School Principals' Strategies for Enhancing Teachers' Professional and Pedagogical Competencies

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ABSTRACT

In Sampang Regency, Madura, the quality of learning remains relatively low, as indicated by weak lesson planning and implementation by teachers. This condition is closely related to the limited mastery of professional and pedagogical competencies, particularly in the development of teaching materials, the application of active learning strategies, and the use of technology. This phenomenon underscores the strategic role of school principals in enhancing teachers' capacity through effective leadership. This study aims to analyze the strategies employed by the principal of SMAI Salafiyah Sreseh, Sampang, Madura, in developing teachers' professional and pedagogical competencies. The research adopts a descriptive qualitative method with data collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. The findings reveal that the principal implements several strategies, including continuous professional training, technology integration in teaching, strengthening teacher collaboration, and regular supervision. Training and supervision have proven effective in enhancing teachers' skills in designing and delivering instruction tailored to students' needs. Meanwhile, technology facilitates more interactive and adaptive learning experiences. Teacher collaboration fosters creativity and professional growth. Overall, these strategies contribute to improving the quality of instruction, student motivation, and the creation of an innovative educational climate. The principal's leadership in developing teacher competencies plays a critical role in addressing educational challenges and preparing students to meet contemporary demands.

Keywords: Principal's Strategies, Educational Quality Improvement, Professional and Pedagogical Competence

ABSTRAK

Di Kabupaten Sampang, Madura, mutu pembelajaran masih tergolong rendah, ditandai dengan lemahnya perencanaan dan pelaksanaan pembelajaran oleh guru. Kondisi ini berkaitan dengan terbatasnya penguasaan kompetensi profesional dan pedagogik, terutama dalam pengembangan materi ajar, strategi pembelajaran aktif, dan pemanfaatan teknologi. Fenomena ini menuntut peran strategis kepala sekolah dalam meningkatkan kapasitas guru melalui kepemimpinan yang efektif. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis strategi kepala sekolah dalam mengembangkan kompetensi profesional dan pedagogik guru di SMAI Salafiyah Sreseh, Sampang, Madura. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepala sekolah menerapkan beberapa strategi, antara lain pelatihan profesional berkelanjutan, integrasi teknologi dalam pembelajaran, penguatan kolaborasi antar-guru, dan supervisi berkala. Pelatihan dan supervisi berperan dalam meningkatkan keterampilan guru dalam merancang dan melaksanakan pembelajaran yang sesuai dengan kebutuhan siswa. Sementara itu, teknologi mendukung pembelajaran yang lebih interaktif dan adaptif. Kolaborasi antar-guru mendorong peningkatan kreativitas dan pertumbuhan profesional. Secara keseluruhan, strategi-strategi tersebut berkontribusi terhadap peningkatan mutu pembelajaran, motivasi belajar siswa, dan terciptanya iklim pendidikan yang inovatif. Kepemimpinan kepala sekolah

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dalam pengembangan kompetensi guru terbukti penting dalam menjawab tantangan pendidikan dan mempersiapkan siswa menghadapi tuntutan zaman.

Kata Kunci: *Strategi Kepala Sekolah, Peningkatan Mutu Pendidikan, Kompetensi Profesional dan Pedagogik.*

INTRODUCTION

The meaning of education is often defined merely as the teaching and learning process that takes place in classrooms and schools. However, according to Amirin (2013) as cited in Desi Pristiwanti, education encompasses all lifelong learning experiences that occur in any place and situation, which can positively influence the development of each individual being. This implies that learning is not limited to the classroom or school environment, but can occur anytime and anywhere.[1]

The positive influence of learning is manifested in three aspects: knowledge, attitude, and skills—commonly referred to as competencies. This aligns with the definition found in the *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language), which describes education as a process of changing attitudes and behavior of an individual or group in an effort to mature people through teaching and training.[2]

According to Abdurrahman Assegaf, first, education is the process of internalizing religious and cultural values, where the main objective is to change human behavior and patterns of thinking. Second, education is a process carried out by, from, and for humans, with the result being an improvement in the quality of human resources who are aware of their function and purpose of existence in this world—both as servants of Allah and as *khalifah fil ardh* (vicegerents on Earth). Third, education is a means to advance both religious and worldly civilization. Therefore, the process of education must bring about such impacts on life.[3]

According to Sudarwan Danim, education is also defined as a process of dignifying humans toward the optimal development of their cognitive, affective, and psychomotor potentials. Education is a process of guiding, training, and leading individuals to avoid or escape from ignorance and manipulation. Education is the metamorphosis of behavior toward true maturity. It can also be understood as a process of elevation that is non-discriminatory, dynamic, and intensive.[4]

From the above explanation, it can be concluded that education is an effort to form a perfect human being (*insan kamil*). In conducting this process, professional and competent teachers or educational personnel are essential.

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[1] Sartika Ujud et al., "Penerapan Model Pembelajaran Discovery Learning Untuk Meningkatkan Hasil Belajar Siswa Sma Negeri 10 Kota Ternate Kelas X Pada Materi Pencemaran Lingkungan," *Jurnal Bioedukasi* 6, no. 2 (2023): 337–47, https://doi.org/10.33387/bioedu.v6i2.7305.

[2] M.Pd Dr. Abdul Rahmat, "Pengantar Pendidikan, Teori, Konsep Dan Aplikasi," *1*, no. jakarta : ECG (2012): cetakan I-cetakan I.

[3] Abd Rachman Assegaf, *Fislsafat Pendidikan Islam* (PT. Rajagrafindo Persada, 2017).

[4] Sudarwan Danim, *Pengantar Pendidikan Landasan Teori, Dan Metafora Pendidikan*, ed. 1 (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2010).

To realize a high-quality national education system, the presence of teachers who serve as the foundation and pillar throughout the educational process is crucial. Teaching, training, educating, and evaluating each student are the duties of a teacher as a professional. Meanwhile, transmitting and developing life values is the teacher's responsibility as an educator, and developing skills and applying them in the students' future lives is the teacher's task as a trainer.[5]

Moreover, a teacher must possess competencies such as skills and behaviors that should be owned, mastered, and internalized—these are essential duties of a teacher. Among the various competencies required, pedagogical competence is one of the most crucial.

This competence is vital because it involves understanding students, including their psychological development. According to Widyaningrum et al., educating students includes conducting learning activities, designing instructional plans, and assessing learning outcomes. In this digital era, teachers are challenged to master developments in information and communication technologies, as these have become integral components of teacher professionalism and competency standards.[6]

The standard for teachers' pedagogical competence is regulated in the Regulation of the Minister of National Education No. 16 of 2007, which includes four core competencies. Pedagogical competence consists of several sub-competencies: (1) mastering student characteristics from physical, moral, social, cultural, emotional, and intellectual aspects; (2) mastering learning theories and principles of educational instruction; (3) developing curricula related to the subject area being taught; (4) conducting educational instruction; (5) utilizing information and communication technology for instructional purposes; (6) facilitating the development of student potential and helping them actualize their various capabilities; (7) communicating effectively, empathetically, and politely with students; (8) conducting assessment and evaluation of learning processes and outcomes; (9) utilizing the results of assessments and evaluations for instructional improvement; and (10) engaging in reflective practices to enhance the quality of learning.[7]

Pedagogical competence is highly essential in supporting a better learning process and enhancing the quality of education, so that students become more motivated to learn and achieve. A professional teacher is capable of implementing effective learning strategies and delivering material in a pleasant and engaging way—focusing not only on the attainment of learning outcomes, but also on nurturing students' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor development.

Salafiyah Islamic Private Senior High School (SMAS) Sreseh, Sampang, Madura—hereafter referred to as SMAS Islam Salafiyah Sreseh—is one of the pesantren-based senior high schools located on Madura Island. Several strategies have been employed by the principal of SMAS Islam Salafiyah Sreseh to develop teachers' pedagogical and professional competencies, including professional training programs—both government-supported and

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[5] Diki Somantri, "Abad 21 Pentingnya Kompetensi Pedagogik Guru," *Equilibrium: Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Dan Ekonomi* 18, no. 02 (2021): 188–95, https://doi.org/10.25134/equi.v18i2.4154.

[6] Somantri.

[7] Aulia Akbar, "Pentingnya Kompetensi Pedagogik Guru," *JPG: Jurnal Pendidikan Guru* 2, no. 1 (2021): 23, https://doi.org/10.32832/jpg.v2i1.4099.

independently initiated—such as the Teacher Competency Test (UKG), Subject Teacher Forums (MGMP), workshops, the strengthening of technology-based learning, inter-teacher collaborative learning, and regular supervision. Initial interviews and observations show that the improvement and development of teachers' competencies have contributed significantly to students' achievements, both academic and non-academic.

Nevertheless, based on literature review and preliminary observations, there remain several gaps that justify the urgency of this research. First, there is a disparity between the ideal concept of education as a holistic, lifelong process and its practical implementation, which remains largely oriented toward formal classroom instruction. Second, although pedagogical competency standards have been clearly outlined in national policy, their implementation in the field—especially in pesantren-based schools in remote areas such as Madura—continues to face numerous challenges, including lack of facilities, limited opportunities for professional development, and insufficient continuous supervision. Third, studies that specifically examine school principals' strategies in improving teachers' pedagogical and professional competencies in pesantren schools are still limited, even though the unique sociocultural context and educational system in these environments require a contextual managerial approach. Fourth, few studies explicitly explore the relationship between teacher competency development and student achievement—both academic and non-academic.

In response to these gaps, this study offers novelty by exploring in depth the strategies employed by school principals to improve teachers' pedagogical and professional competencies in a pesantren-based school, particularly at SMAS Islam Salafiyah Sreseh, Sampang. This research not only describes the practices of teacher development but also seeks to reveal the role of the principal as an instructional leader in creating an educational environment that fosters the quality of teaching and learning processes and student achievement. The local pesantren context in Madura and the qualitative case study approach make this study a valuable contribution to the educational literature, especially in efforts to improve the quality of education rooted in local wisdom.

METHOD

This study adopts a constructivist paradigm, aiming to gather and identify as many participant perspectives as possible regarding the situation being studied.[8] A qualitative approach was selected due to several considerations that align with the characteristics of the phenomenon encountered. According to Williams (2008), qualitative research has 13 characteristics, five of which include: (1) data collection is conducted in a natural setting; (2) the researcher serves as the main instrument in its implementation; (3) holistic analysis is conducted to understand the phenomenon within the research setting and to describe it in the form of synthesis, abstraction, and conclusions; (4) inductive analysis is applied; and (5) the researcher observes and attempts to understand human behavior, including what is said,

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[8] Fathor Rashid, *Metodologi Penelitian KUalitatif Dan Kuantitatif*, I (Kediri: IAIN Kediri Press, 2022), file:///D:/STP/buku metode penelitian FATHOR RASYID.pdf.

what is done, and how interactions occur, while interpreting these from each participant's own point of view.[9]

In accordance with the above approach, data collection in this study utilized semi-structured interviews, in which questions were developed based on the research issues and adapted to each respondent—hereafter referred to as informants. In addition, observation methods were employed to complement the interviews, focusing on learning and supervision activities. Documentation was also used to validate information, such as institutional profiles, records of workshops, and periodic supervision activities.[10]

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on in-depth interviews with the principal of SMAS Islam Salafiyah Sreseh, observations of several activities, and documentation, the data obtained from these various sources were reduced to meet the research needs, then presented and concluded. It was found that the principal's strategies to improve the quality of education are directly related to efforts to develop teachers' professional and pedagogical competencies. These findings can be outlined in several points. First is the quality of inputs. All teachers at SMAS Islam Salafiyah hold a bachelor's degree (S1); six are certified educators, and two are civil servants (ASN). The implementation of the *Merdeka Curriculum* is actively carried out through various approaches such as project-based learning, hands-on practice, case studies, collaboration, and reflection. Educational facilities include a permanent building owned by the foundation, a computer lab, a library, a sports field, and adequate sanitation. The number of students continues to increase annually, with full support from parents.

Second is the quality of the process, which includes structured daily learning activities beginning with spiritual routines followed by teaching and learning sessions. Extracurricular activities are also scheduled regularly twice a month. The principal consistently conducts instructional supervision, both regarding teachers' lesson plans and classroom implementation. In addition, the principal promotes technology-based learning reinforcement. This is an added value for the institution, considering that SMAS Islam Salafiyah Sreseh is a pesantren-based school.

Third is the quality of outputs. Students' achievements include academic fields such as the National Science Olympiad and Language Olympiads, as well as non-academic achievements in the arts and religion. Many graduates continue their studies at universities, including two who received scholarships to Al-Ahqaf University in Yemen. Some graduates return to serve the foundation as educators, while others choose to become entrepreneurs or work in their respective fields.

Fourth is the strategy for teacher competency development. The principal actively encourages teachers to participate in training programs, the Teacher Competency Test (UKG), and Subject Teacher Forums (MGMP). Additionally, collaborative teaching programs among teachers are implemented not only to co-plan instructional activities with

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[9] Nur Hikmatul Auliya Hardani, Helmina Andriani, Jumari Ustiawaty, Evi Fatmi Utami, Ria Rahmatul Istiqomah, Roushandy Asri Fardani, Dhika Juliana Sukmana, *Buku Metode Penelitian Kualitatif, Revista Brasileira de Linguística Aplicada*, vol. 5, 2020.

[10] Syafrida Hafni Syahir, *Metode Penelitian*, ed. Try Koryati, I (Jogjakarta: KBM Indonesia, 2022).

shared ideas and innovations, but also to reduce teacher fatigue and burnout in the classroom.

Furthermore, regular academic supervision is conducted to ensure improvements in teaching practices. As highlighted in an interview excerpt with the principal:

"Teachers are also encouraged to perform their roles holistically—as educators, facilitators, motivators, and mentors. Therefore, periodic supervision and guidance are necessary."

From the explanation above, the findings at SMAS Islam Salafiyah Sreseh indicate that the principal's strategies in developing teacher competencies have a direct impact on the quality of education. This is in line with Bush's (2008) perspective, as cited in Yulia Pebristofora, which states that the principal, as an instructional leader, has a primary responsibility to create a productive learning environment through teacher development.[11]

Moreover, several verses in the Qur'an also address the fundamental principles of educational supervision, which include the principles of improvement, change, scientific approach, and collaboration. Improvement and change are considered foundational in supervision, as supervision essentially aims to achieve these goals. The implementation of supervision should be carried out scientifically and in collaboration between the supervisor and the supervisee. In Islamic education, these principles are already implied in the Qur'an and Hadith.[12]

وَتَعَاوَنُوْا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوٰىۖ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوْا عَلَى الْاِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِۖ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ ۗ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ شَدِيْدُ الْعِقَابِ۞......

"As stated in the Qur'an: "And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is severe in punishment." (Qur'an, Surah Al-Ma'idah: 2)

Similarly, in Surah Al-'Asr, verse 3 (*tawashin*), the principle of cooperation and mutual encouragement in truth and patience is emphasized.

اِلَّا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ ەۙ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ۞

"Except for those who have believed and done righteous deeds and advised each other to truth and advised each other to patience." (Qur'an, Surah Al-'Asr: 3)

From all the explanations above, it can be inferred that the principal is implicitly exercising a leadership role through a **transformational leadership style**. This style is applied by the principal of SMAS Islam Salafiyah and has proven effective in encouraging teachers to go beyond their role as mere transmitters of knowledge, becoming active and reflective learning agents instead.

Transformational leadership was developed by Bernard M. Bass (1985) as a leadership style aimed at achieving organizational goals by deeply motivating employees. This

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11 Yuliana Pebristofora marni Mala, Yatim Riyanto, and Bambang Sigit Widodo, "Peran Kepemimpinan Kepala Sekolah Dalam Mendukung Budaya Dan Mutu SMPK Angelus Custos II Surabaya," *Jurnal Ilmiah Mandala Education* 7, no. 3 (2021): 249–66, https://doi.org/10.58258/jime.v7i3.2213.

12 Bambang Supradi, "Hakikat Supervisi Dalam Pendidikan Islam," *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Educational Management* 2, no. 1 (2019): 1–11.

is carried out through four core components: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.[13]

Several verses in the Qur'an also reflect these four components:[14]
a. **Idealized Influence**: Qur'an, Surah Al-Ahzab, verse 21

قَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِيْ رَسُوْلِ اللّٰهِ اُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللّٰهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْاٰخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللّٰهَ كَثِيْرًا ۗ

Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah you have an excellent example for whoever has hope in Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah often." (Qur'an, Surah Al-Ahzab: 21)

Several tafsir literatures explain that this verse serves as a reminder to the hypocrites that they too can find a noble example in the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). This is because the leadership of the Prophet embodies the concept of **idealized influence** (Ahmed, Ashour, & Sohely, 2018). According to Prajogo, this dimension is also commonly known as *charisma*. A leader with high charisma evokes certain emotional responses from subordinates, leading them to obey and even emulate their leader's actions. This occurs because a charismatic leader becomes a role model for their followers.

b. **Inspirational Motivation**: Qur'an, Surah Ali 'Imran, verse 159

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ ۚ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيْظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْفَضُّوْا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ ۖ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِى الْاَمْرِ ۚ فَاِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللّٰهِ ۗ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِيْنَ

"So by mercy from Allah, [O Muhammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult them in matters. And when you have decided, then rely upon Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who rely [upon Him]." (Qur'an, Surah Ali 'Imran: 159)

This verse exemplifies how the Prophet Muhammad set an example of a humane, courteous, gentle, and forgiving leadership style. It shows that even in critical situations, the Prophet prioritized kindness and tenderness. It also highlights that the Prophet consistently engaged in consultation (*shura*) with his companions in important matters.

c. **Intellectual Stimulation**

The intellectual stimulation dimension of leadership is also reflected in the benefits of consultation as previously described, notably in Surah Ali 'Imran verse 159. Through mutual consultation, the thoughts of all members being led can be stimulated, thereby accelerating the achievement of the organization's goals. Moreover, this process helps gradually cultivate shared vision and aspirations among members (AlSarhi, M., & Armini, 2014).

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[13] Richard Martogi Pardede, "Implementasi Gaya Kepemimpinan Transformatif Terhadap Motivasi Kerja Generasi Z" 05, no. 02 (2024): 275–83.

[14] Gunung Djati et al., "Gunung Djati Conference Series, Volume 36 (2023) Conferences Series Learning Class ISSN: 2774-6585 Website: Https://Conferences.Uinsgd.Ac.Id/" 36 (2023): 471–79.

Another Qur'anic reference is found in Surah Al-Mujadalah verse 11, which states that Allah will elevate the status of those who have knowledge and understanding.

يَاۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيۡنَ اٰمَنُوۡۤا اِذَا قِيۡلَ لَكُمۡ تَفَسَّحُوۡا فِى الۡمَجٰلِسِ فَافۡسَحُوۡا يَفۡسَحِ اللّٰهُ لَكُمۡۚ وَاِذَا قِيۡلَ انۡشُزُوۡا فَانۡشُزُوۡا يَرۡفَعِ اللّٰهُ الَّذِيۡنَ اٰمَنُوۡا مِنۡكُمۡۙ وَالَّذِيۡنَ اُوۡتُوا الۡعِلۡمَ دَرَجٰتٍؕ وَاللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعۡمَلُوۡنَ خَبِيۡرٌ ۝

"O you who have believed, when you are told, 'Make room in assemblies,' then make room; Allah will make room for you. And when you are told, 'Arise,' then arise; Allah will raise those who have believed among you and those who were given knowledge, by degrees. And Allah is acquainted with what you do."

This is also stated in Surah Shad verse 29

كِتٰبٌ اَنۡزَلۡنٰهُ اِلَيۡكَ مُبٰرَكٌ لِّيَدَّبَّرُوۡۤا اٰيٰتِهٖ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ اُولُوا الۡاَلۡبَابِ

"This (Qur'an) is a blessed Book which We have revealed to you (O Muhammad) so that they may reflect upon its verses and that those of understanding would be reminded."

Allah declares that the revelation of this blessed Book is intended for those who possess intellect, so that they may gain lessons from it. A leader, in addition to being competent and intellectual, is also required to enhance the quality of the organization they lead through intellectual stimulation, which can be carried out through consultation, dialogue, discussion, and similar activities.

d. Individualized consideration

One form of individualized attention clearly described in the Qur'an is by assigning tasks based on a person's potential and abilities. Individual consideration is also a necessary trait for those aspiring to be leaders. The verse in the Qur'an that touches on this discourse is QS. Al-Isra verse 84

قُلۡ كُلٌّ يَّعۡمَلُ عَلٰى شَاكِلَتِهٖؕ فَرَبُّكُمۡ اَعۡلَمُ بِمَنۡ هُوَ اَهۡدٰى سَبِيۡلًا ۝

"Say (O Muhammad), 'Each one acts according to his own disposition.' Then your Lord is most knowing of who is best guided in way."

Through these four components, the principal of SMAS Islam Salafiyah Sreseh strives to promote teacher professionalism in education, so that teachers are not merely transmitters of material, but also instill noble values in accordance with the goals of national education. This approach aligns with Sergiovanni's (2001) idea that educational leadership must be based on moral and professional values to create meaningful change.[15] This principle is part of the strategies implemented by the school principal.

From the Islamic perspective, professional and pedagogical competencies are also addressed in Surah An-Najm verses 5–10:

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[15] Akbar, "Pentingnya Kompetensi Pedagogik Guru."

عَلَّمَهُ شَدِيدُ الْقُوَى (5)   ذُو مِرَّةٍ فَاسْتَوَى (6)   وَهُوَ بِالْأُفُقِ الْأَعْلَى (7)   ثُمَّ دَنَا فَتَدَلَّى (8)   فَكَانَ قَابَ قَوْسَيْنِ اَوْ اَدْنَى (9)   فَأَوْحَى اِلَى عَبْدِهِ مَا أَوْحَى (10)

"Taught to him by one intense in strength (Jibril), (5) One of soundness. And he rose to his true form (6) While he was in the higher horizon. (7) Then he approached and descended (8) And was at a distance of two bow lengths or nearer. (9) And he revealed to His Servant what He revealed." (10)

These Qur'anic verses provide a strong foundation that pedagogical competence—covering the ability to manage learning, understand students, and deliver material effectively and wisely—is highly emphasized in Islam. Therefore, school principals, as leaders, should undertake strategic steps to improve teachers' professional and pedagogical competencies. The meaning of strategy is a method used by a person—in this case, a leader—to achieve a desired goal. Linguistically, strategy implies tactics, techniques, or methods. Terminologically, strategy is a general plan of action designed to achieve specific objectives. In this context, a leader in an educational institution is required to be adept at mastering the institution's internal conditions so as to design effective development programs and mobilize the organization's resources. The effectiveness of performance improvement programs often hinges on the accuracy of the strategies employed.[16]

In addition, the school principal also conducts regular academic supervision to monitor and guide teachers' performance in the learning process, aiming to improve education quality. Academically, supervision refers to the professional services provided by school leaders to teachers to develop their teaching skills through planning, monitoring, evaluation, and mentoring.[17]   Previous research by Mulyasa (2013) emphasizes that improving teacher competencies requires continuous academic supervision by the principal. These findings affirm that planned and consistent supervision at SMAS Islam Salafiyah has had a significant impact on improving student learning outcomes, motivation, and character development.[18]

Therefore, it is clear that the identification of systematic and practical strategies implemented by the principal of SMAS Islam Salafiyah Sreseh in enhancing teachers' professional and pedagogical competence has a direct implication on their capacity and capabilities. Upon further analysis, the study highlights several critical points:(1) The need to strengthen school leadership capacity through strategic training based on educational quality management. (2) The importance of support from the education office and government for teacher competence development programs aligned with the contextual needs of Islamic-

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[16] Akhmad Fauzi Hamzah and Rahimatul Aliah, "Strategi Kepala Madrasah Dalam Meningkatkan Kualitas Guru," *Nidhomiyyah: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 4, no. 1 (2023): 09–23, https://doi.org/10.38073/nidhomiyyah.v4i1.872.

[17] Hana Lestari and Ima Rahmawati, "Supervisi Akademik Kepala Sekolah Terhadap Kinerja Mengajar Guru Di SMAN 1 Cibungbulang," *Reslaj : Religion Education Social Laa Roiba Journal* 6, no. 2 (2023): 797–804, https://doi.org/10.47467/reslaj.v6i2.4978.

[18] M. Zuhdi Alfian and Sobri Washil, "Supervisi Akademik Oleh Kepala Sekolah Dalam Meningkatkan Kinerja Guru," *At-Tahsin : Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan* 3, no. 1 (2023): 22–34, https://doi.org/10.59106/attahsin.v3i1.113.

based institutions. (3) The urgency for formulating internal school policies that support the continuous development of teacher professionalism, including evaluation mechanisms, incentives, and professional growth opportunities.

From the research findings, it can be concluded that the strategy of the principal of SMAS Islam Salafiyah Sreseh reflects an integration of transformational leadership and the contextual approach of pesantren in improving teacher competence. These empirical findings reinforce Bush's theory (2008), which emphasizes that school principals, as instructional leaders, have the primary responsibility for creating a productive learning environment through teacher development.

The implementation of strategies such as regular academic supervision, integration of instructional technology, and teacher collaboration is in line with the principles of transformational leadership theory by Bass (1985), particularly in the aspects of *intellectual stimulation* and *individualized consideration*.[19] Teachers are facilitated to grow according to their potential and are encouraged to design innovative and reflective learning processes. This is evidenced by improvements in both academic and non-academic student outcomes, indicating a positive correlation between teacher competence enhancement and student achievement.

This research is also in line with the findings of Hamzah & Aliah (2023) who stated that the madrasah principal's strategy involving teacher collaboration and the strengthening of supervision had a direct impact on increasing professionalism and the quality of learning. In addition, Lestari & Rahmawati (2023) also emphasized the importance of structured academic supervision by the principal in encouraging teacher performance and creating a more active learning culture.

However, the pesantren-based school context that became the locus of this research shows a unique strategy, namely the integration of religious values in the supervision and teacher development process. Unlike public schools, the principal's approach at SMAS Islam Salafiyah is not only oriented toward achieving performance standards but also toward shaping the character and spirituality of teachers as moral exemplars. This approach enriches the literature on educational leadership with a local-based Islamic perspective.

From a conceptual perspective, the principal's strategy in this study also intersects with Sergiovanni's (2001) theory, which emphasizes that educational leadership must be based on moral and professional values to create meaningful change in educational institutions. Here, the school principal is not only an administrator but also a moral leader who shapes a collaborative and value-oriented school culture.

These findings are important as they fill a gap in the study of educational leadership in pesantren schools, which until now have rarely been explored in depth in the national literature. In fact, pesantren-based schools have their own complexity in terms of system, values, and culture, which requires a strategic and contextual approach. This research provides empirical evidence that a leadership strategy combining Islamic values, a

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[19] Laura Rusconi and Myriam Squillaci, "Effects of a Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Training Course on the Development Teachers' Competences: A Systematic Review," *Education Sciences* 13, no. 5 (2023), https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci13050466.

transformational approach, and educational quality management can simultaneously improve teacher quality and student learning outcomes.

Practically, the results of this study are relevant to education policymakers, especially in designing school principal training based on values and local context. Likewise, religious-based schools can replicate this teacher development strategy model to meet quality education challenges without abandoning their distinct Islamic values.

CONCLUSION

From the overall explanation above, it can be stated that the Principal of SMAS Salafiyah Sreseh implements several strategies in improving and developing the pedagogical and professional competencies of teachers, starting from ensuring the quality of human resource inputs, overseeing the quality of the teaching and learning process, ensuring graduate/output quality, and implementing several strategies for professional and pedagogical development through activities such as Teacher Competency Tests (UKG), subject teacher forums (MGMP), workshops, peer mentoring, and periodic academic supervision.

The researcher notes the following: (1) There is a need to strengthen the school principal's leadership capacity through strategic training based on educational quality management. (2) It is important that education offices and the government support teacher competency improvement programs oriented to the contextual needs of Islamic-based institutions. (3) There is a need for internal school policy formulation that supports the continuous development of teacher professionalism, including evaluation mechanisms, incentives, and opportunities for self-development.

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