

Adapting Transformative Leadership in Islamic Education: Insights from Madrasah

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Abstract:

This study aims to analyze the implementation of transformative leadership in madrasahs, focusing on four main components: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design. Data collection techniques are carried out through interviews, observations and documentation. The data obtained are then analyzed using thematic analysis techniques to identify patterns related to implementing transformative leadership. The study results indicate that the madrasah principal successfully acts as a role model that inspires motivates, and supports innovation among teachers and students. Implementing this transformative leadership improves the quality of education by balancing academic achievement and character development of students. However, this study also identified several limitations, such as the lack of active participation in decision-making and suboptimal support for intellectual stimulation. This study provides important implications for leadership development in madrasahs, namely the need to increase the active participation of teachers and students in decision-making and more optimal support for intellectual stimulation. Implementing more inclusive transformative leadership can improve the quality of education, both in terms of academics and the character development of students.

Keywords: *Transformative Leadership, Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivation*

Abstrak:

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis penerapan kepemimpinan transformatif di madrasah, dengan fokus pada empat komponen utama, yaitu pengaruh ideal, motivasi inspirasional, stimulasi intelektual, dan pertimbangan individu. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui wawancara, observasi dan dokumentasi. Data yang diperoleh kemudian dianalisis menggunakan teknik analisis tematik untuk mengidentifikasi pola-pola yang berkaitan dengan penerapan kepemimpinan transformatif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepala madrasah berhasil bertindak sebagai panutan yang menginspirasi, memotivasi, dan mendukung inovasi di kalangan guru dan siswa. Penerapan kepemimpinan transformatif ini berkontribusi pada peningkatan kualitas pendidikan, dengan menyeimbangkan prestasi akademik dan pengembangan karakter siswa. Meskipun demikian, penelitian ini juga mengidentifikasi beberapa keterbatasan, seperti kurangnya partisipasi aktif dalam pengambilan keputusan dan belum optimalnya dukungan untuk stimulasi intelektual. Penelitian ini memberikan implikasi penting bagi pengembangan kepemimpinan di madrasah, yaitu perlunya peningkatan partisipasi aktif guru dan siswa dalam pengambilan keputusan serta dukungan yang lebih optimal untuk stimulasi intelektual. Penerapan kepemimpinan transformatif yang

lebih inklusif dapat meningkatkan kualitas pendidikan, baik dalam aspek akademik maupun pengembangan karakter siswa.

Kata Kunci: *Kepemimpinan Transformatif, Pengaruh Ideal, Motivasi Inspiratif*

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INTRODUCTION

Transformative leadership is considered one of the most effective educational approaches (Baroudi, 2022; Meng, 2022; Ghorbani et al., 2023), including in madrasah, to create sustainable positive change. This leadership concept emphasizes individual empowerment through four main components: ideal influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration (Sathiyaseelan, 2023; Singh & Chaudhary, 2023). In the context of madrasah, madrasa principals who implement transformative leadership can motivate teachers and students to be more enthusiastic about achieving higher educational goals, both academically and morally (Ahmad et al., 2024; Ridlo & Yanti, 2023). Transformative leadership does not only focus on educational outcomes but also on character formation through Islamic values, which are very important in the context of education in Indonesia. This study is important because it explores how madrasa principals can implement these four components in a madrasa environment, which has its challenges and dynamics. Through this study, a more effective leadership model can be found to improve the quality of education in madrasahs.

The main problem madrasah faces today is the imbalance between the quality of leadership and the results achieved in the learning process (Fawait et al., 2024; Prayogi et al., 2022). Many madrasah principals are trapped in administrative routines, lack involvement in student character development, and lack motivation received by teachers and students (Abdullah & Lubis, 2022; Hamdi et al., 2024). In this context, a leadership approach that can foster enthusiasm and creativity among educators and students is needed to achieve more holistic educational goals. Leadership that only focuses on academic results is not enough to produce intelligent graduates with good morals. Therefore, applying transformative leadership that prioritizes ideal influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration is a relevant solution.

The phenomenon in the field shows that many madrasahs have difficulty achieving optimal education quality. At Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Bandung Regency, although there have been efforts to improve the quality of teaching, the madrasah principal has not fully implemented transformative leadership effectively. Many teachers feel less motivated, and students feel they do not get personal attention, which ultimately affects the teaching and learning process. One of the causes is the lack of implementation of the four main components of transformative leadership: ideal influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. This causes low enthusiasm and

involvement in the educational process among teachers and students. Therefore, madrasah principals need to implement a transformative leadership approach so that madrasahs can achieve more comprehensive educational goals in academics and character building.

Several previous studies have revealed the importance of transformative leadership in education. Bakker et al. (2023) and Kehr et al. (2023) research state that transformative leaders can influence their followers to achieve higher goals by providing motivation, inspiration, and attention to individuals. Other studies, such as those conducted by Alzoraiki et al. (2024), Li et al. (2022), and Sliwka et al. (2024), show that principals who implement transformative leadership can create significant changes in school culture, improve teacher performance, and improve student learning outcomes. However, most of these studies focus more on public schools, while the application of transformative leadership in madrasahs, which have unique characteristics and challenges, has not been widely studied. Therefore, this study aims to fill the gap in the literature by examining the application of transformative leadership in madrasahs.

Although several studies discuss transformative leadership in the context of Islamic education, most of these studies are still limited to theoretical aspects and do not explain how madrasah principals can adapt the concept of transformative leadership in the context of madrasahs. Martani's (2023) study stated that many madrasah principals in Indonesia are still focused on administrative tasks, while human resource development, both teachers and students, often receives less attention. This indicates a gap in the literature that needs to be addressed, namely how to apply the four components of transformative leadership—incredibly idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration—in a more specific madrasah context. This study will provide more profound and more practical insights into this.

This study brings novelty by examining the application of the four components of transformative leadership in the context of madrasahs in Indonesia. Most previous studies only examine transformative leadership in the context of general education or state schools. In contrast, its application in madrasahs, combining religious and general education, is minimal.

This study focuses on the central question: How do madrasah principals implement the four components of transformative leadership—ideal influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration—in carrying out their duties at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Bandung Regency? This study argues that the effective implementation of transformative leadership can create positive changes in madrasahs, improve the quality of teaching, and improve the welfare of madrasah members. Through the consistent implementation of these four components, it is hoped that madrasahs can achieve more comprehensive educational goals in terms of academic achievement and student character formation.

The study is expected to provide an original contribution to developing a leadership model in madrasahs that is more responsive to the needs of the times. In addition, this study is also expected to enrich the theory of transformative leadership and provide practical guidance for implementing more effective leadership in madrasahs. The findings of this study can be a reference for other madrasahs in creating a better educational environment, which not only focuses on academic achievement but also the formation of student character based on Islamic values.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design to investigate the transformative leadership of the madrasah principal at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) 1 Bandung Regency. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows for in-depth exploration of complex social phenomena in a natural context, providing rich descriptions and nuanced interpretations of leadership practices (Alhazmi & Kaufmann, 2022; Martani, 2023). The case study design is appropriate for studying a specific phenomenon (Tlili et al., 2023; Welch et al., 2022), such as transformative leadership, in a limited system, namely this madrasah. With this design, the study can provide a detailed understanding of leadership's context, process, and dynamics in a unique setting at this madrasah. This research was conducted at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Bandung Regency, one of the state madrasahs with a good reputation in the area. This location was chosen based on the need to understand how the madrasah principal in the environment implements transformative leadership, which is expected to provide insight into leadership development in other madrasahs.

Data will be collected using semi-structured interviews with the principal, vice principal, teachers, staff, and students, which will be audio-recorded and transcribed for analysis. Non-participant observations will be conducted to gather data on the principal's interactions and the madrasah's climate. Field notes will document key observations. Relevant documents, such as the madrasah's vision and mission, development plans, meeting minutes, and performance data, will also be analyzed to support and strengthen the findings.

The collected data will be organized, transcribed for interviews, and prepared for further analysis. Next, the data will be coded and categorized using thematic analysis to identify recurring themes and patterns relevant to the research questions. The codes and categories formed will be analyzed to develop key themes and interpretations related to implementing transformational leadership and its influencing factors. Findings from interviews, observations, and document analysis will be triangulated to ensure the validity and reliability of the resulting interpretations.

Several validity check techniques will be applied to ensure the credibility of the data. Data triangulation will be done using various data collection techniques (Donkoh & Mensah, 2023), such as interviews, observations, and document analysis, to confirm the findings. In addition, peer review by competent

colleagues in this field will be conducted to check the interpretation and analysis of the data. The results of the interviews and interim findings will also be shared with several participants to verify the accuracy and completeness of the findings. The data that has been collected is then analyzed using a thematic approach, according to Lochmiller (2021). This research method is designed to provide an in-depth and comprehensive understanding of how transformative leadership is applied in the context of madrasahs in Indonesia, especially in MAN 1 Bandung Regency. A qualitative approach with data triangulation and strict validity checks ensures that this study's results are reliable and contribute significantly to the study of leadership in Islamic education.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

Ideal Influence Leadership

Ideal influence in the context of transformative leadership refers to the ability of the madrasah principal to be a role model for all members of the madrasah, both in terms of morals and professionalism. Madrasah principals with ideal influence have high integrity, demonstrate consistency in attitudes and decisions taken, and can guide and inspire their subordinates to follow the values they uphold, especially in Islamic education.

Table 1. Interview Summary

Informant	Interview Excerpts	Indicators
Teacher	"Our principal always sets a very good example, especially in terms of compliance with regulations and professionalism. He shows that being a leader means being a role model."	Leader Example
Head of Madrasah	"In every meeting, I always emphasize the importance of the values of honesty, integrity, and hard work. I hope that all members of the madrasah can follow suit."	Consistency of Values and Ethics
Students	"The principal often gives advice that inspires us. He not only gives orders, but also invites us to work together to achieve greater goals."	Ability to Influence through Character
Teacher	"Our principal has a very clear vision of how this madrasah should develop. That makes us as teachers feel motivated to work hard to realize that vision."	Clear and Inspiring Vision
Head of Madrasah	"I do not only focus on academic success, but also try to provide opportunities for teachers and students to develop, both in their professional skills and in their personal lives."	Development of Self and Others

Table 1 describes in depth how the madrasah principal manifests transformative leadership through personal example, consistency of values, and strength of character. The example given by the leader is reflected in the disciplined and honest attitude practised by the madrasah principal, which becomes a concrete example for teachers and students. This strengthens the consistency of values and ethics, where the leader talks about noble values such as honesty and integrity and upholds them in every decision and action. Thus, the madrasah principal can instil respect and trust among his followers. The ability to influence through character is another key factor that makes the madrasah principal able to inspire his followers, not only with instructions but with the

appeal and personality that strengthens the sense of responsibility and motivation of teachers and students to behave better. All of these indicators are interrelated and show that an ideal leader does not only lead with words but also with tangible actions that inspire positive change in the madrasah environment.

These indicators show that an ideal principal leads with more than just words but with actual actions that inspire positive change in the madrasah environment. From the results of this study, a consistent pattern can be seen regarding the relationship between the quality of the principal's leadership and its impact on the madrasah environment. Consistency of values ensures that the madrasa head talks about ethics and upholds it in every action.

The strong character of the madrasah principal also functions as an attraction that inspires teachers and students. This shows that ideal leadership is more than just giving orders; the madrasah principal must have a strength of character that motivates and encourages positive change. The pattern that emerges here is the integration of personal values and the power of character influence that complement each other. The madrasah principal, who can instil noble values through self-example, is the primary key to influencing the madrasah environment and creating sustainable change.

Inspirational Motivation Principal

Inspirational Motivation refers to the ability of the madrasah principal to inspire and raise the spirit of madrasah members to achieve common goals. An inspirational leader can provide a clear vision, encourage members to develop, and provide strong morale to achieve better performance in academics and character building.

Table 2. Inspirational Motivation in Madrasah Principal Leadership

Informant	Interview Excerpt	Indicators
Head of Madrasah	"I always try to describe the vision of the madrasah for the future at every opportunity. We want to produce a superior generation with good morals."	Inspiring Vision
Teacher	"The principal of the madrasah always gives us encouragement when we feel tired. He said that every difficulty is an opportunity to learn more."	Ability to Encourage
Head of Madrasah	"I do not just want to focus on academics but also want to shape students' character. Every achievement, no matter how small, we appreciate together."	Rewarding Effort and Achievement
Teacher	"Our principal always challenges us to improve ourselves and innovate in teaching. He believes that we can do more than we think."	Positive Challenge
Head of Madrasah	"I always approach teachers and students with empathy, listen to their needs, and try to provide the right solutions so that they feel appreciated."	Empathic Approach

Table 2 illustrates how the principal practices inspirational motivation with a diverse approach, focusing on character development and academic achievement in the madrasah. Through the Inspiring Vision, the principal not only provides clear direction regarding the long-term goals of the madrasah but also creates a collective spirit among students and teachers to work towards the vision. The Ability to Provide Encouragement is also seen when the principal can

motivate when facing challenges, turning obstacles into opportunities for learning. This is in line with the indicator of Appreciating Efforts and Achievements, where every achievement, no matter how small, gets appreciation that encourages self-confidence and motivation to continue trying.

In addition, the principal also provides Positive Challenges, which motivate teachers and students to get out of their comfort zones and improve their abilities. By providing challenges based on individual potential, the principal directs them to achieve higher levels of achievement. The Empathetic Approach is another important aspect, where the principal approaches each individual with special attention to their needs and conditions. This approach creates a stronger connection between the principal and the madrasah community, building mutual trust and increasing enthusiasm for development. Overall, these indicators reflect holistic leadership, where motivation comes not only from a grand vision but also from a deep concern for the needs of individuals in the madrasah.

A strong and consistent leadership pattern is seen in the practice of inspirational motivation of the madrasah principal, which includes five leading indicators. First, the madrasah principal shows an inspiring vision, which provides clear direction and enthusiasm to all members of the madrasah. Then, this leader is motivated by the ability to provide enthusiasm that awakens the fighting spirit in facing challenges. In addition, appreciation for efforts and achievements is the key to increasing self-confidence and maintaining motivation. Not only that, the madrasah principal also provides positive challenges to encourage teachers and students to get out of their comfort zones and approach each individual empathetically, paying attention to personal needs and creating stronger relationships.

Intellectual Stimulation Leadership

Intellectual stimulation refers to the principal's efforts to stimulate critical thinking and innovation among teachers and students. In this context, an effective principal manages educational administration and creates an environment that encourages intellectual development through various activities that stimulate creativity and critical thinking skills.

The study's results showed that the principal at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Bandung Regency actively encouraged teachers to think more deeply about teaching methods. One teacher stated, "The principal always encourages us to think more deeply about how to teach, such as implementing new methods that are more interactive and relevant to current developments" (RZ). This statement reflects the principal's efforts in creating space for teachers to innovate in the learning process, stimulating critical thinking among educators.

In addition to encouraging critical thinking among teachers, the principal also tries to develop critical thinking skills among students. Ali, one of the teachers, said, "We are often asked to discuss broader topics, not just limited to textbooks. This inspires us to think critically and be more open to new ideas" (AHY). This shows that the principal focuses on providing opportunities for students to discuss and explore broader topics, which can broaden their horizons and improve their understanding of the subject matter.

The researcher also observed that the principal consistently held discussion forums, seminars, and workshops for teachers and students. These activities aim to develop critical and creative thinking skills. This observation shows that the principal talks about the importance of critical thinking and creates a concrete platform to develop these skills. Through these forums, teachers and students can interact, share ideas, and develop their abilities to solve problems creatively.

This study's results indicate that the madrasah principal at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Bandung Regency is very successful in stimulating critical and innovative thinking among teachers and students. Through various activities supporting intellectual development, such as discussions, seminars, and workshops, the principal has created an environment that prioritizes problem-solving and creative thinking. Thus, the intellectual stimulation carried out by the principal contributes significantly to developing the quality of education in the madrasah.

A pattern was identified that effective madrasah principal leadership is focused on managing educational administration and developing the intellectual potential of teachers and students. Madrasah principals play a key role in creating a climate that supports critical thinking and innovation through policies, discussion forums, and opportunities to develop creative thinking skills. This pattern confirms that intellectual stimulation carried out by madrasah principals not only improves the quality of learning but also influences the formation of character and positive mindsets for all madrasah members.

Individual Consideration in Madrasah Principal Leadership

Individual consideration in transformative leadership refers to the ability of madrasah principals to provide personal attention to each madrasah member, both teachers and students. A good madrasah principal must understand individual needs, provide personal support, and adjust his/her approach based on each person's potential, problems, and aspirations. Leadership based on individual consideration aims to encourage each individual's personal and professional development in the madrasah environment.



Figure 1. Individual Consideration in the Leadership of Principal

Figure 1 shows that the leadership of the madrasah principal at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Bandung Regency significantly reflects the individual consideration approach, which focuses on attention to the needs and development of each member of the madrasah, both teachers and students. The madrasah principal's approach is the foundation for creating a closer and deeper relationship between leaders and their followers. The madrasah principal actively communicates with each individual to understand the challenges and needs, strengthening trust and commitment to common goals.

In addition, the madrasah principal's attention to teacher professional development is important in applying individual consideration. The madrasah principal provides training opportunities tailored to each teacher's needs, improving academic competence and giving educators a sense of appreciation. This approach increases teachers' motivation to work better and contribute to the madrasah's progress.

The madrasah principal's next steps are to adjust task assignments based on individual strengths and interests. By understanding each member's potential, the principal ensures that each task is given to their best abilities, directly contributing to increased productivity and more optimal work results.

Equally important, the principal prioritizes madrasah members' mental and emotional well-being. The principal provides space for private dialogue, supports personal or professional problems, and listens to complaints or challenges. This approach illustrates leadership that focuses not only on academic aspects but also on personal well-being, which ultimately strengthens emotional bonds and creates more positive relationships in the madrasah environment.

One of the teachers at this madrasah stated, "The principal always allows us to talk privately if there are problems or challenges that we face, both in work and personal life. This provides a sense of care that we appreciate." This statement reflects that the principal actively shows concern for the personal well-being of teachers, which helps create a safer and more valued work environment. This also shows empathetic and humane leadership traits, where the principal is an administrative leader and a caring mentor.

The researcher noted that the principal routinely held individual meetings with teachers and students to listen to their problems, provide advice, and offer necessary support. In addition, the principal also encouraged the use of more personalized and flexible teaching methods, such as tutoring sessions for students who needed special attention. This approach shows that the principal's leadership is not only limited to administrative management but also actively pays attention to aspects of the personal development of madrasah members.

The principal's implementation of individual consideration at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Bandung Regency can be seen as responsive and adaptive leadership to each individual's needs. The principal created an environment that supports teachers' and students' professional development and personal well-being. This approach strengthens the relationship between the principal and madrasah members, increases motivation and performance, and creates profound positive environmental changes.

Applying the four components of transformative leadership at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Bandung Regency has a positive impact on the development of educational quality and overall madrasah performance. Implementing Ideal Influence, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, and Individual Consideration by the madrasah principal has created an environment that is more responsive and adaptive to the needs of the times, both in terms of academics and character. The madrasah principal, who is an example, provides a clear example of the values expected to be applied by all members of the madrasah.

Furthermore, this approach positively impacts student character development based on Islamic values. With individual attention given to students, they feel appreciated and encouraged to develop their potential optimally. In addition, the principal who applies Intellectual Stimulation can create an innovative learning culture, encourage creativity, and equip students with skills relevant to developments in the outside world. Transformative leadership has created a more dynamic and competitive educational ecosystem, focusing on academic achievement and forming strong character and personality among students.

Discussion

One of the main findings in this study is the application of the four components of transformative leadership—Ideal Influence, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, and Individual Consideration—by the principal of Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Bandung Regency. This finding is in line with the theory of transformative leadership put forward by Bass (1990), which states that transformative leadership can motivate followers to achieve higher performance and create significant change in the organization (Bakker et al., 2023; Manu, 2022; Galati et al., 2022). The principal of the madrasah acts as a role model who inspires, motivates, and stimulates innovation among teachers and students (Ho et al., 2024; Kılınç et al., 2024). However, significant differences were found in decision-making in madrasahs, where the principal tends to be more dominant in the decision-making process and does not fully involve all members in every important decision. This is contrary to the views of several researchers who emphasize the importance of the active participation of all members in decision-making to achieve the success of transformational leadership more holistically (Davidaviciene & Al Majzoub, 2022; Umair et al., 2024).

The theoretical implications of this finding indicate that although the principal of the madrasah has succeeded in implementing idealized influence and inspirational motivation, the success of transformative leadership depends not only on the leader's ability to inspire and motivate but also on the organizational structure and culture that support participation and collaboration. As explained in the study by Ghamrawi et al. (2024) and Kılınç et al. (2024), principals who are successful in transformative leadership serve as role models and facilitate the involvement of all members in strategic decision-making. This finding indicates the need to improve the structure of participation in decision-making in madrasahs. In practice, the results of this study point to the importance of madrasah principals prioritizing a collaborative culture that involves teachers and students in the decision-making process, which in turn can increase their involvement in the implementation of existing educational programs.

The intellectual stimulation found in this study is in line with previous findings showing that transformative principals can encourage teachers to innovate and improve the quality of learning (Li & Liu, 2022; Meyer et al., 2023; Reinius et al., 2022). However, although madrasah principals support teacher creativity, there are obstacles related to limited resources and adequate training. This emphasizes the importance of more significant support in terms of training and resources to encourage intellectual stimulation more optimally. The practical

implication is that to encourage sustainable innovation, madrasah principals need to provide structured and ongoing training for teachers and improve access to resources supporting innovative teaching methods.

In terms of individual consideration, the findings of this study indicate that the madrasah principals pay considerable attention to the personal well-being and individual needs of both students and teachers. This reflects transformative leadership principles that uniquely treat each individual, understand their needs, and provide appropriate support. This finding aligns with the study by Suhartanti and Prasetyanto (2022) and Sun et al. (2023), which showed that leadership that pays attention to personal needs can improve individual motivation and performance. In a practical context, this suggests that madrasah principals should continue to strive to pay attention to the well-being and personal needs of each madrasah member (Andriani, 2024), both teachers and students, in a more systematic and structured manner. It also suggests that transformative leadership serves as a tool to create an environment that supports the well-being of all individuals within the organization (Asghar et al., 2022; Barr & Nathenson, 2022; Soni, 2023), which in turn improves the overall quality of the madrasah.

The findings of this study provide an original contribution to developing a model of transformative leadership in the madrasah environment. Although this finding aligns with much of the existing literature, several aspects need further development, especially related to the limitations of participation in decision-making and challenges in intellectual stimulation. The theoretical implication of this finding is the need for further research to explore more deeply how the organizational structure of madrasahs can be improved to support more effective transformative leadership. From a practical perspective, this finding can be a reference for madrasah principals and related parties in creating a more inclusive, innovative, and supportive educational environment for students' academic and character growth by paying more attention to teacher capacity development and a more open participation system.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that the implementation of transformative leadership at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Bandung Regency has successfully improved education quality through the four key components: ideal influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. The principal plays a vital role as a role model, inspiring and motivating teachers and students. This highlights the importance of madrasah leaders with a clear vision who address individual needs, foster innovation, and encourage collaboration. However, the study is limited by its focus on one madrasah. Future research should include multiple madrasahs to explore factors influencing participation in decision-making and strategies for supporting innovation and intellectual development in Islamic education.

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