

VISIONARY LEADERSHIP AND TEACHER PROFESSIONALISM: A MANAGERIAL ANALYSIS IN ISLAMIC EDUCATION

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Abstract

This study explores the practice of visionary leadership in madrasah management and its implications for strengthening teacher professionalism within Islamic education. Visionary leadership is understood as the ability of educational leaders to formulate institutional vision, translate it into managerial policies, and strategically manage resources to support institutional quality and sustainable professional development. Using a qualitative case study approach, this research was conducted in December 2025 at an Islamic educational institution in Indonesia. Data were obtained from two key informants a foundation administrator and a madrasah principal supported by institutional documents. Data collection involved in-depth interviews, limited observation, and documentation, while analysis was conducted thematically through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing with source triangulation to ensure credibility. The findings indicate that visionary leadership, when implemented through integrated managerial functions such as program planning, organizational structuring, teacher mobilization, academic supervision, and systematic evaluation, significantly strengthens teachers' professional commitment, improves instructional performance, and supports sustainable professional growth. The novelty of this study lies in demonstrating that visionary leadership in madrasahs operates not merely as a normative leadership orientation but as a value-based managerial practice grounded in Islamic principles that links institutional vision, ethical values, and professional development. This integrative model illustrates how leadership vision is operationalized in daily managerial practices to enhance institutional effectiveness and teacher professionalism, providing theoretical and practical insights for madrasah leaders, policymakers, and educational practitioners in developing vision-oriented leadership strategies for sustainable improvement in Islamic education

Keywords: Madrasah Management, Visionary Leadership, Islamic Education, Teacher Professionalism.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan mengeksplorasi praktik kepemimpinan visioner dalam manajemen madrasah serta implikasinya terhadap penguatan profesionalisme guru dalam konteks pendidikan Islam. Kepemimpinan visioner dipahami sebagai kemampuan pemimpin pendidikan dalam merumuskan visi institusi, menerjemahkannya ke dalam kebijakan manajerial, serta mengelola sumber daya secara strategis untuk mendukung peningkatan mutu lembaga dan pengembangan profesional guru secara berkelanjutan. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus yang dilaksanakan pada Desember 2025 di salah satu lembaga pendidikan Islam di Indonesia. Data primer diperoleh dari dua informan utama, yaitu pengelola yayasan dan kepala madrasah, serta didukung data sekunder berupa dokumen kelembagaan. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi terbatas, dan dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis secara tematik melalui tahap reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan dengan validitas data dijaga melalui triangulasi sumber. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan visioner yang diimplementasikan melalui fungsi manajerial terintegrasi meliputi perencanaan program, pengorganisasian, mobilisasi guru, supervisi akademik, dan evaluasi sistematis berkontribusi signifikan dalam memperkuat komitmen profesional guru, meningkatkan kinerja pembelajaran, serta mendorong pengembangan profesional yang berkelanjutan. Kebaruan penelitian ini terletak pada temuan bahwa kepemimpinan visioner di madrasah tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai orientasi normatif kepemimpinan, tetapi juga sebagai praktik manajerial berbasis nilai yang berlandaskan prinsip-prinsip Islam serta mengintegrasikan visi kelembagaan, nilai etis, dan pengembangan profesional guru secara sistematis. Temuan ini memberikan kontribusi teoretis dan praktis bagi pimpinan madrasah, pembuat kebijakan, dan praktisi pendidikan dalam merancang strategi kepemimpinan berbasis visi untuk meningkatkan kualitas dan keberlanjutan lembaga pendidikan Islam.

Kata Kunci: Manajemen Madrasah, Kepemimpinan Visioner, Pendidikan Islam, Profesionalisme Guru.

A. Introduction

In recent years, madrasahs and Islamic schools have encountered increasingly complex challenges in educational management, particularly in institutional governance, instructional quality, and teacher professionalism. These conditions require educational leaders not only to perform administrative duties but also to guide institutional development through a clear and strategic vision. In this context, the role of the madrasah principal becomes crucial in aligning institutional vision with resource management while fostering a professional culture that supports sustainable institutional development (Nasih & Insani, 2022).

Previous studies highlight the significant role of visionary leadership in improving educational quality. Visionary leadership contributes to institutional development through strategic planning, inspirational motivation, and the creation of a conducive learning environment that supports both academic and personal student development (Subni dkk., 2024). Nurlaela et al. (2024) emphasize that visionary leadership interacts with teacher competence and school culture in shaping institutional performance. Likewise, Annisa and

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Muttaqin (2024) argue that visionary leadership plays a key role in preparing educational institutions to respond to future challenges, while Permata (2023) demonstrates its influence on teacher welfare and professional commitment. However, most studies still examine visionary leadership in general terms, with limited attention to its managerial dimensions and practical implementation within madrasah contexts.

Based on this background, this study aims to examine how visionary leadership is implemented through managerial practices in madrasah management, particularly in strengthening teacher professionalism and improving institutional quality (Murtafi'ah & Al Rosid, 2024). The study explores how institutional vision is translated into concrete policies, programs, and professional development strategies that support sustainable educational improvement within Islamic educational institutions (Annisa & Muttaqin, 2024).

Although previous research provides valuable insights into visionary leadership, studies that specifically analyze its role as an integrated managerial practice linked to decision-making, teacher management, and sustainable professional development in madrasahs remain limited. This gap highlights the need for deeper exploration of how visionary leadership operates in daily managerial practices and contributes to strengthening teacher professionalism and institutional quality. Therefore, this study is expected to contribute empirically to the development of effective leadership models in Islamic educational management (Nurlaela et al., 2024; Permata, 2023).

B. Method

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to obtain an in-depth and contextual understanding of visionary leadership practices in madrasah management and their implications for teacher professionalism. This approach was selected because it allows the researcher to explore leadership processes, managerial dynamics, and institutional practices as they naturally occur within real educational settings.

The research was conducted in December 2025 at an Islamic educational institution serving elementary, junior high, and senior high school levels. The research subjects consisted of two key informants selected purposively based on their strategic roles in institutional management. The first informant was an institutional administrator responsible for policy formulation and cross-level quality control, while the second informant was a madrasah principal directly involved in program planning, resource management, and performance evaluation. These informants were chosen to ensure the relevance, depth, and credibility of the data collected.

Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews and document analysis. Interviews were conducted indirectly, audio-recorded, and transcribed verbatim to capture comprehensive information related to leadership practices and managerial processes. In addition, institutional documents concerning planning, supervision, and evaluation were examined to support and validate the interview findings. Data credibility was ensured through source triangulation by comparing information obtained from different informants and documentary sources.

Data analysis was carried out thematically through systematic stages of data reduction, categorization, interpretation, and iterative conclusion drawing. This process aimed to identify patterns, relationships, and meanings associated with visionary leadership practices and their influence on teacher professionalism within the context of Islamic education.

C. Results and Discussion

Understanding and the Implementation of Visionary Leadership in Islamic Education

The findings of this study indicate that visionary leadership in madrasah is not only oriented toward long-term institutional goals but is also deeply rooted in Islamic values in educational management. Such leadership emphasizes not only academic achievement but also character formation, moral strengthening, and the internalization of Islamic values as core institutional objectives. In this context, visionary leadership functions as both a strategic and ethical compass guiding institutional development. Accordingly, the institutional vision serves as a unifying framework that connects managerial goals with the moral and spiritual mission of the madrasah (Budiman, 2023; Pratiwi et al., 2025). (Lestari et al., 2023) affirm that visionary leadership contributes significantly to improving educational quality by strengthening institutional culture, enhancing strategic management, and fostering collective commitment among educators.

This finding aligns with the perspective of the first informant, who interprets visionary leadership as the ability of the madrasah principal to formulate, direct, and implement the institution's vision and mission in a clear and measurable manner. The vision becomes the primary reference for managerial decision-making, including program planning, human resource management, and strategies for institutional quality improvement. A clearly articulated vision enables all members of the madrasah to work in a focused and coordinated direction, fostering shared commitment and organizational coherence. Conversely, the absence of a strong vision may lead to fragmented policies that are not aligned with long-term institutional goals. This perspective reinforces the findings of Shobri (2025), who highlights vision as a strategic foundation for policy consistency and organizational culture in educational institutions. In line with this perspective, (Fransiska & Harapan, 2020) confirm that visionary leadership strengthens teacher professionalism through the integration of institutional vision, continuous academic supervision, and structured managerial guidance.

Furthermore, the first informant emphasized that visionary leadership in Islamic education should not be viewed solely as a managerial concept but also as a moral and spiritual responsibility (Al Rosid et al., 2024). The madrasah principal holds a central role in ensuring that Islamic educational values are implemented across institutional activities rather than remaining symbolic. Consequently, visionary leadership aims to produce educational outcomes characterized by sound Islamic understanding, consistent religious practice, and the ability of students to apply Islamic values within school, family, and community contexts. This reflects the dual orientation of Islamic educational vision, encompassing both worldly and ukhrawi dimensions, as emphasized by the informant who

stressed that leadership responsibility extends beyond institutional success to moral accountability before Allah Subhānahu wa Ta‘ālā.

The second informant further strengthened these findings by highlighting the relationship between visionary leadership and the sustainability of Islamic educational institutions. Vision is not merely a formal administrative statement but an operational guideline that directs policies and programs in accordance with the madrasah’s developmental trajectory. In this sense, visionary leadership functions as a controlling mechanism ensuring that innovations and institutional changes remain aligned with established strategic objectives (Budiman, 2023).

These findings are consistent with the study by Nurhasanah et al. (2024), which demonstrates that visionary leadership exercised by madrasah principals plays an important role in maintaining policy continuity amid dynamic educational changes. A vision that is clearly understood and consistently implemented enables Islamic educational institutions to remain adaptive without losing their core identity and foundational values. This argument is further strengthened by (Subni et al., 2024), who assert that visionary leadership significantly contributes to improving educational quality by formulating future-oriented strategies, inspiring teachers’ creativity and commitment, and creating a supportive learning environment that fosters both academic achievement and students’ character development.

Visionary leadership in Islamic education also requires leaders to consider the long-term implications of policy decisions. This perspective aligns with the Islamic Regret Minimization Framework, which emphasizes forward-looking decision-making and minimizing future regret based on maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah principles, namely public benefit and the sustainability of Islamic values. Therefore, leadership decisions are not limited to short-term administrative achievements but also aim to ensure student well-being, institutional sustainability, and moral–spiritual responsibility within Islamic education (Affan & Ulien Nuha, 2024). These findings are reinforced by Azzuhri and Nuha (2025), who demonstrate that leadership practices grounded in managerial functions and transformational approaches enhance teacher performance and strengthen the organizational culture of Islamic educational institutions. Such leadership integrates institutional vision into operational policies, resource management, and sustainable evaluation mechanisms. Consequently, visionary and transformational leadership share a similar orientation in positioning institutional vision as the foundation for managerial decision-making and continuous improvement of educational quality. Similar conclusions are presented by Hartono et al. (2025), who argue that an internalized vision functions as both a strategic guide and a reinforcement of institutional culture.

From a value-based perspective, these findings are supported by Al Faroqi and Syukur (2025), who reveal that visionary leadership grounded in Islamic values plays a significant role in shaping students’ character. A value-oriented vision not only guides institutional policies but also fosters discipline, responsibility, and moral awareness through leadership exemplarity and consistent organizational practices.

Similarly, Siregar et al. (2022) emphasize that visionary leadership in Islamic educational institutions must integrate managerial and value-based dimensions to ensure

that institutional vision remains aligned with moral and character development goals. Such leadership enables Islamic educational institutions to fulfill their academic responsibilities while simultaneously maintaining their moral educational mission in a balanced and sustainable manner.

In practice, both informants highlighted the importance of internalizing institutional vision among teachers as the main agents of education. Vision internalization is conducted through orientation programs, policy communication in formal forums, and the habituation of organizational values through institutional activities. This indicates that visionary leadership extends beyond conceptual vision formulation, requiring leaders to effectively communicate and embed the vision into teachers' professional conduct. This finding is consistent with Sumiatun et al. (2024), who state that the effectiveness of visionary leadership depends largely on the consistency of leaders in communicating and translating vision into concrete actions. This finding is also supported by (Fitriani et al., 2025), which shows that visionary leadership implemented through the Teacher Learning Day program enhances teacher professionalism by encouraging collaboration, continuous learning, and instructional innovation.

Moreover, Anas et al. (2025) emphasize that effective visionary leadership in Islamic education is characterized by leaders' ability to align institutional vision with the daily work behavior of all school members. Consistency between vision, organizational values, and everyday practices ensures that vision is not merely symbolic but is realized in institutional practice. Accordingly, visionary leadership functions as a mechanism that integrates strategic goals, organizational culture, and the moral orientation of Islamic educational institutions.

Teacher Professionalism in Islamic Education: Conditions and Management

Teacher professionalism in this study is understood not merely as classroom instructional ability but as an integrated construct encompassing subject-matter expertise, pedagogical competence, social skills, and personal integrity within Islamic education. Teachers function as central actors whose roles extend beyond knowledge transmission to include shaping students' character, attitudes, and values through daily educational interactions. Consequently, teachers are expected to combine content mastery, effective classroom management, and exemplary conduct that reflects Islamic values in both instructional and non-instructional contexts.

Accordingly, teacher professionalism is assessed not only through instructional performance but also through teachers' moral integrity, social responsibility, and commitment to Islamic educational values. As role models, teachers' attitudes and behaviors become references for students' moral development. Thus, professionalism in Islamic education is inherently holistic, integrating academic, social, and personal dimensions that support comprehensive educational goals.

From this perspective, professionalism reflects the integration of academic competence with moral-spiritual responsibility. Mastery of knowledge and pedagogy must be accompanied by ethical integrity and consistent behavior in carrying out educational duties. Therefore, professionalism is evident not only in instructional effectiveness but also in

teachers' ability to internalize and manifest Islamic values in learning processes, interpersonal relationships, and daily interactions within the madrasah environment.

Interview findings indicate that subject-matter mastery forms the fundamental element of teacher professionalism. Teachers must possess deep and accurate understanding of the subjects they teach to deliver instruction systematically and responsibly according to academic standards. This principle aligns with the classical maxim *fāqid al-shay' lā yu'ṭī*, which suggests that one cannot give what one does not possess. Accordingly, academic competence is ensured from the recruitment stage through structured selection procedures and competency assessments aligned with teachers' fields of expertise. This finding is consistent with Aulia and Cahyani (2024), who emphasize disciplinary mastery as the basis of professional teaching practice in Islamic education.

Beyond academic mastery, professionalism is also shaped by pedagogical competence, defined as the ability to design, implement, and evaluate learning activities according to students' characteristics and needs. Effective pedagogical competence enables teachers to manage learning processes in structured and meaningful ways that support the balanced development of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. Hasanah and Misbah (2025) identify pedagogical competence as a key indicator of professionalism due to its direct relationship with instructional effectiveness and educational goal attainment.

Professionalism is further reflected in teachers' ability to develop contextualized learning responsive to students' academic and social environments. Research on contextual translation-based learning modules at STAI Ali Bin Abi Thalib Surabaya shows that professional teachers must master content and pedagogy while designing systematic and context-sensitive instructional materials. This capability highlights the relationship between academic preparedness, pedagogical competence, and professional responsibility in translating educational objectives into meaningful learning practices (Ulien Nuha et al., 2025).

Teacher professionalism also involves social competence, particularly the ability to build effective communication and collaboration with fellow teachers, madrasah leaders, staff, and parents. Such competence supports coordination and synergy in implementing educational programs and creating a conducive learning environment. This perspective is supported by Marantika and Dahlan (2019), who found that visionary leadership by madrasah principals significantly influences teachers' work discipline and strengthens professional attitudes and responsibility in instructional practices.

Within this framework, teachers are viewed not merely as individual professionals but as integral components of an institutional system requiring collaboration and shared responsibility. Active participation in institutional communication and cooperation with stakeholders becomes an important indicator of professionalism, as educational success cannot be achieved individually. This view aligns with Hanafi (2024), who asserts that teacher professionalism in Islamic education is closely linked to social competence and active participation in institutional culture.

The personal dimension constitutes another key aspect of teacher professionalism. In Islamic educational perspectives, teachers are regarded as *uswah hasanah* (exemplary

figures) expected to demonstrate moral integrity, discipline, and consistency as part of their professional and spiritual responsibilities (Dewi Sundari, 2025). Professionalism is therefore assessed not only through administrative or pedagogical performance but also through teachers' ethical conduct and daily interactions with students. Zaki Ulien Nuha and Afandi (2022) emphasize that professionalism in Islamic education requires integrating pedagogical competence with Islamic values so that learning becomes both educational and transformative.

These findings are reinforced by studies published in JPPD, which indicate that teacher professionalism represents the integration of pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies that significantly influence learning quality and student character development (Nailah & Afifa, 2022). Similarly, Ramadani et al. (n.d.) argue that professionalism encompasses the integration of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects reflected in work attitudes, responsibility, and sustained professional commitment in educational practice.

Furthermore, Azzahiri and Saragih (2025) emphasize that strengthening teacher professionalism in Islamic educational institutions requires systemic support through continuous professional development, academic supervision, and value-based work culture. This finding is supported by Ilhami and Fathoni (2025), who demonstrate that visionary leadership contributes significantly to teacher professional development through training, innovation, and collaborative institutional culture. In line with this, Mhd. Fajar Siddik et al. (2024) show that teacher professionalism develops optimally when supported by leadership that consistently provides direction, facilitation, and evaluation of teacher performance. Accordingly, teacher professionalism should be understood not merely as an individual attribute but as the outcome of a structured institutional process aimed at improving educational quality in Islamic education.

Managerial Strategies in Enhancing Teacher Professionalism

Teacher professionalism in this study is enhanced through managerial strategies designed to be gradual, systematic, and sustainable. Professional development is not viewed as a short-term activity, but as a long-term process aimed at strengthening pedagogical competence, professional attitudes, and the internalization of institutional values within Islamic educational institutions. Through this approach, professional growth becomes a continuous process embedded in the daily management of the madrasah.

Within this framework, teacher professionalism is closely related to educational human resource management. Madrasah management positions teachers as strategic assets whose quality directly influences institutional performance and learning outcomes. Therefore, teacher development is carried out through clear policies, structured programs, and systematic evaluation mechanisms. This approach ensures that teacher improvement is conducted through careful planning aligned with institutional goals and teachers' practical needs (Iman Utama et al., 2022).

Teacher professional development is fundamentally guided by national education policies that regulate the legal and operational foundations of teacher competency

improvement. Indonesian Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers and Government Regulation Number 74 of 2008 emphasize that professional teachers must possess pedagogical, personal, social, and professional competencies obtained through structured professional education. These regulatory frameworks position professional development as a continuous process aimed at strengthening instructional competence, ethical integrity, and professional responsibility. Accordingly, teacher professionalism is enhanced through systematic training, mentoring, supervision, and participation in professional learning communities such as KKG and MGMP. In the digital era, continuous professional development is further reinforced through technology-based training programs that support teachers' adaptive capacity, instructional innovation, and lifelong learning orientation, enabling them to remain responsive to pedagogical and technological advancements in educational practice (Saerang et al., 2023).

In the context of Islamic educational management, managerial strategies contribute to strengthening institutional systems and organizational culture. Planned and coordinated management practices create a work environment that supports teacher professionalism and accountability. Nuha, Rohhani, and Affan (2026) emphasize that strategic planning, clear organizational structures, and consistent control mechanisms significantly contribute to institutional performance, indicating that teacher professionalism is strongly influenced by the quality of institutional governance.

Teacher professional development begins after recruitment, when newly appointed teachers participate in an internship program lasting approximately one month. During this period, teachers observe instructional practices, institutional culture, and communication patterns while learning from senior teachers' classroom management, student interaction, and coordination with institutional leaders. This internship serves as a medium for internalizing professional values, work discipline, and moral responsibility. Teachers not only acquire technical teaching skills but also absorb institutional values embedded in daily educational practices. Such orientation and mentoring play a decisive role in shaping the professionalism of new teachers (Triokoyulisma et al., 2024; Salni & Hidayat, 2024).

After completing the internship, teachers gradually assume teaching responsibilities according to their readiness and competence. Instructional practices are monitored through academic supervision and peer evaluation to ensure instructional quality. Supervision functions not only as a control mechanism but also as a developmental process that provides constructive feedback and mentoring to support reflective teaching practices (Iman Utama et al., 2022). Quantitative findings also show that academic supervision significantly contributes to improving teachers' pedagogical and professional competencies (Sari & Lian, 2025; Rohana, 2025).

Evaluation is conducted periodically during the first six months of service, and supervision results become the basis for managerial decisions, including additional training or contract continuation. This evaluation system demonstrates that teacher professionalism develops through structured and objective mechanisms aimed at maintaining instructional quality and accountability (Ikhwan & Rabbani, 2024; Shihabuddin et al., 2024). In addition, teachers are encouraged to participate in continuous professional development through

MGMP activities, pedagogical training, workshops, and academic forums. These activities are conducted regularly to maintain teacher quality and strengthen long-term professional

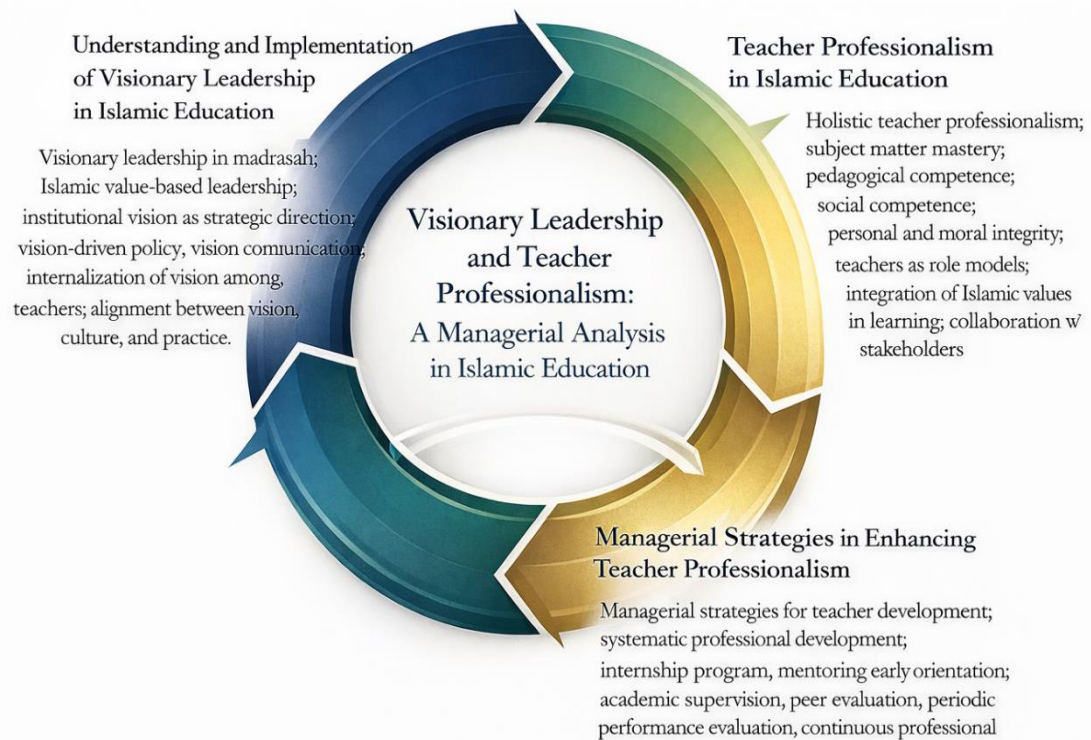


Figure 1. Integrated Conceptual Model of Visionary Leadership and Teacher Professionalism in Islamic Education

commitment (Zaeni & Wasliman, 2025; Buchari et al., 2025). The effectiveness of these strategies is strongly influenced by the managerial competence of the madrasah principal.

The principal plays a strategic role in planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating teacher development programs. Effective managerial leadership fosters a supportive work climate characterized by open communication, coordination, and clear task distribution, encouraging teachers to continuously improve their competencies (Mhd. Fajar Siddik et al., 2024; Khoirudin et al., 2023). This finding is consistent with the study by Lellya (2025), which confirms that visionary leadership of school principals plays a strategic role in formulating institutional vision, building collaborative organizational culture, promoting instructional innovation, and optimizing resource management, all of which significantly contribute to enhancing teacher professionalism and institutional effectiveness in modern educational management.

Figure 1 presents a conceptual model summarizing the relationship between visionary leadership and the strengthening of teacher professionalism in Islamic education. The model illustrates that the implementation of visionary leadership in madrasahs serves as the foundation for developing managerial strategies that support the improvement of teachers' competence and instructional performance. Through this process, teacher professionalism

develops more holistically, encompassing pedagogical competence, subject mastery, and the integration of Islamic values in learning.

Overall, these findings demonstrate that teacher professionalism develops not through instant or fragmented efforts but through a structured managerial system integrating leadership policies, continuous supervision, and sustainable professional development programs (Iman Utama et al., 2022).

D. Conclusion

This study highlights that visionary leadership in madrasah management extends beyond managerial competence and strategic planning, positioning Islamic values as a central foundation for institutional governance and teacher professional development. The key novelty of this research lies in demonstrating how leadership vision, when integrated with Islamic ethical principles, can effectively shape managerial practices, professional culture, and sustainable institutional performance. By bridging leadership theory with value-based educational practice, this study contributes to a more holistic understanding of educational leadership in Islamic contexts. The findings offer both theoretical and practical contributions, particularly by enriching leadership frameworks with spiritual dimensions and providing practical insights for madrasah leaders and policymakers in aligning institutional vision with everyday managerial actions and teacher development strategies.

Despite these contributions, this research is limited by its focus on a single institutional context, which may restrict the broader generalization of the findings. Future studies are therefore encouraged to employ multi-site or comparative designs, integrate quantitative or mixed-method approaches, and explore the long-term impact of visionary and value-based leadership on institutional performance, teacher development, and student outcomes. Such further investigations are expected to provide a more comprehensive and robust understanding of how visionary leadership can be systematically developed to strengthen the quality and sustainability of Islamic education.

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Visionary Leadership And Teacher Professionalism: A Managerial Analysis In Islamic Education

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