Principal Leadership Typology in Improving the Quality of Education at Muhammadiyah 1 Ponorogo Middle School

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Abstract: This study aims to answer two research questions: identifying the leadership typology of the principal of Muhammadiyah 1 Junior High School, Ponorogo, and analyzing their contribution to improving the quality of education at the madrasah. The focus of this research is based on the principal's strategic role as a director, manager, and innovator, who determines educational programs and the achievement of service quality. This study used a qualitative approach with descriptive-analytical methods. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation analysis that illustrated actual leadership practices. Process analysis was conducted inductively and deductively to identify leadership patterns and summarize their links to improving educational quality. The research results indicate that school principals apply democratic, humanistic, and collective leadership typologies. This typology is evident in decision-making patterns involving teachers and the school committee, attention to the welfare and professional needs of educators, and cross-stakeholder collaboration in implementing school programs. Principals also combine their roles as educators, managers, supervisors, and innovators to strengthen the digitalization of learning, improve teacher competency, and develop student achievement programs. This approach creates a conducive, collaborative, and quality-oriented learning environment. Based on these findings, the research recommends strengthening accountability systems to ensure a more structured collective process, as well as regular evaluation of innovative and digital programs to ensure their relevance to student needs and educational development.	_Keywords:_ Leadership; Quality of Education; Collectivity.
Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjawab dua rumusan masalah, yaitu mengidentifikasi tipologi kepemimpinan Kepala SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Ponorogo serta menganalisis kontribusinya terhadap peningkatan mutu pendidikan di madrasah tersebut. Fokus kajian ini didasarkan pada peran strategis kepala sekolah sebagai pengarah, pengelola, dan inovator yang menentukan keberlangsungan program pendidikan dan pencapaian mutu layanan. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode deskriptif-analitis. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara mendalam, dan analisis dokumentasi yang menggambarkan praktik kepemimpinan secara nyata. Proses analisis dilakukan secara induktif–deduktif untuk menemukan pola kepemimpinan serta keterkaitannya dengan peningkatan mutu pendidikan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepala sekolah menerapkan tipologi kepemimpinan demokratis, humanis, dan kolektif. Tipologi ini tampak pada pola pengambilan keputusan yang melibatkan guru dan komite sekolah, perhatian terhadap kesejahteraan serta kebutuhan profesional pendidik, dan kerja sama lintas unsur dalam menjalankan program sekolah. Kepala sekolah juga memadukan peran sebagai edukator, manajer, supervisor, dan inovator untuk memperkuat	_Kata Kunci:_ Kepemimpinan; Mutu Pendidikan; Kolektivitas.

digitalisasi pembelajaran, peningkatan kompetensi guru, dan program pengembangan prestasi siswa. Pendekatan tersebut menciptakan lingkungan belajar yang kondusif, kolaboratif, dan berorientasi mutu. Berdasarkan temuan tersebut, penelitian menyarankan perlunya penguatan sistem akuntabilitas agar proses kolektif berjalan lebih terstruktur serta perlunya evaluasi berkala terhadap program inovatif dan digital agar tetap relevan dengan kebutuhan peserta didik dan perkembangan pendidikan.

A.   Introduction

The leadership of the madrasah principal is a factor that greatly influences the quality of educational services. (Dinia & Masykur, 2025). Various theories, research findings, and national regulations support this link. Law Number 20 of 2003 on the National Education System affirms that education plays a strategic role in achieving national development goals by strengthening religious, psychological, economic, cultural, and scientific aspects. (Malik & Amrullah, 2022). The law also emphasizes that education functions to develop abilities, shape character, and build a dignified national civilization to enlighten the life of the nation (Fadlol, 2021). The goal of education is directed at developing students' potential to become people who are faithful, pious, have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, creative, independent, and able to act as democratic and responsible citizens. This principle applies to all paths, types, and levels of education (Manajemen et al., 2023).

Discussions about madrasah principals cannot be separated from the concept of leadership. Educational leadership is an essential aspect of the success of a school organization. The success or failure of an educational institution is greatly influenced by the ability of its leader to drive the organization. In line with Arkam's view, leadership style plays a significant role in creating a conducive school climate and effective organizational performance. A conducive learning environment will ultimately result in higher-quality educational services (Arkam, 2024).

Leadership itself refers to a leader's ability to influence the behavior of individuals or groups to achieve specific goals. In this process, leaders use

authority, personal character, and influence to improve group productivity and morale. Therefore, the quality of education must always be a primary focus in leadership practices in schools. Madrasah principals are required to possess competencies as educators, managers, administrators, and supervisors (Puadi & Malang, 2024). Furthermore, school principals are also expected to act as leaders, innovators, motivators, and educational entrepreneurs. In the modern educational management paradigm, these functions have evolved into EMASLIM (Educator, Manager, Administrator, Supervisor, Leader, Innovator, Motivator).

School quality is one indicator of an educational institution's productivity and is closely linked to the quality of its management. As Harsoyo noted, quality failures often stem from weak management. Therefore, the managerial competence of a madrasah principal is directly related to the quality of education at the institution they lead (Harsoyo, 2022). In addition, the leadership type of the madrasah principal also determines the effectiveness of carrying out his duties in achieving the expected quality of education (Arkam, 2024).

However, the implementation of the role of a madrasah principal is not without various obstacles. Based on empirical experience, many madrasah principals still face challenges in academics, self-motivation, work discipline, and broad-mindedness. These obstacles generally arise from recruitment processes that are not competency-based, transparent, and uncompetitive. Internal factors within the madrasah principal can also hinder their professional development, ultimately resulting in low productivity in improving the quality of education. This situation emphasizes the strategic position of the madrasah principal in determining the quality of the educational unit they lead (Fadlol, 2021).

Thus, the madrasah principal is a professional with an additional mandate to lead the educational unit as a space for interaction between teachers, students, parents, graduate users, and the community. The level of graduate

user satisfaction will influence the school's reputation in the community. Therefore, the quality of educational output is a crucial factor in facing competition in the job market (Dinia & Masykur, 2025).

B.   Methods

This type of research is qualitative research, which attempts to translate phenomena and facts related to Muhammadiyah 1 Ponorogo Middle School using a descriptive-analytical method with the Principal's Leadership Typology factor in Improving the Quality of Education. The results of this study describe the findings obtained based on interviews, observations, and documentation as they are (naturalistic) and are then analyzed using inductive and deductive theories so that the research object can be explained well.

C.   Results and Discussion

At Muhammadiyah 1 Junior High School in Ponorogo, the principal's leadership is a primary focus for the entire school community. Observations and interviews with teachers, staff, and the school committee demonstrate that the principal employs a democratic, humanistic, and collective leadership style. At the beginning of each semester, a school work meeting is held to discuss educational quality targets, resource management, and innovative programs. In this meeting, all participants have the opportunity to provide input, criticism, and suggestions, which are then considered in the final decision-making process. This reflects the democratic principles mandated by Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System, which mandates participatory educational decision-making (Hidayasha & Syukri, 2024).

Leadership typology is an important tool for understanding and determining the leadership style that best suits the needs of a school or educational institution (Kh & Ali, 2023). Understanding this typology has a number of fundamental reasons that make it play a significant role in the context of educational organizations.

1. Leadership typologies help categorize various leadership styles, allowing institutions to select or develop leaders who align with the characteristics and demands of the institution.

2. By understanding these typologies, educational organizations can design leadership development programs that are more targeted, high-potential, and able to respond to a variety of situations and challenges.

3. Leaders who study leadership typologies in depth can adapt their leadership styles more effectively, thereby impacting overall organizational performance.

4. Understanding typologies can also strengthen a culture of collaboration and build a positive work environment, which in turn increases job satisfaction among school personnel.

5. Leaders who master the concept of leadership typologies tend to be able to make better decisions—decisions that are inclusive, adaptive, and responsive to the dynamics of the educational institution.

6. Specifically in the educational context, teachers who understand and apply leadership typologies appropriately will be better able to meet students' learning needs, resulting in increased student engagement, satisfaction, and academic performance (Said et al., 2021).

One morning, researchers witnessed the principal leading a program achievement evaluation meeting. He opened the meeting by asking the vice principal and teachers: "How is the progress of the one child, one achievement program so far this week? Are there any obstacles we need to address together?" The teachers responded enthusiastically, reporting on student achievements and the obstacles they encountered. The principal listened attentively, provided guidance, and emphasized collaboration: "Let's find solutions together. There is no problem that cannot be overcome if we work collectively." This kind of dialogue highlights how democratic leadership is being implemented in the madrasah environment.

In addition to being democratic, the principal also emphasizes humanistic principles. This is evident in his concern for the well-being of teachers and staff, from professional development to managing workloads to ensure they are not burdensome. The principal regularly greets teachers during classroom visits, inquires about their difficulties, and provides guidance to ensure smooth learning. During one visit to a science class, the principal observed students experimenting and offered encouragement: "Make sure each student understands the concepts well, and give them

the opportunity to experiment independently." This humanistic attitude creates a comfortable learning climate and encourages teachers and students to feel valued.

The principle of collectivity is also an important characteristic of the principal's leadership (Daulay et al., 2024). All programs, from the digitalization of madrasah services to the development of MGMPs, are implemented collaboratively. Teachers, staff, and committees work together to ensure the program's effectiveness. For example, in the implementation of a research-based digital madrasah, teachers across subject areas develop learning content, while administrative staff support technical implementation. The principal facilitates communication, ensures all parties understand their roles, and regularly monitors program implementation. This collaborative approach allows for comprehensive evaluation, the development of follow-up plans, and the optimal achievement of educational goals (Ahmad et al., 2022).

In addition, the principal combines managerial and innovative roles. He or she develops work programs, distributes tasks, and systematically oversees their implementation (Malik & Amrullah, 2022). Program achievement evaluations are conducted monthly through regular meetings with the vice principal and the management team. The evaluation results form the basis for developing improvement strategies and provide input for awards and coaching for teachers and staff. The principal is open to criticism and suggestions, creating a participatory and effective monitoring and improvement mechanism. (Panani Z et al., 2024).

Another phenomenon is the involvement of school principals as innovators. They encourage the development of educational technology, capitalize on the opportunities of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 era, and initiate learning methods relevant to students' needs (Maulidin S, 2024). For example, the Learning Revolution program utilizes digital laboratories and online platforms for interactive learning. The principal also initiated a field trip to the madrasah garden as part of character and environmental education, where students learn both theory and hands-on experience in science and the environment. This innovative approach demonstrates that effective leadership is not only administrative but also visionary and creative.

Daily interactions with stakeholders show that collectivity is a key principle (Awaluddin, 2021). Parents are involved through the school committee, providing financial support and strategic input. Teachers and staff collaborate in designing

activities, developing teaching materials, and conducting evaluations. During the implementation of the "One Child, One Achievement" program, the principal held regular meetings with parents to monitor student progress. The dialogue demonstrated open communication: "Let's support our children to develop their potential. Every achievement they achieve is our shared responsibility," the principal said.

Critically, while democratic, humanistic, and collective leadership have positive impacts, there are challenges. Stakeholder participation can vary depending on trust and personal closeness (Rahman Arief, 2024), Therefore, a formal mechanism is needed to ensure more equal opportunities for contribution. Humanist principles must be balanced with professional assertiveness to maintain performance standards (Ibn & Uika, 2022). High levels of collective effort require structure and accountability to ensure unimpeded decision-making. Innovation and digitalization of learning must be continuously monitored to ensure relevance to educational developments and student needs (Hayati, 2025).

The principal combines the roles of educator, manager, administrator, supervisor, leader, innovator, and motivator. He or she manages the administration of teaching and learning activities, guidance and counseling, student affairs, personnel, and finances through effective delegation to the vice principal. He or she monitors program implementation, ensuring each step meets standards. As a motivator, he or she organizes the physical and non-physical work environment, implements rewards and sanctions, and instills the spiritual value that work is worship. This approach increases the motivation of teachers and staff, and creates a harmonious and productive educational climate (Rahma et al., 2022).

Field observations revealed the principal's intense daily activities. Every morning, he greeted teachers and students, inspected classes, monitored learning, and evaluated teachers' daily reports. He also frequently engaged in informal dialogue with teachers: "How is the implementation of the new method progressing in your classes? Are the students following along?" These simple questions demonstrate his concern for the quality of learning. The principal emphasized the principle of collectivism: the success of the madrasah is everyone's responsibility.

This phenomenon demonstrates that the principal plays a strategic role in determining the direction of the institution, maximizing the potential of teachers and

students, and continuously improving the quality of education. A democratic, humanistic, and collective approach enables optimal madrasah programs, continuous evaluation, and the constant emergence of innovation. Examples of daily activities, meetings, dialogues with teachers and parents, and routine evaluations demonstrate the concrete practice of effective leadership. Muhammadiyah 1 Junior High School, Ponorogo, serves as an example of how a democratic, humanistic, and collective principal can build a productive, innovative, and achievement-oriented educational ecosystem for all members of the madrasah community (Quraish, 2023).

An example of image placement can be seen in the picture 1.

Picture 1. Mind-Mapping

D. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the principal's leadership style plays a strategic role in determining the quality of educational services, in line with regulations, theories, and previous research findings. The principal of Muhammadiyah 1 Junior High School, Ponorogo, implements democratic, humanistic, and collective leadership, which serves as a source of strength in building influence, motivation, and collaborative work to improve educational quality. The involvement of all stakeholders in every stage of program management reflects a democratic character, while a humanistic approach based on local wisdom—such as the attitudes of sitinaja,

sipakatau, and sipaklebbi'—cultivates a sense of respect and strengthens emotional bonds. The principle of collectivity is also evident through a shared awareness of working toward the goal of better educational quality. Although not free from shortcomings, the principal demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement by integrating modern management theory, professional experience, and local values. This combination produces effective leadership and contributes to various school achievements at the local, regional, and national levels. The positive impact of this leadership style is seen in increased participation, trust, and responsibility among subordinates. This is possible because leaders rely not only on managerial competence but also develop intellectual and personal competencies integrated into their leadership capacity.

E.   Bibliography

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