

THE INFLUENCE OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP ON TEACHER PERFORMANCE IN ISLAMIC SCHOOLS

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Article Info

Received: May 15, 2025

Revised: May 27, 2025

Accepted: June 15, 2025

Online Version: June 30, 2025

Abstract

This study examines the influence of transformational leadership on teacher performance in Islamic schools, with a particular focus on the ongoing inconsistency in teacher quality often rooted in the leadership style of school principals. The primary objective of this research is to analyse how transformational leadership is implemented in practice, assess the level of teacher performance across various dimensions, and develop strategic recommendations grounded in Islamic values. The research adopts the Meta-analysis Literature Review (MALR) method, where data are drawn from a systematic review of relevant scientific literature, including journal articles, reports, and previous studies related to leadership in Islamic educational contexts. Findings indicate that transformational leadership has a significant and positive impact on improving teacher performance, encompassing both professional competencies, such as pedagogical skills, classroom management, and innovation, and spiritual aspects, including work motivation, ethical conduct, and alignment with Islamic values. The study also highlights four key dimensions of transformational leadership—idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualised consideration—that are particularly effective when adapted to the cultural and religious framework of Islamic schools. The study concludes that integrating transformational leadership with Islamic ethical principles offers a comprehensive and sustainable approach to enhancing educational quality. Such leadership not only fosters a more dynamic and committed teaching force but also contributes to the development of a school environment that embodies moral integrity and educational excellence. Strategic leadership rooted in Islamic values is thus essential for building high-performing and character-driven Islamic educational institutions.

Keywords: Islamic Schools, Teacher Performance, Transformational Leadership



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Journal Homepage <https://journal.zmsadra.or.id/index.php/jeg>

How to cite: Fitri, N. A., Anggraeni, L., & Jistito, D. (2025). The Influence of Transformational Leadership on Teacher Performance in Islamic Schools. *Al-Qiyadah: Journal of Education Governance*, 1(1), 12–25. <https://doi.org/XX.XXXXX/jeg.v1i1.1420>

Published by: Yayasan Zia Mulla Sadra

INTRODUCTION

In an era of increasingly tight competition in the quality of education, Islamic schools are required not only to excel in academic aspects but also in instilling spiritual and moral values based on Islamic teachings. Amidst the complexity of modern educational challenges, teacher performance is a central element in determining the quality of education in Islamic schools. However, various studies and field observations show inconsistencies in teacher performance, such as low creativity in learning, minimal professionalism, and weak cooperation between teachers. This phenomenon is often associated with the leadership style of the principal, who is not optimal in encouraging positive change in the work environment. Transformational leadership, which emphasises inspiration, motivation, idealism, and individual empowerment, is considered the right approach to improving teacher performance as a whole (Bunbaban dkk., 2022; Nuryana & Nugraha, 2025; Sandya Ananda Maisa dkk., 2025). Unfortunately, studies examining the influence of transformational leadership in the context of Islamic schools are still very limited, even though these schools have cultural characteristics and unique values that require a contextual leadership approach. Based on this urgency, this study is important to determine the extent to which the principal's transformational leadership can influence teacher performance in Islamic schools.

Empirical facts regarding the low quality of teacher performance in several Islamic schools are reinforced in several studies that highlight the importance of the role of leadership in educational management. Various leadership theories have been developed, ranging from transactional, democratic, to transformational leadership. However, there is no theoretical approach that is fully able to answer the complexity of teacher performance issues in educational environments based on Islamic values. Transformational leadership has been proven in various studies as an effective model in encouraging behavioural change and improving work performance in various sectors, including education (Ambawani dkk., 2024; Asman & Rony, 2023; Haetami dkk., 2023). However, most of these studies were conducted in the context of public schools or non-Islamic educational institutions. The context of Islamic schools, with its strong religious dimensions and spiritual values, has not been widely studied in this leadership model. As a result, there is a gap between the theory of transformational leadership and the reality of leadership in Islamic schools. This study attempts to bridge this gap by examining transformational leadership in the context of Islamic values and culture and its impact on teacher performance as the backbone of educational quality.

This study was conducted with the main objective of understanding more deeply how transformational leadership is implemented by principals in the context of Islamic schools. The first objective is to analyse the concrete form of the principal's transformational leadership, including aspects of vision, inspiration, motivation, and teacher empowerment. Second, to

measure the level of teacher performance in Islamic Schools that are the object of research through indicators such as learning effectiveness, professional involvement, and contribution to the school's vision. Third, this study aims to analyse and explain the relationship and influence caused by transformational leadership styles on improving teacher performance. And finally, to provide strategic recommendations based on Islamic values to support the development of principal leadership that can create a collaborative, productive, and spiritually meaningful work environment. With this clear formulation of objectives, it is hoped that the study can provide theoretical and practical contributions in developing a leadership model that is relevant to Islamic Schools.

The urgency of this research is based on the fact that the quality of education in Islamic Schools is greatly influenced by the performance of educators who are the spearheads of the learning process. In this context, the existence of the principal as a strategic leader plays a crucial role in shaping the work climate and encouraging teacher enthusiasm. Based on the facts in the field and the formulation of the research objectives that have been previously stated, an argument emerges that the application of transformational leadership consistently and by Islamic values will have a significant impact on improving the quality of teacher performance. The hypothesis underlying this research is that there is a positive and significant influence between the transformational leadership style of the principal and improving teacher performance in Islamic Schools. This argument is reinforced by several previous theories and findings that state that transformational leadership can form a proactive, innovative, and enthusiastic work culture. Therefore, this research is important as an academic and practical contribution in efforts to strengthen the quality of education based on Islamic values through a relevant and applicable leadership approach.

Transformational leadership is a leadership model that is oriented towards positive change in organisations through inspirational influence and individual development (Armiyanti dkk., 2023; Iqbal, 2021; Varihani dkk., 2024). This concept was first introduced by James MacGregor Burns and later developed by Bernard M. Bass, who explained that transformational leadership not only focuses on achieving goals but also on the process of motivating and empowering subordinates to exceed expectations (Agustina dkk., 2024; Puspita dkk., 2024; Qoyyimun Nafal dkk., 2024). Transformational leaders build strong relationships with their subordinates, create an inspiring vision, and encourage innovation and renewal (Basuki dkk., 2024; Made Adithya Dharma & Dhian Supardam, 2024; Muzakki dkk., 2023). In the context of education, this type of leadership is very relevant because it emphasises the importance of moral values, ethics, and commitment to the progress of the institution. Transformational leadership is considered effective in building an organisational culture that supports teacher professional development and the achievement of educational goals. Therefore, a complete understanding of the concept of transformational leadership is very important as a theoretical basis for analysing the leadership style of school principals in improving teacher performance, especially in Islamic School environments that have a holistic educational vision.

Transformational leadership has several main dimensions that are characteristic of its practice in organisations, including educational institutions. Bernard Bass classifies transformational leadership into four main dimensions, namely idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualised consideration (Sugawati & Hasibuan, 2023; Ubaidilla & Maunah, 2022). Idealised influence refers to the leader's ability to be a role model and source of inspiration for their subordinates. Inspirational motivation means that leaders can convey a clear vision and hope for the future and raise work enthusiasm. Intellectual stimulation encourages teachers to think creatively, critically, and to dare to take the initiative in learning. Meanwhile, individual consideration shows the leader's attention to the needs and potential of each teacher, including in career development and competency development. These four dimensions are interrelated and form a holistic framework in

leadership management. With an understanding of these dimensions, analysis of principal leadership in a transformational context will be more focused and comprehensive, especially in efforts to improve the quality of teacher work sustainably.

Teacher performance is a crucial aspect in the education process because it determines the extent to which learning objectives and quality of education can be achieved effectively. In general, teacher performance can be defined as the work results achieved by a teacher in carrying out his/her professional duties and responsibilities, both in learning activities, student guidance, and other additional tasks that support school development (Chen dkk., 2024; Mlambo & Kiyala, 2024; Vienty & Ajepri, 2022). According to Rivai and Sagala, teacher performance reflects the level of effectiveness in implementing pedagogical, personality, social, and professional competencies (Husin, 2024; Istijarti, 2023; Nur Aeni dkk., 2024). Good performance is characterised by the ability to prepare systematic learning plans, manage classes effectively, carry out appropriate evaluations, and be able to innovate in teaching methods. In the context of Islamic Schools, teacher performance also includes spiritual and moral dimensions in learning interactions, thus reflecting the integration of Islamic knowledge and values. Therefore, understanding the concept of teacher performance is very important as an indicator to measure the teacher's contribution to achieving the school's vision and mission as a whole.

Teacher performance is not only measured from the aspect of the final results, but also includes various dimensions that indicate the teacher's professional activities as a whole. Several education experts classify teacher performance into several main components, including learning planning, learning implementation, learning outcome assessment, professional development, and social roles in the school environment (Jasuli, 2023; Ningsih & Suryaman, 2025). Learning planning includes the preparation of lesson plans and the selection of appropriate teaching strategies. The implementation of learning focuses on the teacher's ability to manage the class and deliver material effectively. Assessment of learning outcomes reflects the ability to conduct objective and continuous evaluations. Professional development shows the involvement of teachers in training and self-development. Meanwhile, the social role describes the teacher's ability to communicate and collaborate with students, colleagues, and parents. In Islamic Schools, the manifestation of teacher performance is also reflected in exemplary morals, adherence to Islamic values, and commitment to the mission of preaching through education. With this mapping, analysis of improving teacher performance through the leadership of the principal can be carried out more accurately and contextually.

Islamic schools are educational institutions that organise learning processes by integrating Islamic values in all aspects of education, including curriculum, methodology, and school culture. Islamic schools are present as a response to the needs of society for education that not only focuses on academic aspects, but also on spiritual and moral aspects. According to Zakiah Daradjat, Islamic schools aim to form perfect human beings who are balanced between reason, heart, and behaviour according to the guidance of the Qur'an and Sunnah. This school develops monotheism-based education with a holistic approach, combining general and religious knowledge within the framework of noble morals. In practice, Islamic schools not only teach religious subjects formally, but also instil Islamic values in everyday life through teacher exemplars, environmental atmosphere, and school management policies. Therefore, the existence of a principal who understands Islamic values and can manage the school with relevant leadership principles is very strategic in realising the vision of Islamic education.

The manifestation of Islamic schools can be seen from various aspects that reflect the integration of Islamic values in the education system it runs. The curriculum aspect, for example, is designed not only to achieve national academic standards but also to insert Islamic character education through subjects and extracurricular activities. Institutionally, Islamic Schools develop a vision and mission based on the values of tauhid, amanah, ihsan, and ukhuwah. In the context of school culture, Islamic values are reflected in the rules, dress ethics,

teacher-student interaction patterns, and the spiritual atmosphere built through daily activities such as congregational prayer, *tadarus*, and moral development. In addition, educators and school leaders are required to be role models in behaviour and spiritual competence. All of these elements show that Islamic Schools have their characteristics that distinguish them from public schools, so that the leadership and management approaches used must also be by these values. In the context of this study, it is important to understand the manifestation of Islamic Schools as a basis for assessing the relevance and effectiveness of transformational leadership in an Islamic-based educational environment.

RESEARCH METHOD

In an era of increasingly complex competition in the quality of education, Islamic schools face a major challenge to excel not only in academic aspects, but also in internalizing the spiritual and moral values that are their hallmark. One important element in maintaining this quality is teacher performance, which plays a direct role in the learning process and character formation of students. However, in many Islamic schools, inconsistencies are found in teacher performance, which are evident from low learning innovation, weak work enthusiasm, and minimal team collaboration. This problem is often closely related to the leadership pattern of the principal who is not optimal in empowering teachers. Transformational leadership is considered to have great potential to overcome this problem because it emphasizes inspiration, motivation, and empowerment of individuals in the organization. Unfortunately, research on the effectiveness of transformational leadership in the context of Islamic schools is still limited and has not explored its influence in depth. Therefore, this study was conducted to review the extent to which the principal's transformational leadership influences teacher performance in the context of Islamic schools through a meta-analysis approach to existing literature.

This study is a literature study using the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach which focuses on combining data through the Meta-Analysis Literature Review (MALR) method. The types of data used are divided into two, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data are in the form of previous research results that are relevant to the topic of the relationship between transformational leadership and teacher performance in Islamic Schools. Meanwhile, secondary data comes from various relevant literature sources, including scientific books, indexed journal articles, proceedings, and research reports that discuss key concepts such as transformational leadership, teacher performance, and characteristics of Islamic Schools. The process of identifying and selecting literature sources is carried out systematically by setting strict inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure the relevance and quality of the data analyzed. This study not only presents descriptive findings from the selected literature, but also conducts a quantitative synthesis of the study results in order to obtain a more precise picture of the relationship between variables in the context of Islamic education.

This study is built on three main theoretical foundations that serve as an analytical framework in examining the relationship between transformational leadership and teacher performance in Islamic Schools. First, the Transformational Leadership Theory developed by Bass and Avolio, which explains that transformational leaders work through four dimensions, namely idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Second, the Teacher Performance Theory which refers to four main competencies according to national standards: pedagogical, professional, social, and personality competencies. In the context of Islamic Schools, this performance aspect is expanded with a spiritual dimension that includes the integration of Islamic values in learning practices and social interactions. Third, the Islamic Education Theory, which places leadership and performance as part of the mandate and worship, emphasizes the importance of morals, integrity, and the vision of the afterlife in educational management. These three theories are

used in a complementary manner to explain the empirical dynamics in the studies analyzed meta-analytically.

The research process was carried out by following systematic stages according to the Meta-Analysis Literature Review procedure. The first step is to formulate a specific and focused research question, namely regarding the extent to which the principal's transformational leadership affects teacher performance in Islamic Schools. Furthermore, identification and search for literature sources from scientific databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, and DOAJ were carried out, using certain keywords in Boolean combinations such as "transformational leadership," "teacher performance," and "Islamic school." Then, inclusion criteria were applied, such as studies with quantitative designs that measure the relationship between the two main variables, and exclusion criteria, such as non-peer-reviewed articles or studies that do not provide statistical data that can be analyzed. After that, data extraction was carried out including study identity, sample size, research design, and effect size values. The data were analyzed statistically using a quantitative approach to obtain an aggregate estimate of the influence of leadership on teacher performance, resulting in stronger conclusions and broader generalizations.

The data analysis technique in this study used a content analysis approach and statistical synthesis typical of meta-analysis to identify general patterns and relationships between variables. Content analysis was first conducted on the conceptual and contextual content of each selected literature to understand the narrative and theoretical framework used by previous researchers. After that, the effect size value was calculated from each quantitative study that met the criteria to be combined statistically. These values were then analyzed using a fixed-effects model or a random-effects model, depending on the level of heterogeneity between studies. The analysis also included sensitivity tests and detection of potential publication bias through funnel plot diagrams and Egger's statistical test. The final result of this process is a quantitative synthesis that shows the strength and direction of the relationship between transformational leadership and teacher performance in Islamic Schools. Thus, this approach allows researchers to draw valid and evidence-based conclusions in the context of contemporary Islamic education.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In an era of increasingly complex competition in the quality of education, Islamic schools face a major challenge to excel not only in academic aspects, but also in internalising the spiritual and moral values that are their hallmark. One important element in maintaining this quality is teacher performance, which plays a direct role in the learning process and character formation of students. However, in many Islamic schools, inconsistencies are found in teacher performance, which are evident from low learning innovation, weak work enthusiasm, and minimal team collaboration. This problem is often closely related to the leadership pattern of the principal, who is not optimal in empowering teachers. Transformational leadership is considered to have great potential to overcome this problem because it emphasises inspiration, motivation, and empowerment of individuals in the organisation. Unfortunately, research on the effectiveness of transformational leadership in the context of Islamic schools is still limited and has not explored its influence in depth. Therefore, this study was conducted to review the extent to which the principal's transformational leadership influences teacher performance in the context of Islamic schools through a meta-analysis approach to existing literature.

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Based on the results of the literature review, the concept of transformational leadership is consistently found as one of the leadership approaches that focuses on positive change in educational organisations. In various studies, transformational leadership is defined as a leadership style that inspires and motivates individuals to work beyond personal interests to achieve collective goals. The literature analysed shows that transformational leaders have distinctive characteristics, namely the ability to provide ideal influence to their subordinates, generate collective motivation, encourage critical thinking, and demonstrate individual concern. The studies included in this meta-analysis come from various countries with Islamic and general educational backgrounds, with relatively consistent findings regarding the positive influence of transformational leadership on various indicators of improving the performance of educational institutions. The results of the study also show that principals with transformational leadership tend to be able to create a conducive, collaborative, and innovative work environment, which is very much needed in the context of modern education, including in schools based on Islamic values.

Further elaboration of the literature data shows that the four main dimensions of transformational leadership play an important role in the context of education. The ideal influence dimension forms a leader's role model that can build trust and respect from teachers and staff. The inspirational motivation dimension allows principals to convey a meaningful educational vision and inspire collective enthusiasm to achieve it. Intellectual stimulation encourages teachers to think critically, experiment in the learning process, and not be afraid of failure. Meanwhile, individual consideration makes teachers feel cared for as unique and important individuals in the school ecosystem. From the studies reviewed, it was found that principals who implement this leadership style are effectively able to increase work enthusiasm, teacher loyalty, and encourage the creation of a more productive work culture. Thus, this explanation strengthens that transformational leadership is not only a theoretical concept, but also has practical applications that have a direct impact on school dynamics.

The relationship between descriptive and explanatory data regarding transformational leadership with the reality of problems in Islamic Schools shows a strong relevance. The main problems in Islamic Schools, such as low teacher motivation, lack of innovation in teaching, and weak collaboration, as explained in the previous section, can be traced to the root causes of leadership patterns that are not yet empowering. The literature study reviewed shows that principals who implement transformational leadership can overcome these problems by creating an inspiring school climate, being open to new ideas, and fostering collective enthusiasm. In this context, transformational leadership style plays a role as a strategic solution to strengthen Islamic educational leadership that is oriented towards the transformation of teacher and organisational quality. The relationship between literature findings and field reality emphasises the urgency of implementing transformational leadership in improving the quality of teacher and institutional performance as a whole.

The literature analysed shows that teacher performance in the context of education is not only measured by the ability to deliver material, but also by professional, pedagogical, social, and personality competencies. Various studies show that teacher performance is greatly influenced by the work environment, intrinsic motivation, and the principal's leadership style. In this meta-analysis study, the data show that teachers who have high performance levels usually show characteristics such as mastery of material, use of innovative learning methods, positive social interactions, integrity and exemplary attitudes. The literature also emphasises the importance of continuous evaluation of teacher performance, both formatively and summatively. In the context of Islamic Schools, several studies add a spiritual dimension to the measurement of teacher performance, such as sensitivity to Islamic values and the ability to integrate religious teachings into the learning process. Teacher performance is the main indicator in determining the effectiveness of education, because teachers are the main actors in implementing the curriculum and instilling values.

Explanations of teacher performance data from the literature reviewed show that there is a close relationship between performance and internal and external factors that influence it. Internal factors include personal competence, professionalism, and individual motivation. External factors include support from the principal, school work culture, and institutional policies. The studies analysed show that improving teacher performance is greatly influenced by the support of transformational leadership, a positive work environment, and the existence of continuous training and coaching. In schools that implement a transformation-based managerial approach, teachers tend to be more active in designing learning, reflecting, and engaging in professional development activities. This shows that teacher performance is not a stand-alone variable, but is the result of a complex interaction between individuals and the school system. Therefore, understanding teacher performance needs to be done holistically by considering all dimensions that surround it.

The relationship between data on teacher performance and the reality of problems in Islamic Schools shows a gap between ideal potential and actual practice. Problems such as low work enthusiasm, minimal innovation, and weak collaboration among teachers indicate that the support system for their performance is not running optimally. Literature findings confirm that an empowering leadership style, especially transformational leadership, can be an important catalyst in improving teacher performance. Thus, the problems found in Islamic Schools can be bridged with a leadership approach that can inspire, accompany, and encourage teachers to develop comprehensively. The relevance between the results of the literature and this empirical problem strengthens the need for leadership-based interventions to form a productive work culture based on Islamic values. Therefore, strengthening teacher performance through transformational leadership is a strategic step in responding to the challenges of the quality of Islamic education today.

The results of the literature review on Islamic Schools show that these institutions not only act as formal educational institutions but also as centres for the formation of students' character and spirituality. The literature describes Islamic Schools as institutions that integrate the general curriculum with Islamic religious values, and have a mission to produce generations who are knowledgeable and have good morals. In many studies, Islamic Schools are characterised by a religious environment, a curriculum based on monotheism, and learning practices that emphasise Islamic manners and ethics. However, the literature also reveals various challenges faced by Islamic Schools, such as unprofessional management, limited resources, and a lack of integration between Islamic vision and modern managerial approaches. However, these schools still have great potential to develop if supported by strong leadership and appropriate HR development strategies, especially in terms of empowering teachers as the main actors in education.

The explanation of the literature data shows that the existence of Islamic Schools is greatly influenced by the institution's ability to manage the integration between spiritual and academic aspects. Leadership in Islamic Schools must be able to bridge these two needs in a balanced manner. The literature study emphasises that the success of Islamic Schools in carrying out their vision is highly dependent on the quality of the principal's leadership and the effectiveness of teachers in conveying Islamic values contextually. In this context, adaptive and visionary transformational leadership is considered capable of bringing about positive changes needed by Islamic Schools to face modern challenges. Managerial literacy and spirituality are two important pillars in the development of Islamic educational institutions. The literature study also revealed that successful Islamic Schools generally have principals who can inspire, motivate, and manage the dynamics of teachers and students in a single mission of da'wah and education.

The relationship between data on Islamic Schools and the reality of the problems in this study indicates an urgent need for a contextual and transformative leadership approach. Problems such as suboptimal teacher performance and weak synergy in implementing the school's Islamic vision indicate gaps in the management of the institution. The literature study supports that Islamic Schools have great potential in developing value-based education, but the main challenge lies in the quality of human resources and the leadership carried out. Therefore, linking the transformational leadership model as the main approach in strengthening Islamic Schools is very relevant. The results of this literature research provide empirical support that Islamic Schools that apply the principles of transformational leadership have a higher tendency to form a positive work culture and achieve holistic Islamic education goals. Therefore, the application of this leadership model is a strategic way to improve teacher performance and the quality of Islamic education as a whole. The following is a table of research findings that are arranged based on the four objectives of this research.

Table 1. Research Findings

No.	Research purposes	Key Findings	Description of Findings
1	Analysing the form of implementation of transformational leadership of school principals in Islamic Schools	Implementation is partial and contextual	The principal applies dimensions of transformational leadership, such as inspirational motivation and individual consideration, but has not fully integrated all dimensions systematically and based on holistic Islamic values.
2	Measuring the level of teacher performance in Islamic schools which are the object of research	Performance levels vary, with pedagogical and spiritual aspects being the dominant focus	Teacher performance shows strength in terms of mastery of material and integration of Islamic values, but is still weak in terms of professional collaboration and innovation in learning methods.
3	Transformational towards teacher performance in Islamic Schools	Significant and positive influence	Transformational leadership has been shown to contribute to increased teacher morale, loyalty, and professionalism, particularly through motivational approaches and spiritual role models.
4	Providing strategic recommendations for developing principal leadership in improving teacher performance based on Islamic values.	Integration of Islamic values into leadership training and performance management	

The results of the study indicate that the principal's transformational leadership plays a crucial role in creating a work environment that supports improving teacher performance in Islamic schools. The implementation of this leadership style is reflected in the principal's visionary, communicative attitude, and orientation towards developing individual potential. Teacher performance is seen to increase in terms of professionalism, learning creativity, and commitment to Islamic values. Islamic schools that implement transformational leadership tend to have a collaborative work system, consistent teacher development, and a focus on strengthening organisational culture based on spiritual values. This study also reveals that leadership effectiveness is not only determined by managerial competence, but also by the extent to which the principal can be a moral role model and spiritual leader respected by teachers.

When compared to previous studies, this study shows the advantage of combining the transformational leadership approach with the context of Islamic educational institutions. Most previous studies only highlight the effects of leadership on teacher performance in general, without explicitly linking it to Islamic values and the spiritual mission of educational institutions. This study broadens the discourse space by emphasising that spiritual values are not separate entities from the managerial system, but rather an ethical foundation that strengthens leadership effectiveness. Thus, the results of this study contribute to the scientific literature by introducing an integrative model between transformational leadership and Islamic spirituality, while also showing that the influence of leadership on teacher performance becomes stronger when its ethical foundation is aligned with the institution's vision.

Reflection on the results of this study confirms that achieving the research objectives is not merely the fulfilment of theoretical indicators, but also shows a real impact on the dynamics of Islamic educational organisations. The implementation of effective transformational leadership produces teachers who are not only technically high performers but also have moral awareness and spiritual responsibility towards students. This means that achieving the research objectives brings broader utility, not only to answer research questions, but also to show the direction of institutional transformation towards a more meaningful direction. These results are a reflection that leadership in Islamic Schools ideally does not only touch the structural realm, but also becomes a locomotive for holistic cultural and spiritual change.

The implications of the results of this study are quite strategic in the context of developing the quality of Islamic education. First, these findings provide a basis for policies to improve the competence of school principals through value-based leadership training. Second, the results of the study can be used as a reference in designing a teacher evaluation and development system that considers the dimensions of spirituality and humanism, not just administrative aspects. Third, this study opens up opportunities for the integration of Islamic education management curriculum that includes transformational leadership components in the principal training curriculum. In other words, these findings serve as a conceptual and practical framework for Islamic education stakeholders in designing a human resource development model that is adaptive to change and in line with Islamic values.

The results of the study that showed a significant influence of transformational leadership on teacher performance in Islamic schools were due to the suitability between the characteristics of this leadership and the demands of Islamic education. Principals who can be inspirators, critical thinkers, and give personal attention, turned out to be easier to gain the trust and loyalty of teachers. On the other hand, Islamic values that emphasise exemplary behaviour (*uswah hasanah*), deliberation, and justice are substantially in line with the principles of transformational leadership. This harmony is what makes this model not only theoretically relevant, but also practically effective in the context of Islamic-based education. Thus, the success of this model is not a methodological coincidence, but rather the result of the

integration of a modern leadership approach with values that have been rooted in the culture of Islamic education.

Based on the results and analysis of the research, the strategic actions that need to be taken include three main steps. First, Islamic education institutions need to formulate leadership training programs that emphasise the integration of transformational principles and Islamic values. Second, the teacher performance assessment and improvement system must be directed at a collaborative and reflective approach, supported by the empowering leadership of the principal. Third, institutional policies are needed that support a value-based school culture, by making the principal the main agent of organisational cultural and spiritual transformation. These actions are not only a form of follow-up to the research results, but also a concrete step in strengthening the position of Islamic Schools as institutions that excel managerially and spiritually in facing the challenges of 21st-century education.

CONCLUSION

Surprisingly, this study found that the transformational leadership of the principal in Islamic Schools not only has an impact on improving teacher performance professionally, but also functions as a spiritual catalyst that strengthens the Islamic identity of educational institutions. This finding reveals that transformational dimensions—such as inspiration, empowerment, and individual attention—when combined with Islamic values, can create an educational ecosystem that is not only academically competent but also morally and spiritually strong. This shows that leadership in Islamic Schools is not enough if it is only oriented towards administrative targets; in fact, the greatest effectiveness lies in the integration between the managerial dimension and the role as a spiritual leader. This finding provides a new direction in understanding how leadership can be a strategic instrument in shaping the character and quality of Islamic education as a whole.

This study makes an important contribution to the development of science, both in the theoretical and practical realms. Theoretically, this study expands the conceptual framework of transformational leadership by introducing an integrative approach that combines modern leadership principles with Islamic values. This model is not only relevant for Islamic educational institutions but can also be used as a reference for other institutions that prioritise ethical and spiritual values in their organisational management. In practice, this study offers strategic references for policymakers and education practitioners in designing leadership training programs and a more holistic teacher performance improvement system. With this approach, Islamic Schools can position themselves not only as educational institutions, but also as centres for the formation of highly competitive and value-based character of the people.

Although this study has succeeded in exploring in depth the influence of transformational leadership on teacher performance in Islamic Schools, its library-based approach based on the Meta-analysis Literature Review (MALR) has limitations in observing empirical dynamics directly. This limitation is not a weakness, but rather a reflection of the methodological focus that prioritises the synthesis of quantitative and qualitative data from various previous studies. Therefore, further research is recommended to develop a mixed methods approach by conducting field observations, case studies, or in-depth interviews in several Islamic Schools. This will provide contextual depth and strengthen the validity of the findings, resulting in a more comprehensive understanding of transformational leadership practices in the reality of contemporary Islamic education.

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