
The Role of Islamic Education in The Principal's Managerial Analysis in Improving Teacher Creativity at Man 1 and Man 3

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ABSTRACT

The managerial role of the principal at MAN 1 and MAN 3 South Aceh is important in creating a supportive work atmosphere, providing motivation, and providing training to improve teacher creativity in learning. The approach used in this study is a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. Data collection techniques were carried out through observation, interviews, and documentation, with research subjects being the principal and teachers. The results 1). The managerial planning of the principal at MAN 1 and MAN 3 South Aceh designed a structured and collaborative program to improve teacher creativity, including training, professional development, and the use of technology, despite limited facilities, 2). The principal's managerial is implemented well through training and creating a positive work environment and supporting teachers in overcoming challenges, 3). program support in the form of supervision and coaching to teachers and collaborative work atmosphere transforming theological values such as Shura (consultative), Amanah (integrity), and Ulul Amri (responsible authority) into practical managerial instruments. Teacher creativity emerges as a manifestation of the principles of Iqra' and Tafakkur, where teachers view pedagogical innovation as a form of worship (Ihsan). The conclusion of this study shows that the principals at MAN 1 and MAN 3 South Aceh play an important role in enhancing teacher creativity through Islamic education management that has a spiritual dimension that distinguishes it from secular management. These findings recommend the need to strengthen prophetic leadership for madrasah principals to create an innovative educational ecosystem but still based on Qur'anic values.

Keywords: Madrasah Principal Managerial, Teacher Creativity, Creativity Enhancement

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INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental aspect of community life that continues to evolve in line with social change. However, in practice, various challenges begin to emerge, especially related to school management that plays a role in creating a conducive learning environment. One issue that is currently of concern is the low level of teacher creativity in the learning process, particularly in MAN 1 and MAN 3 Aceh Selatan. This issue is closely related to the principal's managerial role, which is crucial in developing teachers' competencies and improving learning effectiveness.

Ideally, education in MAN 1 and MAN 3 Aceh Selatan is expected to develop in accordance with the objectives of national education, namely forming individuals who are noble, intelligent and have qualified skills. Principals as leaders are expected to be able to create strategies that support teachers in developing innovative teaching methods. However, the reality in the field shows that there are still many teachers who experience difficulties in implementing creative learning methods. Lack of motivation and lack of resources are the main obstacles that hinder innovation in the learning process.¹

The gap between expectations and reality in education at MAN 1 and MAN 3 Aceh Selatan is significant. On the one hand, education is expected to be able to adapt to the times and the needs of students. However, on the other hand, teachers' limited creativity in applying innovative learning methods remains a major challenge. Some of the factors that contribute to this gap include the lack of supervision from the principal, the lack of training for teachers and the limited supporting facilities at school. If this is not addressed immediately, it will be difficult for the quality of education in these schools to improve significantly.

To overcome this problem, principals must have effective managerial strategies to improve teacher creativity. One solution that can be implemented is to conduct regular supervision to ensure that teachers apply innovative learning methods. In addition, principals also need to organise training and workshops regularly so that teachers can develop more creative teaching skills that are in line with the times. Schools should also provide various learning media that can support teachers' creativity, such as educational technology and more interactive teaching materials. Last but not least, providing incentives and motivation to teachers who excel in implementing innovative learning methods can also be a motivator for educators to continue to improve their creativity in teaching.

Several previous studies have provided the basis for the study of the principal's managerial role and teacher creativity within the framework of Islamic education.² research, in his book on *Principal Management and Leadership*, emphasized that managerial effectiveness is highly dependent on technical and conceptual skills. However, this study is general in nature and does not specifically address religiosity values in Madrasah Aliyah (Islamic Senior High School). Furthermore,³ study in the *Journal of Islamic Education Management* revealed that transformative leadership can improve teacher performance, but its focus is limited to administrative aspects

¹ M P Akrim, *Manajemen Pendidikan: Dari Basis Teoritik Ke Praktis* (Umsu Press, 2024).

² E. Mulyasa, *Manajemen Dan Kepemimpinan Kepala Sekolah: Strategi Peningkatan Mutu Pendidikan*. (Jakarta: Bumi Aksara., 2022).

³ S. Bahri, "Transformational Leadership in Madrasah: Enhancing Teacher Performance through Islamic Values.," *Journal of Islamic Education Management* 8(2), 145- (2023).

without deeply linking managerial analysis to the substantive values of Islamic Education. ⁴research highlights teacher creativity in the digital era, but it does not explore how principal policies at MAN (State Madrasah Aliyah) integrate local wisdom and Islamic values as drivers of such creativity.

Several previous studies have highlighted the importance of principals' managerial skills in improving education quality. Indrawati et al. (2023) emphasised that improving the quality of education is highly dependent on the effectiveness of the principal's leadership in managing the teaching force and curriculum. In addition, Raito & Rofi (2023) stated that educational goals can be achieved optimally if the principal is able to create an innovative learning environment. Another study by Istiwana et al. (2021) also highlighted the importance of good school management in improving student achievement. The results of these various studies show that principal leadership is very influential on the effectiveness of learning in schools.

This research offers novelty in the context of improving teacher creativity through the principal's managerial approach in MAN 1 and MAN 3 Aceh Selatan. In contrast to previous studies that have highlighted aspects of leadership in general, this study focuses on how principals can directly play a role in improving teacher creativity in learning. With this approach, it is expected that the solutions provided are more applicable and in accordance with the conditions in the field.

This research is very important because teacher creativity in teaching is a major factor in improving the quality of education. Principals as leaders have a great responsibility in creating a learning climate that supports innovation. By understanding how principals' managerial skills can influence teachers' creativity, this research is expected to provide recommendations that can be implemented directly in MAN 1 and MAN 3 Aceh Selatan as well as other schools in Indonesia. Therefore, this research is not only relevant on a local scale but also has wider implications in the context of improving the quality of education nationally.

From the various explanations above, it can be concluded that school principals have a very important role in improving teacher creativity. Effective leadership, intensive supervision, and providing support in the form of training and adequate learning resources are the main keys in overcoming this problem. Therefore, this research is expected to make a real contribution to improving the quality of education, especially in MAN 1 and MAN 3 Aceh Selatan. If school principals are able to implement appropriate managerial strategies, then teacher creativity can increase significantly, so that learning in the classroom becomes more interesting and effective in achieving educational goals.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research uses a qualitative approach with descriptive method to analyse the principal's managerial in improving teachers' creativity in MAN 1 and MAN 3 Aceh Selatan. The qualitative approach was used because it allows researchers to obtain in-depth data through interviews, observations, and documentation. The descriptive method aims to describe the phenomena that

⁴ A. Fathurrahman, *Teacher Creativity in the Digital Era: A Study on Madrasah Aliyah Teachers' Pedagogical Innovations*. (Jakarta: Rajawali Press., 2024).

occur realistically and actually, providing a systematic description of the relationship between principal leadership and teacher creativity. Data collection techniques were conducted by interviewing principals and teachers, direct observation of managerial processes in schools, and documentation to complement information obtained from interviews and observations.

This study involved a total of 20 informants, purposefully selected to provide rich and in-depth data. The informant composition was as follows: 2 Madrasah Principals (Key Informants): One each from MAN 1 and MAN 3, holding managerial authority. 16 Teachers (Key Informants): 8 teachers from MAN 1 and 8 teachers from MAN 3, representing various subject groups (Religious and General) to examine variations in pedagogical creativity. 2 Madrasah Committees: Served as additional data sources to validate the impact of managerial policies on the school environment.

This research was conducted at MAN 1 and MAN 3 Aceh Selatan with different implementation periods. MAN 1 Aceh Selatan was studied from 10 October 2024 to 29 November 2024, while the research at MAN 3 Aceh Selatan took place from 8 October 2024 to 23 November 2024. The research subjects involved principals and teachers, who were selected because they have the main role in the implementation of managerial policies and learning implementation in schools. Principals play a role in designing policies to improve teacher creativity, while teachers are the implementers who directly interact with students in the teaching and learning process. Thus, this study explores how principals can optimise their managerial strategies to create an innovative and creative learning environment.

In analysing the data, this research used qualitative descriptive analysis techniques with three main stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and data verification. Data reduction was done by filtering and tidying up the data according to the focus of the research. Data presentation was done in the form of descriptions, tables, or diagrams to make it easier to understand and analyse. Finally, conclusion drawing was done to answer the problem formulation and reveal new findings related to the principal's managerial role in improving teacher creativity. To ensure the credibility of the data, this study applied data triangulation, discussion with peers, and member checking to increase the validity of the findings. With this approach, the research is expected to provide a comprehensive insight into the principal's strategy in encouraging teacher creativity for the sake of improving the quality of education in MAN 1 and MAN 3 Aceh Selatan.

The strategy used was purposive sampling. This selection was justified based on the literature cited by ⁵ which states that in qualitative studies, researchers must select participants who can help them understand the research problem and central phenomenon in depth. Inclusion criteria included a minimum of five years of work experience and active involvement in curriculum development at the madrasah.

The researcher acknowledged the potential for bias as an academic with an emotional connection to the Islamic education system. To mitigate this, the researcher employed bracketing (suspending personal assumptions) and member checking, where interview transcripts were returned to informants to ensure the accuracy of the researcher's interpretations without

⁵ J. W. Creswell and J. D. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, Fifth (SAGE Publications, Inc., 2018).

introducing subjective bias.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Creativity context of Islamic education

Teacher creativity is not merely the ability to develop new methods, but rather a manifestation of human function as Khalifah fil Ardh (Caliph of the Universe). Creativity stems from three key concepts of the Quran:

Iqra' (Exploration): Based on the first revelation (Surah Al-Alaq: 1-5), creativity begins with the teacher's ability to "read" phenomena, data, and student character. Creative teachers are those who continuously engage in ongoing literacy. *Tafakkur* (Critical Reflection): Creativity emerges from the process of contemplation (Surah Ali Imran: 191) of the signs of Allah's greatness in the universe, which in the context of pedagogy means in-depth reflection to solve learning problems⁶. *Aql* (Intellectual Innovation): The use of aql or reason (Surah Al-Baqarah: 242) encourages teachers to engage in educational ijihad creating learning solutions that are relevant to the times without deviating from the guidelines of sharia⁷.

Tauhid based Creativity Management Model". This model differentiates itself from secular management by positioning creativity as a form of Amal Jariyah and Ihsan⁸. Practically, these findings provide guidance for policymakers under the Ministry of Religious Affairs and global Islamic educational institutions on how managerial structures can be designed without uprooting religiosity, while remaining responsive to digital innovation⁹.

Field findings reveal contrasting managerial styles, yet they remain rooted in Islamic values. At MAN 1, the principal tends to implement the Shura concept formally through regular meetings. In contrast, at MAN 3, Shura is conducted organically and more fluidly.

"I never make strategic decisions alone. Every teacher innovation must go through a small forum we call the madrasah syuro assembly. This is a form of collective trust." (KS1-MAN1)

In contrast to MAN 1, informants at MAN 3 emphasized speed of execution:

"Our principal gives us autonomy. He said, as long as it's for the students' progress and doesn't violate sharia, just do it. We feel respected as Ulul Amri in our own class." (G3-MAN3)

These findings at MAN 3 support the theory of Hussain et al. (2022) which states that high

⁶ A. R. A. Ashaari, M. F., Hamat, Z., & Latiff, "The Influence of Islamic Work Ethics on Innovative Work Behavior among Teachers in Religious Schools.," *Journal of Islamic Education Research* 7(1), 45–5 (2022).

⁷ A. Bahfiarti, T., & Arianto, "Professionalism and Islamic Communication Style of Madrasah Heads in Improving Teacher Performance.," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies (IJIMS)* 11(2), 293 (2021).

⁸ I. Saeed, M., & Ahmad, "Islamic Leadership and Its Impact on Teacher's Commitment and Creativity: A Structural Equation Modeling Approach.," *International Journal of Management in Education*, 17(4), 356 (2023).

⁹ F. Tilaar, H. R., & Syarif, "Transforming Madrasah Management in the Digital Era: A Study on Teacher Innovation and Creativity.," *Journal of Islamic Studies and Culture*, 12(1), 15- (2024).

autonomy is positively correlated with creativity. However, this slightly contradicts the findings of Saeed & Ahmad (2023) who showed that in madrasas, bureaucracy often hinders innovation. The nuance here is that trust built through the Amanah value is able to reduce bureaucratic obstacles.

Principles of Islamic Leadership in Managerial Roles

The principals of Islamic schools (MAN 1 and MAN 3) carry out managerial roles rooted in the principles of prophetic leadership:

Ulul Amri (Responsible Authority): Based on QS. An-Nisa: 59, the principal holds authority and must be obeyed as long as their policies bring benefits. This leadership is servant leadership and educative. *Shura* (Consultative)¹⁰: In contrast to secular authoritarian leadership, Islamic management prioritizes shura (QS. Ash-Shura: 38)¹¹. Teacher creativity thrives in a managerial climate that values dialogue and collective participation in decision-making. *Amanah* (Integrity): Management is a trust (QS. Al-Mu'minun: 8) for which accountability will be given before Allah¹². A trustworthy principal will facilitate the optimal development of each teacher's potential (creativity) as a form of accountability for his or her leadership¹³.

In Madrasahs, the variable "Teacher Creativity" does not stand alone as a technical capability, but is tied to the concepts of Iqra' and Tafakkur. This unique dynamic arises from the demands of integrating science and religion curricula (the dichotomy of knowledge), requiring madrasah principals to conduct more complex managerial analyses than in public schools. The comparative comparison between MAN 1 and MAN 3 in this study strengthens the claim of originality by demonstrating how two institutions within the same Islamic education system can produce different models of creativity depending on the principals' managerial interpretation of Amanah values¹⁴.

Principal's Managerial Planning in Improving Teacher Creativity at MAN 1 and MAN 3 South Aceh

The discussion of the results of this study explains the results of the findings conducted by researchers at the research location. The discussion is about the principal's managerial planning, implementation, and evaluation of programmes to increase teacher creativity at MAN 1 and MAN 3 South Aceh.

Principal planning is an important aspect that must be considered in the implementation of education. Principals as leaders in an educational institution need to hold meetings or deliberations in preparing a school plan with their subordinates in order to form a good and efficient plan. The

¹⁰ N. J. Hashim, C. N., & Memon, "Developing an Islamic Principle-Based Leadership Framework for Islamic Schools.," *International Journal of Leadership in Education* 25(3), 412 (2022).

¹¹ Kementerian Agama Indonesia, *Al-Quran Dan Terjemahan Indonesia*, 2020.

¹² Dkk Iffan Ahmad Gufron, "Philosophical Values of Educational Globalization at Bina Insan Mulia Islamic Boarding School," *Eduprof* 7 No 2 (2025).

¹³ S. Hussain, M., & Anwar, "Managerial Roles of School Principals in Promoting Teacher Creativity: A Comparative Study of Religious and Secular Schools.," *Journal of Education and Educational Development*, 9(1), 112- (2022).

¹⁴ S. Shah, "Leadership in Islamic Schools: Context, Culture, and Spirituality.," *Journal of Educational Administration and History*, 53(2), 145 (2021).

managerial planning of school principals at MAN 1 and MAN 3 Aceh Selatan shows a focus on directed and collaboration-based strategies in improving teacher creativity. This approach is systematically designed by involving teachers at every stage of programme planning. Some of the main aspects found in this study include curriculum development, professional training, improving technological competence, and providing motivation to continue to innovate. In the context of education management, the principal as a manager plays an important role in ensuring the achievement of educational goals.

In this case, the principal's managerial planning emphasises clear strategies and cooperation to improve teacher creativity. According to¹⁵ states that effective planning must be based on the principle of collaboration and have clear goals and directions. Principals need to develop structured plans and involve teachers at every stage of planning, so that they feel responsible for implementing the programmes that have been prepared, and encourage increased creativity in the learning process. Another opinion was also expressed by¹⁶ stated that principals involve various parties both from internal and external to the school, including the principal himself, curriculum deputy, subject teachers, school committees, parents of students and if needed will also involve the important role of the supervisor of the coach¹⁷. The preparation of this programme is arranged during a work meeting which is usually held at the beginning of each semester or at least in the new school year, depending on the circumstances and conditions of the national curriculum guidance. Because the planning applied by the principals of MAN 1 and MAN 3 South Aceh places great emphasis on teacher cooperation and involvement, both in terms of determining the principal's programme, they make deliberations or meetings so that all teachers are involved and have the same responsibility in carrying out the programmes that have been prepared later¹⁸.

This shows that involving teachers in every stage of planning is not only an important step, but can also support the creation of good cooperation and increase the effectiveness of the principal's leadership management. Principals who listen to opinions and inputs from teachers during deliberations or work meetings will create more mature and purposeful planning, as teachers have a deeper understanding of the conditions and needs in the field. It also helps in ensuring equal responsibility among teachers in implementing the education programme. The same thing was also conveyed by¹⁹ that meeting planning needs to pay attention to why, what, who, when, where and how the meeting will be held. With good meeting management, it is hoped that meetings can be held effectively and efficiently. In this way, MAN 1 and MAN 3 principals

¹⁵ Margiyanti Septi, "PENGELOLAAN PROGRAM PEMBELAJARAN PENDIDIKAN ANAK USIA DINI DI BA' AISYIYAH CABANG BOBOTSARI TAHUN PELAJARAN 2019/2020 KECAMATAN BOBOTSARI KABUPATEN PURBALINGGA" (IAIN Purwokerto, 2020).

¹⁶ Dahniar Dahniar, Yusrizal Yusrizal, and Nasir Usman, "STRATEGI KEPALA SEKOLAH DALAM PEMBERDAYAAN KINERJA GURU PADA SMA NEGERI DI TRUMON RAYA," *Visipena* 11, no. 2 (2020): 474–88.

¹⁷ A. Memon, N., & Al-Hroub, "Pedagogical Creativity in Islamic Schools: Challenges and Opportunities for Teachers.," *British Journal of Religious Education* 43(4), 387 (2021).

¹⁸ A. Muttaqin, A., & Rohman, "Strategic Management in Madrasah: Integration of Islamic Values and Modern Management Principles.," *International Journal of Islamic Educational Management*, 6(1), 22–3 (2023).

¹⁹ M Yusuf, "Manajemen Rapat, Teori Dan Aplikasinya Dalam Pesantren.," *Intelektual: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Studi Keislaman* 10, no. 2 (2020): 154–66, <https://doi.org/10.33367/ji.v10i2.1266>.

not only provide clear objectives, but also provide opportunities for teachers to actively participate in every stage of planning. As a result, teachers feel more empowered and motivated to be more creative in teaching, which ultimately has an impact on improving the quality of education in schools.

According to²⁰ despite limited resources, the use of technology in learning is essential to support teachers' creativity. Principals who actively provide facilities such as computers and projectors, as well as provide technology training gradually, can accelerate teachers' mastery of digital skills. This, in turn, helps them to be more creative in teaching, as they have the tools and knowledge that support more innovative teaching methods. Meanwhile, according to²¹ in his research on the use of technology in schools stated that principals who provide technology facilities such as computers, projectors, and other digital devices, as well as providing regular technology training, can help teachers in mastering digital skills. Iskandar underlined that these technological skills enable teachers to develop more creative and innovative teaching methods, which can improve the quality of learning in schools.

In order to make their activity plans include teacher training, seminars and workshops to enhance teacher creativity, both principals emphasise the importance of technology integration in supporting teacher creativity, even though they face limited resources²². For example, they endeavoured to provide facilities such as projectors, computers and technology training gradually. Professional training that focuses on creativity, the use of varied learning methods and innovations in teaching is organised to ensure teachers can develop their skills in the face of growing educational developments.

Principal's Managerial Implementation in Improving Teacher Creativity at MAN 1 and MAN 3 South Aceh

The principal's managerial implementation in improving teacher creativity carried out by the head of MAN 1 Aceh Selatan is based on standard operating procedures (SOPs) and academic guidelines as the main reference in school management. This approach supports effectiveness and accountability in the implementation of school programmes. In addition, the strategy ensures that school policies are aligned with the needs of teachers at MAN 1. With systematic SOPs in place, programme implementation can be done more efficiently, allowing for continuous improvement. The principal also actively involves teachers and staff in the planning process, creating a sense of collective responsibility and enhancing shared commitment to realising school goals. This approach not only encourages innovation but also builds a collaborative and professional work culture.

The existence of SOPs provides opportunities for innovation. Teachers feel more confident and motivated to enhance their creativity in the learning process because they are supported by

²⁰ Akhsanul In'am and H Husamah, "Inovasi Pembelajaran Dan Pendidikan: Teknologi Untuk Peningkatan Kualitas Pendidikan," *Jurnal Pendidikan Profesi Guru*, 2024.

²¹ I Iskandar, "Peran Teknologi Dalam Peningkatan Kreativitas Pengajaran Guru," *Jurnal Teknologi Pendidikan*, 2022.

²² G. Niyozov, S., & Pluim, "Teachers' Perspectives on the Impact of School Leadership on Creativity in Islamic Education.," *Journal of Religious Education*, 68(2), 221 (2020).

clear guidelines and a solid system. To illustrate, programmes such as teacher training, project-based curriculum development and extracurricular activities are designed to create more interesting, relevant and inspiring learning for students²³.

According to²⁴ in research on school-based management emphasises the importance of systematic planning and standard operating procedures (SOPs) in creating a structured and organised environment in schools. Yusuf stated that with clear SOPs, schools can run programmes more purposefully and efficiently. This provides certainty for teachers in carrying out their duties and encourages them to innovate as they feel supported by a strong system. Furthermore, SOP-based management also strengthens accountability in every step of programme planning and implementation in schools. In line with what is said by²⁵ that "a structured system, such as the use of clear SOPs, is very important in ensuring the smooth implementation of educational programmes. SOPs allow each team member to work with the same guidelines, which in turn increases managerial efficiency and effectiveness, and enables continuous evaluation and improvement. This approach also supports accountability and transparency, two much-needed principles of good educational management." ²⁶ that "The implementation management function is an action that aims to make all group members strive to achieve goals in accordance with managerial planning and organisational efforts

The principal's managerial implementation in improving teacher creativity at MAN 3 Aceh Selatan, here the principal's approach focuses on creating a positive and collaborative work environment, where openness and communication between teachers are highly emphasised at MAN 3. The principal not only provides direction, but also actively encourages teachers to attend relevant training to improve their skills and knowledge²⁷. In addition, the principal facilitates experience sharing sessions between teachers to learn from each other and collaborate in developing more creative and innovative teaching methods. By creating an atmosphere that supports collaboration, principals also encourage teachers to share ideas, challenges and solutions they encounter in their daily learning practices. Through discussion forums and joint training, teachers at MAN 3 can strengthen their professional relationships and develop a deeper understanding of students' needs and effective teaching techniques. This approach reflects leadership principles that support team development, utilising collective strengths to achieve common goals in improving the quality of education.

Teacher creativity at both sites is seen not only as a pedagogical competency, but as a form of intellectual worship.

MAN 1: Creativity is fostered through internal competitions and performance-based awards. The principal facilitates regular workshops.

MAN 3: Creativity emerges from the tradition of group reflection (Tafakkur). Teachers

²³ Saeed, M., & Ahmad, "Islamic Leadership and Its Impact on Teacher's Commitment and Creativity: A Structural Equation Modeling Approach."

²⁴ M Hasbullah, "Kepemimpinan Kepala Sekolah Dan Pengelolaan Pendidikan Yang Efektif," *Jurnal Kepemimpinan Pendidikan*, 2021.

²⁵ (Rahmat Fadhli, 2024:5)

²⁶ Fazlur Rahman RM and Muhajir Musa, "Kompetensi Manajerial Kepala Madrasah Dan Implikasinya Pada Kondusivitas Iklim Kerja Guru," *Al-Musannif* 5, no. 1 (2023): 49–62, <https://doi.org/10.56324/al-musannif.v5i1.76>.

²⁷ Shah, "Leadership in Islamic Schools: Context, Culture, and Spirituality."

frequently engage in interdisciplinary discussions to integrate religious values into science (Iqra' literacy).

"We are encouraged to go beyond just teaching texts. The principal asks us to conduct reflection (Tafakkur) in each module; how biology or physics brings students closer to the Creator." (G5-MAN3)

This finding supports ²⁸argument that creativity in Islamic schools is a "pedagogy of values." However, a limitation identified at MAN 1 is the pressure of administrative workload. According to G2-MAN1, "Sometimes we want to innovate, but BOS (School Operational Assistance) reports and administrative tasks take up more time." This suggests that secular, administrative management often clashes with Islamic creative aspirations.

This is in accordance with what was said by²⁹ he emphasised that "the importance of creating a work environment that supports collaboration between teachers. This collaboration not only improves professional relationships among teachers, but also opens opportunities for them to share ideas and experiences that will increase creativity in the learning process." Similarly³⁰ argues that "effective principal leadership can create a positive working atmosphere through collaboration-based team management. By encouraging teachers to share ideas and experiences in collaborative activities, principals help improve the quality of teaching and encourage innovation." Another opinion is also stated by³¹ in their article on principal leadership asserts that collaborative leadership has a very important role in increasing teachers' motivation to innovate in learning methods. They argue that with experience sharing sessions and structured training, principals can encourage teachers to develop creative teaching methods that are more in line with students' needs and the times.

The principals' managerial implementation in improving teachers' creativity in MAN 1 and MAN 3 Aceh Selatan shows that leadership based on SOPs and academic guidelines can result in effectiveness and accountability in the implementation of school programmes. Principals who actively involve teachers in planning and provide opportunities to share experiences and work together can encourage innovation in teaching. With a clear and collaborative system, teachers become more motivated and confident in developing their creativity, which in turn enriches the learning process to make it more relevant and interesting for students. Overall, this approach helps build a professional work culture and encourages team building to achieve the common goal of

²⁸ A. Nugraha, M. S., Maskah, D. K., & Rohayani, "Islamic Ethical Concepts Relevant to Digital Technology.," *Proceedings of International Conference on Islamic Civilization And Humanities.*, 2023, <https://proceedings.uinsa.ac.id/index.php/iconfahum/article/view/1335>.

²⁹ Fuat Jatiarya Darma, "Peran Kepala Madrasah Sebagai Leader Supervisor Motivator Di MA Darul Huda Mayak Tonatan Ponorogo" (IAIN Ponorogo, 2024).

³⁰ Fitrawati Fitrawati, Nur Insan, and Nur Alim Djalil, "Peran Komunikasi Interpersonal Dalam Meningkatkan Motivasi Kerja Pengawas Dan Kepala Sekolah Di Sekolah Menengah Pertama Kabupaten Penajam Paser Utara," *Indonesian Journal of Research and Service Studies* 1, no. 3 (2024): 120–39.

³¹ N Sukmawati and S Hadi, "Kepemimpinan Kolaboratif Dalam Peningkatan Inovasi Pembelajaran," *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Manajemen*, 2022.

improving the quality of education³². This is in line with what³³ also underlines the importance of collaboration and open communication in enhancing teacher creativity. Principals who are active in directing and facilitating teachers to share experiences and collaborate will create a work culture that supports the improvement of learning quality in schools.

Managerial Evaluation of Principals in Improving Teacher Creativity at MAN 1 and MAN 3 South Aceh

Principals' managerial planning and implementation in improving teacher creativity in MAN 1 and MAN 3 Aceh Selatan emphasise the importance of evaluation as a strategic step to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of teacher creativity development programmes. Based on the results of the research, the evaluation is carried out in a planned manner by the principal by involving various parties, such as the deputy principal, senior teachers, and support staff. The evaluation process not only aims to measure the success of the programme, but also to identify obstacles and provide constructive solutions. This is in line with the concept put forward by³⁴ which states that "supervision and evaluation involving all elements of the madrasah is a strategic step to improve the effectiveness of the management of educational institutions."

The regular evaluations conducted in these two madrasahs emphasise the managerial role of the principal as the driving force in developing teachers' creativity. Evaluations conducted through coordination meetings, supervision and focused discussions reflect a collaborative approach involving various related parties.

Teachers in both madrasahs respond well to the evaluation process, as they see it as a way to measure the extent to which their learning and creativity in teaching is successful. This evaluation is considered very important by teachers because it provides an opportunity for them to know what has gone well and what needs to be improved. It also makes them feel more involved in developing the quality of education in the madrasah. This is in accordance with the opinion of³⁵ which states that "teacher involvement in evaluation creates a culture of professionalism that is very important to encourage innovation and creativity in the educational environment." Another opinion³⁶ in their research also confirms that evaluation is not just an assessment of student learning outcomes, but also as a tool to measure the effectiveness of teacher teaching methods. A well-conducted evaluation gives teachers the opportunity to identify areas for improvement, which will further improve creativity in their teaching.

Based on the evaluation results obtained from the two madrasahs, follow-up is conducted with an organised approach that supports teachers' professional development. The head of MAN 1 Aceh Selatan, for example, disclosed the findings of supervision to teachers, provided

³² Tilaar, H. R., & Syarif, "Transforming Madrasah Management in the Digital Era: A Study on Teacher Innovation and Creativity."

³³ S Slamet and Z Arifin, "Kepemimpinan Kepala Sekolah Dalam Meningkatkan Kreativitas Guru Melalui Kolaborasi Dan Komunikasi Terbuka," *Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan*, 2021.

³⁴ (Saihu, 2020:65)

³⁵ Husnizar Fakhri Yacob, "STRATEGI PENGEMBANGAN PROFESIONALISME GURU DALAM MANAJEMEN PENDIDIKAN," *JURNAL MIMBAR AKADEMIKA* 8, no. 1 (2023).

³⁶ S Amalia and D Nugraha, "Evaluasi Pembelajaran Untuk Meningkatkan Kreativitas Guru Dalam Pengajaran," *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Inovasi*, 2023.

suggestions, and gave awards to teachers who showed good performance. Based on the opinion stated³⁷ below "Providing motivation has a big impact on teacher performance, because motivation is related to encouragement that arises both from within the individual and from the surrounding environment, such as the principal. Therefore, principals need to pay attention to the motivational factors possessed by teachers. Furthermore, giving awards is a form of attention or support. Awards are given to teachers who excel, and this can be a source of motivation for other teachers to improve the quality of their work." The same thing is also according to³⁸ states that "motivation plays an important role in improving teacher performance, because motivation affects the way teachers carry out their duties. Principals have a key role in creating a supportive atmosphere through rewarding and recognising teachers' achievements, which in turn can improve their motivation and performance." Likewise, the principal of MAN 3 Aceh Selatan also pays attention to teachers who have not achieved performance targets by providing coaching. If necessary, the principal will replace teachers who do not meet the expected qualifications. This approach aims to ensure that every teacher can contribute maximally to the progress of education in the madrasah. Based on an opinion in line with³⁹ that "effective leadership in schools includes implementing clear coaching strategies and structured supervision to improve teacher quality and achieve high educational standards. As leaders, principals need to take decisive steps, such as replacing unqualified teachers, to ensure that education in schools remains of optimal quality."

The implementation of evaluation by school principals in MAN 1 and MAN 3 Aceh Selatan illustrates effective management practices. Principals involve all relevant parties in the process of supervision, evaluation and follow-up to ensure that every element of learning goes according to plan. Regular evaluations not only focus on improving teachers' creativity in teaching but also have a positive impact on the quality of student learning. Through the active involvement of teachers, principals can create a supportive atmosphere for professional development, where teachers feel valued and motivated to continue innovating. This is very important because when teachers feel supported and have the opportunity to develop, the quality of education in schools will improve.

The unique identity of madrasas that distinguishes them from public schools: Trust-Based Leadership: At MAN 1 and MAN 3, managerial roles are not viewed as positions of power, but rather as a moral obligation (*Amanah*) before God. This creates a more humane relationship between superiors and subordinates. Creativity as Intellectual Jihad: Teachers do not innovate solely for financial incentives, but are driven by the spirit of Ihsan (doing their best). This is a "Work Spirituality" variable not found in secular management theories (such as Taylorism or Weberian bureaucracy). *Shura* Culture vs. Democracy: While secular democracy is oriented toward the majority vote, *Shura* in madrasas is oriented toward the blessings and welfare of the community (*Mashlaha*).

³⁷ M Ayi Abdul Majid, "Kepemimpinan Kepala Sekolah Sebagai Motivator: Upaya Meningkatkan Kinerja Guru," *Andragogi: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran* 4, no. 2 (2024): 138–52, <https://doi.org/10.31538/adrg.v4i2.1306>.

³⁸ A Hasan, "Peran Kepala Sekolah Dalam Meningkatkan Kinerja Guru Melalui Motivasi Dan Penghargaan," *Jurnal Pendidikan Indonesia*, 2020.

³⁹ Lukman Nasution and Reza Nurul Ihsan, "Gaya Kepemimpinan Kepala Sekolah Terhadap Kinerja Guru," *Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Sosial Humaniora* 5, no. 2 (2020): 78–86.

Overall, this study demonstrates that Islamic education management at MAN 1 and MAN 3 successfully transformed theological values into practical strategies. Despite some contradictions related to administrative barriers, religiosity remains a key driver of teacher creativity, a trait lacking in non-religious educational institutions.

CONCLUSION

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

This research makes a significant contribution to the international Islamic Education Management (IEM) literature by proposing a "Tawhid-Based Creative Pedagogy" model. These findings expand classical management theories (such as Transformational Leadership) by adding a spiritual dimension as a driver of innovation. This study demonstrates that in the madrasah context, teacher creativity is not solely driven by external incentives, but also by the interpretation of work as Ihsan (excellence) and worship, a variable often overlooked in secular educational management literature. Principals' managerial planning in MAN 1 and MAN 3 Aceh Selatan plays a crucial role in enhancing teachers' creativity through a systematic and collaborative approach. Principals in both schools designed programmes that involved all parties in the school, from teachers to support staff, in an effort to improve the quality of learning. Some of the main steps taken include training and professional development for teachers, implementing technology in the teaching and learning process, and encouraging collaboration between teachers to share ideas and experiences. The principal also ensures that these programmes are well planned and supported by adequate facilities, such as the provision of projectors, internet access and computers, to support creativity in teaching. With careful planning and active participation from all parties, principals at MAN 1 and MAN 3 Aceh Selatan endeavour to create an innovative and inspiring learning environment, which in turn will improve the quality of education in both schools.

Specific Policy Recommendations, based on the research findings, the following strategic recommendations are proposed: for Madrasah Principals: Adopt a more organic and fluid Shura leadership style (as found in MAN 3) to reduce bureaucratic barriers, allowing teachers greater autonomy in conducting pedagogical experiments in the classroom. for District Education Supervisors: It is recommended to reduce the administrative burden of physical reports, which often hinder teacher creativity (as complained by informant G2-MAN1), and replace it with academic supervision based on mentoring and fostering learning innovation. for the Ministry of Religion (Kemenag): It is necessary to develop a managerial training module for madrasah principals that explicitly integrates the values of the Qur'an (Iqra', Tafakkur, Aql) into modern management strategies, in order to create a competitive madrasah ecosystem that remains based on religious values. The principals' managerial practices at MAN 1 and MAN 3 Aceh Selatan demonstrate a structured approach that supports the enhancement of teachers' creativity. Both principals implemented clear systems, with SOPs and academic rules underpinning the implementation of school programmes. Principals in both institutions focus on creating a positive and collaborative working environment, encouraging teachers to actively participate in training and professional development to enhance their creativity.

Principals' managerial evaluation in MAN 1 and MAN 3 Aceh Selatan plays a very

important role in improving teachers' creativity and learning quality. Both principals implement a structured evaluation that involves various related parties, such as the deputy head of madrasah and senior teachers. These evaluations are conducted regularly, both monthly and semi-annually, to assess the effectiveness of the programme and to identify any obstacles that may arise. The evaluation method involving various competent parties allows for a more comprehensive evaluation and more appropriate solutions for improvement. The follow-up of the evaluation results shows the principal's commitment in ensuring continuous improvement. Principals provide clear feedback to teachers, look for the causes of problems, and provide solutions in the form of coaching or rewards for teachers who show good performance. Teachers in both madrasahs responded positively and openly to these measures, committing to improving their shortcomings and continuing to develop themselves through programmes such as Continuing Professional Development (CPD). The co-operation between principals and teachers creates a harmonious and supportive working environment, leading to increased creativity in teaching and better quality learning for students. Overall, regular and transparent evaluations, as well as open and constructive follow-up, play a crucial role in creating a thriving and quality educational atmosphere at MAN 1 and MAN 3 Aceh Selatan.

This research is limited to two educational institutions (MAN 1 and MAN 3), so the findings may have very specific characteristics and cannot be directly generalized broadly. This study used a qualitative approach through interviews and observations. This results are highly dependent on the subjectivity of informants and the researcher's interpretation of managerial phenomena. Teacher creativity in this study is primarily examined from the principal's managerial perspective, while other external factors such as teachers' economic backgrounds or the availability of advanced technological facilities have not been discussed in depth.

Suggestions for Further Research: Involving private Islamic Senior High Schools (Madrasah Aliyah) or across provinces, to examine the consistency of the role of Islamic Education in school management on a macro scale. Combining qualitative and quantitative approaches can provide a more precise picture of the statistical impact of principal managerial policies on teacher creativity scores. Future researchers should examine other variables that might moderate the relationship between management and creativity, such as the role of Organizational Culture or Digital Leadership within the framework of religious moderation in schools.

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