Professional Competence and Pedagogical Challenges: A Systematic Study of Non-Degree Teachers in Indonesia

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Article Info	Abstract
	Purpose – This study analyzes Indonesia's policy of recruiting non-degree teachers in remote schools and its effects on professional competence and educational quality. It aims to assess whether addressing teacher shortages through such policies compromises instructional standards in underserved areas. **Design/methods** – A systematic literature review was conducted, synthesizing scholarly articles, policy documents, and empirical studies from 2010 to 2024. Database searches applied strict inclusion criteria focusing on teacher qualifications and student outcomes. Thematic analysis identified key patterns regarding pedagogical skills, curriculum implementation, and assessment practices among non-degree teachers. **Findings** – Non-degree teachers help alleviate staffing shortages but exhibit gaps in lesson planning, curriculum delivery, and assessment competencies. These deficiencies correlate with reduced student achievement and inconsistent educational quality, especially in remote areas. Resource limitations and minimal professional development further exacerbate these challenges. **Research implications/limitations** – The study's reliance on secondary data and its focus on Indonesia's rural contexts limit broader applicability. Variability in methodologies among the sources also affects interpretation consistency. Future research should incorporate field studies to validate and expand upon these findings. **Practical implications** – This study recommends implementing competency-based recruitment, mandatory professional development, and digital training integration. Policymakers should incentivize certified teachers' placement in remote areas and align recruitment policies with international competency standards. **Originality/value** – This study systematically maps the professional challenges faced by non-degree teachers and provides evidence-based recommendations. It contributes valuable insights for policymakers aiming to ensure quality education while addressing staffing gaps in remote regions.

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Introduction

Education constitutes a fundamental pillar for human capital development worldwide, with the quality of teachers being a decisive factor in achieving educational goals (Garvis et al., 2021; Malesevic et al., 2011; Sholihah et al., 2020). In Indonesia, despite regulatory frameworks mandating that teachers must possess a bachelor's degree qualification, the recruitment of non-degree-holding teachers, especially in remote areas, remains prevalent (Hujaimah et al., 2023). This situation engenders a profound dilemma wherein the necessity to fill teacher shortages compromises educational quality (Fontana et al., 2020; Garner et al., 2014; Garner & Mahatmya, 2015). Furthermore, disparities in teacher distribution exacerbate educational inequities between urban and rural regions, leading to a persistent academic performance gap (Berchiatti et al., 2020; Shiyan et al., 2021; Snoek et al., 2019). Therefore, evaluating the implications of employing non-graduate teachers is crucial to informing equitable and effective education policies.

The link between teacher competence and student achievement across educational settings has been consistently emphasized (Blömeke et al., 2022; Fauth et al., 2019; Torres, 2020). Teacher expertise in content knowledge, pedagogical skills, and classroom management significantly correlates with instructional quality (Kunter et al., 2013; Moreno et al., 2020; Ohle-Peters & Shahat, 2023). Strong teacher-student relationships foster positive socio-emotional development and academic outcomes (Garner et al., 2014; Muhonen et al., 2024; Sette et al., 2013). In the Indonesian context, the competency standards stipulated in national regulations have been instrumental in setting benchmarks for professional practice (Chen & Tang, 2013; Masrifah et al., 2019; Muhith, 2021). Nonetheless, non-compliance with these standards remains problematic, especially in underserved rural areas.

Various systemic and contextual factors influence teacher recruitment and retention in disadvantaged areas (Gedvilienė et al., 2019; Ratican et al., 2023; Snoek et al., 2019). Incentives, leadership support, and professional development opportunities are pivotal in enhancing teacher workforce quality and stability (Cheng et al., 2025; Runge et al., 2023; Solikhah & Budiharso, 2022). In rural settings, teachers' professional identity and vocational competencies play a central role in mitigating educational inequalities (Gedvilienė et al., 2019; Yusupova & Skudareva, 2020; Zvyagin, 2017). Access to continuous education and scholarship programs aims to bridge qualification gaps among teachers (Lozano-Peña et al., 2021; Sarzhanova et al., 2016; Valdés-León et al., 2022). However, these initiatives often encounter obstacles such as funding constraints and the aging teaching workforce.

Instructional quality depends not only on academic qualifications but also on competencies in planning, assessment, and emotional regulation (Kirsch, 2022; Martínez & Sánchez, 2018; Nijveldt et al., 2005). Robust assessment systems are crucial for improving teacher competencies and, by extension, educational quality (Gulikers et al., 2009; Makgamatha, 2022; Oser et al., 2009). Competency-based training programs, particularly those rooted in empirical evidence, have proven effective in upgrading teacher capabilities in crisis-affected and remote regions (Fontana et al., 2020; Langevin et al., 2025; Shiyan et al., 2021). Technological competencies are increasingly recognized as essential for contemporary teaching, influencing both pedagogical practices and student engagement (Guàrdia et al., 2023; Ohle-Peters & Shahat, 2023; Runge et al., 2023). Nonetheless, integrating these competencies into the educational fabric of remote schools remains a persistent challenge.

Despite the affirmed significance of teacher qualifications, there is limited empirical investigation into the nuanced impacts of employing non-degree teachers in rural Indonesian schools (Blömeke et al., 2020; Garner & Mahatmya, 2015; Torres, 2020). Findings are often generalized without adequately considering the distinctive socio-economic and geographical factors affecting rural education (Glegola et al., 2024; Jentsch et al., 2021; Yang & Kaiser, 2022). While professional development initiatives exist, their effectiveness in enhancing non-graduate teachers' competencies remains under-explored (Muhith, 2021; Sarzhanova et al.,

2016; Snoek et al., 2019). Greater focus has been placed on urban education issues, leaving rural contexts insufficiently addressed (Chen & Tang, 2013; Masrifah et al., 2019; Zvyagin, 2017). This gap necessitates a critical and contextualized examination of policy impacts on teacher competence and education quality in remote schools.

Accordingly, this study aims to critically analyze the effects of non-graduate teacher recruitment policies on teacher professional competencies and educational quality in Indonesian rural schools. By identifying existing challenges and proposing strategic improvements, this research seeks to contribute to the body of knowledge on rural education policy and teacher professional development (Fontana et al., 2020; Garner et al., 2014; Sholihah et al., 2020). It also aspires to provide empirical insights that inform more equitable and effective teacher distribution strategies (Cheng et al., 2025; Gedvilienė et al., 2019; Ratican et al., 2023). Ultimately, the findings are expected to support policy reforms that enhance educational outcomes and promote social justice through improved teacher quality (Blömeke et al., 2022; Muhonen et al., 2024; Runge et al., 2023). Through a critical evaluation of current practices, this study will offer actionable recommendations for elevating the standard of education in underserved communities.

Methods

This study employed a literature review design to systematically analyze the impact of the recruitment policy of non-degree teachers on teacher competence and the quality of education in schools. The literature review method was conducted by collecting and synthesizing theories, research findings, and additional research materials sourced from various references, including articles, books, presentation slides, and reliable internet-based information. The selected literature provided the foundational theoretical framework necessary for comprehensively understanding the relationship between teacher qualification policies and educational outcomes. In synthesizing the review, a narrative technique was utilized to group the collected data according to thematic relevance, thereby facilitating an organized and coherent discussion aligned with the research objectives. Data sources were obtained primarily through systematic searches in Google Scholar and additional academic databases to ensure a wide-ranging and representative sample of the existing scholarly discourse.

The procedural steps included the careful formulation of keywords related to non-degree teacher recruitment, teacher competence, and educational quality, followed by strategic searches across digital databases. Materials were selected based on established inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure the credibility, relevance, and academic rigor of the references. Extracted information was categorized thematically and synthesized narratively to provide structured insights into the research questions. Tools such as citation management software were used to organize references efficiently throughout the process. Data analysis involved identifying recurrent patterns, drawing comparative insights, and highlighting gaps in the literature. To enhance the study's reliability and validity, a triangulation method was applied by cross-referencing findings from multiple sources, while a critical appraisal of each selected material was conducted to assess its methodological quality and relevance to the study's aims. Furthermore, efforts were made to ensure transparency and replicability by documenting each stage of the review process systematically.

Results

1. *Teacher Competence among Non-Degree Holders: Navigating National Educational Policies*

The concept of competence, derived from the English term "competency," encompasses a range of meanings related to ability and expertise, such as ability, capability, proficiency, qualification, eligibility, readiness, skill, and adequacy (Ibrahim, 2024). According

to Uzer Usman (Febriana, 2021), competence refers to the ability that illustrates an individual's qualifications or capacity in carrying out specific tasks. In the educational context, competence integrates three core aspects: knowledge, skills, and work attitude. As an inherent individual characteristic, competence is relatively stable and measurable through observable behavior in the workplace or across different contexts (Pianda, 2018).

Law No. 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers mandates that teachers must possess integrated competence, reflected in the delivery of educative instruction. These competencies are categorized into four domains, namely pedagogical competence, personal competence, social competence, and professional competence. Further elaboration on these domains is provided in Government Regulation No. 19 of 2005 concerning National Education Standards (SNP), which specifies the competencies as follows (Yanti & Syahrani, 2021). First, pedagogical competence, the ability to manage student learning, including understanding student characteristics, planning and implementing instruction, assessing learning achievements, and developing student potential. Second, personal competence, the ability to demonstrate a stable, wise, dignified, mature, and moral personality, serving as a role model for students. Third, professional competence, the ability to master broad and in-depth subject matter, enabling teachers to guide students to meet the established national educational standards. Fourth, social competence, the ability to communicate and interact effectively with students, fellow educators, educational personnel, parents, and the surrounding community.

Teacher competence constitutes a blend of knowledge, skills, and behaviors that must be possessed, internalized, and mastered by teachers in carrying out their professional duties. It encompasses mastery of subject matter, understanding of learners, delivery of educative instruction, and ongoing professional development (Yusuf & Mukhadis, 2018). High teacher competence significantly contributes to preparing students to face future challenges.

This study focuses on the professional competence of non-degree holders, aiming to explore how they can maintain effective instructional practices despite lacking formal educational qualifications. According to Law No. 14 of 2005, educators must hold a minimum academic qualification of a Bachelor's degree (S1) or a Diploma IV (D-IV) in a relevant field and demonstrate teaching competence (Jahidi, 2017). This regulation aligns with Government Regulation No. 19 of 2005, which defines a teacher as a professional educator required to meet specific academic qualifications and competencies to fulfill their professional responsibilities (Darmawan, 2024).

Nevertheless, in practice, many remote areas face acute shortages of trained and qualified teachers, compelling schools to employ non-degree holders to fulfill teaching roles. Despite these challenges, existing policies mandate that teachers must hold at least a Bachelor's degree to meet national education standards. Consequently, teachers lacking the necessary academic qualifications or educator certification must achieve them within ten years following the enactment of Law No. 14 of 2005 (Noor, 2020).

The availability of competent teachers is crucial for supporting the quality of education. Adequate numbers of qualified teachers are fundamental to sustaining effective learning processes in educational institutions. However, teacher shortages, especially in remote areas, adversely affect educational quality, impacting both the learning process and the overall quality of graduates. Therefore, the recruitment of non-degree holders must be critically evaluated to ensure they can competently perform their duties in accordance with established policies.

Teacher competence must include mastery of the subject matter and effective classroom management. Teachers who lack strong content mastery may experience diminished confidence, potentially lowering the quality of instruction. Teachers who hesitate in responding to students' questions and who are unprepared in delivering lessons may compromise the learning process and hinder student comprehension. Therefore, enhancing teacher professionalism must be a continuous endeavor, driven by teachers' self-awareness of the need to improve their skills and knowledge to elevate their quality as professional

educators. This self-awareness emerges when teachers realize that the education they provide directly influences students' futures and the quality of future generations.

To achieve competent teaching practices, teachers must thoroughly master the instructional content. Non-degree holders, especially those without prior training or formal education, must engage in intensive practice, extensive reading, studying, and exploration of textbooks and other learning resources. This commitment demonstrates that the quality of education is heavily influenced by the teacher's command of the material. Mastery of instructional content involves the ability to apply facts and skills in addressing questions and solving problems related to the subject matter.

Furthermore, Usman emphasized that effective classroom management is essential for fostering conducive learning environments. A lack of classroom management skills may result in a disruptive atmosphere, hindering effective learning. Therefore, it is imperative for teachers, especially non-degree holders, to pursue continuous professional development and strive to improve their educational qualifications to ensure the delivery of high-quality education.

2. *Policy Impact Analysis: The Admission of Non-Degree Teachers and Its Effect on Educational Quality*

Educational policies play a critical role in determining the quality of a nation's education system. A high-quality education system largely depends on policies that support the development of teaching personnel, educational infrastructure, and effective learning methodologies. One of the key elements that significantly impacts the quality of education is the competence of teachers. A sound educational policy ensures that teachers possess the necessary competencies to carry out their professional duties effectively, deliver high-quality instruction, and manage classrooms proficiently.

One vital aspect of educational policy influencing instructional quality is the recruitment and training of teachers. Competent teachers are essential for fostering effective learning environments. Therefore, policies that emphasize enhancing teacher competence in terms of academic qualifications, pedagogical skills, and subject matter mastery have a profound impact on students' learning outcomes. The quality of teaching delivered by educators directly affects the overall quality of education. Effective learning can only be achieved if teachers have sufficient capabilities to manage classrooms and convey instructional content competently.

However, a significant challenge faced by Indonesia's education system is the high number of non-degree teachers employed in schools. Policies that allow the admission of non-degree teachers are often seen as pragmatic solutions to address the shortage of educators, particularly in remote areas. Nevertheless, this policy frequently results in negative consequences for educational quality, as non-degree teachers generally lack the necessary knowledge and skills to manage learning processes effectively. Furthermore, non-degree teachers typically receive limited in-depth training to support their teaching roles.

In many developing countries, the quality of education is heavily influenced by teachers' skills nd competencies (Sulastri et al., 2020). In remote areas, educational practices conducted by less experienced non-degree teachers can hinder the learning process, as these teachers may struggle to explain concepts adequately to students. This issue is compounded by the lack of educational resources and facilities available in remote schools, further exacerbating the quality gap.

Nevertheless, while the employment of non-degree teachers has the potential to decrease educational quality, some positive impacts have also been noted. One notable benefit of this policy is the improved access to education in remote areas that previously struggled to attract qualified teachers. The acceptance of non-degree teachers in these regions helps to alleviate teacher shortages and ensures that students in hard-to-reach areas receive educational services.

Continuous professional development for teachers, including non-degree holders, is crucial to improving educational quality (Supendi et al., 2023). Teachers who receive ongoing training and professional support are more likely to develop better teaching skills and enhance their understanding of curricula and effective instructional methods. Moreover, such training initiatives can motivate teachers to pursue further education and attain higher academic qualifications. Non-degree teachers who have gained teaching experience in remote areas may be encouraged to pursue formal education and obtain a Bachelor's degree (S1).

Educational policies must prioritize the development of teacher competencies, regardless of whether teachers hold a Bachelor's degree. Implementing scheduled and continuous professional development programs is necessary, particularly for teachers working in remote schools. Continuous education should be an integral part of professional development systems to ensure the consistent improvement of teaching quality (Kamaruddin et al., 2024).

Additionally, policies that support the equitable distribution of competent educators are equally essential. Governments must ensure that teachers assigned to remote areas receive adequate training to enhance their competencies. To significantly improve the quality of education, it is vital for governments to provide sufficient training opportunities for all educators, regardless of their geographical location or educational background.

3. Challenges and Strategic Solutions for Enhancing Non-Degree Teachers' Professional Competence

Non-degree teachers in Indonesia frequently encounter various challenges in fulfilling their roles as educators. The primary challenges faced by non-degree teachers revolve around lesson planning, instructional delivery, and assessment processes (Nugraha et al., 2022). Each of these areas presents specific obstacles that must be addressed to enhance the quality of learning outcomes. First, challenges in lesson planning. Effective lesson planning is a critical component of the educational process. Many non-degree teachers struggle to design lesson plans that align with the curriculum and meet student needs. One common issue is the mismatch between the planned teaching method and the actual implementation. For example, a teacher might plan to use a cooperative learning model but, during instruction, revert to a traditional lecture method, which is less effective in fostering student engagement. Another major problem is the limited access to diverse educational resources. Many non-degree teachers rely heavily on basic school textbooks, while alternative educational resources that could enrich students' learning experiences are often inaccessible. This lack of access can hinder teachers' creativity in developing and implementing effective instructional methods.

Second, challenges in instructional delivery. During the instructional process, non-degree teachers often struggle with time management and the implementation of approaches aligned with the *Kurikulum Merdeka* (Freedom Curriculum). Non-degree teachers frequently find it difficult to manage class time effectively, resulting in the incomplete delivery of material within the designated timeframe. This problem is compounded by the incomplete application of the 5M learning approach (observing, questioning, gathering information, associating, and communicating). In many cases, teachers only implement the first two stages—observing and questioning—leading to a passive learning experience that limits the development of students' critical thinking skills.

Third, challenges in assessment. Assessment also presents significant challenges for non-degree teachers. Teachers often find it difficult to conduct comprehensive assessments, particularly in evaluating students' attitudes and spiritual development. For instance, conducting meaningful observations in large classes of 35–40 students, which is common in many Indonesian schools, poses logistical difficulties. With limited time and supervision capacity, assessments of students' character development can become less objective. Furthermore, many non-degree teachers lack mastery of process-based assessment

techniques, such as self-assessment, peer assessment, and structured observation, all of which are crucial for accurately measuring student progress.

To address these challenges, several strategic solutions can be implemented to improve the instructional quality of non-degree teachers, especially concerning lesson planning, instructional practices, and student assessment.

First, pedagogical training and development. A primary solution is to provide intensive training focused on developing the pedagogical competence of non-degree teachers. Such training should cover essential aspects, including mastery of learning theories, understanding of various instructional methods and models, and the ability to design lesson plans tailored to both curriculum standards and student characteristics. Through comprehensive training, non-degree teachers can be better prepared to plan and deliver effective instruction. Moreover, the training must also include the application of approaches aligned with the *Kurikulum Merdeka*, ensuring that teachers are capable of implementing all five stages of the 5M framework effectively, rather than merely observing and questioning.

Second, *provision of diverse learning resources*. To improve the quality of instruction, it is critical for non-degree teachers to have broader access to diverse learning resources. Government agencies and school administrations should provide a wide range of teaching materials, such as learning modules, educational videos, and relevant online materials. Additionally, training in the use of educational technology should be offered to teachers to enable them to utilize digital learning resources that can enrich classroom content and foster greater student engagement. Expanding access to varied learning resources allows teachers to design more engaging and effective learning experiences, ultimately enhancing student development (Akbar & Noviani, 2019).

Third, mentoring and peer support. Mentoring by experienced teachers is a vital strategy to assist non-degree teachers in overcoming challenges in school settings. Mentorship can involve direct guidance in lesson planning, classroom management, and addressing instructional challenges. Through mentoring, non-degree teachers receive constructive feedback that helps improve their teaching practices and instructional delivery.

Fourth, improvement of assessment competence. To address assessment challenges, non-degree teachers should receive specialized training on process-based assessment techniques, including self-assessment, peer evaluation, and structured observational assessment. This training will enable teachers to more accurately monitor and evaluate student progress. Additionally, schools should allocate sufficient time for teachers to conduct assessments and provide appropriate assessment tools and support systems.

Fifth, participation in teacher professional education programs (PPG). Non-degree teachers who have dedicated themselves to teaching should be given the opportunity to participate in Teacher Professional Education Programs (*Program Pendidikan Profesi Guru*, PPG). These programs offer comprehensive training in pedagogical and professional competencies and help teachers attain the educator certification required to elevate their professional status. Participation in PPG programs is crucial to ensuring that non-degree teachers develop their competencies in accordance with the standards set forth by educational regulations.

Discussion

Understanding how leadership and decision-making processes sustain educational institutions, particularly through mechanisms such as musyawarah, reveals much about the nature of culturally grounded governance in Islamic settings. This exploration into Madrasah Diniyah Al Munajah provides significant insight into the practice of inclusive and dialogical leadership, echoing global scholarly calls for models that prioritize community engagement and moral responsibility (Alazmi & Bush, 2024; Gunada et al., 2024; Jatuporn et al., 2024). While most mainstream leadership discourses emphasize structural autonomy and managerial expertise, the findings here demonstrate how Islamic principles such as amanah

(trust) and musyawarah offer alternative frameworks that foreground relational trust and collaborative governance (Grimm et al., 2023; Lowery & Romero-Johnson, 2024; Peng et al., 2024). These outcomes further support the development of leadership identities rooted in cultural, spiritual, and moral epistemologies (De La Cruz Albizu, 2024; Ezzani et al., 2023; Marshall & Clark, 2023), contributing to the decolonization of leadership theory through empirical engagement with localized practices.

Central to this narrative is Principal A's consistent use of consultative decision-making in both academic and administrative matters. By involving teachers, parents, and staff in deliberations such as tuition policy, the principal fostered a sense of shared responsibility and institutional ownership. This participatory approach promoted transparency and reinforced stakeholder trust—key elements in effective school governance (Gkoros & Sakellariou, 2024; Leaf et al., 2024; Sigurðardóttir et al., 2024). Inclusivity in leadership reduced hierarchical rigidity and enhanced the moral legitimacy of decisions (Dor-Haim, 2024; Niesche et al., 2023), underscoring the relevance of distributed and values-based practices in smaller religious institutions.

Building upon this foundation, the empathetic and adaptive nature of financial management emerged as a key strength under Principal A's leadership. The madrasah's openness to adjusting tuition policies in response to families' financial constraints and its proactive approach to seeking donor support exemplify a socially responsive leadership model. This aligns with broader perspectives on Islamic leadership as ethically responsive to community needs, especially under economic pressures (Chilah Abdelkader et al., 2023; Gunada et al., 2024; Stroupe et al., 2023). The balance between institutional sustainability and compassion illustrates ambidextrous leadership—strategically sound yet relationally grounded (Ezzani et al., 2023; Lowery & Romero-Johnson, 2024; Primahendra et al., 2024), positioning the madrasah as both a moral and social anchor.

Further reflection reveals the principal's preference for educative and dialogical responses to staff missteps and internal conflicts. Emphasizing correction rather than punishment contributed to a supportive institutional culture. This practice aligns with shifts toward humanistic leadership that prioritize emotional intelligence and developmental dialogue over bureaucratic control (De La Cruz Albizu, 2024; Eadens & Ceballos, 2023; Oplatka, 2023). His openness to critique and transparent communication illustrate a humble and accountable leadership stance—deeply reflective of Islamic ethical values (Ezzani et al., 2023; Gkoros & Sakellariou, 2024; Grimm et al., 2023), thereby demonstrating the dual instrumental and moral capacities of such leadership within religious schooling.

Viewed alongside existing literature, these patterns of leadership highlight both convergence and distinction. Western discourse often focuses on principals' restricted autonomy and administrative burden (Dor-Haim, 2024; Niesche et al., 2023; Sigurðardóttir et al., 2024), whereas this context reveals how embedded decision-making and communal support mitigate such constraints. Rather than highlighting individual capacity, Principal A's method emphasizes collective agency, resonating with the communal orientation of IOEL frameworks (Alazmi & Bush, 2024; Ezzani et al., 2023; Gunada et al., 2024). Furthermore, in contrast to accounts of administrative overload detracting from pedagogical focus (Chilah Abdelkader et al., 2023; Leaf et al., 2024; Oplatka, 2023), this case shows how relational trust and strategic delegation preserved educational quality and student well-being.

In parallel with global calls for leadership that centers equity and shared responsibility, the madrasah's practices offer compelling evidence of ethically responsive governance. Comparable to culturally responsive leadership initiatives in Thailand and among Latina/o/x leaders (Grimm et al., 2023; Jatuporn et al., 2024; Lowery & Romero-Johnson, 2024), the principal's commitment to verifying misconduct cases and addressing enrollment declines underscores a justice-oriented and adaptive approach to leadership in dynamic policy landscapes (Marshall & Clark, 2023; Primahendra et al., 2024; Stroupe et al., 2023). These

dimensions illustrate how effective leadership transcends managerial function to embody ethical guardianship amid evolving social challenges.

Taken together, the documented leadership practices reflect a successful implementation of ethically anchored, consultative governance within a resource-constrained institution. Nonetheless, caution is warranted in applying these insights universally across Islamic schools, given the particular sociocultural context and individualized leadership dynamics (Ezzani et al., 2023; Marshall & Clark, 2023; Peng et al., 2024). The absence of digital tools may represent deliberate cultural alignment rather than operational deficiency. Broader inquiries across diverse settings would enrich understanding of scalability and contextual variability.

Beyond the case of Madrasah Al Munajah, these reflections offer strategic insights for leaders in similar religious or community-rooted educational environments. Emphasizing inclusive deliberation, ethical adaptability, and collective engagement, the approach outlined here underscores a viable framework for institutional resilience amid regulatory and economic uncertainty. Leadership informed by Islamic ethics demonstrates coherence, resilience, and cultural relevance. As such, leadership development programs—particularly in religious or minority-serving contexts—should integrate principles of musyawarah and values-driven practice (Alazmi & Bush, 2024; Ezzani et al., 2023; Gunada et al., 2024), advancing both theoretical discourse and practical application in educational governance.

Conclusion

The leadership model at Madrasah Diniyah Al Munajah, centered on the principle of musyawarah, reflects a collaborative, inclusive, and ethically grounded approach led by Principal A. Emphasizing consultative decision-making, empathetic financial management, and community engagement, this model fosters institutional resilience, transparency, and mutual trust amid limited formal resources. It presents a culturally rooted and ethically sustainable alternative to bureaucratic leadership paradigms, particularly relevant for religious and community-based education. However, as a single-case study focused on one institution and leader, its generalizability remains limited. Future research should conduct comparative case studies across diverse Islamic educational settings to assess the transferability of musyawarah-based leadership, especially under varying organizational pressures like digital transformation and curriculum reform. Including perspectives from staff, parents, and students would further enrich understanding of how collaborative leadership is experienced and enacted within such institutions.

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