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The Role of Teachers as Learning Managers in Enhancing Students' Academic Achievement in Islamic Primary Education: A Perspective on Effective Learning Management

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Abstract:
This study aims to describe, analyze, and evaluate the role of teachers as learning managers in improving students' academic achievement in Islamic primary education. The background of this research is based on the phenomenon that the implementation of teachers' roles as learning managers is still not optimal and varies among teachers, thereby affecting the quality of student learning outcomes. This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study design conducted at MI Darul Hikmah Al-Fatimiyah, Besuki, Situbondo, East Java, Indonesia. The research subjects include the principal, teachers, and students, with data collection techniques consisting of observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Data analysis was carried out through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, supported by triangulation techniques to ensure data validity. The findings reveal that teachers have performed managerial learning functions, including planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating instruction, although not yet consistently and innovatively. The main supporting factors include teachers' commitment, students' motivation, and principal leadership support, while the inhibiting factors include limited learning media, low integration of educational technology, and heterogeneous student abilities. The strategy applied is a student-need-based learning model through planning, implementation, and evaluation stages. The study also shows that the role of teachers as learning managers has a positive impact on improving students' academic achievement. Therefore, strengthening teachers' managerial competencies is essential for enhancing instructional quality and ensuring sustainable educational improvement in Islamic primary schools.

INTRODUCTION

Teacher roles in the Islamic primary education system have undergone a significant shift from merely being content deliverers to becoming complex and multidimensional learning managers. However, empirical realities indicate that many teachers have not yet fully optimized their managerial functions in

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instructional processes (Al Khozaini & Mundiri, 2024). This phenomenon becomes increasingly concerning as insufficient teacher competence in managing learning directly contributes to the decline of students' academic achievement. In various Islamic primary education institutions, learning processes remain dominated by conventional, teacher-centered approaches rather than systematic, structured, and competency-based learning management (Abu Hasan Agus R, 2023). This condition highlights a clear gap between the demands of 21st-century teacher professionalism and stagnant instructional practices. Furthermore, teachers are often positioned merely as instructors rather than planners, organizers, implementers, and evaluators of learning processes. From a modern educational management perspective, teachers are expected to function as key actors who manage the entire learning process effectively and efficiently. This situation is critical, as the quality of instruction strongly determines students' learning outcomes, particularly at the primary education level, which serves as the foundational stage for students' cognitive and character development (Baharun et al., 2021). Therefore, the role of teachers as learning managers has become a strategic issue that cannot be overlooked in efforts to improve educational quality.

Field findings indicate that students' academic achievement in several Islamic primary education institutions has not yet reached optimal standards. This can be observed from low learning achievement scores, limited higher-order thinking skills, and minimal student participation in classroom activities. These conditions are closely related to teachers' weak capacity in managing instruction systematically and based on students' learning needs. Teachers tend to use monotonous and less varied teaching methods, and they have not fully implemented structured instructional management approaches (Maimuna, 2024). In addition, time management, instructional strategies, and learning evaluation are still conducted partially and without comprehensive planning. Empirical evidence from various educational studies indicates that effective teacher instructional management has a strong correlation with improved academic achievement. The better teachers are in planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating instruction, the higher students' academic performance will be. However, implementation of the teacher-as-learning-manager concept is still uneven in practice. This situation presents a major challenge for Islamic educational institutions in improving learning quality that is responsive to contemporary developments. Therefore, a more in-depth investigation is needed to understand how the role of teachers as learning managers can be effectively implemented within Islamic primary education contexts (Wisudaningsih et al., 2024).

Research conducted between 2022 and 2025 indicates that the issue of teachers as learning managers has been widely studied across various educational contexts. Studies in 2022 emphasized that teacher learning management significantly contributes to students' motivation and learning outcomes. Research in 2023 further confirmed that systematic lesson planning enhances the effectiveness of teaching and learning processes. Meanwhile, studies in 2024 highlighted the importance of technology integration in instructional management to increase student engagement. More recent studies in 2025 suggest that teachers with strong managerial competencies are more capable of creating interactive and productive learning environments. Overall, the

research landscape demonstrates a consensus that teachers' managerial roles positively influence students' academic achievement. However, most studies have focused on general schools or urban-based madrasahs with relatively adequate facilities. This indicates a research gap regarding local Islamic primary education institutions with distinct socio-cultural characteristics. Therefore, a more contextualized study is needed to examine how this concept is implemented in real educational settings.

Although numerous studies have examined the relationship between teachers' roles as learning managers and students' academic achievement, several limitations remain. First, most studies still employ simple quantitative approaches without deeply exploring the instructional processes carried out by teachers in real classroom settings. Second, many studies have not integrated cultural and religious dimensions, which are essential in Islamic primary education contexts. Third, previous research tends to be overly general, failing to capture the specific dynamics of local educational institutions. Fourth, the transformation of teacher roles in response to 21st-century educational demands has not been comprehensively examined, particularly in relation to sustainable improvement of student achievement. In addition, there is limited research directly linking teacher instructional management with student academic outcomes in small-scale institutions grounded in traditional Islamic values. These limitations highlight the urgent need for more in-depth, contextual, and field-based research. Therefore, this study seeks to fill these gaps through a more holistic and integrated approach.

This study aims to describe, analyze, and evaluate in depth the role of teachers as learning managers in improving students' academic achievement in Islamic primary education. The main focus is to identify how teachers plan instruction, organize learning processes, implement teaching strategies, and evaluate student learning outcomes. In addition, this study seeks to explore the relationship between the quality of teacher instructional management and students' academic performance in Islamic primary education settings. Descriptively, this study provides an empirical overview of instructional management practices in real classroom contexts. Thus, the findings are expected to contribute to a deeper understanding of how teachers' roles as learning managers are operationalized in practice and to enrich the literature on Islamic educational management focused on improving academic achievement.

Critically, this study aims to examine the effectiveness of teachers' roles as learning managers in addressing the challenge of low student academic achievement. This analysis goes beyond description by exploring the factors influencing the success and failure of instructional management implementation in classrooms. Such critical analysis is essential to determine whether teachers genuinely perform their managerial roles in accordance with modern educational management principles or merely as administrative formalities. Furthermore, this study critiques the gap between ideal instructional management theory and actual classroom practice. This approach is expected to contribute to the development of more adaptive and contextual learning models. It also identifies structural, pedagogical, and cultural barriers affecting teachers' performance in managing instruction. Thus, the study is not only descriptive but also analytical and reflective of Islamic primary education realities.

Furthermore, this study has a transformative orientation aimed at providing recommendations for improving teachers' instructional management practices. This transformation includes enhancing teachers' competencies in designing student-centered learning, applying innovative teaching strategies, and strengthening evaluation systems oriented toward learning outcomes improvement (Pacal & Işık, 2025). In the context of Islamic primary education, this transformation is expected to strengthen the integration of Islamic values with students' academic competencies. Additionally, this study provides practical contributions for educational institutions in developing effective classroom management-based policies. Therefore, this research is not only academic in nature but also practical and implementable in improving educational quality.

The novelty of this study lies in its focus on integrating teachers' roles as learning managers with students' academic achievement in the context of a local Islamic primary education institution at MI Darul Hikmah Al-Fatimiyah Besuki Situbondo. This study differs from previous research because it specifically examines the implementation of instructional management within a unique socio-religious educational setting. Moreover, it combines descriptive, critical, and transformative approaches simultaneously to produce a more comprehensive analysis (Mundofi, 2025). Another novelty is the direct linkage between teachers' instructional management practices and students' academic outcomes in a real-world context. Therefore, this study is expected to contribute new insights to the development of Islamic-based learning management theory and serve as a reference for future research in the same field. The research location provides a unique empirical context that has not been widely explored in previous literature.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design. The qualitative approach is selected to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of teachers' roles as learning managers within a natural setting, not to test statistical hypotheses, but to explore meanings, processes, and practices occurring in the field. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), qualitative case study research enables researchers to deeply explore a bounded system through rich and contextual data collection. In this study, the case study focuses on the implementation of teachers' roles as learning managers in improving students' academic achievement at MI Darul Hikmah Al-Fatimiyah, Besuki, Situbondo. This approach is considered appropriate because the phenomenon under investigation is complex, contextual, and highly influenced by social interactions between teachers and students in the learning process. Thus, the case study design allows the researcher to capture the learning reality holistically, deeply, and naturally.

This research was conducted at MI Darul Hikmah Al-Fatimiyah, Besuki, Situbondo, East Java, Indonesia, as a case study location selected purposively based on the characteristics of an Islamic primary education institution with distinctive learning dynamics. The research subjects included the headmaster, classroom teachers, and students who are directly involved in the learning process. Informants were selected using purposive sampling, namely selecting participants based on specific considerations deemed capable of providing the most relevant information related to the research focus. According to Sugiyono (2022), purposive sampling in qualitative research is used to obtain in-depth data

from informants who truly understand the phenomenon being studied. Thus, the research subjects were not chosen randomly, but based on their roles and involvement in learning management processes. This approach is expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of how teachers perform their roles as learning managers in the context of Islamic primary education.

Date collection in this study was carried out using three main techniques, namely participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observation was conducted to directly examine classroom learning processes, including how teachers plan, implement, and evaluate instruction. In-depth interviews were conducted with teachers and the headmaster to obtain detailed information regarding the learning management strategies applied and their impact on students' academic achievement. Documentation was used to collect supporting data such as lesson plans (RPP), students' learning outcomes, and institutional records of learning activities. According to Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), the use of multiple data collection techniques in qualitative research aims to strengthen the validity of findings through data triangulation. Thus, the combination of these techniques enables the researcher to obtain rich, in-depth, and complementary data that accurately represents the research reality.

Date analysis in this study follows the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which consists of three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data reduction involves selecting, focusing, and simplifying data relevant to the research focus. Data display is conducted in the form of systematic descriptive narratives to facilitate understanding of emerging patterns in the field. Conclusions are drawn progressively based on identified relationships among the data. To ensure data validity, this study employs source triangulation and technique triangulation. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), trustworthiness in qualitative research can be enhanced through credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Therefore, the data analysis process in this study is not only descriptive but also systematic and scientifically accountable, producing valid and credible findings that contribute to the development of Islamic educational management knowledge.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

The Role of Teachers as Learning Managers

The findings of this study indicate that teachers at MI Darul Hikmah Al-Fatimiyah, Besuki, Situbondo, have implemented their roles as learning managers, although the level of implementation varies among teachers. In general, this role encompasses instructional planning, classroom organization, implementation of teaching strategies, and evaluation of student learning outcomes (Hefniy & Arifin, 2023). Teachers do not merely function as transmitters of knowledge, but also as managers of the learning process who strive to create a conducive and active classroom environment. Based on classroom observations, some teachers have systematically prepared lesson plans and adapted their teaching methods to students' characteristics. This is reinforced by the statement of one teacher: "We try to manage learning not only by delivering material, but also by organizing the classroom so that students are active and understand the material well"

(W1/GK/2026). These findings suggest that the managerial role of teachers is gradually developing, although it still requires strengthening in terms of innovation and consistency in classroom implementation.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors of Teachers' Roles as Learning Managers

The study finds that several factors influence the effectiveness of teachers' roles as learning managers. The main supporting factors include teachers' strong commitment to improving instructional quality, as well as the principal's support in the form of academic supervision and the provision of learning tools (Lubis et al., 2022). In addition, students' relatively high motivation also contributes to the success of the learning process. One informant stated: "We always receive guidance from the headmaster to improve our teaching methods so that they become more structured and enjoyable for students" (W2/KS/2026). However, there are also significant inhibiting factors, such as limited instructional media, teachers' insufficient ability to integrate educational technology, and the heterogeneous academic abilities of students within a single classroom. These conditions require teachers to exert greater effort in managing instruction effectively. Thus, the effectiveness of teachers' roles as learning managers is strongly influenced by a combination of interrelated internal and external factors.

In addition, the findings also identify the instructional strategy model used by teachers in performing their roles as learning managers, namely a student-need-based planning–implementation–evaluation model. At the planning stage, teachers design lesson plans (RPP) by considering students' characteristics and learning outcomes. During implementation, teachers apply active learning strategies such as group discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and contextual learning based on students' experiences. At the evaluation stage, teachers use a combination of formative and summative assessments to measure students' academic achievement continuously. One teacher stated: "We adjust our methods to students' conditions; sometimes we use discussions, sometimes hands-on practice so they can understand the material more easily" (W3/GP/2026). This model indicates that teachers have attempted to implement a more adaptive and flexible learning management approach. However, this strategy still requires strengthening, particularly in terms of digitalization and the use of technology-based learning media.

The Impact of Teachers' Roles as Learning Managers on Students' Academic Achievement

The findings of this study indicate that the implementation of teachers' roles as learning managers has a positive impact on improving students' academic achievement. This is reflected in better learning outcomes, increased student participation in classroom activities, and improved understanding of subject matter (Mukhibat et al., 2024). Teachers who are able to manage learning systematically tend to produce students with higher academic achievement compared to those experiencing unstructured learning processes. One student stated: "When the teacher explains clearly and often uses discussion, I understand the lesson more easily" (W4/S1/2026). This finding indicates that effective learning management contributes directly to the effectiveness of the learning process. Thus, the role of teachers as learning managers is closely related to the

improvement of learning quality in Islamic primary education settings.

Overall, the results of this study show that teachers' roles as learning managers, supporting and inhibiting factors, and instructional strategy models are interrelated in shaping students' academic achievement quality. Teachers who are able to carry out planning, implementation, and evaluation functions effectively are proven to be more successful in improving student learning outcomes. However, this effectiveness is strongly influenced by internal factors such as teacher competence and motivation, as well as external factors such as facilities and institutional support (Ardi et al., 2024). The student-need-based learning strategy model is the primary approach used by teachers in managing classroom instruction. Therefore, it can be concluded that the success of improving students' academic achievement is not only determined by teaching methods, but also by teachers' ability to perform comprehensive, adaptive, and contextual learning management functions.

DISCUSSION

The Role of Teachers as Learning Managers

The findings of this study indicate that the role of teachers as learning managers at MI Darul Hikmah Al-Fatimiyah, Besuki, Situbondo, has been implemented at an operational level, although it is not yet evenly distributed among all teachers. This finding suggests that teachers have carried out instructional managerial functions, including planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating the learning process. From a management education perspective, teachers are not only positioned as instructors but also as designers of effective learning systems (Robbins & Coulter, 2021). This aligns with the concept of the teacher as an instructional manager, which positions teachers as the main actors in managing the entire classroom learning process. However, variations in implementation indicate a competency gap among teachers in consistently applying learning management principles (Aulia et al., 2024; Mulyana & Maylawati, 2024). Some teachers have systematically prepared lesson plans and adapted their teaching methods to students' characteristics, while others still tend to use conventional approaches. This condition shows that the transformation of teachers' roles toward learning managers is still in a transitional stage. Therefore, strengthening teachers' pedagogical and managerial competencies is necessary so that the functions of planning through evaluation can be carried out in an integrated manner and oriented toward optimal student learning outcomes.

Theoretically, the role of teachers as learning managers is in line with the classroom management approach, which emphasizes the importance of systematically and purposefully organizing the learning environment. Teachers are not only required to master subject content but also to create a conducive, participatory, and student-centered learning climate (Marzano, 2022). The findings show that some teachers have begun to internalize this role by creating active classroom environments through discussions and two-way interactions. This is supported by teachers' statements that learning is not solely focused on delivering material but also on managing student activities to ensure deeper understanding of concepts. However, analysis reveals that the approaches used are not yet fully aligned with 21st-century learning innovations, such as project-based learning or digital technology integration. In other words, teachers'

managerial roles remain partially adaptive rather than fully transformative. This condition highlights the need to strengthen teachers' competencies in pedagogical innovation so that their role as learning managers can have a more significant impact on learning quality.

Further analysis shows that the implementation of teachers' roles as learning managers also reflects the professionalization process of teachers in Islamic primary education contexts. Teachers are no longer merely curriculum implementers but also pedagogical decision-makers at the classroom level. This is consistent with Fullan (2023), who argues that meaningful educational change begins with the transformation of teachers' roles in the classroom. In this study, teachers have demonstrated efforts to adjust instructional strategies to students' needs, although still on a limited scale. However, not all teachers consistently apply the full cycle of learning management. This inconsistency results in variations in learning quality across classrooms. Therefore, it can be concluded that the role of teachers as learning managers has been conceptually established, but still requires strengthening in terms of implementation, consistency, and innovation to sustainably support the improvement of students' academic achievement.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors of Teachers' Roles as Learning Managers

The findings of this study indicate that the effectiveness of teachers' roles as learning managers is influenced by a range of interrelated internal and external factors. The main supporting factors originate from teachers' commitment to improving instructional quality, as well as the principal's support in the form of academic supervision (Lubis et al., 2022). This finding is consistent with instructional leadership theory, which emphasizes that school principals play a strategic role in enhancing teacher performance through continuous professional development (Bush & Glover, 2021). In addition, students' relatively high motivation also serves as an important factor supporting the success of the learning process. A positive school environment creates conditions that enable teachers to manage learning more effectively. However, these supporting factors have not fully been able to overcome the challenges encountered in practice. This indicates that the success of learning management is not determined by a single factor, but rather results from a complex interaction among teacher competence, institutional support, and student characteristics (Hamdan et al., 2021).

On the other hand, the inhibiting factors identified in this study are quite significant and have the potential to affect the effectiveness of teachers' roles as learning managers. Limited availability of instructional media is one of the main obstacles that makes the learning process less varied. In addition, the limited ability of some teachers to integrate digital technology also poses a challenge in responding to the demands of 21st-century learning. The heterogeneity of students' abilities within a single classroom further complicates learning management, as teachers must adapt instructional strategies both individually and in groups. This condition aligns with recent studies indicating that student diversity is one of the main challenges in effective instructional implementation (UNESCO, 2024). Therefore, teachers are required to possess high pedagogical flexibility to accommodate differences in student abilities without compromising overall learning quality.

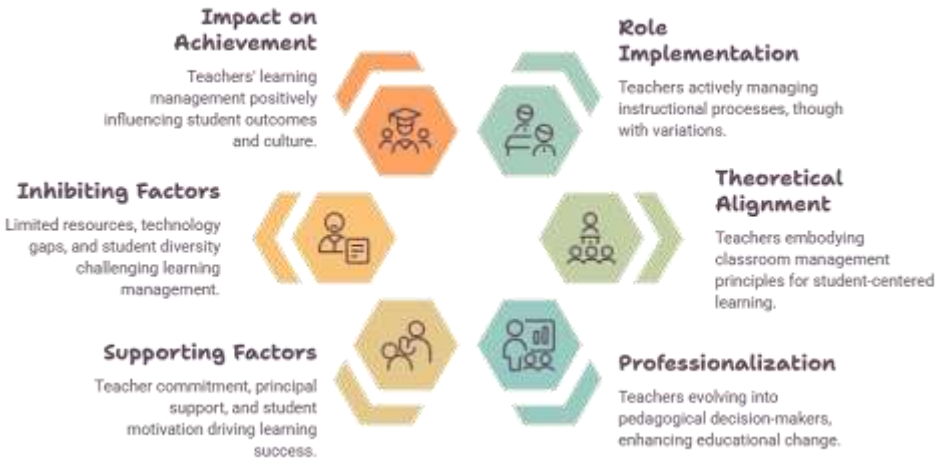
Further analysis shows that supporting and inhibiting factors do not exist independently but interact in shaping the quality of teachers' learning management. For instance, strong principal leadership can mitigate the impact of limited resources when accompanied by appropriate management strategies. Conversely, even with high teacher commitment, limited resources can hinder the optimization of learning processes. This demonstrates that improving teachers' roles as learning managers requires a systemic approach involving all educational components. Accordingly, policies are needed to strengthen teacher competencies, provide adequate learning facilities, and develop a school culture that supports instructional innovation. Without the integration of these factors, the effectiveness of learning management will be difficult to achieve optimally.

The Impact of Teachers' Roles as Learning Managers on Students' Academic Achievement

The findings of this study indicate that the role of teachers as learning managers has a positive impact on improving students' academic achievement. This is reflected in improved learning outcomes, increased student participation in classroom activities, and a better understanding of subject matter. From the perspective of cognitive learning theory, well-organized learning processes enhance students' ability to construct knowledge more effectively (Bruner, 2022). Teachers who are able to manage learning systematically tend to provide more meaningful learning experiences for students. This shows that learning management is not merely an administrative aspect, but has a direct implication for students' learning outcomes. Thus, the quality of teachers' learning management is one of the key determinants of academic achievement in Islamic primary education settings (Mukaddamah, 2023).

From an empirical perspective, the improvement of students' academic achievement is influenced not only by teaching methods but also by teachers' ability to manage the instructional process effectively. Teachers who are able to integrate planning, implementation, and evaluation consistently have been proven more successful in improving student learning outcomes. This is consistent with Hattie (2023), who states that teacher effectiveness is one of the most significant factors in enhancing students' academic achievement. In the context of this study, students who experience structured learning tend to understand the material more easily and become more active in the learning process. Conversely, unstructured learning often results in lower comprehension and reduced student engagement. Therefore, the role of teachers as learning managers plays a highly strategic contribution in improving the quality of learning outcomes.

More broadly, the impact of teachers' roles as learning managers also contributes to the development of a more positive learning culture within madrasah environments. Well-managed learning creates an interactive, collaborative, and competency-oriented classroom atmosphere. This not only improves academic achievement but also fosters students' independence and responsibility in learning. Thus, it can be concluded that the role of teachers as learning managers has a multidimensional impact, not only on cognitive aspects but also on students' affective and social development. Therefore, strengthening teachers' roles as learning managers is an important strategy for continuously improving the quality of Islamic primary education.



Picture 1. Mind Map of the Basics of Effective Learning Management

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study and discussion, it can be concluded that the role of teachers as learning managers at MI Darul Hikmah Al-Fatimiyah, Besuki, Situbondo, has been implemented at an operational level; however, variations in its implementation are still evident. Teachers have carried out instructional managerial functions, including planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating learning activities, although these practices have not been fully consistent and evenly applied across all classes. Teachers are not only responsible for delivering subject matter but also for managing the learning process in ways that create active, conducive, and student-centered classroom environments. This indicates that the transformation of teachers' roles toward becoming learning managers has begun, yet still requires strengthening in pedagogical innovation, consistency of implementation, and integration of learning technologies to align with the demands of 21st-century education.

The factors influencing teachers' roles as learning managers consist of both supporting and inhibiting elements that interact dynamically. The main supporting factors include teachers' commitment, students' motivation, and the principal's support through academic supervision and the strengthening of instructional planning tools. Meanwhile, the dominant inhibiting factors include limited instructional media, insufficient teacher competence in integrating technology, and the heterogeneous abilities of students within classrooms. This condition shows that the effectiveness of learning management is determined not only by individual teacher competence but also by systemic support from the school environment. Therefore, strengthening teacher capacity and improving learning facilities are necessary to minimize existing constraints effectively.

Furthermore, the role of teachers as learning managers has been proven to positively impact students' academic achievement. Well-managed learning processes enhance learning outcomes, increase student participation, and deepen conceptual understanding. The learning management model based on planning, implementation, and evaluation that is adapted to students' needs serves as the main strategy employed by teachers in the instructional process. Thus, it can be concluded that the success of improving students' academic achievement does not depend solely on teaching methods, but also on teachers' ability to perform

comprehensive, adaptive, and contextual learning management functions. This emphasizes the importance of strengthening teachers' professionalism as learning managers in order to continuously improve the quality of Islamic primary education.

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