

Improving Teacher Discipline and Performance through Leadership Analysis of the Head of Madrasah Aliyah

Anis Fauzi¹, Hanafi², Irman Suherman³, R. Siti Pupu Fauziah⁴ Durotun Nasihah⁵, Rifyal Ahmad Lugowi⁶

^{1,2,5,6} Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten, Indonesia; anis.fauzi@uinbanten.ac.id

^{3,4} Universitas Djuanda, Bogor, Indonesia

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

leadership analysis;
teacher discipline;
teacher performance;
madrasah head;
democratic leadership

Article history:

Received 2024-12-08

Revised 2025-06-19

Accepted 2025-06-29

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the leadership practices of madrasah heads in enhancing teacher discipline and performance at Madrasah Aliyah in Cilegon City, Indonesia. A qualitative research approach was employed, utilizing observations, interviews, documentation, triangulation, field notes, and member checks to gather data. The analysis involved qualitative techniques supported by data processing to calculate average response scores from various respondent groups. The findings reveal a positive trend in teacher discipline and performance at Madrasah Aliyah in Cilegon City. Key leadership practices contributing to this improvement include routine attendance checks, weekly evaluations, briefings, and addressing disciplinary issues during staff meetings. However, at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 and Negeri 2, the leadership's impact has been limited. This is attributed to the continuation of previous leadership's programs, with only minimal introduction of new initiatives. While leadership practices have contributed to improved teacher performance across the madrasahs, their effectiveness varies. The continuation of outdated work programs without significant innovation has hindered leadership effectiveness in certain institutions.

Corresponding Author:

Anis Fauzi

Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten, Indonesia; anis.fauzi@uinbanten.ac.id

1. INTRODUCTION

The success of educational institutions, particularly madrasahs, is closely tied to the effectiveness of their leadership. Leadership at the madrasah level is a critical determinant of educational quality, teacher performance, and student outcomes (Bush, 2023). While numerous studies have explored various leadership theories and styles—ranging from transformational and servant leadership to sustainability and crisis leadership—there remains a significant gap in understanding how these leadership paradigms are specifically adapted, practiced, and evaluated within the context of Islamic educational institutions like madrasahs.

Despite a growing body of research on leadership in general education settings, the application and impact of leadership practices in madrasahs, particularly in relation to cultural, religious, and administrative complexities, remain under-explored. This research addresses this gap by investigating the leadership practices of madrasah heads and their effect on school management, teacher performance, and student outcomes. It aims to develop a clearer, more contextualized

understanding of effective leadership in madrasahs, contributing to the literature on educational leadership in faith-based schools.

While existing literature recognizes the significance of transformational, servant, and inclusive leadership in improving school culture and innovation (Ashfaq et al., 2023; Fatima et al., 2023; Siyal et al., 2023), few studies focus specifically on the Islamic madrasah system. Additionally, although some research has addressed leadership training and development in educational institutions (Turner et al., 2022; Lawrason et al., 2023), there is limited evidence on how these programs translate into real leadership practices within madrasahs.

Moreover, the leadership literature often overlooks structural challenges such as policy constraints, financial limitations, and insufficient administrative support in madrasahs (Flessa et al., 2023). There is also a lack of comprehensive models that integrate various leadership styles with the unique socio-religious fabric of madrasahs. This study offers a novel contribution by proposing a multidimensional leadership model tailored for madrasah leadership, integrating transformational, inclusive, and crisis leadership elements with cultural-religious sensitivities.

This study aims to explore and analyze the leadership practices of madrasah heads and examine how these practices influence teacher performance, student learning outcomes, and overall institutional effectiveness. It focuses on identifying the dominant leadership styles commonly used within madrasahs and evaluating their impact in both rural and urban educational contexts. The research further seeks to propose a leadership development model that is contextually grounded, taking into account the unique challenges and opportunities within the Islamic educational system.

To achieve these objectives, the study investigates several key research questions. It examines the types of leadership styles predominantly employed by madrasah heads and how these practices affect teacher performance and student academic achievement. Additionally, the research explores the contextual factors—such as cultural, organizational, and policy-related elements—that either support or hinder effective leadership implementation in madrasahs. A further line of inquiry considers how leadership training and professional development programs can be better designed to meet the specific needs of madrasah leaders in various educational environments.

The significance of this research lies in its potential to make meaningful contributions to both academic literature and practical policy. From a policy perspective, the findings may guide the development of frameworks that strengthen leadership capacities in Islamic educational institutions, especially those in underserved or remote areas. On the practical side, the study provides empirical insights that can inform the design of leadership training and mentoring initiatives, ensuring they are tailored to the realities of madrasah administration and management.

Moreover, by pinpointing leadership practices that enhance teacher motivation, instructional quality, and student achievement, the research offers evidence-based strategies for improving educational outcomes in madrasahs. It also addresses critical issues of gender and equity by highlighting the barriers that women face in attaining leadership positions within Islamic education. In doing so, it contributes to the broader discourse on inclusivity and representation in educational leadership (Bakken et al., 2023; Carr et al., 2023).

Lastly, the study underscores the relevance of sustainability leadership and e-leadership in preparing madrasahs for the demands of the modern educational landscape. As digital transformation and global educational challenges reshape the way schools operate, madrasah leaders must be equipped with the skills to lead sustainably and innovatively (Chamakiotis et al., 2021; Eustachio et al., 2023). By bridging theoretical perspectives with practical implications, this research sets the stage for future efforts to enhance leadership quality and institutional resilience within the madrasah system.

The complexity of educational leadership in madrasahs is intensified by factors such as ideological commitments, limited resources, gender dynamics, and shifting pedagogical demands.

Previous studies have shown that transformational leadership fosters innovative work behavior, especially in supportive climates (Taha et al., 2023), and that inclusive leadership improves subordinate performance (Siyal et al., 2023). However, the specific application of these leadership styles within madrasah contexts requires further empirical validation.

In addition, the co-leadership model and the concept of collective competence, though recognized in some secular education systems (Yada & Jäppinen, 2022), remain largely unexplored in madrasahs. This study, therefore, examines how joint leadership efforts between madrasah heads and supervisory bodies can foster institutional development and sustainability. Furthermore, it considers how policy reforms and leadership interventions can address challenges such as workload, lack of autonomy, and leadership burnout (Horwood et al., 2022; Ibrahim & Aljneibi, 2022).

In conclusion, the leadership of madrasah heads is pivotal in achieving educational excellence. However, gaps remain in understanding the unique leadership needs of madrasahs, especially regarding training, gender inclusion, policy integration, and sustainability. This research endeavors to fill those gaps by offering an in-depth, context-specific analysis of madrasah leadership practices and proposing frameworks for improved leadership development and school management.

2. METHOD

This research is a case study, which seeks to analyze as much data as possible on the subject being researched (Deddy Mulyana, 2018). The key informant in this study is the leadership of the head of the madrasah, from the informant is referred to the next informant on a rolling basis. Documentation and observations at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 and Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Cilegon City are secondary data sources for this research (Sugiyono, 2018). Improvement of teacher discipline and performance is the subject of the study.

The research data was collected using interview, observation, documentation, triangulation, field notes, and member checks. Interviews were conducted with the head of the madrasah, deputy head of the madrasah, educators, education staff, and madrasah committees at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 and Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Cilegon City. Observations were made at the research location to obtain information about the ins and outs of the leadership of the head of the madrasah. Documentation is used to obtain written data, archives and documents. Triangulation is carried out to match the data obtained to produce more accurate data. Member Check is a verification of data provided and approved by the informant. Field notes in the form of recordings of what a researcher hears, sees, feels, and thinks, to collect the latest information related to the research process

The resource persons in this study are: two madrasah heads, two deputy heads of madrasah for curriculum affairs, two teachers of religious sciences, two teachers of general subjects, two education staff, and four student representatives. The sources of this research totaled 14 people, as shown in the table and source code below.

Table 1. The Resource Persons

No.	Category	MAN 1 Kota Cilegon	MAN 2 Kota Cilegon
1	Madrasah Head	Dra. Hj. Maryati, M. Pd	Sumarno, M.Pkim
2	Deputy Heads of Madrasah for Curriculum Affairs	Rasmanto, S.Pd	H. Ajidullah, S.Pd
3	Teachers of Religious Science	Sugiharti, M.Pd.I	Rahmatullah, S.Pd.I
4	Teachers of General Subject	Amir, S.Pd.I	Hj. Latifah, S.Pd.I
5	Education Staff	H. Rudi Hermawan, S.E	Hidayatullah, S.Sos)
6	Komite Madrasah	Asep Saifullah, S. Ag., M. Si	Drs. Khatib Ali Khasan
7	Student Representative	Ahmad Mustofa Siti Halimah	M. Iqbal Nisa Nurul Jannah

The data from interviews, observations, documentation, triangulation, field notes, member checks and field notes collected during the research process were processed and analyzed descriptively to understand the ins and outs of the contribution of the leadership of the head of the madrasah in improving the discipline and performance of teachers at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 and Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Cilegon City.

3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

3.1 *The Role of Madrasah Leadership in Enhancing Discipline at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Cilegon City*

According to Mr. Rudi's admission, as the head of administration, the efforts of the head of the madrasah in improving work discipline by means of controlling, checking attendance, if there are violations submitted in the meeting forum, holding briefings and evaluations at the end of the week (Rudi, 2023). The head of the madrasah seeks to improve the work discipline of educators and education personnel (Maryati, 2023). Indisciplinary actions occur due to several factors. The head of the madrasah assessed that the factors of oneself and the environment (Maryati, 2023). Factors from oneself, such as a lack of awareness. Another factor is due to the influence of the work environment and leadership. Factors that support the enforcement of work discipline are motivation, rules, awareness of duties and responsibilities as well as habituation (Sugiati, 2023).

The results of the interview with Mr. Rudi stated that the head of the madrasah has become a role model in work discipline, controlling the activities and presence of his employees, especially his high social spirit and also communication that continues to be established (Rudi, 2023). Other education personnel (Rasmanto, 2023) explained that the leadership of the head of Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Cilegon City could provide a good example for educators and education staff. When subordinates give advice, he is open, and when they are outstanding he gives rewards in the form of praise, charters or materials (Rudi, 2023).

His type of leadership is firm and flexible. Firmly, when someone violates, he reprimands and takes action, flexibly, he uses ethics to humanize humans humanely. The social spirit is also good, namely maintaining friendship with subordinates (Amir, 2023) which was also agreed by Mrs. Sugiarti that the current leadership is firm, as it is and transparent (Sugiati, 2023). In general, the current leadership is almost as dedicated to educators and education personnel as the previous leadership. The head of the madrasah currently has a program to further maximize the potential of children in the academic field, because the extra-curricular and art fields are quite maximized. The current leadership style of madrasah heads is democratic, flexible, and simple (Rasmanto, 2023). The attendance schedule at MAN 1 Cilegon is 07.00 and all school residents must be present at the madrasah, be it the head of the madrasah, educators, educators

The attitude of a leader will be influential in facing several aspirations, ideas and criticism from his subordinates. Responding to this, the head of Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Cilegon City is open, whatever they suggest, as long as the goal is to make the madrasah better and the funds are sufficient, he supports (Maryati, 2023). An open and transparent attitude is carried out to build a comfortable working climate. The head of the madrasah tries to maintain communication and involve educators and education staff in all matters. He is willing to accept aspirations and criticism from subordinates very openly and provide support if it is good for the interests of the madrasah (Rudi, 2023). The work climate that I feel is comfortable, and we help with monthly madrasah activities such as routine recitation, we are involved as resource persons (Atikoh, 2023). The work climate created is very good, because every month recital activities are held alternately, namely between teachers and students, between teachers and madrasah committees, and between teachers and guardians of students (Amir, 2023).

The school committee is involved in the preparation of the vision and mission of the madrasah and we even contribute ideas to discuss. We communicate first to overcome problems in the madrasah. This communication is one of the supervisions of the head of the madrasah towards us (Atikoh, 2023). The head of the madrasah involves several deputy heads to convey aspirations that will become a new policy. Then the policy is communicated to educators and education personnel in a forum. How to communicate it is held every two weeks, namely the evaluation of reports from student attendance and various problems in the classroom (Maryati, 2023).

The evaluation carried out by the head of the Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Cilegon City is using a control book, continuing to supervise directly or indirectly. For example, monitoring the attendance data of educators and education personnel (Maryati, 2023). The leadership of the head of Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Cilegon is quite effective because his work program has begun to be implemented (Amir, 2023), and it is in accordance with the regulations, as well as strong control from the head of the madrasah (Rudi, 2023).

3.2 The Role of Madrasah Heads' Leadership in Enhancing Teacher Performance at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Cilegon City

The efforts undertaken by the head of Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Cilegon City to enhance teacher performance are multifaceted and proactive. These efforts include providing motivation, meeting the needs of educators, conducting regular performance assessments, and supervising teaching activities. Furthermore, the madrasah head actively encourages teachers to participate in training sessions, seminars, and other self-development programs, while also ensuring that the knowledge gained from such activities is shared with the wider educational staff (Maryati, 2023). To further boost motivation, the head of the madrasah offers rewards in the form of verbal praise, certificates of appreciation, and, in some cases, material incentives (Rasmanto, 2023b).

Overall, the general performance of teachers at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Cilegon City is considered satisfactory. Teachers carry out their responsibilities in alignment with institutional policies, and there is a strong sense of collegiality among staff. Educators demonstrate teamwork, mutual care, and a supportive working environment (Maryati, 2023). Each academic year begins with the preparation of essential teaching documents such as lesson plans and syllabi, indicating a commitment to structured and goal-oriented teaching (Rasmanto, 2023).

To ensure the smooth delivery of the curriculum, educators and staff are expected to adapt to ongoing changes in national education policies. In response to the introduction of the Independent Curriculum, the head of the madrasah has facilitated technical guidance sessions aimed at equipping teachers with the skills needed to implement the new approach effectively (Maryati, 2023). Additionally, annual planning meetings are held at the beginning of each academic year to establish teaching programs and plan school activities, including budget allocation and the formation of supporting committees (Rasmanto, 2023b).

However, despite these structured efforts, the supervisory practices at the madrasah remain an area requiring improvement. Teaching aids and other administrative tools created by educators are not consistently reviewed or evaluated by the head of the madrasah. Moreover, classroom supervision is often not conducted during live instructional sessions, which reduces the effectiveness of feedback and the ability to address pedagogical issues in real time (Sugiati, 2023). These gaps in monitoring limit the potential for comprehensive quality assurance and instructional improvement.

Several internal and external factors also influence teacher performance. Internally, challenges such as low motivation, procrastination, and limited digital literacy hinder some educators' effectiveness in the classroom. Externally, infrastructure-related issues—most notably the lack of projectors and other basic technological tools in each classroom—negatively affect the teaching and learning process (Sugiati, 2023). These constraints reveal the need for targeted interventions to

improve both individual performance and institutional support systems.

Nevertheless, there are numerous strengths that support positive teacher performance. Many educators at the institution hold at least a bachelor's degree, and there is a pervasive sense of professionalism grounded in high job expectations. Strong collaboration among colleagues, mutual assistance, and a culture of shared responsibility are evident throughout the school. Additionally, the provision of performance-based rewards continues to serve as a motivational driver and a form of institutional recognition for educators' dedication and hard work (Maryati, 2023).

In summary, the leadership of the madrasah head plays a pivotal role in fostering an environment that supports teacher performance. While efforts in training facilitation, motivation, and planning have yielded positive results, improvements in supervision and infrastructure are necessary to sustain long-term progress. Continued investment in both human and physical resources, along with consistent leadership engagement, will be essential for further elevating the quality of teaching and learning at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Cilegon City.

3.3 Enhancing Teacher Discipline and Performance Through the Leadership of the Madrasah Head at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Cilegon City

Overall, the level of discipline at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Cilegon City is relatively strong. However, issues persist in areas such as attendance accountability, particularly regarding the failure of some educators and staff to properly report or confirm their absences. To address these challenges, the head of the madrasah has implemented a series of initiatives aimed at gradually strengthening workplace discipline. These efforts include motivating staff to boost morale, offering personal attention and support, fostering a sense of connection through home visits, and consistently supervising and evaluating staff behavior. Additionally, a reward and punishment system has been applied, guided by the regulations on employee discipline outlined in Government Regulation No. 94 of 2021. This structured approach reinforces accountability while promoting a positive and respectful professional environment.

3.4 The Role of Madrasah Leadership in Enhancing Discipline at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Cilegon City

At Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Cilegon City, the head of the madrasah emphasizes discipline as a foundational principle for achieving institutional goals. As a leader, he positions himself as a role model, demonstrating strong work ethics and punctuality. The enforcement of discipline is guided by both government regulations and internal policies (Sudrajat, 2022). However, discipline is not enforced merely through formal rules but through the cultivation of personal commitment among educators and staff. The head of the madrasah focuses on developing this commitment to ensure that every individual adheres to the established standards and contributes positively to the institution's progress (Latifah, 2023).

One of the key initiatives implemented to improve discipline involves encouraging staff to arrive before school hours begin. The head of the madrasah sets an example by arriving early himself and greeting students at the gate. He takes a proactive yet respectful approach to discipline, personally addressing staff who arrive late by observing school activity through CCTV and engaging them in private conversations (Hidayatullah, 2023; Ajidullah, 2023b). His consistent presence and involvement help reinforce expectations and set a standard for behavior.

Beyond punctuality, the head of the madrasah plays a significant role in modeling religious and character-building activities. Each morning, he actively participates in congregational dhuha prayers and dhikr, alongside students and staff, creating a spiritually grounded school culture. He also introduced a daily program that includes welcoming students, followed by the morning spiritual routine, reinforcing the value of discipline through both spiritual and academic practices. In

addition, he regularly monitors and guides the performance and work discipline of teachers and staff (Ihsanudin, 2023).

His leadership is rooted in principles of service, empathy, and inclusivity. Recognizing that differences in opinions, attitudes, and approaches are natural in a diverse work environment, he maintains an open and transparent leadership style. He encourages educators and staff to voice their aspirations, suggestions, and even criticisms, with the belief that collective input leads to institutional progress (Sumarno, 2023). This approach fosters a sense of belonging and shared ownership among the school community.

Since assuming the leadership role only one semester ago, the head of the madrasah has focused on building a positive work climate. According to Mr. Ihsanuddin, the environment under his leadership feels comfortable and collaborative, as the leader is still in a phase of adjustment and is receptive to feedback. Similarly, Mr. Hidayatullah noted that the head does not exhibit authoritarian tendencies. Instead, he communicates new policies, such as those related to discipline, through discussion and socialization. For example, an initial plan required all staff to arrive at 06:30; however, after receiving concerns from teachers, the policy was revised so that only those scheduled to greet students arrive early, while others begin at 07:00.

The leadership style of the madrasah head is best described as democratic. When formulating policies or addressing challenges, he ensures that the process involves consultation with all relevant stakeholders. This participatory approach aims to make every member of the staff feel responsible for implementing shared decisions (Sumarno, 2023). In cases of conflict, he prefers to resolve issues privately with the individuals involved. However, if the issue involves a larger group, he conducts coaching sessions at the end of each semester to collectively address and resolve concerns. While he occasionally makes unilateral decisions under urgent circumstances, he still communicates these decisions transparently to the entire school community (Ihsanudin, 2023).

Importantly, the head of the madrasah emphasizes that every decision is made with the institution's best interests in mind—not personal ones. He consistently reminds educators and staff that the goal is to build a collective commitment to improving the madrasah (Hidayatullah, 2023). This collaborative spirit is further supported by the active involvement of the school committee. According to Mr. Rahmatullah, a member of the committee, discussions around the madrasah's vision and mission involve collective decision-making. He acknowledges that decisions made through consensus are more sustainable. The synergy between the madrasah leadership, the committee, and the teachers' council is well-established, creating a strong foundation for harmonious and effective school governance (Rahmatullah, 2023).

3.5 Leadership of madrasah heads in improving teacher performance at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Cilegon City

In general, the picture of teacher performance at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Cilegon City is quite good and still needs to be improved. This can be seen from the number of students who participated in various fields of competition and got results from the competitions they participated in, meaning that the teacher's performance was quite good (Sumarno, 2023). Apart from his good performance competence, Mr. Ajid, as the deputy head of curriculum, said that learning administration is an obligation for every teacher during the implementation of the independent curriculum. Previously making lesson plans, now it has changed to a teaching module. Therefore, every teacher is required to make the teaching module which is a must to fulfil his duties and responsibilities administratively (Ajidullah, 2023).

With a fairly good predicate, they should actually be more motivated in self-development. To achieve this degree, the head of the madrasah seeks to provide encouragement and motivation and encourage participation in seminars or workshops according to needs. In preparing a learning

program, especially at the beginning of the new school year, the head of the madrasah held a meeting to discuss things that must be prepared by all teachers. Then to prepare for good teacher conditions and good performance, the head of the madrasah holds training or workshops to support the learning program in the new school year (Ajidullah, 2023a).

Mr. Ihsanuddin, as a teacher, said that during the process of teaching and learning activities, teachers are required to make a daily report on what is done on that day and report to the head of the madrasah for evaluation (Ihsanudin, 2023). With the report, all teachers are trying to stay productive and improve their performance. As a result of this report, the head of the madrasah can assess the performance of teachers in terms of reports, activeness, discipline, and several other aspects. To continue to monitor and see the development of teacher performance, the head of the madrasah holds a meeting once a month to see and evaluate the performance of teachers and motivate and accept various aspirations from teachers to support improvement in their performance (Latifah, 2023).

In improving teacher performance, the head of the madrasah has carried out socialization, workshops several times, included teachers in training and training activities and supervised once a year to support the improvement of teacher performance, brievieng to continue to monitor the achievement and improvement of teacher performance. When teachers understand their duties and responsibilities, it is hoped that their performance will also improve (Hidayatullah, 2023).

Related to how to form responsibility, here are the results of an interview with an educator (Ihsanudin, 2023). That is by preparing everything needed in the learning process the day before, and still having to learn to find the easiest steps so that the planned learning goals can be delivered. As an education staff (Hidayatullah, 2023), it has its own way of forming an attitude of responsiveness, namely in working intended as worship.

3.6 The leadership of the head of the madrasah in improving the discipline and performance of teachers at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Cilegon City

The findings of this study reveal that the head of Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Cilegon City has implemented a range of strategic efforts to enhance teacher performance. These include providing motivation and encouragement, offering regular guidance and mentoring, and facilitating teacher participation in professional development activities such as government-sponsored training and workshops organized by the madrasah itself. Additionally, the madrasah head ensures the provision of adequate facilities, conducts supervision and monitoring, assesses teacher performance regularly, and delivers evaluations along with performance-based recognition or rewards. These actions are aimed at fostering a supportive and productive teaching environment.

One notable finding is that teachers at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Cilegon City generally demonstrate a high level of enthusiasm and motivation to participate in training and workshops. With the increasing accessibility of online platforms, many professional development activities are now conducted virtually, removing traditional barriers such as distance and time. This flexibility has contributed significantly to improving teacher participation and skill enhancement.

The leadership style adopted by the madrasah head is predominantly democratic. This is reflected in the way teachers and education staff are encouraged to express their opinions, provide input, and share constructive feedback in a respectful and open environment. Such a leadership approach fosters collaboration, inclusivity, and a shared sense of responsibility in the decision-making process (Salsabila, 2023). It aligns well with the broader goals of educational leadership that prioritize the empowerment of educators and the continuous development of institutional performance.

Furthermore, the study supports existing literature indicating that leadership significantly influences teacher discipline. Effective leadership not only instills respect for institutional norms but also reinforces adherence to rules and responsibilities. Teachers are more likely to demonstrate obedience to established policies and accept accountability for their actions when they are part of a leadership culture that emphasizes fairness, transparency, and mutual respect (Pane, 2022).

Although the level of teacher discipline at Madrasah Aliyah 1 Cilegon City is generally satisfactory, there are still areas that require improvement—particularly in terms of licensing and formal leave procedures. Some educators fail to properly report their absences or obtain permission in accordance with institutional policies, indicating a need for stricter enforcement or clearer communication of expectations.

In conclusion, the study highlights the significant role of leadership in shaping teacher performance and discipline. By adopting a democratic leadership style and actively supporting teacher development, the head of the madrasah has created a more engaged, motivated, and accountable teaching workforce. These findings reinforce the importance of leadership strategies that are participative, development-oriented, and focused on continuous improvement.

A summary of the research findings is presented in the following table format (not included here).

Table 2. Informants and Summary of Findings

No	Summary	MAN 1 Kota Cilegon	MAN 2 Kota Cilegon
1	Leadership Style	Democratic	Democratic
2	Leadership Character	kinship, flexible, simple, and communicative	open, communicative, innovative and provide the best service
3	personality	firm and flexible	Gentle, setting an example with actions
4	Discipline	Pretty good, it's just that it's still weak in licensing	It is still weak and needs to be improved, especially in terms of attendance.
5	character of the head Firm	Firm	Gentle
6	focus of activities	prioritizing a family approach	focuses on building commitment and implementing a point system

The findings of this study reveal that both madrasah heads at MAN 1 and MAN 2 Cilegon City consistently apply a democratic leadership style in managing their institutions. This aligns with the view of Murtado (2019), who states that democratic leadership emphasizes cooperation and coordination among subordinates. In this model, leaders remain open to individual differences, welcome constructive suggestions and criticisms, and maintain a strong focus on the engagement of each group member in institutional activities.

This leadership approach is also supported by the theoretical framework of George R. Terry, who defines leadership as the process of influencing others in the pursuit of organizational goals. According to Terry, effective leadership involves motivating followers, enhancing group performance, and shaping institutional culture (Kadim & Arfan, 2011). These principles are reflected in the practices observed at both madrasahs, where leaders influence teacher behavior and cultivate a collaborative environment to improve overall school performance.

The leadership traits demonstrated by the madrasah heads—particularly their flexibility, openness, familial approach, and willingness to innovate—also reflect the views of Setiawan, who describes leadership as the skillful art of using personal influence to guide others toward predefined

objectives (Setiawan, n.d.). Similarly, Spears and Lawrence (2002) argue that leadership involves providing structure, coordination, and direction to individuals or groups in order to meet shared institutional goals. These perspectives resonate with the leadership practices observed in the study, where madrasah heads act as facilitators of collaboration, rather than authoritative figures.

Further supporting this characterization, the personality traits of the madrasah heads—firmness in decision-making combined with a gentle, approachable demeanour—echo C. Turney's concept of leadership. As cited in Robbins (2002), Turney emphasizes that leadership is both a managerial and interpersonal process that involves making decisive choices while communicating them in a socially sensitive and inclusive manner. The balance of decisiveness and empathy observed in both madrasah heads underlines the effectiveness of their leadership styles in promoting institutional discipline and cohesion.

Practically, this research contributes to a better understanding of how democratic leadership supports the enhancement of discipline among teachers, staff, and students. At MAN 1 Cilegon City, the madrasah head enforces discipline by offering motivational support, giving personal attention to staff, building positive relationships, providing supervision, conducting evaluations, and applying a reward-and-punishment system. Meanwhile, the head of MAN 2 Cilegon City adopts a slightly different yet complementary approach by emphasizing personal commitment, cultivating awareness of responsibilities, and establishing a structured point system for attendance. In addition, he serves as a role model through punctuality and participation in school activities, regularly offers guidance, and conducts thorough evaluations to reinforce accountability.

Together, these findings underscore the central role of leadership in shaping the disciplinary culture and professional conduct within madrasahs. By applying democratic principles and maintaining a balance of firmness and compassion, madrasah heads create an environment where rules are respected, collaboration is encouraged, and educators are empowered to improve their performance. This study affirms the relevance of participative leadership in religious educational contexts and provides a practical reference for developing leadership strategies aimed at institutional improvement.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that both Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 and Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Cilegon City have adopted a democratic leadership style, characterized by openness, flexibility, familial interactions, innovation, and effective communication. This leadership approach has been instrumental in fostering collaboration and building a supportive educational environment. At MAN 1, the madrasah head has focused on improving teacher discipline as a transitional goal, using gradual enforcement methods that include motivation, personal engagement, home visits, supervision, evaluations, and a structured reward-and-punishment system. Similarly, efforts to enhance teacher performance involve motivation, participation in professional development activities, provision of facilities, supervision, performance assessment, and appreciation for achievements. However, the overall impact of leadership effectiveness remains limited, as many of the initiatives are still ongoing and reflect continuity from prior administrative periods. One notable limitation of this research is its short observation period, which does not allow for a comprehensive evaluation of long-term outcomes. Furthermore, the study focuses only on two institutions, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings. Future research is encouraged to explore the long-term effects of democratic leadership on teacher performance and discipline across a broader range of madrasahs, and to assess how leadership transitions influence the sustainability of work programs and institutional culture.

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