International Journal of Education, Vocational and Social Science
https://e-journal.citakonsulindo.or.id/index.php/IJEVSS
E-ISSN : 2963 4954
IJEVSS

An Analysis Of The Principal's Leadership Style In A High-Performing Muhammadiyah School

Astajab
Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang
Yus Mochamad Cholily
Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang

Corresponding Author: astajab@smamda.net

Abstract

Principal leadership is a strategic factor in achieving school quality and excellence, particularly in Muhammadiyah excellent schools, which are required to adapt to the rapid development of education, technology, and organizational dynamics. This study aims to analyze the leadership styles of principals in Muhammadiyah excellent schools and examine their contribution to school excellence. The study employed a mixed-methods approach using a sequential explanatory design that integrated quantitative and qualitative analyses. The participants consisted of six principals and sixty teachers from Muhammadiyah excellent schools in East Java, selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected through questionnaires, observations, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and linear regression, while qualitative data were analyzed using the interactive model developed by Miles and Huberman.

The findings indicate that transformational leadership (M = 4.77; SD = 0.32) and visionary leadership (M = 4.75; SD = 0.28) were the most dominant leadership styles demonstrated by school principals. These leadership styles were reflected in the principals' ability to inspire teachers, foster an innovative school culture, and guide school development through a clear long-term vision. Meanwhile, transactional leadership (M = 4.50; SD = 0.39) and participative/democratic leadership (M = 4.48; SD = 0.41) contributed to strengthening organizational discipline, accountability, collaboration, and teacher participation. The findings further reveal that the integration of these four leadership styles positively contributes to improving teacher performance, work motivation, an innovative school culture, and the overall excellence of Muhammadiyah schools.

This study concludes that effective principal leadership, particularly transformational and

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License

visionary leadership integrated with Islamic and Muhammadiyah values, is a key factor in enhancing educational quality, institutional competitiveness, and the sustainable development of Muhammadiyah excellent schools in the digital and disruptive era.

Keywords: principal leadership, transformational leadership, visionary leadership, Muhammadiyah excellent schools, educational quality.

INTRODUCTION

School principal leadership is a key factor in improving educational quality and the success of school management. Principals do not merely perform administrative tasks but also serve as instructional leaders, change agents, motivators, and drivers of school culture (Mulyasa, 2022; Bush, 2018). The effectiveness of principal leadership directly influences teacher performance, learning processes, school governance, and student learning outcomes. Therefore, leadership becomes a crucial element in efforts to achieve educational quality standards in today's increasingly competitive and challenging era.

In the context of Islamic educational institutions, particularly Muhammadiyah schools, principal leadership has distinctive characteristics as it integrates Islamic spiritual values with modern managerial competencies. Muhammadiyah school principals are expected to incorporate the values of *amanah* (trustworthiness), *ihsan* (excellence), *musyawarah* (consultation), and exemplary conduct into their leadership practices while managing educational institutions professionally and with a strong commitment to quality improvement (Ridho & Novezar, 2023). Excellent Muhammadiyah schools represent the successful integration of these values, namely schools that are capable of balancing academic excellence, Islamic character development, and technological mastery in a harmonious manner.

The excellence of Muhammadiyah schools cannot be separated from the quality of visionary, innovative, and collaborative principal leadership. Several studies have demonstrated that principal leadership styles significantly influence teacher motivation, innovation culture, and school performance (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000; Yuliana, Sulisworo, & Hasanah, 2022). Appropriate leadership styles can create a positive work climate, enhance teacher commitment, and encourage sustainable school achievement. However, studies on principal leadership styles in excellent Muhammadiyah schools remain relatively limited, particularly research that examines the relationship between leadership styles, internal and external influencing factors, and their contribution to school excellence.

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License

This research gap requires further investigation, considering that the increasingly complex dynamics of education in the digital and disruptive era require principals to implement leadership styles that are adaptive, inspirational, and value-based. Furthermore, understanding the factors influencing the implementation of leadership styles is essential so that principal development programs, organizational policies, and professional development initiatives can be designed more effectively and appropriately.

Although several studies have examined transformational and visionary leadership in educational institutions, most have focused on general schools or have investigated only a single leadership style partially. Research that comprehensively examines four leadership styles (transformational, visionary, transactional, and participative) within the context of excellent Muhammadiyah schools using a mixed-methods approach remains very limited. Therefore, this study offers an empirical contribution through a comprehensive mapping of principal leadership styles as a foundation for strengthening the leadership model of excellent Muhammadiyah schools.

The explanation presented in this background highlights the need for an in-depth study of principal leadership within excellent Muhammadiyah schools. Based on this background, this study aims to:

1. Describe the leadership styles of principals in excellent Muhammadiyah schools.
2. Identify the factors influencing the implementation of these leadership styles.
3. Analyze the influence of principal leadership styles on the achievement of school excellence.

Based on these objectives, this study does not merely describe the leadership practices of Muhammadiyah school principals in greater depth but also contributes to the development of Islamic value-based educational leadership theory and provides practical recommendations for strengthening the quality of Muhammadiyah schools in the modern era.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Principal Leadership Style

Principal leadership style has become a central theme in educational management literature due to its strategic role in influencing teacher performance, school culture, and learning quality. Bass and Avolio (1994) emphasize that leadership is a pattern of influence implemented through leaders' behaviors in directing their subordinates. Within the school context, leadership is not merely related to administrative responsibilities but also encompasses human resource

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License

empowerment and the strengthening of an academic climate (Bush, 2018).

Transformational and visionary leadership are two approaches that are generally associated with improving school effectiveness. Transformational leadership emphasizes four main dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, which have been proven to enhance teacher motivation, innovation, and organizational commitment (Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2020; Day, Gu, & Sammons, 2016). On the other hand, visionary leadership plays a role in establishing long-term strategic directions and developing a future-oriented perspective within educational institutions (Bush, 2018; Hallinger, 2018). Visionary leaders do not merely formulate a vision but also ensure that the vision becomes an operational guideline for all members of the school community.

Two other frequently studied leadership styles are transactional and participative leadership. Participative leadership provides opportunities for teachers to be involved in decision-making processes, thereby increasing a sense of ownership and collaboration (Spillane, 2021). Meanwhile, transactional leadership plays an important role in maintaining organizational structure, discipline, and accountability through reward and punishment mechanisms (Robbins & Judge, 2020). Recent studies indicate that effective school leadership is often a combination of several leadership styles rather than a single leadership approach (Hallinger, 2018; Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2021).

From the perspective of this study, these four leadership styles form a multidimensional framework that complements one another: transformational leadership stimulates motivation, visionary leadership provides direction, transactional leadership maintains organizational stability, and participative leadership builds collective support.

2. Principal Leadership in the Context of Muhammadiyah Education

Leadership in Muhammadiyah schools has unique characteristics because it integrates Islamic values with modern management principles. The ideological identity of Muhammadiyah, which emphasizes *amanah* (trustworthiness), *ihsan* (excellence), *shura* (consultation), *uswah hasanah* (good exemplary conduct), and *tajdid* (renewal), shapes a leadership character that is oriented not only toward outcomes but also toward moral and spiritual values.

The study by Ridho and Novezar (2023) indicates that Muhammadiyah school principals tend to implement transformational leadership based on Islamic values. This integration strengthens the dimensions of exemplary behavior, commitment to change, and quality orientation. A study by Yuliana et al. (2022) also found that visionary leadership in Muhammadiyah schools enhances teacher loyalty and organizational culture consistency because principals act as

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License

carriers of Islamic vision that guides all learning practices.

Other literature emphasizes that Islamic leadership cannot be separated from moral values and noble character, positioning principals as both spiritual leaders and educational managers (Hashim, 2017). However, empirical research examining the combination of modern leadership styles and Islamic values within the context of excellent Muhammadiyah schools remains limited, making it an important research gap for this study.

Therefore, the study of Muhammadiyah leadership should not only examine managerial aspects but also explore the religious values that shape leadership styles and organizational practices.

3. School Excellence

School excellence is a multidimensional construct that includes academic quality, school culture, learning innovation, teacher competence, student achievement, and effective school management (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004). The Regulation of the Minister of National Education (Permendiknas) No. 13 of 2007 emphasizes that school principals are strategic actors in improving school quality through academic supervision, resource management, and professional development of teachers.

Maryani (2024) states that school excellence is inseparable from effective principal leadership, particularly in promoting innovation, facilitating learning improvement, and developing a quality-oriented culture. Hallinger (2011) further supports this argument by demonstrating that school leadership has both direct and indirect effects on student achievement through strengthening learning quality and academic climate.

In the context of Islamic schools, school excellence also includes the development of religious character, the integration of spiritual values into learning processes, and the ability of schools to adapt to technological advancements and global environmental changes (Hashim, 2017).

4. Theoretical Synthesis: The Relationship between Leadership Styles and School Excellence

The synthesis of various theories indicates that principal leadership styles contribute significantly to achieving school excellence.

1. Transformational leadership enhances teacher motivation, creativity, and performance.
2. Visionary leadership provides strategic direction and develops a culture of innovation.
3. Transactional leadership maintains organizational stability and discipline.
4. Participative leadership strengthens collective support and the effectiveness of program implementation.

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License

Leithwood et al. (2004) emphasize that leadership is the second most influential factor affecting educational achievement after teacher quality. Therefore, principal leadership is considered a multiplier factor that strengthens teacher capacity and school culture.

In the context of Muhammadiyah schools, these four leadership styles operate within the framework of Islamic values that strengthen integrity, exemplary conduct, spirituality, and work ethics. This perspective becomes the conceptual foundation of this study in examining how Muhammadiyah school principals' leadership styles influence school excellence.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. Research Approach and Design

This study employs a mixed methods approach with a sequential explanatory design, which integrates a quantitative approach as the primary method and a qualitative approach as a supporting method to provide deeper interpretations of the research findings. The quantitative approach is used to analyze the leadership styles of school principals and their influence on school excellence, while the qualitative approach is employed to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the implementation of principal leadership in excellent Muhammadiyah schools.

2. Research Location and Time

The research was conducted in several Excellent Muhammadiyah Schools in East Java Province, selected based on their A accreditation status and reputation as outstanding Muhammadiyah schools. Data collection was carried out in 2026 through questionnaires, observations, interviews, and document analysis.

3. Research Subjects and Informants

The research subjects consisted of six school principals and sixty teachers from excellent Muhammadiyah schools in East Java. The sample was determined using a purposive sampling technique, with the criteria that the schools have an A accreditation status, demonstrate good academic achievements, and implement effective principal leadership practices.

In the qualitative phase, informants were selected purposively based on their direct involvement in leadership implementation and learning processes. Therefore, they were considered capable of providing in-depth information regarding the implementation of principal leadership and its impact on school culture and learning quality.

4. Data Collection Techniques

Research data were collected through several techniques as follows:

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License

a. Questionnaire

The main research instrument used the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) Form 5X developed by Bass and Avolio (1994) to measure transformational leadership. In addition, an instrument measuring school excellence was used, covering indicators of teacher performance, school culture, and student achievement.

All instrument items used a five-point Likert scale. Before implementation, the instruments were tested for content validity by three educational management experts. The reliability test results showed Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.91 for transformational leadership, 0.88 for visionary leadership, 0.86 for transactional leadership, 0.84 for participative leadership, and 0.89 for the school excellence instrument. Therefore, all instruments were declared reliable.

b. Observation

Observations were conducted to obtain data regarding the implementation of principal leadership and classroom learning processes, particularly related to classroom management, learning interactions, the use of instructional media, and student engagement.

c. In-depth Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with school principals and several teachers to obtain deeper information regarding leadership practices, school culture, quality improvement strategies, and factors influencing the excellence of Muhammadiyah schools.

d. Documentation Study

Documentation was used to complement research data through the examination of school documents, including school vision and mission statements, work programs, academic supervision reports, quality assurance documents, and school achievement records.

5. Data Analysis Techniques

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to obtain the mean scores, standard deviations, and distribution of respondents' answers. Furthermore, Pearson correlation analysis and linear regression analysis were conducted to examine the relationship and influence of principal leadership styles on school excellence.

Qualitative data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman (1994), which consists of three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

6. Data Validity and Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of qualitative data was ensured through source triangulation, technique triangulation, member checking, and peer debriefing.

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License

Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from school principals and teachers, while technique triangulation was carried out by comparing data collected through questionnaires, observations, interviews, and documentation studies.

Furthermore, interview findings were reconfirmed with informants through member checking, and the results were discussed with colleagues through peer debriefing to enhance the credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability of the research findings.

7. Research Focus

The focus of this study is to analyze the leadership styles of school principals in excellent Muhammadiyah schools in East Java and their impact on school excellence.

The analysis focuses on four leadership styles, namely:

1. Transformational leadership
2. Visionary leadership
3. Transactional leadership
4. Participative/Democratic leadership

This study examines how these leadership styles are implemented within the context of excellent Muhammadiyah schools and how they contribute to achieving sustainable school excellence.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

1. Respondent Profile

The respondents in this study consisted of six school principals and sixty teachers from excellent Muhammadiyah schools in East Java. Most of the principals were between 40–50 years old, had more than 10 years of professional experience, and held a Master's degree (S2). These characteristics indicate that the respondents possessed adequate professional experience, making the information provided relevant and credible in describing principal leadership practices.

The respondent composition consisted of 63.6% males and 36.4% females, with an average working experience of 14.6 years. Among the school principals, 83.3% held a Master's degree (S2) and 16.7% held a Bachelor's degree (S1). Meanwhile, among teachers, 41.67% held a Master's degree (S2) and 58.33% held a Bachelor's degree (S1).

2. Leadership Styles of Muhammadiyah School Principals

The findings indicate that transformational and visionary leadership styles represent the main strengths of Muhammadiyah school principals' leadership practices. Based on quantitative

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License

analysis, the transformational leadership style obtained the highest mean score (M = 4.77; SD = 0.32), indicating that principals consistently provide inspiration, motivation, exemplary behavior, and professional support to teachers.

Meanwhile, the visionary leadership style ranked second with a similarly high score (M = 4.75; SD = 0.28). This finding reflects principals' capacity to formulate strategic directions, develop long-term visions, and guide school communities in addressing educational challenges in the digital and disruptive era.

Furthermore, the transactional leadership style showed a relatively high mean score (M = 4.50; SD = 0.39). This style was reflected in the implementation of reward and punishment systems, consistency in enforcing regulations, and teacher performance evaluation.

On the other hand, the participative/democratic leadership style obtained the lowest mean score (M = 4.48; SD = 0.41). This style was demonstrated through principals' efforts to encourage deliberation, teacher involvement, collaboration, and openness toward criticism and suggestions. Although the score was slightly lower compared to the other three leadership styles, this dimension remains an essential element in creating an inclusive school culture.

These quantitative findings were strengthened by the results of in-depth interviews. Muhammadiyah school principals emphasized that Islamic values such as exemplary conduct (*uswah hasanah*), consultation (*musyawarah*), trustworthiness (*amanah*), and excellence (*ihsan*) serve as moral and spiritual foundations in implementing leadership. These values influence how principals guide teachers, make decisions, and develop a productive work culture within schools.

Therefore, the leadership style of Muhammadiyah school principals represents a combination of visionary and transformational leadership strengths, deeply rooted in Islamic values embedded within the organizational culture.

3. The Influence of Leadership Styles on School Excellence

The findings demonstrate that transformational and visionary leadership styles, which obtained the highest mean scores, provide the strongest contributions to promoting excellence in Muhammadiyah schools.

Quantitatively, transformational leadership achieved a mean score of (M = 4.77; SD = 0.32), illustrating that principals consistently provide inspiration, motivation, exemplary behavior, and professional support that directly contribute to improving teacher performance. Such support creates a conducive working environment and facilitates continuous learning innovation.

Meanwhile, visionary leadership, with a mean score of (M = 4.75; SD = 0.28), also demonstrates a significant influence on school excellence. Principals are capable of formulating

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License

strategic directions, developing long-term visions, and guiding school communities in responding to educational changes in the digital and disruptive era. This capability encourages alignment between school strategic planning, curriculum development, and future-oriented work culture. Practically, a clear vision enables teachers to become more focused, adaptive, and committed to achieving school quality targets.

In addition to these two dominant leadership styles, transactional leadership, with a mean score of (M = 4.50; SD = 0.39), also contributes to maintaining organizational stability, discipline, and accountability through clear reward and punishment mechanisms. Although its average score is lower, transactional leadership remains important in ensuring that school procedures, regulations, and quality standards are implemented consistently.

The participative or democratic leadership style also contributes positively to strengthening collaborative culture within schools, although it obtained the lowest mean score (M = 4.48; SD = 0.41). Principals encourage deliberation, teacher involvement in decision-making, and openness to feedback and criticism. This participative leadership creates a stronger sense of ownership among teachers toward school programs, ultimately improving the effectiveness of school policy implementation.

These quantitative findings are consistent with qualitative data obtained from in-depth interviews. Teachers reported that principals demonstrate strong exemplary behavior, provide clear direction, and develop teachers' confidence. Furthermore, principals provide opportunities for teachers to develop creative ideas, implement learning innovations, and participate in school development programs. Islamic values such as exemplary conduct, consultation, trustworthiness, and excellence also serve as moral foundations that strengthen principal leadership practices in building institutional excellence.

Thus, both quantitative and qualitative findings demonstrate that the combination of visionary and transformational leadership, integrated with strong Islamic values, plays a central role in creating Muhammadiyah school excellence. This leadership approach not only improves teacher performance but also strengthens innovation culture, collaboration, and educational service quality, enabling schools to compete and develop sustainably.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that the four measured leadership styles—transformational, visionary, transactional, and participative leadership—make different contributions to shaping excellence in Muhammadiyah schools.

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License

Among the four styles, transformational leadership obtained the highest score (M = 4.77; SD = 0.32), indicating that principals consistently provide inspiration, motivation, exemplary conduct, and professional support for teachers. This high score shows that teachers perceive positive influences from leadership oriented toward human development, organizational change, and quality improvement.

This finding aligns with the theory of Bass and Avolio (1994), which states that transformational leadership enhances organizational commitment, work morale, and performance through four dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. In Muhammadiyah schools, these dimensions are manifested through exemplary leadership (*uswah hasanah*), spiritually based motivation, and encouragement for continuous innovation.

Besides transformational leadership, visionary leadership also demonstrated very high results (M = 4.75; SD = 0.28). Teachers perceived that principals possess clear strategic directions, are able to anticipate future challenges, and can mobilize organizations toward long-term goals. Visionary leadership is highly relevant in modern education characterized by rapid change. As stated by Bush (2018), school leaders must be able to anticipate environmental dynamics and establish adaptive and sustainable policies.

Nadeak (2016) also emphasizes that visionary leaders are capable of communicating a strong vision and integrating it into the actions of all school members. This study supports that perspective, particularly because Muhammadiyah schools place Islamic vision, academic excellence, and technological mastery as key pillars of institutional development (Ridho & Novezar, 2023).

Below transformational and visionary leadership, transactional leadership obtained a high score (M = 4.50; SD = 0.39). This indicates that principals consistently implement reward and punishment mechanisms, maintain discipline, and conduct regular teacher evaluations. Although transactional leadership is often considered an administrative and structural approach, it remains important in ensuring organizational stability and compliance with school quality standards.

According to Robbins and Judge (2020), transactional leadership functions to maintain organizational stability through reinforcement of rules and procedures. Within Muhammadiyah schools, this leadership style strengthens school governance so that learning processes, administration, and quality standards can operate effectively and consistently.

Meanwhile, participative/democratic leadership obtained the lowest score (M = 4.48; SD = 0.41), although it remained within the very high category. This indicates that principals provide

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License

opportunities for teachers to express opinions, participate in decision-making, and collaborate in school management.

Table 1. Mean Scores of Principal Leadership Styles in Muhammadiyah Schools

No.	Leadership Style	Mean Score (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
1	Transformational Leadership	4.77	0.32
2	Visionary Leadership	4.75	0.28
3	Transactional Leadership	4.50	0.39
4	Participative/Democratic Leadership	4.48	0.41

However, compared with other leadership styles, participative leadership still requires further strengthening, particularly in encouraging active participation and transparency in decision-making processes. This finding supports Sergiovanni (1991), who argues that effective leadership is not only hierarchical but also collaborative, enabling teachers to experience shared responsibility and involvement.

Spillane (2006) further emphasizes the importance of distributed leadership, where leadership responsibilities are shared among all school members to create adaptive and innovative organizational structures.

Qualitative findings from in-depth interviews further strengthen the quantitative results. Teachers reported that principals demonstrate strong exemplary behavior, build trust, provide clear guidance, and create opportunities for teacher innovation. This finding is consistent with Hoy and Miskel (2013), who emphasize that positive interpersonal relationships, trust, and teacher intrinsic motivation are important factors shaping innovation culture and school effectiveness.

In Muhammadiyah schools, these aspects are strengthened by Islamic values such as syura (consultation), amanah (trustworthiness), and ihsan (excellence), which serve as moral and spiritual foundations for principal leadership.

Overall, this study demonstrates that Muhammadiyah school excellence is not only determined by outstanding programs, infrastructure, or technological mastery but is strongly influenced by the quality of principal leadership.

The combination of transformational, visionary, transactional, and participative leadership styles, grounded in Islamic and Muhammadiyah values, has proven capable of creating a learning environment that is adaptive, competitive, innovative, and spiritually rooted.

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License

Such leadership creates a balance between managerial stability, long-term strategic direction, innovative motivation, and collective participation of all school members. These findings reinforce educational leadership theory that principal effectiveness is not determined by a single leadership style but by the ability to combine various leadership approaches contextually according to the characteristics of value-based educational organizations.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion presented in this study, several conclusions can be drawn as follows:

1. The leadership styles of principals in excellent Muhammadiyah schools are predominantly characterized by transformational and visionary leadership, which obtained the highest mean scores (M = 4.77 and M = 4.75, respectively). These two leadership styles are reflected in the principals' ability to provide inspiration, motivation, exemplary conduct, and clear strategic direction for the school community. Transactional leadership (M = 4.50) and participative leadership (M = 4.48) are also implemented effectively, although at relatively lower levels. The combination of these four leadership styles creates a balanced leadership approach that integrates motivation, discipline, collaboration, and change orientation.
2. The implementation of principal leadership styles is influenced by several key factors, including Islamic and Muhammadiyah values, managerial competence, a collaborative school organizational culture, and active teacher support and participation. Values such as *uswah hasanah* (exemplary conduct), *syura* (consultation), *amanah* (trustworthiness), and *ihsan* (excellence) serve as moral and spiritual foundations for principals in carrying out their leadership roles. These factors shape a strong leadership character oriented toward exemplary behavior, professionalism, innovation, and the strengthening of school spirituality.
3. Transformational and visionary leadership styles are proven to have significant contributions to achieving excellence in Muhammadiyah schools. These two leadership approaches encourage improved teacher performance, foster a culture of innovation, strengthen the commitment of school members, and ensure that institutional strategic directions are implemented consistently. Transactional and participative leadership styles also strengthen governance structures and internal collaboration, enabling school programs to be implemented effectively. Therefore, the quality of principal leadership is a key factor in maintaining and enhancing the competitiveness of Muhammadiyah schools in the era of educational disruption.

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License

Overall, this study confirms that the excellence of Muhammadiyah schools is not solely determined by programs and facilities but is strongly influenced by the quality of integrative principal leadership that combines transformational, visionary, transactional, and participative leadership values with Islamic principles as the institutional identity.

REFERENCES

Arien, W., Islami, N., Mahdum, M., Copriady, J., & Putra, Z. H. (2026). The impact of transformational leadership in education: A systematic literature review. Research and Development Journal of Education.

Balwant, P. T. (2016). Transformational instructor-leadership in higher education teaching: A meta-analytic review and research agenda. Journal of Leadership Studies, 9(4), 20–42. https://doi.org/10.1002/jls.21423.

Bush, T. (2018). Leadership and Management in Education. Sage Publications.

Day, C., Gu, Q., & Sammons, P. (2016). The impact of leadership on student outcomes: How successful school leaders use transformational and instructional strategies to make a difference. Educational Administration Quarterly, 52(2), 221–258.

Fayezi, S. (2026). Transformational leadership in higher education: A motivation–ability–opportunity perspective. Education Sciences, 16(6).

Furqoni, D. W., Nurdin, D., & Nurdin, N. (2026). Principals' transformational leadership and its role in shaping teachers' differentiated instruction and student achievement: A systematic literature review. JMSP.

Hallinger, P. (2018). Bringing context out of the shadows of leadership. Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 46(1), 5–24.

Haryaka, U., Mulawarman, W. G., Nurlali, N., Warman, W., Sjamsir, H., & Sa'ad, M. I. (2026). Transformational leadership in educational management: Encouraging student motivation and engagement. Frontiers in Education, 11. https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2026.1676318

Hoy, W. K., & Miskel, C. G. (2018). Educational administration: Theory, research, and practice (10th ed.). McGraw-Hill.

Johan, M., Permana, J., Nurdin, D., & Suryana, A. (2026). Arah perkembangan kajian kepemimpinan transformasional kepala sekolah dalam pengembangan inovasi pembelajaran untuk peningkatan mutu pendidikan. JAMP: Jurnal Administrasi dan Manajemen Pendidikan.Hallinger, P. (2011). Leadership for Learning: Lessons from 40 Years of Empirical Research. Journal of Educational Administration, 49(2), 125–142.

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License

Leithwood, K. (2021). A review of evidence about equitable school leadership. Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

Leithwood, K., Harris, A., & Hopkins, D. (2020). Seven strong claims about successful school leadership revisited. School Leadership & Management, 40(1), 5–22.

Maneethai, D., Eisenberger, R., Rockstuhl, T., Wu, D., & Lewis, B. A. (2026). Transformational leadership in context: A meta-analysis of 40 years of research. Journal of Applied Psychology.

Maryani, D. (2024). Systematic literature review: Principal's leadership in improving teachers' performance. PPSDP International Journal of Education, 4(2), 45–56.Leithwood, K., & Jantzi, D. (2000). The Effects of Transformational Leadership on Organizational Conditions and Student Engagement. Journal of Educational Administration, 38(2), 112–129.

Mulyasa, E. (2022). Manajemen dan kepemimpinan kepala sekolah. Remaja Rosdakarya.

OECD. (2020). School leadership for learning. OECD Publishing.

OECD. (2023). Education at a glance 2023. OECD Publishing.

OECD. (2025). Education policy outlook 2025. OECD Publishing.

Pont, B. (2020). School leadership and educational change. OECD Publishing.

Ridho, M. R., & Novezar, R. A. (2023). Transformational leadership of school principals at Muhammadiyah junior high school level in Wonosobo Regency. Ittishal Educational Research Journal, 5(1). https://doi.org/10.51425/ierj.v5i1.61

Robbins, S. P., & Judge, T. A. (2020). Organizational behavior (18th ed.). Pearson.

Shields, C. M. (2026). Understanding the widespread applicability of transformative leadership. Education Sciences, 16(2).

Spillane, J. P. (2021). Distributed leadership. Jossey-Bass.

Syafrin, D., Malahayati, R., Irsyad, I., Syahril, S., & Achyar, N. (2026). Peran transformational leadership dalam pengawasan pendidikan berbasis penjaminan mutu. Naradidik: Journal of Education and Pedagogy.

UNESCO. (2021). Reimagining our futures together: A new social contract for education. UNESCO.

UNESCO. (2024). Global education monitoring report 2024. UNESCO.

UNICEF. (2023). The state of global learning. UNICEF.

World Bank. (2024). The state of global learning poverty 2024. World Bank.

Yuliana, R., Sulisworo, D., & Hasanah, E. (2022). Kepemimpinan transformasional kepala sekolah di SMP Muhammadiyah Semin. Academy of Education Journal, 13(1), 12–25.

Zepeda, S. J. (2017). Instructional supervision: Applying tools and concepts (4th ed.).

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License

Routledge.Leithwood, K., Louis, K. S., Anderson, S., & Wahlstrom, K. (2004). How Leadership Influences Student Learning.

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License