

Performance Management Strategy in Increasing Competitive Advantage in Islamic Educational Institutions

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Received: 02, 2025. Revised: 03, 2025. Accepted: 04, 2025. Published: 07, 2025

ABSTRACT

Islamic educational institutions face challenges in enhancing their competitiveness amid intense competition, both with public institutions and among fellow Islamic educational institutions. Effective performance management is key to building competitive advantage, encompassing not only academic achievement but also spiritual values aligned with Islamic teachings. This study aims to identify and analyze effective performance management strategies to support competitive advantage in Islamic educational institutions through a systematic literature review (SLR) approach using the PRISMA method. The findings indicate that competency-based curriculum development, leadership capacity building, a transparent and fair performance evaluation system, and strengthening networks and partnerships are essential elements in creating and maintaining the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions. Implementing these four strategies synergistically can enhance the quality of educational services, strengthen reputation, and attract students and parents alike. Thus, this research provides a comprehensive guide for leaders of Islamic educational institutions to achieve sustainable competitive advantage in a dynamic educational environment.

Keywords: Performance Management, Competitive Advantage, Islamic Educational Institutions, Network Strengthening, PRISMA.

ABSTRAK

Lembaga pendidikan Islam menghadapi tantangan untuk meningkatkan daya saing mereka di tengah persaingan ketat, baik dengan lembaga umum maupun sesama lembaga pendidikan Islam. Manajemen kinerja yang efektif menjadi kunci dalam membangun keunggulan kompetitif, yang tidak hanya mencakup pencapaian akademik tetapi juga nilai-nilai spiritual sesuai ajaran Islam. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi dan menganalisis strategi manajemen kinerja yang efektif untuk mendukung keunggulan bersaing di lembaga pendidikan Islam melalui pendekatan *systematic literature review* (SLR) menggunakan metode PRISMA. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa pengembangan kurikulum berbasis kompetensi, peningkatan kapasitas kepemimpinan, sistem penilaian kinerja yang transparan dan adil, serta penguatan jaringan dan kemitraan merupakan elemen penting dalam menciptakan dan mempertahankan daya saing lembaga pendidikan Islam. Implementasi keempat strategi ini secara sinergis dapat meningkatkan kualitas layanan pendidikan, memperkuat reputasi, dan menarik minat siswa maupun orang tua. Dengan demikian, penelitian ini menawarkan panduan komprehensif bagi pemimpin lembaga pendidikan Islam untuk meraih keunggulan kompetitif berkelanjutan dalam lingkungan pendidikan yang dinamis.

Kata Kunci: Manajemen Kinerja, Keunggulan Bersaing, Lembaga Pendidikan Islam, Penguatan Jaringan, PRISMA.

INTRODUCTION

In this era of globalization, Islamic educational institutions have faced significant pressures to improve the quality of education and enhance their competitiveness, both nationally and globally.¹ Competition in the education sector has become increasingly fierce, not only between Islamic educational institutions and general institutions but also among Islamic institutions themselves. This requires these institutions to manage their resources more effectively, especially in terms of performance management.²

The success of Islamic educational institutions in achieving a competitive advantage is heavily influenced by their ability to compete, thus necessitating specific strategies to achieve the desired goals and benefits.³ Gaining a competitive edge in Islamic education institutions becomes more challenging due to rapid changes, technological developments, and unpredictable societal behaviors. In the era of globalization, these challenges demand management that can develop the institution both internally and externally to face competition. Efficient management not only maintains the stability and sustainability of the institution but also strengthens its position amidst competition. Competition becomes a necessity, and achieving excellence is its goal.⁴

Performance management has become a crucial element that determines operational effectiveness, the quality of educational services, and the achievement of the institution's mission. In the environment of Islamic educational institutions, performance management is not only focused on achieving superior academic results but also includes spiritual and ethical values in harmony with Islamic principles.⁵ The development of strategies and competitive advantages in Islamic educational institutions aims to maximize targeted market potential. Changes in this context require management to be more professional, capable of recognizing the institution's competitive advantages, and implementing strategies that align with those advantages.⁶

In Islam, competition is not prohibited. On the contrary, Muslims are encouraged to compete in goodness. However, this competition must be conducted in a proper, honest manner, free from deceit and dishonesty. The goal is for everyone to achieve the best results while maintaining ethical values and honesty.⁷ In the general educational context, the concept of competitive advantage refers to an institution's ability to offer better value to its students

¹ Dewi Hayati Nufus, Abdul Mu'ti, and Alpha Amirrachman, "Globalisasi Dan Pembelajaran Sosial-Emosional Berbasis Pendidikan Islam :," *NUKHBATUL 'ULUM: Jurnal Bidang Kajian Islam* 9, no. 2 (December 22, 2023): 264–87, <https://doi.org/10.36701/nukhbah.v9i2.1009>.

² Nenny Kurniaty Lisfa, "Pendidikan Islam Di Indonesia: Problem Masa Kini Dan Perspektif Masa Depan," *Fastabiqulkhairaat* 4, no. 1 (July 3, 2023): 1–18.

³ Rista Bintara et al., "Management of Green Competitive Advantage: A Systematic Literature Review and Research Agenda," *Economies* 11, no. 2 (February 2023): 66, <https://doi.org/10.3390/economies11020066>.

⁴ Xiaobin Zhang et al., "Open Innovation and Sustainable Competitive Advantage: The Role of Organizational Learning," *Technological Forecasting and Social Change* 186 (January 1, 2023): 122114, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2022.122114>.

⁵ Ani Apiyani, "Optimalisasi Manajemen Sumber Daya Manusia Dalam Pendidikan Islam," *Jurnal Tahsinia* 5, no. 4 (2024): 499–511, <https://doi.org/10.57171/jt.v5i4.198>.

⁶ Didit Darmawan and Elodie Grenier, "Competitive Advantage and Service Marketing Mix," *Journal of Social Science Studies (JOS3)* 1, no. 2 (July 28, 2021): 75–80, <https://doi.org/10.56348/jos3.v1i2.9>.

⁷ Asrulla Asrulla et al., "Membangun Competitive Advantage Sekolah Dalam Menghadapi Tantangan Globalisasi," *Jurnal Genta Mulia* 15, no. 2 (June 28, 2024): 1–10.

compared to other institutions.⁸ This advantage can be achieved through various means, such as improving teaching quality, providing superior facilities, or having innovative programs.⁹ In Islamic educational institutions, increasing competitive advantage not only relies on academic aspects but also plays a role in instilling strong Islamic values in the learning process and shaping students' character in accordance with Islamic principles.¹⁰ Therefore, effective performance management in Islamic educational institutions can play a strategic role in building a competitive advantage.

Previous literature reviews show that performance management in educational institutions has been widely studied by researchers. According to Aswaruddin et al. (2024),¹¹ performance management helps Islamic educational institutions improve human resource quality to achieve goals in accordance with market needs. By implementing performance management in Islamic educational institutions, it is expected to create an organization focused on quality and a strong quality culture. This is also expected to provide a competitive advantage so that institutions can compete with other educational institutions. The research by Syahrin and Salehudin (2024) emphasizes that improving the quality of education requires sustained efforts to strengthen performance management through collaboration among all involved parties.¹² However, research conducted by Estetika et al. (2022) reveals that performance management in Islamic educational institutions is often merely formalities for promotion purposes.¹³ As a result, many Muhammadiyah schools, especially in rural areas of Wonogiri, are considered less competitive, lagging behind in competition with public schools, and receiving less appreciation from the community. This is also supported by Ghozi's (2020) research,¹⁴ which shows that the increasing number of educational institutions triggers a high level of competition. To keep madrasahs or schools attractive to students, school principals need to strengthen competitive advantage by designing and implementing innovative programs that are unique and differentiate their institutions from other

⁸ Kartini Dwi Hasanah et al., "Analisis Aspek-Aspek Keunggulan Daya Saing Dalam Meningkatkan Kualitas Pendidikan Di SDI Al-Akbar Bangsal," *Jurnal Riset Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (JURMLA)* 4, no. 2 (August 8, 2024): 107–16, <https://doi.org/10.32665/jurmia.v4i2.2420>.

⁹ Fazli Abdillah, "Peran Perguruan Tinggi Dalam Meningkatkan Kualitas Sumber Daya Manusia Di Indonesia," *EDUCAZIONE: Jurnal Multidisiplin* 1, no. 1 (August 4, 2024): 13–24, <https://doi.org/10.37985/educazione.v1i1.4>.

¹⁰ Yusri M. Daud, "Problematisasi Dan Urgensi Kepala Sekolah Dalam Mengimplementasikan Nila-Nilai Manajerial Di Lembaga Pendidikan Islam," *Jurnal Review Pendidikan Dan Pengajaran* 7, no. 3 (May 29, 2024): 6253–62, <https://doi.org/10.31004/jrpp.v7i3.33729>.

¹¹ Aswaruddin Aswaruddin et al., "Manajemen Kinerja : Meningkatkan Competitive Advantage Pada Lembaga Pendidikan Islam," *Jurnal Publikasi Ilmu Manajemen* 3, no. 1 (2024): 151–59, <https://doi.org/10.55606/jupiman.v3i1.3287>.

¹² Syahrin Syahrin and Mohammad Salehudin, "Manajemen Kinerja Guru di Sekolah Menengah Pertama Negeri 1 Karanganyar Kecamatan Karanganyar Kabupaten Kutai Timur," *El-Idare: Journal of Islamic Education Management* 10, no. 1 (April 19, 2024): 42–52, <https://doi.org/10.19109/elidare.v10i1.21975>.

¹³ Rio Estetika, Imron Rosyadi, and Muh Nur Rochim Maksud, "Manajemen Kinerja Dalam Mencapai Competitive Advantage Sekolah Muhammadiyah," *Jurnal Basicedu* 6, no. 3 (May 1, 2022): 5146–56, <https://doi.org/10.31004/basicedu.v6i3.3064>.

¹⁴ Moh. Ghozi, "Manajemen Kinerja Kepala Sekolah Dalam Meningkatkan Competitive Advantage (Keunggulan Bersaing) Pada Lembaga Pendidikan Islam (Studi Multi Kasus Di Man 2 Kota Kediri Dan Man 2 Tulungagung)" (Thesis, Tulungagung, IAIN Tulungagung, 2020), <https://doi.org/10/DAFTAR%20RUJUKAN.pdf>.

educational entities. However, in reality, according to Zarkasyi (2016),¹⁵ performance management is still less known and has not been optimally implemented in many educational institutions, especially in Islamic educational institutions. Nevertheless, studies on performance management in Islamic educational institutions aimed at increasing competitive advantage through performance management strategies have been widely conducted. However, there is a relevant and urgent research gap to explore how effective performance management can be applied in Islamic educational institutions to create and sustain competitive advantage. This article aims to fill that gap by conducting a systematic literature review to identify and analyze effective performance management strategies that can enhance competitive advantage in Islamic educational institutions.

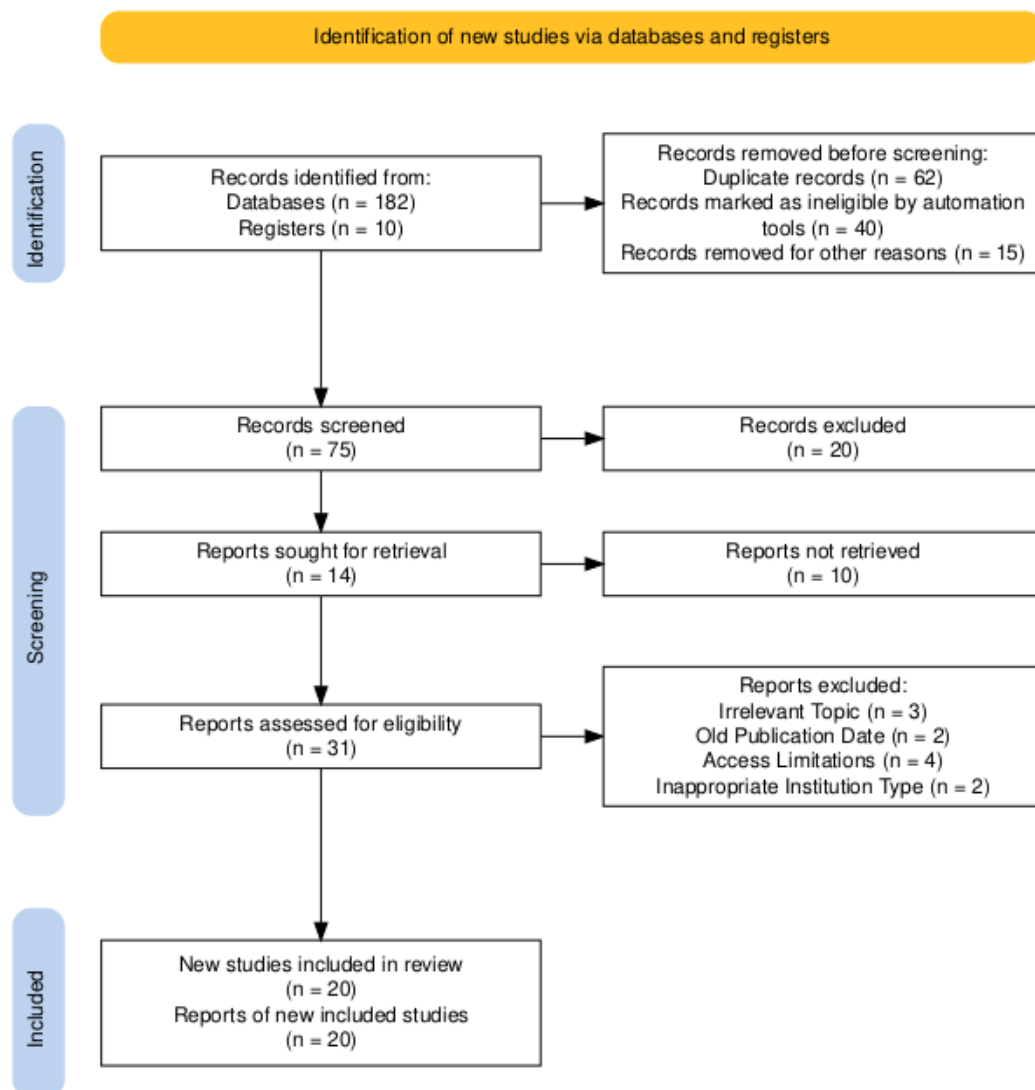


Figure 1. Article Selection Flow Using PRISMA

¹⁵ Ahmad Zarkasyi, "Manajemen Kinerja Dalam Tafsir Al-Qur'ân Dan Hadist Pendekatan Filsafat Tematik," *Qolamuna : Jurnal Studi Islam* 2, no. 1 (December 12, 2016): 133–50.

METHOD

The method used in this article is a systematic literature review with the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) approach. In this process, the author conducts a literature search on Google Scholar using the keywords “Islamic educational institutions,” “education performance management,” and “competitive advantage.” The literature found is then selected based on inclusion criteria, namely studies focusing on performance management in Islamic educational institutions and possessing relevant empirical data or findings. After the screening process, articles that meet the inclusion criteria are analyzed in depth to identify trends, challenges, and effective performance management strategies to improve the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions. More detailed information about the article selection flow using the PRISMA method can be seen in the figure 1.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Effective and collaboration-based performance management plays an important role in improving the quality of Islamic education. However, based on the review of various previous research literature, there are several main challenges in its implementation. First, performance management is often carried out merely as a formality, focusing more on promotion interests rather than on improving education quality. Second, competition among educational institutions is becoming more intense with the increasing number of institutions, so school principals need to design innovative programs to remain attractive to students. Third, the understanding and application of performance management are still not optimal in many Islamic educational institutions. Therefore, concrete steps are needed to address these challenges and strengthen the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions.

Effective Performance Management Strategies to Enhance Competitive Advantage

1. Development of a Competency-Based Curriculum

The development of a competency-based curriculum emphasizes designing educational programs that prioritize mastery of specific skills and knowledge. This approach includes identifying core competencies, developing suitable learning designs, and implementing effective learning management strategies to promote individual progress and assessment.¹⁶ The competency-based curriculum contains standards of abilities that must be achieved in each subject.¹⁷ This curriculum focuses on maximizing students’ abilities and potentials, helping them build the knowledge they learn, and encouraging the application of that knowledge in daily life.¹⁸

¹⁶ Loso Judijanto and Siska Dwi Yulianti, “Analisis Bibliometrik Tentang Pengembangan Kurikulum Berbasis Kompetensi Dalam Konteks Era Digital,” *Sanskara Pendidikan Dan Pengajaran* 2, no. 02 (May 31, 2024): 106–14, <https://doi.org/10.58812/spp.v2i02.390>.

¹⁷ Eldina Sarah Nababan, “Peran Kurikulum Berbasis Kompetensi Untuk Meningkatkan Mutu Pendidikan Di Lembaga Pendidikan Menengah,” *Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan Dan Sosial* 3, no. 1 (April 30, 2024): 55–61, <https://doi.org/10.58540/jipsi.v3i1.536>.

¹⁸ Bustanul Arifin and Abdul Mu’id, “Pengembangan Kurikulum Berbasis Keterampilan Dalam Menghadapi Tuntutan Kompetensi Abad 21,” *DAARUS TSAQOFAH Jurnal Pendidikan Pascasarjana Universitas Qomaruddin* 1, no. 2 (July 7, 2024): 118–28, <https://doi.org/10.62740/jppuqg.v1i2.23>.

This curriculum is designed to improve students' learning outcomes through personalized learning approaches, increase student participation, and prepare them to face the demands of the working world. The development of a competency-based curriculum becomes an effective performance management strategy in enhancing competitive advantage because this approach is designed to produce graduates who not only master theory but also possess practical skills relevant to industry and community needs. In the context of Islamic educational institutions, this approach not only focuses on religious knowledge but also integrates it with life skills that are relevant to current developments.

Changing times continuously influence the education system. Innovations in education are carried out to ensure relevance and meet societal needs. Curricula need to adapt to the demands of the era.¹⁹ Islamic educational institutions must ensure that their graduates are equipped with skills aligned with current market and job requirements.²⁰

The development of a competency-based curriculum demands that educational institutions constantly update their curriculum content, teaching methods, and evaluation processes to stay relevant and responsive to changing needs.²¹ This step is crucial to enhancing the competitiveness of graduates, so that Islamic educational institutions can produce individuals who not only have a deep understanding of religious knowledge but are also ready to compete in the job market.²²

2. Enhancement of Leadership Capacity

Northouse (2021) defines leadership as the process of influencing others to understand, agree, and carry out what needs to be done and how to do it.²³ Additionally, leadership also involves guiding individuals or groups to achieve common goals. Heifetz et al. (2009) emphasize that a leader must have the ability to face complex challenges and adapt to rapid changes.²⁴ Increasing leadership capacity is important so that leaders can adapt quickly, make accurate decisions, and lead teams amidst complex challenges and rapid changes. Without adequate capacity, organizations may fall behind or struggle to achieve their objectives.²⁵

Leadership development programs for principals and managers in Islamic educational institutions can help them manage performance effectively. These training

¹⁹ Devi Erlistiana et al., "Penerapan Kurikulum Dalam Menghadapi Perkembangan Zaman Di Jawa Tengah," *Al-Fahim: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 4, no. 1 (March 30, 2022): 1–15, <https://doi.org/10.54396/alfahim.v4i1.235>.

²⁰ M. Nur Lukman Irawan et al., "Strategi Lembaga Pendidikan Islam Dalam Menjawab Tantangan Pendidikan Kontemporer," *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Konseling (JPDK)* 4, no. 6 (November 16, 2022): 4273–80, <https://doi.org/10.31004/jpdk.v4i6.8887>.

²¹ Irma Budiana, "Inovasi Dalam Pengembangan Kurikulum Pendidikan," *JURNAL PENDIDIKAN & PENGAJARAN (JUPE2)* 2, no. 2 (July 28, 2024): 433–50, <https://doi.org/10.54832/jupe2.v2i2.401>.

²² Muhammad Irfan, Nayyif Sujudi, and Vioni Qurrota A'Yunin, "Education Quality Monitoring Management: Manajemen Pengawasan Mutu Pendidikan," *Al-Mustawa: Jurnal Pendidikan, Psikologi dan Konseling Islam* 1, no. 1 (July 10, 2024): 30–46.

²³ Ahmad Bairizki, "Peningkatan Kapasitas Kepemimpinan Dan Minat Berwirausaha Mahasiswa Di Era Digital," *AMMA: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat* 3, no. 6 : Juli (July 29, 2024): 469–78.

²⁴ Ronald Heifetz, Alexander Grashow, and Marty Linsky, "Leadership in a (Permanent) Crisis," *Harvard Business Review* 87, no. 7–8 (2009): 62–69, 153.

²⁵ Manahan P. Tampubolon, *Change Management: Manajemen Perubahan: Individu, Tim Kerja, Organisasi* (Jakarta: Mitra Wacana Media, 2020), <http://repository.uki.ac.id/2339/>.

programs cover managerial aspects, communication, and decision-making. The goal of increasing leadership capacity is to equip principals and managers in Islamic educational institutions with the necessary skills and knowledge to manage the institutions effectively.

Developing leadership capacity in Islamic educational institutions includes managerial skills, communication, and decision-making.²⁶ This is crucial because a leader with high capacity can optimize resource utilization, improve operational efficiency, and strengthen an innovative and collaborative organizational culture. Excellent leadership also plays a role in establishing clear communication, conveying an inspiring vision, and motivating the entire team toward common goals.²⁷

Leaders who can balance innovation and efficiency can strengthen the competitive advantage of the institution, ensure the quality of services remains sustainable, and create lasting competitiveness.²⁸ Without strong and directed leadership, institutions find it difficult to execute plans optimally, which ultimately hampers the achievement of goals and competitiveness in an increasingly competitive educational environment.²⁹ Therefore, increasing leadership capacity is very important to create a competitive advantage in Islamic educational institutions.

3. Transparent and Fair Performance Appraisal System

Performance or achievement is the translation of the English word “performance,” which refers to work achievement, task implementation, work results, and work display.³⁰ Performance is an indicator of the success of individuals, teams, or organizational units in achieving goals set by the organization through behaviors that align with expectations.³¹

Performance appraisal aims to assess how teachers work and how successful they are in completing tasks according to their expertise, using reliable tools to compare actual performance with established standards.³² A clear, transparent, and fair performance appraisal system can enhance motivation and the performance of teachers and staff.³³ This assessment also helps institutions evaluate target achievement and identify necessary improvements.

²⁶ Endar Evta Yuda Prayogi, Hardika Saputra, and Rachmat Panca Putera, “Implementasi Nilai-Nilai Kepemimpinan Rasulullah Dalam Kepemimpinan Pendidikan Islam Di Era Digital,” *Reflection : Islamic Education Journal* 1, no. 4 (October 30, 2024): 51–65, <https://doi.org/10.61132/reflection.v1i4.162>.

²⁷ Ade Gunawan et al., “Kepemimpinan Kharismatik Dalam Perspektif Pendidikan Islam,” *Al-Liqo: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 9, no. 1 (June 30, 2024): 19–35, <https://doi.org/10.46963/alliqo.v9i1.840>.

²⁸ Amena Sibghatullah and Muhammad Raza, “The Impact of Strategic Leadership on Competitive Advantage: The Mediating Role of Ambidexterity and Information System: Evidence from Islamic Banks in Jordan,” *International Journal of Informatics and Information Systems* 3, no. 2 (September 30, 2020): 67–80, <https://doi.org/10.47738/ijis.v3i2.67>.

²⁹ Aullah Odhiambo Collins Willis, Godfrey Kinyua, and Anne Muchemi, “Strategic Leadership as an Antecedent of Competitive Advantage: A Review of Literature,” *International Journal of Managerial Studies and Research* 10, no. 1 (2022): 18–33, <https://doi.org/10.20431/2349-0349.1001003>.

³⁰ Ahmad Shidqi Dian Arifandi, “Evaluasi Kinerja Guru,” *Edukais: Jurnal Pemikiran Keislaman* 4, no. 2 (December 28, 2020): 106–19, <https://doi.org/10.61595/edukais.2020.4.2.106-119>.

³¹ Hasan Baharun, “Manajemen Kinerja Dalam Meningkatkan Competitive Advantage Pada Lembaga Pendidikan Islam,” *At-Tajdid: Jurnal Ilmu Tarbiyah* 5, no. 2 (2016): 243–62.

³² Hilda Marwani Akbar and Jamilus Jamilus, “Penilaian Kinerja dalam Pendidikan Islam,” *Jurnal Manajemen STIE Muhammadiyah Palopo* 10, no. 1 (June 1, 2024): 152–62, <https://doi.org/10.35906/jurman.v10i1.1987>.

³³ Muh Ibnu Sholeh, “Pengakuan Dan Reward Dalam Manajemen SDM Untuk Meningkatkan Motivasi Guru,”

A transparent and fair performance appraisal system is an evaluation framework designed to assess staff performance clearly, openly, and without bias.³⁴ This system is very important in increasing motivation, quality of performance, and a sense of justice among staff in Islamic educational institutions.³⁵ Fair and transparent performance appraisal provides a competitive advantage for Islamic educational institutions.³⁶ With transparency, staff clearly understand how their performance is evaluated, which encourages trust and high motivation.³⁷

Fairness in evaluation ensures that rewards and development opportunities are based on actual contributions, free from favoritism or bias, thus creating a harmonious and productive work environment. An environment that is fair and transparent in performance evaluation attracts and retains qualified educators, boosts their loyalty and motivation to contribute maximally.³⁸ This directly impacts the improvement of educational service quality, which differentiates the institution from competitors, strengthens its reputation, and provides competitiveness in a highly competitive environment.

In Islamic educational institutions, the implementation of this appraisal system becomes a characteristic that positions the institution as a pioneer in upholding Islamic values such as honesty, justice, and integrity, thereby building a sustainable competitive advantage.

4. Strengthening Networks and Partnerships

Collaboration becomes a vital factor in strengthening the competitive advantage of schools and ensuring the sustainability of quality programs.³⁹ Establishing strong partnerships with the government, community, business world, other educational institutions, as well as social and religious organizations, is an effective strategy to accelerate the enhancement of the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions in this modern era.⁴⁰ This is driven by the need for support from various parties to achieve optimal development of the school's competitive advantages.⁴¹

COMPETITIVE: *Journal of Education* 2, no. 4 (September 27, 2023): 212–34, <https://doi.org/10.58355/competitive.v2i4.41>.

³⁴ Hesti Kusumaningrum et al., “Penerapan Staffing Untuk Meningkatkan Produktivitas Lembaga Pendidikan,” *Jurnal Bintang Pendidikan Indonesia* 2, no. 2 (May 15, 2024): 270–89, <https://doi.org/10.55606/jubpi.v2i2.2991>.

³⁵ Ihsan Maolana, Astuti Darmiyanti, and Jaenal Abidin, “Strategi Kepemimpinan Kepala Sekolah Yang Efektif Dalam Meningkatkan Kualitas Guru Di Lembaga Pendidikan Islam,” *Innovative: Journal Of Social Science Research* 3, no. 4 (August 19, 2023): 83–94.

³⁶ Mimi Musmiroh Idris and Abas Asyafah, “Authentic Assessment in Islamic Education,” *Islamic Research* 3, no. 1 (April 1, 2020): 1–9, <https://doi.org/10.47076/jkps.v3i1.36>.

³⁷ Nur Adilah, “Sistem Reward Terhadap Kinerja Karyawan Pada PT BPRS Mustaqim Aceh Dalam Tinjauan Fiqih Muamalah” (Undergraduate Thesis, Banda Aceh, Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry, 2024), <https://repository.ar-raniry.ac.id/id/eprint/39631/>.

³⁸ Fitri Isnaini Fausia and Mudji Kuswinarno, “Analisis Dampak Kompensasi Dan Benefit Terhadap Motivasi Karyawan Bank BRI,” *Jurnal Media Akademik (JMA)* 2, no. 6 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.62281/v2i6.570>.

³⁹ Samsu Samsu et al., “Community Empowerment in Leading Pesantren: A Research of Nyai's Leadership,” *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education (IJERE)* 10, no. 4 (December 1, 2021): 1237–44, <https://doi.org/10.11591/ijere.v10i4.21833>.

⁴⁰ Muh Hanif, Abu Dharin Dharin, and Meysia Evralita Hutaauruk, “Management of Social Entrepreneurship at Indonesian Boarding School,” *Pegem Journal of Education and Instruction* 13, no. 3 (July 1, 2023): 375–85, <https://doi.org/10.47750/pegegog.13.03.38>.

⁴¹ Mohammad Bilutfikal Khofi and Mufasirul Furqon, “Strategi Kepemimpinan Kiai Dalam Mengembangkan

Strengthening networks and partnerships means building and expanding cooperative relationships with other educational institutions, industry, and the community to support the development of Islamic educational institutions.⁴² By forming strategic partnerships, institutions can gain benefits such as knowledge exchange, access to broader resources, and collaboration opportunities to improve the quality of education.⁴³

Strengthening networks and partnerships is an important strategy for Islamic educational institutions to enhance competitiveness and relevance in the modern era. By forming partnerships with the government, business sector, other educational institutions, as well as social and religious organizations, Islamic educational institutions can access broader resources, technologies, and knowledge. These partnerships enable institutions to update teaching methods and improve education quality.⁴⁴

Through strong networks, educational institutions can adopt best practices and collaborate in research and curriculum development based on research.⁴⁵ Relevant curricula rooted in Islamic values attract student interest and gain community support, thereby strengthening the institution's reputation. Additionally, collaboration with industry opens opportunities for students to gain hands-on experience, such as internships or mentoring, which helps them become more prepared to compete in the job market.⁴⁶ Strengthening networks and partnerships provides a competitive advantage for Islamic educational institutions, making them more competitive, innovative, and aligned with modern educational needs while still maintaining Islamic values.

CONCLUSION

This research shows that effective performance management strategies play a crucial role in building a competitive advantage for Islamic educational institutions. The development of a competency-based curriculum, enhancement of leadership capacity, transparent and fair performance appraisal systems, and strengthening networks and partnerships are key elements that have been proven capable of improving the quality and competitiveness of institutions. These four strategies support Islamic educational institutions in creating an educational environment that not only focuses on academic achievement but also on character development based on Islamic values. With a holistic approach that

Pondok Pesantren,” *INCARE, International Journal of Educational Resources* 5, no. 3 (October 29, 2024): 265–88, <https://doi.org/10.59689/incare.v5i3.1019>.

⁴² Irawan et al., “Strategi Lembaga Pendidikan Islam Dalam Menjawab Tantangan Pendidikan Kontemporer.”

⁴³ Cindy Cindy, Amanda Stevany Nurvita, and Mahfud Ifendi, “Strategi Promosi Dan Komunikasi Jasa Pendidikan,” *DLAJAR: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran* 4, no. 1 (January 25, 2025): 25–36, <https://doi.org/10.54259/diajar.v4i1.3740>.

⁴⁴ Sholeh, “Pengakuan Dan Reward Dalam Manajemen SDM Untuk Meningkatkan Motivasi Guru.”

⁴⁵ Isropil Siregar et al., “Tsu-Isu Global Pengembangan Kurikulum Merdeka Dan Pemagangan Life Skill World Class Education,” *Jurnal Review Pendidikan Dan Pengajaran* 7, no. 4 (September 9, 2024): 12887–95, <https://doi.org/10.31004/jrpp.v7i4.34247>.

⁴⁶ Komariah Suwito et al., “Integrasi Ilmu Dan Agama Dalam Membangun Generasi Berintegritas Melalui Pendidikan Agama Islam,” *EDUCATOR (DIRECTORY OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION JOURNAL)* 5, no. 1 (June 5, 2024): 19–38, <https://doi.org/10.58176/edu.v5i1.1535>.

integrates spiritual and professional aspects, Islamic educational institutions can remain relevant, competitive, and become the primary choice for society.

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