting human resources; 4) Implementing curriculum standards; 5) Developing human resources; 6) Integrating Islamic values with daily life.

2. Supporting factors for effective principal leadership strategies in managing integrated Islamic school organisations, as identified in the findings and discussions, include 1) Internal factors, such as the principal's experience and HR conditions that meet standards; 2) External factors, such as good relations with the Foundation, the Committee and Parents, adequate facilities and infrastructure, and available educational funding.

The inhibiting factors for the principal's strategy in managing the organisation of SMA IT Yarsi Mataram refer to the findings and discussions, namely, 1) The condition of the teaching and education staff who still lack external training; 2) Limited ownership of facilities and infrastructure because it is under the auspices of the foundation; 3) Constraints in managing the school organisation.

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