Management of Education: Manajemen Pendidikan Islam
Vol. 12, No. 2, 2026
Available online at https://jurnal.uin-antasari.ac.id/index.php/moe
Email: moejournal@uin-antasari.ac.id
p-ISSN: 2442-4048 | e-ISSN: 2808-408X

Instructional Leadership Practices for Teacher Professional Development: A Case Study of an Indonesian Elementary Madrasah

***Zainal Abidin[1], Ahmad Qusairi[2], Ikmal Wahyudi[3]**
[1,2]Universitas Islam Internasional Darullughah Wadda'wah, Bangil Pasuruan, Indonesia.
[3]Yamouk University, Jordan
*Correspondence Author: zainalabidin@uiidalwa.ac.id

Keywords:
Instructional Leadership, Teacher Quality, and Professional Development

Abstract:
Instructional leadership has been widely recognized as an important approach for supporting teacher professional development; however, limited research has explained how it is enacted in Islamic elementary schools operating under constrained technological and professional development resources. This study aimed to explore how instructional leadership practices were enacted to support teacher professional development and continuous professional learning in a resource-constrained madrasah. An interpretive qualitative single-case study was employed because it enabled an in-depth understanding of leadership practices within their organizational context. The study involved 13 participants, comprising one madrasah principal and twelve teachers at MI Dalwa Pasuruan. Data were collected using semi-structured interviews, non-participant observations, and document analysis. Data were analyzed iteratively through coding, categorization, theme development, and triangulation across data sources. Six themes emerged: participatory planning for teacher professional development, continuous teacher training and coaching, academic supervision, programme evaluation, teacher collaboration, and contextual supporting and constraining factors. The findings indicate that instructional leadership supported opportunities for continuous professional learning through collaborative planning, reflective instructional practices, feedback, and collegial interaction. Limited facilities, inconsistent participation, and varied teacher motivation influenced its implementation. The study contributes a contextually grounded explanation of how instructional leadership is enacted, negotiated, and constrained in a resource-limited Islamic elementary school.

Received: 2026-03-07
Revised: 2026-07-29, 2026-08-08
Accepted: 2026-08-11
Published: 2026-08-17

How to cite: Abidin, Z., Qusairi, A., & Wahyudi, I. (2026). Instructional Leadership of Madrasah Principals in Improving Teacher Quality in Elementary Madrasahs. *Management of Education: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, *12*(2), 196–213. https://doi.org/10.18592/moe.v12i2.20203

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License

Introduction

The change in education in the digital age has led to an increase in expectations for schools to improve the quality of teaching and learning due to technological change, changes in society's needs, and the demands of 21st-century competencies (Mohamed Hashim et al., 2022; Rahimi & Oh, 2024). Rather than representing a purely technological challenge, these changes require schools to strengthen teachers' capacity to design meaningful learning experiences through continuous professional development (PD) and effective instructional support. In this context, teacher quality is a central determinant of educational improvement because it shapes teachers' ability to plan instruction, implement appropriate pedagogical strategies, assess student learning, and continuously refine classroom practices. Consequently, improving teacher quality is not merely an individual responsibility but also an organizational process that depends on how school leaders create conditions that support

teachers' learning and professional growth. Therefore, the role of instructional leadership in teacher professional development is of particular importance in improving the quality of education in madrasahs (García-Martínez et al., 2021; Nguyen et al., 2021).

In this study, teacher quality is understood as the capacity of teachers to deliver effective learning through the integration of pedagogical competence, professional commitment, reflective practice, and continuous participation in professional development. Rather than treating competence, professionalism, motivation, and performance as interchangeable concepts, this study considers teacher quality as a broader construct reflected in teachers' ability to plan instruction, implement effective teaching strategies, engage in professional learning, and improve instructional practices through reflection and feedback. From this perspective, instructional leadership plays an essential role because madrasah principals are responsible for creating organizational conditions that support teacher learning, strengthen professional capacity, and sustain continuous improvement in instructional practice. Therefore, the role of the madrasah principal as a leader goes beyond administration to become an agent for teacher development to improve the quality of teachers (Liu et al., 2021; Muli Prima Aldi M et al., 2026).

Instructional leadership is one of the widely accepted approaches to leadership in educational management. It provides a comprehensive framework for school leaders to enhance teaching and learning through their active involvement in the instructional process. Hallinger's (2022) instructional leadership framework conceptualizes this leadership through three interconnected dimensions: defining the school mission, managing the instructional program, and developing a positive school learning climate. These dimensions form the conceptual basis of the present study, as they encompass the leadership practices examined in the current research, including participatory planning of professional development programs, teacher training and coaching, academic supervision, program evaluation, and promotion of teacher collaboration as a supportive learning culture. These leadership practices are not simply administrative tasks but coordinated strategies through which madrasah principals facilitate continuous teacher learning and support teacher professional development in their schools (Hallinger & Kovačević, 2022; Zaini et al., 2023).

Several existing studies have consistently demonstrated that instructional leadership supports teacher professional development and continuous professional learning (Dasci Sonmez et al., 2025; He et al., 2024; Mavi et al., 2025). School leaders who are actively engaged in designing learning processes, offering academic supervision, and creating professional learning opportunities and a collaborative culture within the school are expected to support teachers' pedagogical learning and professional involvement (Abidin & Qusairi, 2025; Meyer et al., 2023). Nevertheless, most research results on this topic have been obtained in resource-rich school organizations or have primarily focused on the direct link between instructional leadership and teacher learning outcomes. The implementation of instructional leadership in under-resourced Islamic elementary schools, despite organizational constraints and contextual influences on its practices, has received little attention. Consequently, the implementation of instructional leadership in such contexts remains insufficiently understood, particularly regarding how planning, professional development, supervision, evaluation, and teacher collaboration interact to support continuous professional learning for teachers.

Teacher professional development has been acknowledged as one of the vital means through which instructional leadership can be transformed into continuous professional learning. Professional development requires more than individual training; rather, it entails continuous learning and reflective practice, feedback, and collaborative work among teachers (Affriyenni et al., 2025; Nolan & Xenofontos, 2025). However, there is a lack of empirical

literature on how different elements of instructional leadership practices (planning, coaching, supervision, evaluation, and collaboration among teachers) support continuous professional learning.

The success of teacher professional development is also affected by the organizational context in which it is implemented. Despite the efforts being made by schools to promote innovation among teachers, there are still organizational differences in terms of capacity, availability of learning resources, and technology that affect professional development and innovation among teachers (Mhlongo et al., 2023; Trust & Whalen, 2021). Under resource-limited educational environments, a lack of facilities can limit teachers' engagement in professional development and hinder the implementation of innovative instructional practices despite leadership efforts aimed at supporting professional learning. Nonetheless, little research has been done on the interaction between the above-mentioned contextual factors and instructional leadership in Islamic elementary schools.

In the case of the Indonesian education system, there exist unique organizational and contextual challenges that might not necessarily be encountered in previous research studies on the subject matter of instructional leadership in regular schools. Even though previous researchers have discovered that activities such as teacher training, supervision, and performance evaluation positively affect the professional development of teachers (Qusairi, 2024). The focus has mostly been on the effectiveness of these leadership practices rather than on how the processes of implementing them in schools that lack the organizational and physical resources are carried out. In particular, the way instructional leadership practices are negotiated in private Islamic elementary schools, where professional development programs must consider specific contextual factors, has not been widely explored.

One private Islamic elementary school that reflects these contextual challenges is MI Dalwa in Pasuruan. Preliminary observations and initial discussions with madrasah leadership conducted before this study indicated that the school had implemented several initiatives to strengthen teacher professional development, including teacher training, academic supervision, and performance evaluation. These preliminary interactions also revealed several contextual issues that require further investigation, including varying levels of teacher engagement in professional development activities, limitations in information technology facilities, and organizational challenges related to participation in school development programs. These conditions were not treated as predetermined research findings but served as the contextual background for selecting the research site and guiding an in-depth exploration of how instructional leadership is enacted within a resource-constrained madrasah setting.

Building on the literature gaps identified above, this study aims to examine how instructional leadership is enacted to support teacher professional development and continuous professional learning at MI Dalwa Pasuruan, an Islamic elementary school operating in a resource-constrained context. Specifically, this study addresses two research questions: (1) How is instructional leadership enacted through planning, teacher professional development, supervision, evaluation, and teacher collaboration to support continuous professional learning at MI Dalwa Pasuruan? (2) What contextual factors support and constrain the enactment of instructional leadership for teacher professional learning within a resource-limited madrasah? This research contributes to the instructional leadership literature by providing an in-depth examination of the nature of leadership practices and the factors influencing these practices in Islamic elementary schools. Furthermore, the findings offer practical insights for madrasah principals and policymakers seeking to strengthen teacher professional development and continuous professional learning through contextually appropriate instructional leadership strategies in schools with limited resources and funding.

Method

This study employed a qualitative approach using a single-case study design to examine how instructional leadership was enacted to support teacher professional development and continuous professional learning at MI Dalwa Pasuruan. A qualitative case study was deemed appropriate because it sought to gain an in-depth understanding of leadership practices, professional development processes, and the organizational conditions that influence teachers' professional learning within a bounded educational context. Following the case study perspective of Yin (2018), the case was bounded by one Islamic elementary school (madrasah ibtidaiyah), one instructional leadership system led by the madrasah principal, and one teacher professional development context implemented during the study period. This design enabled an in-depth exploration of the interactions between instructional leadership practices, teacher professional development, and contextual constraints that could not be adequately captured through quantitative approaches (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Yin, 2009, 2018).

This study was conducted at MI Dalwa Pasuruan, a privately owned Islamic elementary school purposively chosen based on its resource-constrained context and ongoing teacher professional development activities led by the madrasah's principal. The school was deemed relevant to the analysis in that it had multiple features that were critical for the study, including scarce educational resources, professional development activities, common instructional leadership actions like academic supervision and teacher coaching, and an organizational culture that facilitates teacher learning. These features created an appropriate setting for examining the enactment and adaptation of instructional leadership practices in relation to organizational conditions and continuous professional learning. Hence, the case study was chosen for the generation of rich contextual insights and not for statistical generalization, in line with the logic of qualitative case studies (Tisdell et al., 2025).

The participants comprised 13 informants selected through purposive sampling because they were directly involved in planning, implementing, supervising, and evaluating teacher professional development activities at the madrasah. The participants included one madrasah principal (P1) and twelve teachers (T1-T12) from various grade levels and subjects. The teachers were selected because of their involvement in teaching and professional development programs, which enabled them to provide detailed information about teaching leadership and ongoing professional learning. Table 1 presents the characteristics of the participants. Purposeful sampling is used because it ensures that participants have sufficient knowledge and experience to provide in-depth information related to the research questions (Bouncken et al., 2026; Patton, 2014).

Table 1. Characteristics of Research Participants

Participant Code	Role	Teaching Experience (Years)	Grade Level / Subject
P1	Madrasah Principal	7 years	School Leadership
T1	Teacher	7 years	Grade I
T2	Teacher	7 years	Grade II
T3	Teacher	7 years	Grade III
T4	Teacher	7 years	Grade IV
T5	Teacher	7 years	Grade V
T6	Teacher	7 years	Grade VI
T7	Teacher	6 years	Islamic Education
T8	Teacher	6 years	Arabic Language
T9	Teacher	5 years	Mathematics
T10	Teacher	5 years	Bahasa Indonesia
T11	Teacher	5 years	Science
T12	Teacher	5 years	Physical Education

Data were collected over five months, from January to May 2025, through non-participant observations, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis to obtain complementary evidence regarding the enactment of instructional leadership and teacher professional development. The semi-structured interviews were conducted with all 13 participants, with each interview guide focusing on their experiences and perceptions regarding instructional leadership, professional development, supervision, evaluation, and collaboration. Non-participant observations were conducted during relevant school activities, including classroom teaching, academic supervision, teacher meetings, and professional development activities; the observation records documented leadership practices, teacher involvement, and organizational interactions. Documentation was used to complement and corroborate the interview and observation evidence through analysis of available school records, including annual programs, teacher professional development programs, supervision documents, meeting minutes, and teacher evaluation documents. Documentary evidence was selected based on its relevance to the instructional leadership practices and professional development activities examined in the study. The use of the three methods enabled methodological triangulation and strengthened the credibility of the empirical findings (Opara et al., 2023; Schlunegger et al., 2024).

The data analysis was carried out iteratively during the study, utilizing the interactive approach suggested by Miles et al. (2013), which included three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. First, the researchers repeatedly read the interview materials, observation field notes, and documentary evidence to become familiar with the dataset. Meaningful segments relevant to instructional leadership, teacher professional development, and contextual conditions were then identified and assigned initial codes. Similar codes were subsequently compared and grouped into broader categories. The categories were reviewed across interview, observation, and documentary evidence to identify recurring patterns, relationships, and differences. Through this iterative comparison, the categories were refined into six themes: planning teacher professional development, teacher training and coaching, academic supervision, program evaluation, teacher collaboration, and contextual supporting and constraining factors. The researchers continuously compared emerging interpretations with the original empirical evidence throughout the analysis process (Miles et al., 2013; Monaro et al., 2022).

Source and methodological triangulation were used to improve the validity of the findings. Source triangulation involved comparing data from the madrasah principal and teachers to identify converging and diverging perspectives on instructional leadership and teacher professional development. Methodological triangulation involved systematic comparisons of evidence from interviews, non-participant observations, and document analysis to examine whether the emerging themes were supported by different forms of evidence. Where discrepancies occurred, the researchers returned to the relevant original data and re-examined the interpretation before incorporating the evidence into the thematic analysis. Through this triangulation process, the credibility of the findings was strengthened because the themes were grounded in multiple sources of empirical evidence (Ediyanto et al., 2025; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Ethical considerations were observed throughout the study. Before data collection, all participants were informed about the purpose of the research, the voluntary nature of their participation, and their right to withdraw at any stage without consequence. Informed consent was obtained from each participant, and confidentiality was maintained by removing personal identifiers from all research records. To ensure anonymity while maintaining the traceability of the findings, each participant was assigned a unique identification code consisting of P1 for the madrasah principal and T1–T12 for teachers. These participant codes

are used consistently throughout the Results section when presenting interview quotations, enabling readers to identify the source of each quotation while protecting participants' identities.

Results

The analysis of interview transcripts, non-participant observation field notes, and documentary evidence generated six interrelated themes that explain how instructional leadership was enacted to support teacher professional development and continuous professional learning at MI Dalwa Pasuruan. The themes were developed through the iterative analytical process described in the Methods section, involving the initial coding of categories, cross-source comparison, and refinement of categories into themes. The six themes were: (1) Planning Teacher Professional Development, (2) Teacher Training and Coaching, (3) Academic Supervision, (4) Evaluation of Teacher Professional Development Program, (5) Teacher Collaboration, and (6) Contextual Supporting and Constraining Factors. Across the themes, interview evidence was compared with observation and documentary evidence and interpreted using Hallinger's instructional leadership framework. Therefore, the findings describe how instructional leadership practices were enacted and negotiated to create opportunities for teacher professional learning, rather than demonstrating changes in teacher competence, classroom performance, or student achievement.

1. Planning Teacher Professional Development

The findings show that teacher professional development at MI Dalwa Pasuruan was initiated through participatory planning in which the madrasah principal and teachers discussed instructional needs, professional learning priorities, and appropriate developmental activities. Rather than relying solely on programs predetermined by the principal, teachers were given opportunities to express their classroom-related needs and contribute to decisions concerning professional development activities. Interview evidence illustrates this participatory process. One teacher explained:

> *"The training programs provided by the principal allowed us the opportunity to share teaching experiences and enhance our teaching approaches in the classroom." (T4)*

Another teacher described how discussions with the principal helped connect professional development activities with classroom needs:

> *"We could discuss our learning needs in the classroom through discussions with the principal so that the training was relevant to our situation." (T7)*

Observation Note (OBS-01): During an internal planning meeting, the madrasah principal facilitated discussions with teachers concerning instructional challenges, professional learning needs, instructional materials, and types of training considered relevant to their teaching context. Teachers provided suggestions before the annual professional development program was formulated. Documentary evidence (DOC-01), consisting of the Annual Teacher Professional Development Program, minutes of teachers' planning meetings, and the school's academic calendar, confirmed that professional development activities were incorporated into the annual program following discussions between the principal and the teachers. The records included teacher training, academic supervision, and collaborative and professional learning activities.

Taken together, the evidence indicates that instructional leadership is enacted through collaborative decision-making rather than one-way policy implementation. Within Hallinger's framework, this practice primarily relates to defining the school mission because

the principal and teachers negotiated shared instructional priorities and connected these priorities with professional learning activities. The evidence supports the interpretation that participatory planning created greater relevance between professional development activities and teachers' reported instructional needs without implying a directly measured improvement in teacher quality.

2. Teacher Training and Coaching

Teacher training and coaching were implemented as ongoing professional learning activities through internal school meetings, pedagogical discussions, and coaching facilitated by the madrasah principals. The activities focused on instructional strategies, teaching materials, sharing teaching experiences, and discussing classroom challenges. The principal described the purpose and implementation of these activities.

> *"We constantly engage in internal coaching and training via school meetings on instructional techniques and teaching materials." Our goal was to support teachers in continuously improving their teaching methods. However, the greatest challenges are the inconsistent attendance of some teachers during scheduled coaching sessions and the reluctance of a few teachers to move beyond conventional teaching methods." (P1)*

A teacher similarly described the training as an opportunity for professional exchange.

> "...the training exercise given by the principal created a chance for us to exchange our teaching experience and improve the way of teaching in the class." (T4)

OBS-02: During internal professional meetings, the principal facilitated discussions concerning instructional strategies, learning materials, and classroom challenges. Teachers exchanged teaching experiences and discussed alternative approaches to classroom instruction. The observations also recorded inconsistent participation by some teachers in scheduled professional development activities. Documentary evidence (DOC-02), including teacher training archives, training schedules, and professional development records, confirmed that internal training and coaching were incorporated into the madrasah's annual teacher development activities. The documents recorded activities related to instructional methods, teaching materials, and professional discussions, while program records also indicated patterns of inconsistent attendance.

The convergence of these sources indicates that training and coaching provided a formal setting for continuous professional learning, reflection, and exchange of instructional experiences. In Hallinger's framework, these practices are primarily associated with developing the school learning climate because the principal created opportunities for teachers to learn collectively. However, the evidence also shows that participation was uneven, with attendance and willingness to engage with new instructional approaches varying among teachers. Thus, the findings point to professional learning opportunities being created rather than a uniformly demonstrated improvement in teacher competence.

3. Academic Supervision

Academic supervision was enacted through direct classroom observations, followed by feedback and reflective discussions. The focus of supervision included lesson delivery, instructional methods, teacher–student interactions, and classroom management. Rather than functioning solely as an administrative monitoring mechanism, the supervision process provided teachers with a structured opportunity to discuss instructional practices with the principal. The principal explained:

> *"I conduct academic supervision regularly by directly observing classroom teaching and learning activities. During the observation, I pay attention to how teachers deliver the lesson, apply instructional*

methods, and interact with students. At the end of the observation, I have sessions with teachers to evaluate my findings and provide feedback for improvement. "The goal of academic supervision is not just the monitoring of classroom teaching but also a continuous process of self-reflection by the teacher in terms of his/her instructional practice." (P1)

A teacher explained similarly:

"From the classroom supervision conducted by the madrasah principal, we received direct feedback on our teaching practices and classroom management. In the following sessions, we had the opportunity to reflect on our teaching weaknesses and find ways to address problems in the classroom." (T3)

Observation Note (OBS-03): Classroom observations showed that the principal directly observed teaching and learning activities, focusing on lesson delivery, instructional methods, teacher–student interactions, and classroom management. Following observations, the principal facilitated reflective discussions concerning instructional strengths, areas requiring attention, and possible responses to the classroom challenges. Documentary evidence (DOC-03), including supervision notes, observation sheets, and post-supervision meeting records, documented the classroom observations, feedback, and follow-up discussions. The records also indicated that observations and feedback were used as reference points for subsequent, professional development activities.

Triangulated evidence indicates that academic supervision functioned as a developmental component of instructional leadership by connecting classroom observation with feedback and reflection. This practice corresponds to Hallinger's dimension of managing instructional programs. The evidence supports the conclusion that supervision created structured opportunities for reflective instructional practice and professional dialogue, but it does not establish measurable changes in teacher performance.

4. Evaluation of Teacher Professional Development Program

Program evaluation functioned as a recurring reflective process through which the principal and teachers reviewed professional development activities, discussed implementation challenges, and identified possible follow-up actions. Therefore, evaluation meetings connected training and supervision with subsequent reflection on professional learning needs. The principal explained:

"…We regularly conduct evaluation meetings with all teachers to assess the effectiveness of the training and academic supervision programs that have been implemented. These meetings provide opportunities for collective reflection, allowing teachers to share the challenges they encounter in the classroom, including limited information technology facilities and difficulties applying new instructional methods. It is through the course of such an evaluation process that it becomes possible for us to recognize problems and develop plans of action." (P1)

A teacher described the same process as a forum for reflection and problem solving:

"Evaluation sessions with the madrasah principal help us reflect on our experiences after going through training and classroom supervision. In these sessions, we openly share our problems related to the use of new teaching techniques and find out possible solutions." (T5)

Observation Note (OBS-04): Evaluation meetings involved open discussions in which teachers reflected on their experiences following training and academic supervision. Teachers discussed instructional difficulties and possible responses, while recurring issues included teacher motivation, inconsistent participation in professional development activities, and limitations in information technology facilities. Documentary evidence (DOC-04), including program evaluation reports, evaluation meeting minutes, teachers' reflective notes, and professional development records, documented follow-up discussions, and issues identified during the evaluation. The records particularly highlighted challenges related to the

implementation of new instructional approaches, participation in professional development activities, and limited technological facilities in the schools.

The convergence of evidence indicates that program evaluation supports an ongoing cycle of reflection and adjustment within teacher professional development. In Hallinger's framework, this practice falls within managing the instructional program because information from training and supervision is brought back into collective review and subsequent planning. Therefore, the evidence demonstrates a process of continuous professional learning and organizational reflection rather than a measured program effect on teacher quality.

5. Teacher Collaboration

Teacher collaboration has emerged as an important informal and formal component of continuous professional learning. Teachers used professional interactions to exchange teaching experiences, discuss classroom difficulties, and seek solutions to instructional problems. These interactions extended beyond scheduled training and supervision activities and provided additional space for professional learning within the madrasah. One teacher explained:

> *"We often spend our free time discussing teaching among ourselves with other teachers. We talk about the difficulties we face in class and exchange our teaching experiences with one another." (T2)*

The principal also described collaboration as an organizational practice encouraged within the school.

> *"Not only do we provide formal guidance, but we also encourage harmony between teachers. With the collaborative culture, teachers can solve instructional issues together and develop themselves professionally." (P1)*

Observation Note (OBS-05): Informal observations in the teachers' room and during school breaks showed spontaneous professional discussions concerning lesson planning, teaching materials, classroom management and classroom difficulties. Teachers exchanged experiences, offered peer support, and discussed possible solutions to the instructional problems. Documentary evidence (DOC-05), including internal discussion notes, teacher learning community records, and documentation of collaboration sessions, confirmed both formal and informal collaborative activities. The records showed that teachers shared instructional experiences, discussed classroom issues, and exchanged ideas related to teaching practices. The documentary evidence also indicated that collaborative activities complemented formal training and academic supervision.

The convergence of interview, observation, and documentary evidence indicates that teacher collaboration provides an additional mechanism for continuous professional learning. Within Hallinger's framework, these practices relate to developing the school learning climate because the principal supports dialogue, collegial interaction, and shared responsibility for instructional concerns. The findings suggest that collaboration provides opportunities for peer learning and reflection, particularly when access to formal professional development resources is limited.

Table 2 synthesizes the six themes, their corresponding dimensions of Hallinger's instructional leadership framework, the observed leadership practices, and the forms of evidence supporting each finding. The final column is intentionally framed as implications for teacher professional development, rather than measured improvements in teacher quality.

Table 2. Theme and Evidence of Instructional Leadership Practices

Theme	Instructional Leadership Dimension (Hallinger)	Specific Leadership Practices	Supporting Evidence	Implication for Teacher Professional Development
Planning Teacher Professional Development	Defining the School Mission	Collaborative identification of teachers' professional learning needs; participatory program planning	Interviews (P1, T4, T7); OBS-01; DOC-01	Professional development activities were aligned with reported instructional priorities and teacher learning needs
Teacher Training and Coaching	Developing the School Learning Climate	Internal training, coaching, pedagogical discussion, peer learning	Interviews (P1, T4); OBS-02; DOC-02	Created opportunities for professional exchange, reflection, and continuous learning
Academic Supervision	Managing the Instructional Program	Classroom observation, instructional feedback, and reflective supervision	Interviews (P1, T3); OBS-03; DOC-03	Provided structured opportunities for feedback and reflective instructional practice
Program Evaluation	Managing the Instructional Program	Evaluation meetings, reflective dialogue, and monitoring program implementation	Interviews (P1, T5); OBS-04; DOC-04	Supported the identification of instructional challenges and follow-up professional learning needs
Teacher Collaboration	Developing the School Learning Climate	Professional dialogue, peer support, and collaborative problem-solving	Interviews (P1, T2); OBS-05; DOC-05	Sustained peer learning and collegial professional engagement
Contextual Supporting and Constraining Factors	Cross-cutting contextual conditions	Supportive leadership, collaboration, professional commitment, management of resources, and participation constraints	Interviews (P1, T7); OBS-06; DOC-06	Shaped the continuity, accessibility, and enactment of professional learning activities

The table demonstrates that the practices identified in the six themes correspond to recognized instructional leadership dimensions, while also showing that their enactment depended on teacher participation and organizational conditions. The evidence supports an interpretation of instructional leadership as a process that creates and sustains opportunities for teacher professional development and continuous professional learning, rather than as a directly demonstrated mechanism for improving teacher quality or student achievement.

6. Contextual Supporting and Constraining Factors

The implementation of instructional leadership was shaped by organizational conditions that both supported and constrained teachers' professional development. The supporting conditions included supportive leadership, collegial collaboration, professional commitment, and a positive professional culture. In contrast, the constraining conditions included limited information technology facilities, inconsistent participation in professional development activities, and varying motivation to adopt innovative instructional approaches.

The principal described the interaction between these conditions as follows:

"The implementation of teacher professional development cannot rely solely on leadership initiatives. Supportive collaboration among teachers has become one of our greatest strengths in this regard. At the same time, we continue to face several challenges, including limited educational facilities, inconsistent

teacher attendance during professional development activities, and varying levels of motivation to adopt innovative teaching practices." (P1)

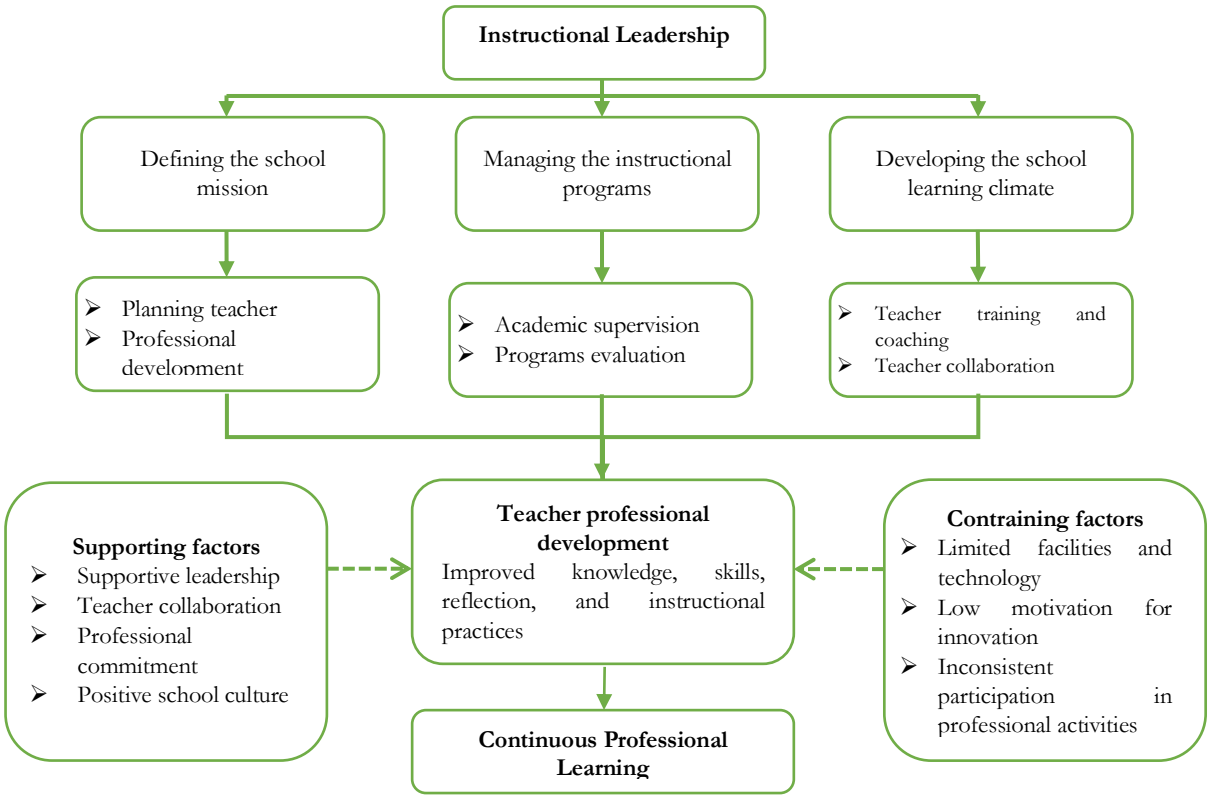
A teacher similarly emphasized the role of peer support under resource constraints: "Support from colleagues helps us overcome many classroom challenges. Even though the facilities are limited, we continue to exchange ideas and learn from one another to improve our teaching." (T7)

Observation Note (OBS-06): Field observations recorded formal and informal professional exchanges among teachers, including discussions during meetings and interactions in teachers' rooms. The observations also recorded limitations in information technology facilities and inconsistent participation by some teachers in professional development activities.

Documentary evidence (DOC-06), including program evaluation reports, professional development records, and internal meeting minutes, identified supportive and constraining conditions in the program. Supportive factors included instructional leadership, teacher collaboration and professional commitment. The constraining factors included limited information technology facilities, inconsistent participation in training, and varying motivation to implement innovative instructional practices.

Triangulated evidence indicates that instructional leadership was enacted within, rather than independently of, the organizational conditions of the madrasah. Collaborative relationships and supportive leadership created opportunities for professional learning, while resource limitations and uneven participation constrained the continuity of some activities. Therefore, the findings position contextual conditions as part of the process through which instructional leadership was negotiated and sustained, rather than as peripheral background variables. Figure 1 presents the conceptual model illustrating how instructional leadership practices were enacted to support teacher professional development within a resource-constrained madrasah environment.

Figure 1. Conceptual Model of Instructional Leadership



Discussion

The findings indicate that instructional leadership in MI Dalwa Pasuruan was enacted through a set of interconnected practices comprising participatory planning, continuous teacher training and coaching, academic supervision, program evaluation, and collaboration. Rather than demonstrating direct improvements in teacher quality, the findings show how these leadership practices created and sustained opportunities for teacher professional development and continuous professional learning, as reflected in the participants' accounts, observations, and documentary evidence. Furthermore, the results imply that instructional leadership was shaped not only by the practices initiated by the principal but also by teachers' participation, collaboration, and the organizational conditions in which these practices were implemented. Accordingly, the discussion focuses on explaining why these leadership practices were meaningful, how they were negotiated within the madrasah context, and how the contextual factors shaped their implementation.

1. Participatory Instructional Leadership and Teacher Professional Development

The findings suggest that participatory planning constituted an important mechanism through which instructional leadership supported teacher professional development. In contrast to top-down decision-making processes, the madrasah principal engaged teachers in identifying professional learning needs, addressing teaching issues, and determining appropriate program development. This participatory process created opportunities for teachers to contribute to decisions about professional learning and may have increased the perceived relevance of the programs because they were connected to reported classroom needs. Such results support the notion that instructional leadership is a collaborative activity in which the school leader provides the opportunity for teachers to participate in instructional decision-making (Hallinger & Kovačević, 2022; Printy, 2008).

Findings have shown that teachers were also not uniform in their reactions to participative instructional leadership practices. Even though some teachers actively participated in the planning process and regarded the programs as relevant for their instruction, other teachers showed a relatively low level of participation, especially where motivation to use the new instructional strategies was low. This variation indicates that providing opportunities for participation does not automatically produce uniform professional engagement. The extent to which participation became meaningful was shaped by teachers' willingness to engage, their readiness to consider alternative instructional approaches, and the organizational conditions surrounding professional development. This finding adds to previous research by illustrating that participatory instructional leadership practices need to be considered within a particular organizational context as a negotiated process between leadership practices and teacher agency (Harris & Jones, 2023).

In the context of a resource-constrained madrasah, participatory planning assumed an even more strategic role because it enabled limited resources to be aligned with teachers' most pressing professional learning needs. Through teachers' participation in setting priorities, the principal could focus available professional development opportunities on areas that teachers identified as relevant to their instructional work. Thus, the significance of participatory planning in this case lies not in demonstrating improved teacher quality but in showing how collaborative decision-making helped establish conditions for continuous professional learning despite contextual limitations. The significance of this finding is in the development of literature that regards instructional leadership as context-based (Bush et al., 2019).

2. Training, Supervision, and Evaluation as a Continuous Professional Learning Cycle

The findings indicate that teacher training, academic supervision, and program evaluation should not be interpreted as separate administrative activities but rather as interconnected components of a continuous professional learning cycle. While internal training allowed teachers to exchange pedagogical information and teaching experiences, academic supervision offered an opportunity for the principal to examine classroom teaching practices and provide appropriate feedback to the teachers based on their instructional requirements. Evaluation sessions then facilitated a process of joint reflection where teachers could share difficulties related to the use of new instructional strategies and discuss possible responses to these difficulties. Such steps constitute a key role of instructional leadership, whose main function is to ensure that the organizational context promotes instructional improvement and not just compliance with school policy (Shaked, 2023).

These results provide additional evidence that teachers had different responses to these professional development efforts. Although some respondents viewed training, supervision, and evaluation as important opportunities for professional development, others continued to resist using new strategies in their teaching practice or attended the activities on an inconsistent basis. This variation suggests that providing professional learning opportunities alone is insufficient to ensure consistent engagement across teachers. Rather than attributing these differences solely to individual motivation or professionalism, the findings indicate that teacher participation was negotiated within the interaction between individual readiness, leadership support, and organizational conditions. Thus, constructive feedback alone is insufficient for changing instructional practices without the active participation of teachers and organizational support. This conclusion goes beyond existing research because it shows that instructional leadership involves the reciprocal actions of school leaders and teachers rather than one-directional instructional control (Gechere et al., 2025).

This combination of training, coaching, and evaluation became especially important in relation to a resource-limited madrasah, since the limited organizational resources were used to integrate professional learning into routine school activities. The madrasah did not depend on external professional development training programs alone but used regular coaching, classroom observations, reflection, and evaluation as a means of embedding teacher learning into organizational activities. It should be noted, then, that the significance of the research does not involve any claims about the improvement in teacher competence but rather about the explanation of the way in which instructional leadership promoted an organizational process of professional learning in a difficult environment. This result corroborates the idea that effective instructional leadership is associated with the continuity of professional learning (Hallinger & Kovačević, 2022).

3. Instructional Leadership in a Resource-Constrained Madrasah

These results show that instructional leadership took place in a resource-constrained madrasah, wherein the organizational context played an important role in terms of teacher professional development implementation. The lack of technological equipment and uneven attendance in professional development, as well as different motivations of teachers, shaped the ways in which instructional leadership practices could be implemented and sustained. It appears that the enactment of instructional leadership cannot be understood solely in terms of the actions of the school principal; rather, it needs to be examined in relation to the organizational resources, teacher participation, and contextual conditions surrounding those actions. This result is in line with research that indicates the necessity of contextual dependency for instructional leadership and calls for adaptation of the leader's behavior to the peculiarities of the school (Anselmus Dami et al., 2022).

One of the significant conclusions of this study is that informal collaboration among teachers provided an additional source of professional learning that complemented the madrasah's formal professional development activities. In addition to scheduled training programs, teachers had the opportunity to discuss their experiences in teaching and solve their classroom-related problems through informal collaborations within the madrasah. Such collaborative relations provided conditions for ongoing professional learning despite a lack of external training and educational resources. In this sense, collaboration functioned as an organizational resource through which teachers could exchange experiences, seek peer support, and discuss instructional problems. The findings of this study corroborate earlier studies stating that instructional leadership can be enhanced when principals create a professional learning climate based on trust, collegiality, and instructional responsibilities (Harris & Jones, 2023).

It was also noted that contextual constraints affected teachers in different ways. Whereas some teachers participated actively in collaborative learning and engaged in professional discussions, others proved less responsive due to motivational factors and their readiness to change instructional practices. These differences reinforce the view that instructional leadership is a negotiated organizational process involving the interaction of leadership practices, teacher agency, and context. Therefore, the contribution of this research lies in showing how teacher professional learning in a resource-constrained Islamic elementary school can be supported through a combination of formal leadership practices and collegial collaboration, rather than demonstrating a direct improvement in teacher quality (Printy, 2008).

4. Theoretical and Practical Implications

The findings have several theoretical implications in the literature on instructional leadership, specifically in the context of Islamic primary schools facing resource limitations. In line with the framework proposed by Hallinger, the study reveals that instructional leadership is not limited to the monitoring of teaching and learning activities but includes the elements of collaborative planning, ongoing professional development, evaluation of programs, and nurturing of professional relationships (Hallinger & Kovačević, 2022). More specifically, the findings suggest that the three dimensions of instructional leadership—defining the school mission, managing the instructional program, and developing the school learning climate—can be understood as interconnected processes rather than isolated leadership functions. The collaborative culture of teachers helped sustain these processes under resource constraints by providing an additional organizational space for professional learning and peer support. Thus, the study adds to the growing number of studies discussing instructional leadership as a flexible, contextually sensitive, and socially constructed leadership process (Bush et al., 2019).

From an operational point of view, the results indicate that it is important for principals to focus on participatory decision-making while designing professional development programs for teachers to ensure that the professional development activities actually address the instructional requirements of the teachers. Similarly, academic supervision must also be considered a developmental approach based on constructive feedback and reflective discourse rather than an approach solely focused on the accountability of the administration. Moreover, encouraging collaborative professional learning communities for teachers can be a feasible solution for schools that have limited access to outside training resources. For madrasah foundations and educational authorities, the findings point to the importance of supporting feasible professional development arrangements and improving access to information technology and other instructional resources. These recommendations follow

directly from the contextual constraints identified in the study rather than assuming that additional resources alone will produce improvements in teacher performance.

Combined, these implications from both theoretical and practical perspectives imply that the efficiency of instructional leadership relies on the interplay of leadership practices, teacher agency, and organizational context. Therefore, the findings suggest that supporting teacher professional practice in resource-constrained madrasahs requires not only leadership practices but also organizational conditions that enable teachers to participate in, reflect on, and sustain professional learning. Rather than proposing a universal framework for instructional leadership, this study offers contextually grounded insights into how collaborative and adaptive leadership practices can support teacher professional learning in madrasahs with similar organizational characteristics.

5. Limitations and Future Research

There are several limitations associated with this study that must be taken into account while interpreting the results. First, it was carried out using a single-case study methodology at one Islamic elementary school with 13 participants; hence, the findings should not be used to make statistical generalizations. Second, the research was based mainly on interviews, observations, and documentation to examine the enactment of instructional leadership and the experiences of teacher professional development; however, it did not examine whether it affected teachers' competence, class performance, and students' achievements. The findings should therefore be interpreted as an account of instructional leadership practices and participants' experiences and perceptions of professional learning, rather than as evidence of measured improvements in teacher quality, classroom performance, or student outcomes. Although the case may offer transferable insights for madrasahs with similar resource and organizational characteristics, such transferability requires careful consideration of contextual similarities. Future research could involve multiple institutions, comparative or longitudinal designs, and direct measures or observations of changes in teaching practices and student learning to examine outcomes that could not be established in the present study.

Conclusion

This study shows that instructional leadership at MI Dalwa Pasuruan is realized through interrelated practices, including participatory planning, ongoing teacher training and coaching, academic supervision, evaluation programs, and teacher collaboration in the context of a madrasah with resource constraints. The findings indicate that these leadership practices were perceived by participants as supporting continuous teacher professional learning through collaborative decision-making, reflective instructional practice, feedback, and collegial engagement. At the same time, their implementation was shaped by contextual conditions, including limited educational facilities, varying levels of teacher motivation, and inconsistent participation in professional development activities, while collaborative teacher culture functioned as an important organizational resource that helped sustain professional learning and instructional reflection despite these constraints. Rather than demonstrating direct improvements in teacher quality, teacher performance, or student achievement, the study contributes an empirically grounded explanation of how instructional leadership is enacted, negotiated, and constrained in an Islamic elementary school with limited resources. These findings suggest that the value of instructional leadership in similar madrasah contexts lies not only in formal leadership practices but also in creating organizational conditions that enable continuous teacher professional learning.

References

Abidin, Z., & Qusairi, A. (2025). Kepemimpinan Kolaboratif Dan Partisipatif Dalam Meningkatkan Profesionalisme Guru. *Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan (JMP)*, *14*(3), 332–341. https://doi.org/10.26877/jmp.v14i3.24842

Affriyenni, Y., Georgiou, H., & Finkelstein, N. (2025). Navigating the adoption of research-based instructional strategies within the complex nature of higher education. *Physical Review Physics Education Research*, *21*(2), 020124. https://doi.org/10.1103/wvjk-8y8k

Anselmus Dami, Z., Budi Wiyono, B., Imron, A., Burhanuddin, B., Supriyanto, A., & Daliman, M. (2022). Principal self-efficacy for instructional leadership in the perspective of principal strengthening training: Work engagement, job satisfaction and motivation to leave. *Cogent Education*, *9*(1), 2064407. https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2022.2064407

Bouncken, R. B., Czakon, W., & Schmitt, F. (2026). Purposeful sampling and saturation in qualitative research methodologies: Recommendations and review. *Review of Managerial Science*, *20*(2), 579–615. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11846-025-00881-2

Bush, T., Middlewood, D., & Bell, L. (2019). *Principles of educational leadership & management*.

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. SAGE Publications.

Dasci Sonmez, E., Cemaloglu, N., & Kahraman, G. (2025). Teachers' professional learning: Do instructional leadership and teacher leadership make a difference in Turkiye? *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, *53*(5), 1016–1043. https://doi.org/10.1177/17411432241280124

Ediyanto, E., Çakır, G. K., Wong, L. H., Muslihati, M., Ben, F., & Setiyowati, A. J. (2025). *Proceedings of the 2024 3rd International Conference on Educational Management and Technology (ICEMT 2024)*. Springer Nature.

García-Martínez, I., Montenegro-Rueda ,Marta, Molina-Fernández ,Elvira, & and Fernández-Batanero, J. M. (2021). Mapping teacher collaboration for school success. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, *32*(4), 631–649. https://doi.org/10.1080/09243453.2021.1925700

Gechere, T., Oumer, J., & Ouke, T. (2025). Influence of principals' instructional leadership and teachers' efficacy on students' performance in secondary schools in the Wolaita Zone, South Ethiopia. *Discover Sustainability*, *6*(1), 967. https://doi.org/10.1007/s43621-025-01797-3

Hallinger, P., & Kovačević, J. (2022). Mapping the intellectual lineage of educational management, administration and leadership, 1972–2020. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, *50*(2), 192–216. https://doi.org/10.1177/17411432211006093

Harris, A., & Jones, M. (2023). The importance of school leadership? What we know. *School Leadership & Management*, *43*(5), 449–453. https://doi.org/10.1080/13632434.2023.2287806

He, P., Guo, F., & Abazie, G. A. (2024). School principals' instructional leadership as a predictor of teacher's professional development. *Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education*, *9*(1), 63. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40862-024-00290-0

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. SAGE.

Liu, Y., Bellibaş, M. Ş., & Gümüş, S. (2021). The Effect of Instructional Leadership and Distributed Leadership on Teacher Self-efficacy and Job Satisfaction: Mediating Roles of Supportive School Culture and Teacher Collaboration. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, *49*(3), 430–453. https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143220910438

Mavi, D., Tuti, G., & Özdemir, M. (2025). Instructional leadership as a catalyst for teacher professionalism: A multilevel mediation model of teacher collaboration. *Journal of Educational Administration*, *63*(6), 536–550. https://doi.org/10.1108/JEA-02-2025-0055

Meyer, A., Hartung-Beck, V., Gronostaj, A., Krüger, S., & Richter, D. (2023). How can principal leadership practices promote teacher collaboration and organizational change? A longitudinal multiple case study of three school improvement initiatives. *Journal of Educational Change*, *24*(3), 425–455. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10833-022-09451-9

Mhlongo, S., Mbatha, K., Ramatsetse, B., & Dlamini, R. (2023). Challenges, opportunities, and prospects of adopting and using smart digital technologies in learning environments: An iterative review. *Heliyon*, *9*(6). https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e16348

Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldana, J. (2013). *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook*. SAGE Publications. https://books.google.co.id/books?id=p0wXBAAAQBAJ

Mohamed Hashim, M. A., Tlemsani, I., & Matthews, R. (2022). Higher education strategy in digital transformation. *Education and Information Technologies*, *27*(3), 3171–3195. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-021-10739-1

Monaro, S., Gullick, J., & West, S. (2022). Qualitative Data Analysis for Health Research: A Step-by-Step Example of Phenomenological Interpretation. *The Qualitative Report*. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2022.5249

Muli Prima Aldi M, Tika Widiyan, Juni Erpida Nasution, Leni Fitrianti, & Farida Nur Hidayah. (2026). The Role of Madrasah Principal Leadership in Enhancing Institutional Quality in Islamic Senior High Schools. *Journal of Educational Management Research*, *5*(1), 281–292. https://doi.org/10.61987/jemr.v5i1.1624

Nguyen, D., Pietsch, M., & Gümüş, S. (2021). Collective teacher innovativeness in 48 countries: Effects of teacher autonomy, collaborative culture, and professional learning. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *106*, 103463. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2021.103463

Nolan, K., & Xenofontos, C. (2025). Exploring Teachers' Fears and Resistance when Learning about Culturally Responsive Pedagogy in the Mathematics Classroom. *Journal for Theoretical & Marginal Mathematics Education*, *4*(1), Article 0406. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17024063

Opara, V., Spangsdorf, S., & Ryan, M. K. (2023). Reflecting on the use of Google Docs for online interviews: Innovation in qualitative data collection. *Qualitative Research*, *23*(3), 561–578. https://doi.org/10.1177/14687941211045192

Patton, M. Q. (2014). *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods: Integrating Theory and Practice*. SAGE Publications.

Printy, S. M. (2008). Leadership for Teacher Learning: A Community of Practice Perspective. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *44*(2), 187–226. https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X07312958

Qusairi, A. (2024). Strategi Pembinaan untuk Meningkatkan Profesionalisme Guru di Sekolah. *Jurnal Inovatif Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, *3*(2), 227–238. https://doi.org/10.38073/jimpi.v3i2.1698

Rahimi, R. A., & Oh, G. S. (2024). Rethinking the role of educators in the 21st century: Navigating globalization, technology, and pandemics. *Journal of Marketing Analytics*, *12*(2), 182–197. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41270-024-00303-4

Schlunegger, M. C., Zumstein-Shaha, M., & Palm, R. (2024). Methodologic and Data-Analysis Triangulation in Case Studies: A Scoping Review. *Western Journal of Nursing Research*, *46*(8), 611–622. https://doi.org/10.1177/01939459241263011

Shaked, H. (2023). How organizational management supports instructional leadership. *Journal of Educational Administration*, *61*(1), 60–77. https://doi.org/10.1108/JEA-07-2022-0101

Tisdell, E. J., Merriam, S. B., & Stuckey-Peyrot, H. L. (2025). *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*. John Wiley & Sons.

Trust, T., & and Whalen, J. (2021). Emergency remote teaching with technology during the COVID-19 pandemic: Using the whole teacher lens to examine educator's experiences and insights. *Educational Media International*, *58*(2), 145–160. https://doi.org/10.1080/09523987.2021.1930479

Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. SAGE.

Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications* (Vol. 6). Sage Thousand Oaks, CA.

Zaini, M., Barnoto, B., & Ashari, A. (2023). Improving Teacher Performance and Education Quality through Madrasah Principal Leadership. *Kharisma: Jurnal Administrasi Dan Manajemen Pendidikan*, *2*(2), 79–90. https://doi.org/10.59373/kharisma.v2i2.23