

The Madrasah Principal's Strategy for Improving the Performance Quality of Honorary Teachers at MTs Al-Ikhlas Moubang, Parigi Moutong Regency

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ABSTRACT

This research was motivated by the importance of teacher performance quality. The quality of honorary teachers is a crucial pillar for the continuity of education in private madrasah. However, honorary teachers often face challenges such as low welfare and limited facilities. This condition demands an extraordinary leadership role to maintain academic stability. This research employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. The data analysis techniques included data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. The validity of the data was tested through triangulation techniques. The findings of this research showed that the Madrasah principal's strategy was based on a *leading by example* model and participatory supervision through routine weekly evaluations. However, several challenges were still found, including low honoraria, limited digital facilities, and geographical barriers. The implications of this research confirm that exemplary leadership can be an alternative solution to addressing the material limitations experienced by honorary teachers in educational institutions. This research also illustrates that emotional recognition and the involvement of honorary teachers in a humanistic evaluation process can significantly enhance their loyalty and work dedication

Informasi Artikel

Kata Kunci:

Strategi, Kepala Madrasah, Kualitas Kinerja, Guru Honorar

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini di latar belakang oleh pentingnya kualitas kinerja guru. Tanpa terkecuali kualitas guru honorar yang merupakan pilar krusial bagi keberlangsungan pendidikan di madrasah swasta, namun seringkali terkendala oleh rendahnya kesejahteraan dan terbatasnya fasilitas. Kondisi ini menuntut peran kepemimpinan yang luar biasa untuk menjaga stabilitas akademik. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode deskriptif. Teknik analisis data yang digunakan meliputi reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Keabsahan data diuji melalui teknik triangulasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa strategi kepala madrasah bertumpu pada model *leading by example* (keteladanan) dan supervisi partisipatif melalui evaluasi rutin mingguan. Namun masih ditemukan tantangan berupa rendahnya honorarium, keterbatasan fasilitas digital, serta hambatan geografis. Implikasi penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa kepemimpinan berbasis keteladanan mampu menjadi solusi alternatif dalam mengatasi keterbatasan sumber daya materiil di lembaga pendidikan. Penelitian ini memberikan gambaran bahwa pengakuan emosional dan pelibatan guru honorar dalam proses evaluasi yang humanis dapat meningkatkan loyalitas serta dedikasi kerja secara signifikan.

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1. Introduction

Education is the main pillar in shaping superior, well-characterized, and highly competitive human resources. In the context of Islamic education, madrasah play a crucial role in instilling Islamic values while developing students' academic competencies. The existence of madrasah today is considered important in supporting the vision of national-scale development.

The quality of madrasah is determined by various factors, including the leadership of the madrasah principal, teacher performance quality, financial welfare, and the geographical location of the madrasah. The madrasah principal as an educational manager has a significant responsibility in managing, directing, and developing the institution so that students are able to compete academically and non-academically. In addition, the professionalism of honorary teachers is also important in ensuring educational quality. Professional teachers are expected to have pedagogical, personal, social, and other competencies. However, due to low welfare conditions, honorary teachers often face dilemmas between remaining in the madrasah or seeking additional work to meet their living needs.

Based on research conducted at MTs Al-Ikhlâs Moubang, Parigi Moutong Regency, which is still a private madrasah, the researcher found a clear picture of how the principal implemented leadership strategies amid various limitations. Almost all teachers at MTs Al-Ikhlâs Moubang are honorary teachers who sometimes receive salaries once every six months. In 2024, they only received their full year's salary in January 2025.

This phenomenon, makes this research important to conduct. First, there is a gap between the idealism of national education quality policies and the actual performance quality of teachers. Second, the financial welfare of honorary teachers is a real issue affecting their performance and professionalism. Third, effective strategies from the madrasah principal are needed to improve the quality and performance of honorary teachers at MTs Al-Ikhlâs Moubang, Parigi Moutong Regency.

Therefore, this research entitled "The Madrasah Principal's Strategy for Improving the Performance Quality of Honorary Teachers at MTs Al-Ikhlâs Moubang, Parigi Moutong Regency" is expected to contribute theoretically to the development of Islamic educational management studies, as well as practical contributions to the management of private madrasah in remote areas, especially in the context of improving the performance

quality of honorary teachers in response to financial limitations.

2. Method

This research employed descriptive qualitative research, which aims to describe, understand, and interpret deeply a phenomenon occurring in the field based on the perspectives of the research subjects. The research focused on the madrasah principal's strategy for improving the performance quality of honorary teachers at MTs Al-Ikhlâs Moubang, Parigi Moutong Regency.

Location and Time

This research was conducted at MTs Al-Ikhlâs Moubang, Parigi Moutong Regency. The research was carried out in April 2026.

Research Subjects

The subjects of this research included the madrasah principal, honorary teachers, permanent teachers, administrative staff, and the madrasah committee of MTs Al-Ikhlâs Moubang, Parigi Moutong Regency.

Data Collection Techniques

- Observation
- In-depth interviews
- Documentation

Data Analysis Techniques

- Data reduction
- Data display
- Conclusion and data verification

Data Validity

- Source triangulation
- Technique triangulation
- Time triangulation

3. Result and Discussion

1. The Madrasah Principal's Strategy for Improving the Performance Quality of Honorary Teachers at MTs Al-Ikhlâs Moubang, Parigi Moutong Regency

Based on the findings conducted at MTs Al-Ikhlâs Moubang, Parigi Moutong Regency, the performance quality of honorary teachers became the main concern of the madrasah principal in achieving the institution's vision and mission. Considering that most educators hold honorary status, the madrasah principal positioned himself not only as a manager but also as the main driving force in ensuring learning quality. The strategies implemented focused on overcoming the limitations of employment status through adaptive and humanistic leadership

approaches to ensure that every teacher maintained enthusiasm and professionalism in their work.

According to the madrasah principal's statement, the main strategy implemented was direct exemplary leadership (*leadership by example*). The principal positioned himself as a behavioral role model for honorary teachers. With the principle of "*starting from the madrasah principal*", he realized that changes in subordinates' behavior were influenced by the examples given by the madrasah principal as a leader.

Another strategy involved strengthening internal communication through routine weekly meetings. This step reflected participatory management, where the principal provided space room for teachers to review and evaluate their performance. These meetings were not merely formalities but functioned as quality control mechanisms (*quality control*).

The madrasah principal also implemented the *PDCA* (*Plan, Do, Check, Act*) approach. The focus was not on finding teachers' mistakes, but rather on collective *problem solving*. The main strategy of the madrasah principal, commonly known as Ustaz Amaran, whose full name is Amaran Andimurad, S.Pd.I, implemented work discipline through real behavioral manifestations, which is theoretically referred to as *Action-Centered Leadership Intelligence* in classroom.

His leadership proved capable of transforming the work atmosphere into a more positive one. This was evidenced in the fact that honorary teachers at MTs Al-Ikhlas Moubang felt "*uplifted*" or emotionally motivated, rather than feeling pressured or avoiding their responsibilities as a teacher.

This condition indicated that the presence of *charismatic leadership* combined with a humanistic approach. This leadership style, which is favored by teachers, created strong loyalty, especially honorary teachers. When teachers feel comfortable and appreciated, their performance improves naturally due to their sense of love for the profession and respect for their leader. Consequently, the quality of performance increases, the quality of education advances, and the goals of the madrasah become easier to achieve.

By demonstrating personal dedication, such as arriving earlier and actively participating in field activities, the madrasah principal succeeded in building strong moral legitimacy in the eyes of teachers. This created a positive work environment in which teachers felt motivated rather than pressured, and their professional dignity was elevated.

Besides the exemplary aspect, the improvement in performance was strengthened by a consistent managerial supervision system. Through the combination of character strength (exemplary leadership) and system strength (periodic evaluation), the madrasah principal was able to ensure that educational quality standards at MTs Al-Ikhlas Moubang, Parigi Moutong Regency remained well maintained, resulting in many students achieving academic accomplishments both at the inter-madrasah and national levels.

2. The Implications of the Madrasah Principal's Strategy on the Performance Quality of Honorary Teachers at MTs Al-Ikhlas Moubang, Parigi Moutong Regency

The exemplary strategy consistently implemented by the principal of MTs Al-Ikhlas Moubang had significant implications for shaping the disciplinary character of honorary teachers. This research showed that the madrasah principal's actions of arriving earlier and leaving later than others were not merely routine activities, but became a moral standard for all staff members. The logical implication of this behavior was the emergence of respect and intrinsic responsibility among honorary teachers. They tended to align their attendance and leaving times with those of the principal.

The transformation of disciplinary culture through "*ewuh pakewuh*" changed behavior not because of fear of formal sanctions, but because teachers wanted to align their integrity with the respected leader. The validation of exemplary leadership as a driving force for teacher discipline proved that the principal's early presence at school as a visual supervisor was far more effective and combined with fingerprint attendance systems or verbal reminders.

In addition, there were also supporting and inhibiting factors for the madrasah principal in implementing his strategy. This may be influenced by social capital and positive organizational culture. Senior teachers guided honorary teachers without hierarchical barriers and creating a healthy collegial collective within the madrasah environment. On the other hand, the madrasah principal also faced real challenges, such as low honorariums, structural and geographical obstacles, and limited digital learning facilities and infrastructure.

The success achieved by the madrasah principal in implementing the strategy was centered on a leadership model based on exemplary behavior combined with a humanistic approach. By demonstrating personal dedication, the principal succeeded in building strong moral legitimacy in the eyes of teachers, especially teachers with honorary status. This created a positive work

environment where teachers felt motivated rather than pressured.

Although the research findings showed that most teachers at MTs Al-Ikhlās Moubang were still honorary teachers, faced limitations in facilities, infrastructure, and geographical conditions that could hinder learning processes and the improvement of educational quality, the madrasah principal was still able to maintain the quality of learning. Through the implementation of this strategy, the madrasah principal succeeded in sustaining the professionalism of honorary teachers and encouraging students to achieve outstanding academic achievements.

Conclusion

The strategy of the principal of MTs Al-Ikhlās Moubang in improving the performance of honorary teachers was centered on a *leading by example model* combined with a humanistic approach. By demonstrating personal dedication, such as arriving earlier and directly participating in field activities, the madrasah principal successfully built strong moral legitimacy among teachers, especially honorary teachers. This created a positive work environment in which teachers felt motivated rather than pressured.

In addition to exemplary leadership, the success in improving teacher performance was strengthened by a consistent managerial supervision system through routine weekly and monthly evaluations. The principal's decision to directly lead the evaluation process ensured a short and effective communication channels between leaders and staff. As a result, every learning problem can be promptly addressed through collective problem solving.

Although internal factors were strong, the welfare of honorary teachers, geographical conditions, and limited learning facilities remained managerial challenges for the madrasah principal in maintaining the consistency of honorary teachers' performance quality at MTs Al-Ikhlās Moubang, Parigi Moutong Regency.

Nevertheless, the madrasah principal still plays a crucial role as a bridge in transforming material limitations into emotional strength through humanistic approaches and real exemplary leadership. By relying on social capital in the form of kinship and openness, the principal succeeded in creating a productive and quality work environment. As a result, structural barriers such as low honorariums and limited facilities did not necessarily weaken the dedication spirit of honorary teachers in educating students in Moubang Village, Parigi Moutong Regency.

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