

# Enhancing Educational Quality Through Strategic Human Resource Management in Islamic Schools

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## Abstract:

This study examines the implementation of Human Resource Management (HRM) in Islamic schools and its impact on educational quality. It aims to identify key factors influencing the effectiveness of HRM and assess its effect on educator performance and learning outcomes. Using a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. The findings indicate that HRM is implemented strategically through precise planning, a focus on pedagogical and technological competencies, methodological alignment with Ministry of Religious Affairs guidelines, and the provision of adequate facilities. Most educators have postgraduate qualifications, and some are pursuing doctoral studies. Continuous evaluation, regular training, and an active pesantren-based learning culture foster a dynamic educational environment. The study concludes that well-structured HRM has a significant impact on improving educator performance and overall academic quality. The findings, as a scholarly contribution, offer valuable insights for faith-based educational institutions seeking to strengthen their HRM practices to improve learning outcomes.

**Keywords:** *Human Resource Management, Education Quality, Educator Performance*

## Abstrak:

Studi ini didasarkan pada upaya untuk mengeksplorasi tentang implementasi Manajemen Sumber Daya Manusia (MSDM) di madrasah dan implikasinya terhadap mutu pendidikan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi faktor-faktor kunci yang memengaruhi efektivitas MSDM dan menilai dampaknya terhadap kinerja pendidik dan hasil pembelajaran. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan studi kasus kualitatif, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa MSDM diimplementasikan secara strategis melalui perencanaan yang jelas, fokus pada kompetensi pedagogik dan teknologi, penyelarasan metodis dengan pedoman Kementerian Agama, dan penyediaan fasilitas yang memadai. Sebagian besar pendidik memiliki kualifikasi pascasarjana, dan beberapa sedang menempuh studi doctoral. Evaluasi berkelanjutan, pelatihan rutin, dan budaya belajar berbasis pesantren yang aktif mendorong terciptanya lingkungan pendidikan yang dinamis. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa MSDM yang terstruktur dengan baik secara signifikan meningkatkan kinerja pendidik dan mutu pendidikan secara keseluruhan. Temuan sebagai kontribusi ilmiah menawarkan wawasan berharga bagi lembaga pendidikan berbasis agama yang ingin memperkuat praktik MSDM mereka untuk meningkatkan hasil pembelajaran.

**Kata Kunci:** *Manajemen Sumber Daya Manusia, Mutu Pendidikan, Kinerja Pendidik*

## INTRODUCTION

Human Resource Management (HRM) is a crucial aspect of improving the quality of education (Desmaniar et al., 2022; Nurhasnah et al., 2024; Pariyanti et al., 2022), especially in Islamic educational institutions such as Madrasah Aliyah Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng. Despite its reputation as a leading pesantren-based madrasa, Tebuireng faces persistent challenges in managing its human resources effectively. Initial observations reveal several pressing issues: the absence of a standardized recruitment system has led to inconsistencies in educator qualifications; professional development opportunities are not evenly distributed, causing disparities in pedagogical competence; and a lack of structured retention strategies has contributed to a relatively high turnover rate among young teaching staff. For instance, administrative reports from 2022 show that nearly 30% of newly recruited teachers left the institution within two academic years, citing limited career advancement and unclear workload distribution. Furthermore, some teaching staff report difficulties in accessing regular training aligned with the Ministry of Religion's curriculum updates. These empirical indicators underscore the urgency of developing a more integrated and strategic HRM system at Tebuireng, one that ensures sustainable educator development and institutional excellence.

In other words, human resource management is the process of planning, organizing, directing, and supervising the withdrawal (Liu et al., 2021), development of human resources, compensation, integration, maintenance, and release of human resources to meet individual, social, and organizational goals (Vishwakarma, 2023). This definition encompasses two primary functions of human resources: the management function, which includes planning, organizing, directing, and supervising; and the operative function, which involves recruitment, development, compensation, integration, and maintenance (Melnychenko et al., 2022). Understanding how these functions are implemented in practice is crucial, particularly in the context of institutions like madrasas, where the effectiveness of HRM directly impacts educational quality and institutional sustainability. Therefore, examining the real-world application of HRM in this setting becomes a critical area of inquiry.

Human Resource Management (HRM) refers to the set of organizational practices and policies—including recruitment, training and development, performance evaluation, and reward systems — that shape employee attitudes and performance (Pariyanti et al., 2022; Qutni et al., 2021; Sütőová et al., 2022). In the context of education, effective HRM plays a crucial role in developing high-quality human resources (Arman et al., 2020), which are now considered the primary drivers of national progress. This is particularly relevant for Madrasah Aliyah Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng, where the quality of education depends heavily on how well HRM functions are carried out. Challenges such as uneven professional development, lack of structured performance evaluations, and

difficulty retaining competent staff highlight the urgent need to strengthen HRM practices to ensure sustainable educational excellence.

The quality of education is often indicated by good conditions, qualified personnel, and all components that must be present in education, such as inputs, processes, outputs, educational personnel, facilities, infrastructure, and costs (Atabik et al., 2024; Jamoliddinovich, 2022). The quality of education is achieved when the inputs, processes, outputs, teachers, facilities, infrastructure, and costs meet certain conditions (Falloon, 2020; Gupta et al., 2022). However, among these several components, the one that plays a greater role is a quality educator (Grieshaber & Hunkin, 2023), namely one who can address challenges quickly and responsibly. Educators in the future will face increasingly complex challenges, so they will always need to make various improvements and adjustments to their competency mastery.

The achievement of educational goals is highly dependent on the leadership skills and wisdom of the principal, who is one of the key educational leaders (Saidek, 2023), because the principal is a professional official in the school organization who is in charge of managing all organizational resources and cooperating with teachers in educating students to achieve educational goals (Suarni, 2022). One of the important areas in educational administration/management is related to personnel/human resources involved in the educational process, including both educators, such as teachers, and educational personnel, such as administrative personnel (Amiruddin et al., 2022). The intensity of the educational world regarding human beings can be seen as a significant difference between educational institutions and other organizations (Kaukko et al., 2021; Rohman et al., 2023). This suggests that the issue of human resources is a significant concern in the educational and learning process. This also means that managing human resources is a critical field in facilitating the educational and learning process in schools.

Human resource development (HRD) in Islamic boarding schools is considered vital for improving the overall quality of education and institutional sustainability (Raihan & Munawar, 2022). The development process typically consists of three stages: identifying development needs, setting clear objectives, and formulating effective strategies. Implementation commonly includes recruitment, structured training and education programs, and fostering a strong institutional culture (Ridwan et al., 2022; Utama et al., 2023). Evaluation efforts often focus on behavioral changes and responsibility fulfillment, using tools such as printed evaluation books and routine meetings.

While existing literature provides a solid framework for HRD in Islamic boarding schools, most studies emphasize theoretical models or macro-level observations. Few have examined how these strategies are applied in specific institutional contexts or how they influence measurable outcomes, such as educator performance and the quality of student learning. This study aims to fill that gap by analyzing the concrete implementation of HRM and HRD strategies at Madrasah Aliyah Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng. It seeks to understand not only whether these practices are present, but how effectively they function and what

institutional factors support or hinder their success.

This study provides a unique contribution by bridging the gap between theoretical frameworks of human resource management (HRM) and human resource development (HRD) in Islamic educational institutions, specifically focusing on Madrasah Aliyah Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng. This paper not only highlights the challenges faced by Tebuireng but also provides evidence-based recommendations for strengthening HRM practices to improve teaching quality and institutional sustainability. It evaluates the effectiveness of HRM and HR strategies in enhancing educator performance and maintaining educational excellence. This approach is expected to provide valuable insights for similar institutions seeking to enhance their HRM frameworks and achieve long-term success in the education sector.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach (Cissé & Rasmussen, 2022) to gain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of Human Resource Management (HRM) in Madrasah Aliyah Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng, Jombang, East Java. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and document analysis to obtain a comprehensive view of HRM practices. A total of 18 participants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure relevance and depth of insight. These included the head of the madrasah (1), teachers (7), administrative staff (3), students (4), and parents of students (3), each offering unique perspectives on HRM implementation and its perceived outcomes.

Primary data were gathered from direct narratives in interviews and field observations of teaching, evaluation, and administrative processes. Secondary data consisted of institutional documents, including annual performance reports, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for HRM, training and development program outlines, and internal policy guidelines. These documents were used to contextualize and support findings from interviews and observations that appeared in the term "Interview Respondent". Data analysis followed a thematic coding process (Clarke & Braun, 2018), identifying recurring patterns and relationships between HRM practices and educational outcomes. To ensure the credibility of the findings, triangulation was applied across data sources and respondent categories. This methodological rigor allowed the study to reveal how HRM contributes meaningfully to improving both teacher performance and the quality of education at the institution.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Result

#### Concept of Human Resources Planning

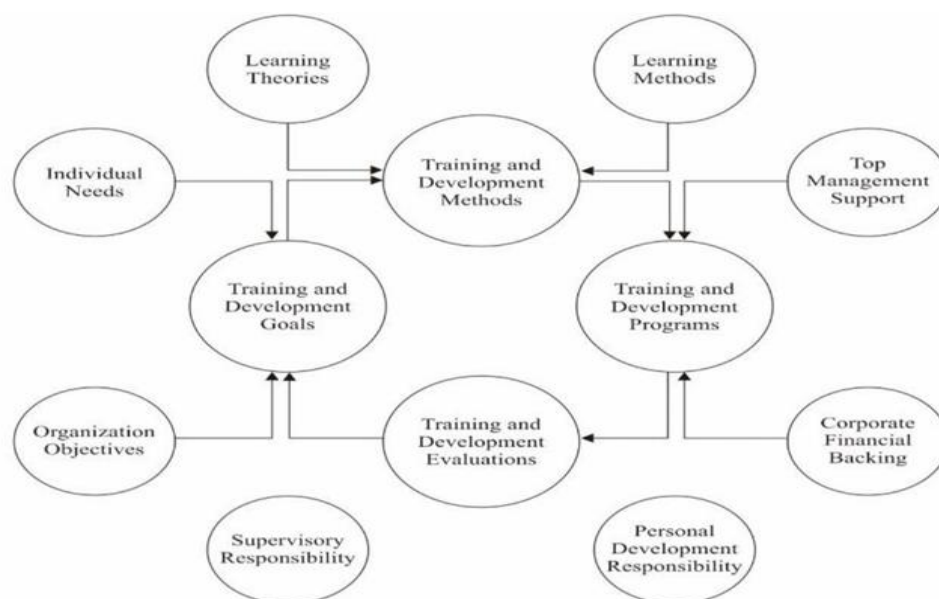
The findings suggest that Madrasah Aliyah Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng has successfully operationalized classical HR planning frameworks by aligning institutional objectives with practical implementation programs. The adoption of Jackson & Schuler's HR planning model, particularly its objective-setting and

program structuring steps, demonstrates strategic alignment with broader madrasah goals.

This integration does not mean that the Ministry of Education and Culture manages madrasah, but rather the recognition that madrasahs are part of the national education system, even though their management is delegated to the Ministry of Religious Affairs. In terms of curriculum, the general knowledge taught in madrasah is the same as in public schools; however, the heavy curriculum burden resulting from the addition of the religious curriculum makes the learning burden for Madrasah students heavier than that of public school students.

Madrasah in Islamic boarding schools was initially oriented towards creating Islamic religious experts (kiai) who oversaw providing information and explanations about Islamic teachings to the broader community. However, over time, Islamic boarding schools responded to the demands of community needs by teaching general knowledge in addition to religion. The pesantren that remained in the initial study was known as the yellow book, while the pesantren that combined with the school system was called Pondok Pesantren Modern.

Furthermore, pesantren can be categorized into two groups: first, pesantren that only organize Islamic religious studies, drawing on the works of classical scholars (yellow book); second, pesantren that organize educational activities with a formal school system. Modern Islamic boarding schools integrate these two systems to cater to a broader range of educational needs.



**Figure 1. Training and Development Model**

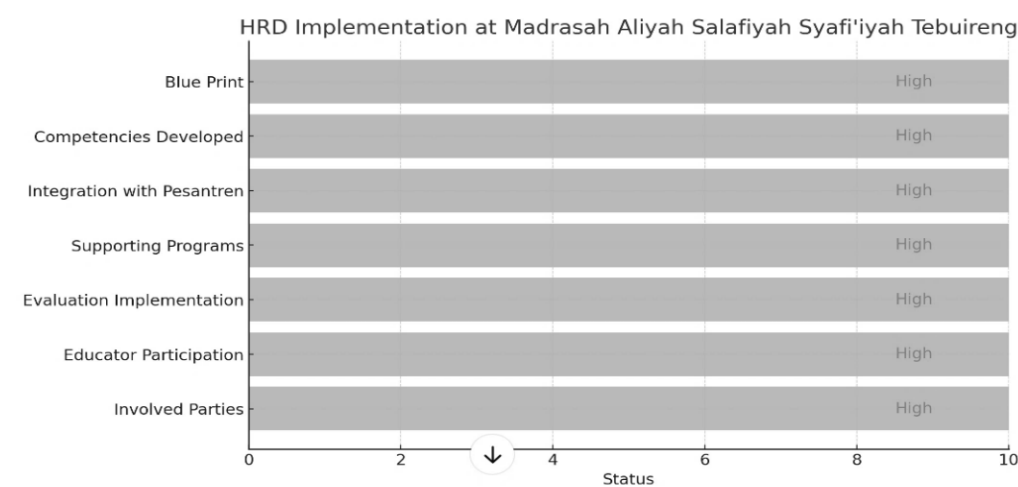
Figure 1 illustrates the interrelationship between these various elements and their mutual influence within the context of training and development within the organization. As the teacher said, individual needs and organizational goals influence training goals, which in turn affect the training method and program chosen. Support from top management and financial allocation also play a crucial



role in the success of the training, while supervisory responsibilities and personal development help ensure effective implementation and evaluation for continuous improvement (Interview Respondent). This verse affirms that all of God's creations in heaven and on Earth were created for the benefit of humanity. This illustrates the crucial role humans play in managing and utilizing the Earth's resources wisely. The suitability of this verse reminds us of several implementations in Madrasah Aliyah Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng, among them are: a) Human resource development in madrasahs is an effort to improve the quality of educators and administrative staff so that they can carry out their duties better.

### Learning Environment

Human resource development at Madrasah Aliyah Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng involves various parties, including the mudir of the education section, the quality assurance unit of the pesantren, and leadership elements in the madrasah environment. Evaluations of human resource development programs are conducted annually to ensure that the program operates as planned. This evaluation is typically conducted twice a year, during semester breaks, and receives high enthusiasm from educators. This implementation shows the commitment of madrasahs to improving the quality of education through structured and sustainable human resource development. As illustrated in Figure 1.



**Figure 1. The Implementation of Human Resource Development (HRD)**

Each component shows a high status, indicating effective implementation and commitment to improving the quality of education through structured and continuous HRD programs. Based on the results above, it can be concluded that teaching and learning are conducted in a lively, creative, and meaningful atmosphere, supported by an active discussion culture (*bahstul masa'il*). Moreover, high engagement is observed in both classroom settings and extracurricular activities, such as *Paskibraka*, among others.

Madrasah Aliyah Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng has made significant strides in its human resource (HR) development efforts, involving key stakeholders such as the head of the education department, the quality assurance unit, and the leadership elements within the madrasah. The institution conducts biannual evaluations of its HR programs, demonstrating its commitment to ensuring these initiatives are implemented effectively and aligned with educational goals. The enthusiasm of educators during these evaluations reflects the positive reception of HR efforts. This structured and ongoing approach contributes to a lively, creative, and meaningful learning environment, supported by a culture of active discussion (*bahstul masa'il*). The high level of engagement observed in both classroom settings and extracurricular activities, such as the *Paskibraka* (Flagship Flag Raising Team), further demonstrates the success of these HR programs in fostering a dynamic and engaging educational atmosphere.

### **Implementation of HRD in the Teaching and Learning Process**

The implementation of human resource development (HRD) in improving the quality of education at Madrasah Aliyah Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng is carried out through the formulation of a human resource development program, which has been neatly arranged in the form of a blueprint. This blueprint serves as a reference and a handle in running the planned program. The Deputy Head of the Madrasah curriculum section explained, "That the development of human resources in this madrasah is based on pedagogic competence and information technology. Human resource development is carried out following the fields needed, and all programs have been integrated with the existing system in the pesantren" (Interview Respondent).

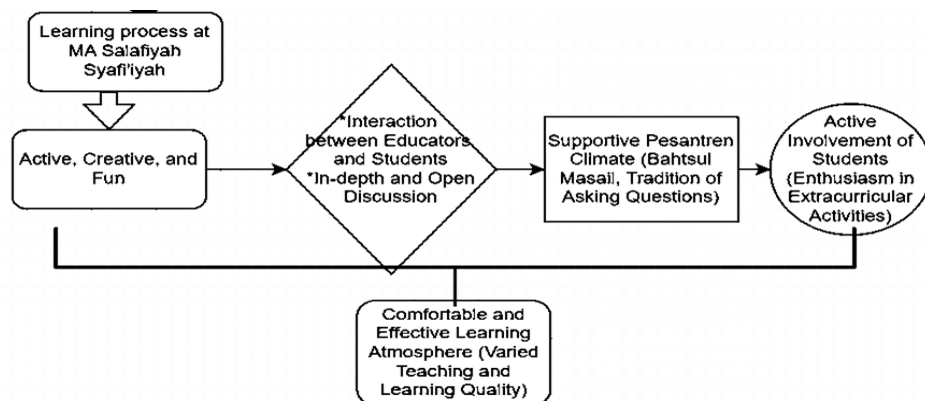
The Head of the Madrasah, Roziqi, added that the blueprint program formulation already exists and covers various aspects, including the Subject Teacher Conference (MGMP), the Counseling Guidance Teacher Conference (MGBK), and the development of a special curriculum for Islamic boarding school content teachers. This shows that madrasahs are also focused on developing the pesantren curriculum for the future (Interview Respondent).

The teaching and learning process at Madrasah Aliyah Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng occurs in an active, creative, engaging, and meaningful atmosphere. This is evident in the engaging interactions between educators and students, where the discussions were both profound and enjoyable. The climate of the pesantren, which is accustomed to *bahstul masa'il* (in-depth discussion of scientific issues), helps students think openly and critically.

This condition fosters a comfortable and practical learning atmosphere, where students feel at home and enthusiastic in every learning activity. They are often reluctant to stop discussing or return to the cottage because they feel that the time they have is valuable and should be used for self-development activities.

According to the Head of the Madrasah, Roziqi, the quality of teaching is stated. "The quality of teaching and learning activities (KBM) varies greatly in each teacher, but the majority are very good. Productive discussions between teachers

and students are frequent, demonstrating the success of the madrasah in creating a pleasant learning environment. Extracurricular activities are also in great demand by students, such as Paskibraka, where students often difficult to be told to go home because they enjoy the activity so much” (Interview Respondent).



**Figure 2. Learning Process**

The implementation of human resource management (HR) at Madrasah Aliyah Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng has significantly contributed to improving both the quality of education and the performance of educators. One key aspect is the use of clear and well-structured blueprints, which focus on enhancing the pedagogic and information technology (IPTEK) competencies of teachers. This ensures that educators have a solid framework and the necessary skills to deliver learning materials effectively. The madrasah also places a strong emphasis on renewing learning methods, ensuring that teaching and learning activities (KBM) adhere to the rules set by the Ministry of Religion (Kemenag) while continuously updating materials, infrastructure, and teacher training. The adoption of the 2013 Curriculum (K13) further supports the improvement of learning quality.

Additionally, Madrasah Aliyah Salafiyah Salafi'iyah Tebuireng is equipped with adequate supporting facilities, including well-maintained buildings, learning rooms with LCD projectors, internet access, and sports facilities. The institution's A+ accreditation highlights the excellence of its facilities, which helps create a conducive learning environment. Regular evaluation of human resource development programs, typically conducted twice a year, ensures the effectiveness of these efforts. The high participation of educators in training and evaluation activities underscores their commitment to continuous improvement. The educators themselves hold high qualifications, with many possessing Master's degrees, and some even pursuing doctoral programs, which motivates students and ensures the delivery of high-quality education. Furthermore, the active, creative, and meaningful learning atmosphere fostered in the madrasah, supported by the pesantren's culture of discussion (bahstul masa'il), encourages critical and open thinking, enhances interaction between educators and students, and makes the learning process more engaging.



## Discussion

This study explores the effective operationalization of classical HR planning frameworks, particularly Jackson & Schuler's HR planning model. The alignment of institutional objectives with practical HR programs demonstrates a clear strategic vision to enhance educational quality (Azmi et al., 2023; Wahab, 2024), professional development, and stakeholder satisfaction. By focusing on human resource development (HRD), including teacher training, professional development programs, and competency workshops, the institution aims to enhance both the performance of educators and administrative efficiency (Muhajir, 2022; Ritonga et al., 2021). The consistent implementation of these HR planning steps illustrates the institution's commitment to fulfilling its mission of providing high-quality education while adhering to the educational standards set by the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

The successful incorporation of religious values into HR planning is exemplified by the integration of Surah Al-Jatsiyah (13) into the human resource development approach. This verse highlights the human responsibility to manage resources wisely, aligning with the institution's efforts to enhance the competence and professionalism of its educators and staff (Mattjik et al., 2020; Purwanto & Wafa, 2023). By focusing on sustainable development and aligning HR management practices with both religious teachings and national educational goals, the institution fosters an environment that empowers educators and administrators to contribute effectively to its mission. This holistic approach reflects the growing recognition of HRM's role in educational quality and organizational sustainability. Thus, the findings demonstrate how combining religious principles with strategic HR planning can enhance both the quality of education and the institution's overall performance.

The institution has effectively aligned its human resource planning with its vision and mission, focusing on improving educational quality, enhancing teacher professionalism, and enhancing stakeholder satisfaction. Established goals serve as the foundation for designing targeted human resource programs that enhance educator competency and foster professional growth. Clearly defined goals in human resource planning are crucial for the successful implementation of educational strategies (Mahdzir et al., 2021; Qutni et al., 2021). Furthermore, the focus on enhancing the professionalism of educators and administrative staff supports the broader goal of creating a sustainable and high-quality educational experience for students, reflecting the importance of human resource planning for the success of the educational institution.

The institution has strategically implemented various human resource development programs to achieve these goals. These programs, including teacher training, new staff orientation, and competency enhancement workshops, are designed to enhance the skills of educators and administrative staff. These initiatives are crucial for improving the quality of teaching and management in educational institutions (Hutasuhut et al., 2023; Rifai & Zahro, 2023). By ensuring that all staff members have access to these professional development

opportunities, the institution can maintain high standards of teaching and administrative practices.

The institution has made progress in its human resource (HR) development efforts, particularly through the formulation and implementation of a structured HR development blueprint. This blueprint, which focuses on enhancing pedagogical and information technology (IPTEK) competencies among educators, serves as a clear guide for developing human resources to improve the quality of teaching and learning. The integration of HR development programs with existing systems reflects a comprehensive approach to meeting the needs of educators. HR development efforts not only aim to improve teaching methods but also align with the broader institutional goals, ensuring that education remains dynamic and relevant (Ali, 2019; Gupta et al., 2022). This alignment of HR with institutional goals contributes to a strong foundation for continued growth, both in teaching quality and the overall educational experience.

Furthermore, the active and creative learning environment further enhances the impact of HRD initiatives. The emphasis on open and critical thinking reflects the institution's success in fostering a positive and conducive learning environment. The quality of teaching showed significant variation among educators; however, the majority were highly effective in fostering productive discussions with students. This high level of student interaction and engagement, coupled with excellent facilities and qualified educators, underscores the critical role of HRD in improving educational quality and student outcomes (Fatihin et al., 2023; Rohmad et al., 2024). These findings suggest that ongoing evaluation and active participation of educators in development programs are crucial to sustaining these improvements in educational quality. This structured approach to human resource development also highlights the institution's commitment to meeting the professional needs of its staff, ensuring their long-term engagement and contribution to the institution's success.

## CONCLUSION

The implementation of human resource management at Madrasah Aliyah Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng demonstrates that strategic planning, continuous educator development, and a pesantren-based learning culture can significantly enhance educational quality and educator performance. The most important finding is that integrating modern HR practices, such as precise blueprints, pedagogical and technological competence development, curriculum updates, and regular evaluations, within the pesantren environment fosters a dynamic and effective learning ecosystem. Scientifically, this study contributes to the limited body of literature on HRM in pesantren-based madrasahs by highlighting how religious traditions can coexist and synergize with formal HR frameworks. However, this research is limited by its focus on a single case, which may not fully represent the diversity of HRM practices in other pesantren or madrasah contexts across Indonesia, thus providing opportunities for broader comparative studies in the future.

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