



## **SCHOOL PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP STYLE IN STRENGTHENING TEACHERS' WORK COMMITMENT IN ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL-BASED INSTITUTIONS**

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### **Abstract:**

This research is a qualitative study that examines the role of the Principal's leadership style in increasing teacher work commitment at MTS Al-Islamiyah, an Islamic boarding school-based educational institution. Through an in-depth interview approach with School Principals, Senior Teachers, and Administrative Staff, this research explores the impact of participative leadership styles and Islamic boarding school values on teachers' work commitment. The research results highlight the importance of teacher participation in decision making as a key element in creating a supportive work environment. In addition, the harmony between Islamic boarding school values and leadership practices shows a positive impact in building strong work commitment among teachers. These findings contribute to an in-depth understanding of how the principal's leadership style interacts with the Islamic boarding school context in strengthening teachers' work commitment at the secondary education level. The conclusions of this research provide valuable insight into understanding how the leadership style of the Principal can be a determining factor in building teacher work commitment in Islamic boarding school-based educational institutions.

**Keywords:** *Principal Leadership Style, Teacher Work Commitment, Islamic Boarding School*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Islamic boarding school-based education in Indonesia has a role that cannot be ignored in shaping character, morality and the quality of human resources. MTs Al Islamiyah, as one of the first level secondary education institutions that uses the Islamic boarding school model, places the principal in a central position as the main leader who is responsible for guiding, inspiring and motivating teachers in an effort to produce a quality and committed generation (Uwe et al. , 2021) .

Leadership is the skill of organizing a group of individuals who are united to achieve a certain goal, influencing and motivating other people to achieve organizational goals with a high level of commitment, all done using power as optimally as possible (Atasoy, 2020) . Therefore, the principal's leadership style is a key factor in shaping organizational culture and the level of teacher work commitment in Islamic boarding school-based institutions (Muhammad Anggung, 2021) . According to Komariah and Triatna in a research journal (Misbah et al., 2019) , school principals as educational leaders must have the ability to identify and understand the various positions and conditions desired by both teachers and administrative staff. With effective collaboration, harmony of thought can be achieved in school improvement efforts. The importance of building effective relationships, giving appreciation and respect to all members, as well as showing concern for their needs, assisting in personal development, and providing guidance towards the future.

According to (Rachmawati & Suyatno, 2021) , increasing teacher job satisfaction and commitment can be achieved by implementing effective school management, which can be done through strengthening managerial competence. As stated by Springer, a head of an organization, in his role as a manager, can increase employee productivity through implementing appropriate management to increase job satisfaction and work commitment. Teachers' professional commitment refers to their personal attachment to their responsibilities and duties as educators, which creates a sense of responsibility, responsiveness and innovation towards advances in science and technology (Zuraida et al., 2020) . Teachers who are committed are teachers who have the awareness and readiness to work seriously, wholeheartedly and with dedication. They also show sincerity and have strong motivation to actively participate in school organizations, with a sincere intention to support the achievement of organizational goals (Muslimin et al., 2019) .

Pesantren as the cultural background of the institution adds a special dimension to this research, where religious values, traditions and education are interrelated (Abdurrahmansyah, 2017) . Islamic boarding schools as traditional Islamic educational institutions have their own uniqueness, where religious, cultural and educational elements are integrated into one unit (Usman, 2013) . The unique characteristics possessed by Islamic boarding schools are its hallmark, as a center for Islamic education which is recognized for its existence in maintaining and preserving Islamic boarding school traditions, even in the midst of the current era of rapidly developing modernization (Abul Hasan Al Asyari, 2022) . Therefore, understanding and applying the leadership style of school principals in the Islamic boarding school context can have a significant impact on strengthening the work commitment of educational stakeholders.

Based on research conducted (Pramudya et al., 2022), the results of the research show that the school principal's policy program to improve teacher performance begins with aligning perceptions and vision with the school principal and senior teachers. School principals actively empower teachers according to their abilities and desires, collaborate, equip infrastructure, and encourage active participation in Teacher Working Groups (KKG). The principal's leadership style, which includes instructive, consultative, participative, and delegative approaches, has proven effective in coaching and guiding teachers, motivating them to achieve educational goals.

In addition, based on research conducted (Coskun et al., 2023) , the results of this research found a significant relationship between the transformational leadership behavior of school principals and teachers' organizational commitment . Transformational leadership behavior was also proven to be a significant predictor of teacher organizational commitment. It can be concluded that the transformational leadership style applied by the principal is effective in increasing the organizational commitment of teachers. In this context, practical, theoretical recommendations and potential research developments can be identified.

Apart from that, research conducted by (Alias & Razak, 2023) showed that, from statistical data, the average learning leadership of school principals was 3.7, while teacher organizational commitment was 3.3, indicating that both levels were in the medium category. . The validity of the questionnaire in the measurement model was declared acceptable, and the results of hypothesis testing showed that the principal's learning leadership had a moderate influence ( $\beta = 0.397$ ) on teacher organizational commitment. These findings provide an important contribution to the development of knowledge in the field of instructional leadership and organizational commitment in the Indonesian educational context. In conclusion, to increase teacher commitment, it is necessary to improve the principal's instructional leadership practices.

Research conducted by (Rahtikawatie et al., 2021) shows that, although Islamic boarding school leadership practices are considered positive in policy, social support and financial dimensions, there are still shortcomings in structural and teaching aspects. Statistically, Islamic boarding school leadership has a positive and significant impact on the relationship between teachers, school facilities, systems, and student learning achievement. Therefore, it is recommended that Islamic boarding school leaders receive

more administration and governance training, and need government support to provide technical facilities to ensure consistent student learning achievement. This research also revealed that the principal or leadership at the Islamic boarding school does not have the authority to set school policies.

Findings from research (Asiyah et al., 2021) state that increases in professional development have a significant positive impact on teachers' work commitment, and this work commitment also influences the quality of learning presented by teachers. Apart from that, the research results show that innovative work also has an influence on the quality of teacher learning.

Apart from that, research conducted by (Rachmawati & Suyatno, 2021) from research results revealed several findings. First, it was found that work commitment has a significant influence on teacher job satisfaction. Second, it was revealed that the principal's conceptual competence did not have a significant influence on teacher work commitment and job satisfaction. Meanwhile, the third finding shows that the principal's interpersonal competence has a significant influence on teacher work commitment and job satisfaction. Finally, the research results also show that the technical competence of a school principal has a significant influence on teachers' work commitment and individual job satisfaction.

The novelty of this research can be found in the special approach used to identify and explore phenomena related to school principal leadership styles in the context of Islamic boarding school-based institutions. In addition, this research explores the unique and complex elements in Islamic boarding school culture that influence the relationship between school leadership and teacher work commitment. Through in-depth analysis of the interaction between aspects of religion, tradition, and leadership practices in Islamic boarding schools, this research can add insight into how leadership styles can play a role in increasing work commitment in special educational environments such as Islamic boarding schools. Novelty can also be found in practical recommendations prepared to improve leadership effectiveness in Islamic boarding school-based institutions, which can become the basis for developing better policies and management strategies.

By exploring the understanding of the principal's leadership style and its impact on teacher work commitment, it is hoped that this research can provide practical recommendations that can increase leadership effectiveness at MTs Al Islamiyah and perhaps also make a broader contribution to the understanding of educational leadership at the national level.

This research aims to explore more deeply the leadership style of the principal at MTs Al Islamiyah and the extent of its influence on teacher work commitment. Through a qualitative approach, this research will explore the experiences, perceptions and views of teachers at MTs Al Islamiyah regarding the principal's leadership style and how this influences their work commitment.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This research uses a qualitative approach to detail and understand in depth the leadership style of school principals in the context of Islamic boarding school-based institutions. A qualitative approach provides the freedom to explore the complexity of cultural, religious and traditional factors that can influence the dynamics of teacher leadership and work commitment. With this approach, researchers can detail nuances and contexts that cannot be measured quantitatively, allowing for a richer understanding of the relationship between leadership and work commitment in the Islamic boarding school environment.

Research participants will be carefully selected, involving school principals, senior teachers and administrative staff at selected Islamic boarding schools. In-depth interviews will be the primary method for collecting data, allowing participants to share their experiences, perceptions and views regarding leadership style and work commitment. Apart from that, participatory observation will also be carried out to

provide direct insight into the dynamics of relationships in the daily environment of the Islamic boarding school. The combination of in-depth interviews and observations will provide in-depth and contextual data.

Data analysis in this research will use a thematic analysis approach, where the main findings and patterns that emerge from interviews and observations will be identified and analyzed. To ensure the validity of the research, triangulation steps will be implemented, namely by comparing and matching findings from various data sources. In addition, open dialogue with participants throughout the research process will ensure that interpretations and findings reflect actual experiences and realities within Islamic boarding school-based institutions. The overall research method is designed to provide an in-depth understanding of how the principal's leadership style can influence the work commitment of teachers in Islamic boarding schools.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This research explores the role of the Principal's leadership style in strengthening teachers' work commitment in Islamic boarding school-based institutions. Through interviews with the Principal, a Senior Teacher, and an Administrative Staff, several findings were found that provide an in-depth picture of the relationship between leadership style and work commitment at this institution.

The discussion regarding strengthening teachers' work commitment also highlights the important role of school principals in creating a supportive and motivating organizational climate. A positive work environment, supported by teamwork and an inclusive organizational culture, helps teachers feel valued and contribute optimally. Therefore, this research confirms that school principals have an important responsibility in creating conditions that support teachers' professional and personal growth, which in turn increases their commitment to the mission of Islamic boarding school education. In addition, the identification of the close relationship between leadership and work commitment provides practical insights for developing management strategies and leadership development in Islamic boarding schools.

The leadership style expressed by the Principal is participative and rooted in Islamic boarding school values. These findings were consistently revealed in the perspectives of Senior Teachers and Administrative Staff during interviews. The Principal's participative leadership style has a positive impact on teacher work commitment. Teacher participation in decision making creates a sense of responsibility and ownership, establishing a supportive and motivating work environment.

From a Senior Teacher's perspective, involvement in policy formation and Islamic boarding school development is the key to increasing work commitment. This confirms that the role of the Principal as a leader who facilitates active participation of teachers can make a major contribution to their motivation and commitment.

Administrative Staff also highlighted the importance of an open and supportive leadership style. Feeling valued and having the opportunity to contribute makes administrative staff feel like their involvement is recognized, which in turn increases their work commitment.

In the discussion, it can be concluded that the principal's leadership style plays a central role in forming teacher work commitment in Islamic boarding school-based institutions. A participative leadership style, rooted in Islamic boarding school values, creates an inclusive and sustainable work environment. Recommendations can be given to strengthen leadership training that supports participation, while maintaining the implementation of Islamic boarding school values in the organizational culture. Thus, this research provides valuable insights for similar educational institutions in strengthening teachers' work commitment through effective leadership.

Furthermore, a positive correlation is also seen in the application of Islamic boarding school religious values and traditions as an integral part of leadership. This theory is strengthened by research results which show that a strong spiritual dimension, through the integration of religious values, strengthens teachers' commitment to the

goals of Islamic boarding school education. Thus, the research results empirically support the theory of participatory leadership and provide a deeper understanding of the correlation between the leadership style of school principals and teacher work commitment in the Islamic boarding school-based school environment at MTs Al-Islamiyah.

## CONCLUSION

This research details the significant role of the Principal's leadership style in strengthening teachers' work commitment at MT s Al-Islamiyah, an Islamic boarding school-based institution. The results of interviews with the Principal, Senior Teachers and Administrative Staff show that the leadership style applied, especially one that is participative and rooted in Islamic boarding school values, has a positive impact on the work commitment of educators.

The Principal's participative leadership style creates a work climate that inspires and motivates teachers to actively participate in the decision-making process, creating a strong sense of ownership of the institution's vision. A deep understanding of Islamic boarding school values is also an ethical basis that encourages and strengthens the work commitment of teachers at MT 's Al-Islamiyah.

Thus, the conclusion of this study confirms that the combination of a participative leadership style and Islamic boarding school values at MT s Al-Islamiyah plays a critical role in forming a positive work environment and building strong work commitment among teachers. Recommendations to continue developing leadership approaches that promote active participation as well as maintaining and strengthening Islamic boarding school values are key to supporting the growth and sustainability of this institution in inspiring the commitment and dedication of its educators. This conclusion proves that wise leadership can be the main pillar in shaping the quality of work and spirit of teacher service in an Islamic boarding school-based education environment.

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