SERVANT LEADERSHIP OF THE HEAD OF THE MADRASAH IN IMPROVING TEACHER PERFORMANCE AT AL-WASHLIYAH PRIVATE ALIYAH MADRASAH MEDAN DISTRICT MEDAN CITY AREA

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
	This study aims to analyze the role of servant leadership in improving teacher performance at Al-Washliyah Private Aliyah Madrasah in Medan. A qualitative approach with a case study design was chosen to explore the head of the madrasah's leadership in addressing teacher performance issues. Data were collected through non-participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation, using triangulation techniques to ensure data validity. The results show that the decline in teacher performance is due to a leadership crisis, including the physical and emotional absence of the madrasah head, lack of supervision, and limited communication and recognition. The implementation of servant leadership, which emphasizes empathy, support, and teacher development, proved effective in addressing these issues, boosting teacher motivation and self-efficacy. This study recommends adopting servant leadership as a solution to enhance teacher performance in madrasahs.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Educational leadership is a key factor that determines the quality of the learning process and outcomes. The principal of a school or madrasah not only serves as a manager, but also as a leader who inspires, directs, and empowers all elements of the school. When leadership is weak, various problems arise such as low teacher discipline, lack of motivation to teach, and lack of innovation in learning activities. The further impact is the decline in the quality of educational services as a whole.

The results of observations at Madrasah Aliyah Private Al-Washliyah Medan show that madrasah heads face leadership challenges, including absenteeism in daily activities, weak supervision of teachers, and lack of motivation and example. This has an effect on declining teacher performance, low participation in learning activities, and lack of initiative in developing educational innovations.

Previous research confirms that the leadership quality of school principals greatly determines the work climate and teacher performance (Bartanen, 2020; Sumiati et al., 2024; Dewi et al., 2021; Fabes et al., 2023). One of the approaches that has been widely studied and proven to be effective is servant leadership, which is leadership that emphasizes service, empathy, and empowerment of organizational members (Greenleaf, 1970; Eva et al., 2019). However, this approach tends to be secular and has not fully touched on the spiritual aspects that are important foundations in Islamic educational institutions, such as madrasas.

In Islam, leadership is a great mandate that must be carried out with the principles of justice, responsibility, and service to the ummah, as explained by Al-Mawardi (1996). These values are in line with the principles in servant leadership, but have a deeper spiritual dimension. Therefore, it is important to integrate these two approaches in order to present a leadership model that is relevant to the context of the madrasah, both from the structural, cultural, and spiritual aspects.

This research departs from the need to formulate a leadership style that is not only empowering, but also reflects Islamic values. By combining the concepts of servant leadership and Islamic leadership, it is hoped that a leadership approach that is contextual, inspiring, and able to improve teacher performance and create a more professional, collaborative, and religiously valuable madrasah work culture.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study type, because it aims to understand in depth the leadership role of madrasah heads in improving teacher performance. This approach is considered appropriate for exploring the meaning, experience, and perception of the subject in a real social context (Creswell, 2016). Case studies were chosen to uncover the dynamics of leadership within the constraints of a particular system, as well as answer the "why" and "how" questions related to leadership practices (Yin, 2018).

The location of the research is at Madrasah Aliyah Private Al-Wasliyah, Jl. Ismailiyah No. 82, Matsum II City, Medan Area District, Medan City. This madrasah was chosen purposively because it shows distinctive characteristics related to the issues being researched, such as weak institutional management and non-optimal leadership functions. The research was carried out for six months, from March to August 2025.

The subjects of this study are purposively selected informants, namely individuals who have experience, involvement, and relevant knowledge to the research topic. Information was collected through in-depth interviews to explore the role of madrasah heads, teacher performance, and obstacles faced in the leadership process (Sugiyono, 2017; Creswell, 2016).

Table 1. Research Informant

No	Name	Status	Reasons for Selection
1	Muslim Rasyid	Head of Madrasah	It was chosen with the consideration that the head of the madrasah occupies the highest hierarchical position in the organizational structure so that it has a strategic role in the decision-making process that has direct implications for the performance of the organization.
2	Iriansyah Putra	Deputy Head of Madrasah	It was chosen with consideration that the deputy head of the madrasah has a role in monitoring and evaluating leadership performance which in turn affects the effectiveness and performance of the organization.
3	Julianto	Teacher	It is chosen with consideration that teachers have empirical experience in observing and experiencing firsthand the dynamics of leadership styles and organizational culture in madrasas.
4	Musdar Bustam Tambusai	Teacher	
5	Jamaluddin	Teacher	
6	Nurdin Rustam	Teacher	
7	Ferry Simbolon	Teacher	
8	Abdul Aziz	Teacher	
9	Nano Wahyudin	Teacher	

This study took Madrasah Aliyah Private Al-Wasliyah, Medan Area District, Medan City as an object because it was considered relevant to the problem being studied, namely the weak role of the head of the madrasah as an organizational leader which had an impact on the suboptimal performance of teachers and the emergence of an undisciplined attitude. This madrasah was chosen to find the right leadership model, especially in the context of Islamic education. To dig deeper into the data, three data collection techniques were used, namely non-participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation studies. Non-participant observation was carried out by directly observing activities in the madrasah without direct involvement, focusing on the behavior of the madrasah head, communication patterns, and teacher discipline. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with madrasah heads, teachers, and staff to explore their views on the implementation of leadership and its impact on teacher performance. Meanwhile, a documentation study was conducted to review administrative and policy documents to complement observation and interview data.

The data obtained was analyzed through three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. Data reduction is done by filtering and simplifying data to focus on relevant information. The presentation of data is carried out in the form of descriptive narratives, quotes, or matrices based on predetermined themes. Conclusions are drawn gradually and continuously to find patterns or meanings that emerge from the data, especially in seeing the influence of the servant leadership style of madrasah heads on teacher performance. To ensure the validity of the data, a triangulation technique is used, which is comparing the results of interviews, observations, and documentation to get a complete and objective picture. This technique increases the credibility and accuracy of research results according to qualitative research principles.

3. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS
3.1. Teacher Performance Conditions at Al-Washliyah Private Madrasah Aliyah Medan Area

The performance of teachers at Madrasah Aliyah Private Al-Washliyah Medan Area shows instability. Teachers generally have good teaching skills and mastery of the material, but their work motivation is more influenced by emotional aspects such as attention, recognition, and involvement of madrasah leaders. Factors such as gratitude, the presence of leaders, and open communication have been proven to be able to significantly increase teacher morale.

Even so, the morale of many teachers is fluctuating and inconsistent. Problems such as unexcused absences, delays, and lack of commitment are common. The head and deputy head of the madrasah admitted that the discipline and discipline of teachers were still weak as the main problem that hindered the effectiveness of learning. In addition, leadership that is not actively present is also considered to reduce teacher enthusiasm and involvement.

Interaction between teachers is generally good, but some teachers show a lack of participation in madrasah activities. This reflects that the work atmosphere and example of the leadership are very important to build teacher motivation and professionalism. A more empathetic leadership approach and a consistent coaching system are needed to improve teacher performance as a whole.

3.2. Leadership of the Head of Madrasah at Madrasah Aliyah Private Al Washliyah Medan Area

This research was conducted at Madrasah Aliyah Private Al-Washliyah, Medan Area District, Medan City, which was chosen because it faced real problems related to the weak role of the head of the madrasah as the leader of the organization. This condition has an impact on non-optimal performance management, especially in terms of teacher discipline and work spirit. To examine this phenomenon in depth, the approach used is qualitative with a descriptive method. The goal is to comprehensively understand how the head of the madrasah carries out his role in improving teacher performance. The data collection techniques used included in-depth interviews with madrasah heads, deputy madrasah heads, and several teachers; direct observation of madrasah activities; as well as documentation studies such as attendance data and performance reports. The data sources in this study consist of key informants (madrasah heads and deputy madrasah heads) and supporting informants (teachers and administrative employees). The collected data was analyzed through the process of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn, with the validity of the data tested using triangulation techniques and sources.

3.3. Support and Obstacles of the Head of the Al-Washliyah Private Aliyah Madrasah Medan Area

Based on the results of the interview, the teachers said that the support of the madrasah head they needed was not only in the form of facilities, but moral support, direct attendance, appreciation, and involvement in decision-making. Teachers feel that their confidence and morale increase when they are given space to grow, given feedback, and feel appreciated for their efforts. Unfortunately, this support is currently very limited.

Madrasah heads are considered to rarely monitor the learning process. Teachers work without direct direction and do not know whether their teaching methods are up to the expectations of the institution. Evaluations are only carried out at formal moments such as accreditation, without any continuous coaching or in-depth discussion. This causes teachers to feel alone, without direction, standards, or adequate support.

One of the main factors for the lack of support is the high workload of madrasah heads, which is more taken up by administrative affairs and activities outside the madrasah. As a result, interaction with teachers is limited and internal decisions are often delayed. The deputy head of the madrasah even assessed the need for a rearrangement of priorities and division of tasks so that the head of the madrasah could focus more on internal coaching.

Overall, the limitations in support, monitoring, and evaluation from the head of the madrasah make teachers feel uncared for, lose motivation, and do not develop optimally. If this condition is not immediately corrected, it will have a negative impact on the quality of education and the achievement of the institution's vision.

3.4. Data Analysis of Research Results

Based on the results of interviews conducted with teachers at Madrasah Aliyah, a number of problems were found that were closely related to the leadership of madrasah heads and their impact on teacher performance and motivation. The majority of informants stated that the head of the madrasah had not carried out his leadership role effectively. Madrasah principals are often physically absent from the school environment, focus more on external or administrative affairs, and are rarely directly involved in teachers' activities. This absence creates the impression of being hands-off and distances the head of the madrasah from its strategic role as a director, listener, as well as a coach.

The lack of appreciation and appreciation is one of the main sources of a decrease in teachers' work motivation. Many teachers feel that their hard work is being ignored, even for small things. A simple appreciation like a thank you note or a direct visit to class is enough to lift the spirit, but this is very rare. Teachers also feel that they lack psychological support, both in the form of empathy, encouragement, and attention from leaders. As a result, they feel that they have to struggle alone without a sense of togetherness or assistance.

The monitoring and evaluation system in madrassas is also considered very weak. Monitoring of teaching activities is carried out on an irregular basis, even tending to be formal. Teachers don't get constructive feedback on how to teach them, making it difficult to make improvements. Evaluation, which is supposed to be a means of coaching, does not build up, or even touch substance. In addition, teacher development programs do not run systematically and sustainably. Many new teachers do not receive adequate guidance, and the individual potentials of teachers are not empowered because leaders do not know the character and abilities of each teacher.

The interaction between the head of the madrasah and the teacher took place in one direction and there was minimal openness. Teachers find it difficult to convey aspirations or consult regarding learning strategies because leaders are rarely available and do not provide a healthy dialogue space. Conflict management also tends to be passive. When problems arise, the head of the madrasah does not take the role of a solution, but lets the teacher solve it himself. In terms of discipline, the indecisiveness of the madrasah head creates an imbalance between demands and examples. Teachers feel that they do not get good role models because the leaders themselves are often absent and do not show a consistent professional attitude.

Overall, this condition shows that the leadership quality of madrasah heads has a great influence on the enthusiasm, motivation, and performance of teachers. The absence of present, active, and caring leadership causes teachers to lose their direction and feel like they are working in solitude. Significant changes are needed, starting from increasing the role of madrasah heads as learning leaders who are able to foster, appreciate, and assist teachers in the process of self-development and improving the quality of education in madrasas.

3.5. Discussion

Based on the results of interviews conducted with teachers at Al-Wasliyah Private Aliyah Madrasah in Medan Area District, Medan City, various problems were found related to the leadership of madrasah heads and their impact on teacher performance. The teachers said that the head of the madrasah had not carried out his function optimally, both in terms of supervision, motivation, and coaching. Madrasah heads are rarely present and rarely involve themselves directly in the process of teaching and learning activities, thus giving the impression of not caring and letting go of their responsibilities as leaders of educational institutions. The absence of the head of the madrasah makes teachers feel unwelcome, especially when they have made maximum efforts in designing and delivering subject matter.

In addition, teachers also feel that they do not get appreciation from the leadership. Simple forms of appreciation such as praise or gratitude are also very rarely given, even though they are considered very important in increasing teachers' confidence and work motivation. The lack of appreciation for teachers' efforts causes a decrease in work morale, even making some teachers no longer enthusiastic in carrying out their duties. On the other hand, the monitoring and evaluation system for teacher performance also does not run optimally. Supervision is only carried out in a formal manner and does not touch the substantive aspect of learning. Teachers do not get constructive feedback, making it difficult to make improvements and improve competencies in a sustainable manner.

This condition is exacerbated by the absence of a clear professional development and coaching program. Teachers feel that their potential is not recognized and not empowered. New teachers are not optimally guided, so they have to adapt and learn on their own in carrying out their duties. The lack of effective communication between madrasah heads and teachers is also an obstacle in creating a conducive work environment. The relationship between leaders and teachers feels formal and one-way. Teachers find it difficult to convey ideas, aspirations, and complaints because leaders tend to be closed and do not provide space for dialogue.

In terms of discipline and conflict resolution, the head of the madrasah is also considered indecisive and inconsistent. The problems that arise are often left without a clear solution, causing discomfort among fellow teachers. The example of the head of the madrasah was also questioned because he did not show a professional

attitude, such as often not being present and not showing a work spirit. This has a negative impact on the attitude and discipline of teachers who feel that they do not have a proper role model in the madrasah environment.

Overall, the results of the interviews show that the weak role of madrasah heads in leadership, appreciation, coaching, and communication has had a direct impact on the low performance and motivation of teachers. Fundamental changes and commitment from madrasah leaders are needed to build more participatory, communicative, and supportive leadership to improve the quality of education in madrasas.

Table 2. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors of Madrasah Heads in Improving Teacher Performance

Supporting Factors	Inhibiting Factors
Visionary and humanist leadership that builds trust and work spirit of teachers.	Passive and bureaucratic leadership style without emotional closeness to teachers.
Servant leadership *approach* that emphasizes empathy, listening, and service.	The absence of the head of the madrasah physically and emotionally in the daily dynamics.
Integration of Islamic leadership values (trust, fairness, responsibility, devotion).	Lack of two-way communication and rigid relationships.
Supervision is constructive, reflective and sustainable.	There is no constructive periodic supervision or evaluation.
Evaluate performance that is fair, open and encourages self-improvement.	Evaluations are often formal, or administrative.
Facilitation of professional development spaces: training, reflection, learning community.	There is no system of continuous training, coaching, or mentoring.
Motivating professional reward and recognition system.	Lack of appreciation or appreciation for the work and dedication of teachers.
Collaborative leadership that creates an inclusive and supportive work culture.	Rigid work environment. closed, and minimal participation.
The vision of the madrasah is clear, inspiring, and able to move the collective spirit.	Teachers work without direction without guidance of an internalized vision or institutional goals.

This research proves that madrasah heads have a central role in improving teacher performance through visionary, humanist, and value-based leadership. When the head of the madrasah is able to build a clear vision, establish open communication, and be emotionally present in the life of the madrasah, the teacher will feel accompanied, appreciated, and motivated. Supervisory supervision, fair and reflective evaluation, and providing space for self-development are important keys in building teacher effectiveness and work spirit. In addition, the use of the principles of servant leadership and Islamic leadership values—such as trust, fairness, and responsibility—can create a collaborative, dignified, and spiritually meaningful work climate.

On the other hand, this study also reveals that a passive, bureaucratic, and minimal interaction leadership style is a serious obstacle to achieving optimal teacher performance. The absence of the madrasah head in the daily dynamics, the absence of periodic evaluations, and closed communication make teachers feel neglected and lose their direction. The absence of a consistent reward and coaching system also reduces teachers' motivation and confidence in their capacity. When the relationship between leaders and teachers is not based on trust and care, the work environment becomes rigid and loses the collective spirit. Therefore, service-based leadership and Islamic values are not only important, but also an urgent need to revive teacher performance as a whole.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that the "Alone Together" phenomenon among students of the State Islamic University of North Sumatra (UINSU) is significantly influenced by the intensity and patterns of social media use. The findings indicate that the frequency of daily social media use, comfort in self-expression on social media, and the habit of checking notifications during study or college activities are the dominant factors contributing to the formation of the Alone Together culture.

Data collected from 96 respondents revealed that the majority of students spend over 5 hours per day on social media. This reflects a high level of digital engagement among students, which, in turn, impacts the decline in the quality of direct social interaction within the campus environment. While students are physically present together, they tend to be more emotionally and mentally focused on the digital world, resulting in social isolation.

This research makes an important contribution to understanding how social media shapes the behavior and dynamics of social interaction among the younger generation. Additionally, these findings serve as a foundation

for educational and intervention efforts aimed at optimizing social media usage to continue supporting healthy social relationships and preventing social isolation in real spaces.

As a recommendation, further research can expand the scope by exploring other variables such as motivation for social media use, levels of digital addiction, or perceptions of loneliness. A qualitative approach could also be employed to delve deeper into the psychological and emotional aspects of the **Alone Together** phenomenon. Furthermore, a digital literacy program targeting students is necessary to raise awareness of the importance of balancing the virtual world and the real world in forming meaningful social relationships.

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