

Stress Management Strategy for Kindergarten Teachers Based on Islamic Values

Jazilatul Auniyah✉, Sofyan Tsauri, Zainal Abidin

Universitas Islam Negeri KH. Achmad Siddiq Jember, Indonesia

Abstract

Teacher stress management has become an important issue in educational institutions, especially in early childhood education where teachers face high emotional and pedagogical demands. This study aims to analyze the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of strategic stress management for teachers at kindergarten. The study employed a qualitative approach with a phenomenological design. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation involving school principals and teachers as key informants. The findings reveal that strategic stress management in the institution is carried out through three stages: strategy formulation based on institutional vision, identification of stressors, and strengthening Islamic values; strategy implementation through problem-focused coping and emotion-focused coping approaches; and strategy evaluation through monitoring teachers' emotional stability, work commitment, and teaching effectiveness. The study also found that Islamic values such as patience, sincerity, deliberation, and *tawakkal* function as important foundations in strengthening teachers' psychological resilience. The research contributes conceptually to the development of Islamic educational management, particularly in integrating strategic management and stress management within educational institutions. Practically, this study offers an institutional stress management model that is preventive, systematic, and spiritually oriented in supporting teacher well-being and improving educational quality.

Keywords: Strategic Management, Stress Management, Teacher Well-Being, Islamic Education, Early Childhood Education

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✉ **Correspondence Author:** jazilatulnia@gmail.com

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INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education is a strategic foundation for developing superior, adaptive, and character-based human resources. The early childhood phase holds a fundamental position in the individual development process because it is during this stage that intellectual, emotional, social, moral, and spiritual aspects are simultaneously formed. From the perspective of Islamic Educational Management, education is not only directed at the transfer of knowledge but also at the formation of the personality of a perfect human being, oriented towards a balance of physical, intellectual, and spiritual dimensions (Tsauri, S. (2022; Hayati & Abidin, 2023). Therefore, the success of early childhood education is greatly influenced by the professional and psychological qualities of teachers, the primary actors in the educational process (Fauzi et al., 2017).

Kindergarten teachers have complex pedagogical and moral responsibilities in carrying out educational activities. Teachers are not only tasked with implementing classroom learning but also with organizing educational administration, conducting learning evaluations, establishing communication with students' parents, and carrying out character development functions based on

Islamic values (Mulyadi et al., 2018). This complexity of tasks places teachers in work situations fraught with psychological pressure. In early childhood education, the intensity of work pressure tends to be higher because teachers deal with the dynamic nature of students, who require intensive emotional attention, and who demand ongoing patience and emotional stability. These conditions have the potential to create work pressure that can impact the quality of teachers' professional performance.

Job stress is a psychological and physiological response that arises from an imbalance between job demands and an individual's capacity to manage the pressure they face (Latifah et al., 2019). Stress occurs when an individual perceives a situation as threatening and exceeds their adaptive capacity (Schwarzer, 2024; Radley & Herman, 2023). In the context of education, teacher job stress is influenced by various factors, including high administrative burdens, pressure from learning targets, limited infrastructure, interpersonal conflict, changes in educational policies, and the increasing demands for teacher professionalism in the modern education era. If this pressure persists without systematic management, it can lead to emotional exhaustion, burnout, decreased work motivation, low job satisfaction, and even physical and mental health disorders.

The phenomenon of teacher work stress has become a crucial issue in the dynamics of contemporary educational institution management. Various studies have shown that teacher work stress has significant implications for the quality of learning, work effectiveness, and the sustainability of educational quality. High workloads, weak institutional support, and low appreciation of the teaching profession are dominant factors influencing the emergence of teacher psychological stress. Managing teacher stress requires simultaneous internal and external support to optimally maintain teacher psychological well-being (Nwoko et al., 2024; Bardach et al., 2022). A mindfulness approach can improve teachers' mental well-being and enhance the quality of learning interactions in madrasas (Rodhiyah et al., 2020). Furthermore, principal leadership plays a significant role in managing teacher work stress through strengthened organizational communication, personal development, and institutional support.

These various studies indicate that teacher occupational stress is a multidimensional issue that requires comprehensive management. However, previous research has tended to focus on individual psychological approaches. Studies on teacher occupational stress have focused more on coping strategies, relaxation, mindfulness, and counseling as the primary tools for addressing teacher psychological distress. This approach positions teachers as the primary actors in resolving individual occupational stress issues. However, teacher occupational stress is influenced not only by personal factors but also by organizational culture, leadership patterns, managerial systems, and institutional support within the educational environment.

Furthermore, previous research has generally addressed psychological and managerial aspects only partially (Sari et al., 2020). Studies on the integration of strategic management and stress management based on Islamic values are still relatively limited, particularly in Islamic early childhood education institutions. This situation indicates a research gap in the study of teacher stress management, namely the lack of optimal research integrating strategic management approaches with the internalization of Islamic values in teacher stress management systematically and institutionally. Yet, Islamic educational institutions have an organizational culture that places spirituality as the foundation for human resource management and the creation of a conducive work environment.

From a strategic management perspective, human resource management is not only directed at increasing organizational productivity but also at efforts to create sustainable psychological well-being for organizational members. Fred R. David explains that strategic management is the process of formulating, implementing, and evaluating strategies systematically

to achieve organizational goals effectively and efficiently. In the context of educational institutions, strategic management plays a crucial role in creating a healthy, humanistic, and productive work culture. Therefore, teacher stress management should be an integral part of educational institutions' strategic policies to ensure the continued maintenance of teachers' psychological well-being (Fitriyanti et al., 2019).

From an Islamic educational perspective, stress management is not only achieved through psychological and organizational approaches, but also through a spiritual approach grounded in Islamic values. Islam teaches the principles of patience, deliberation, gentleness, sincerity, and trust in God as foundations for dealing with various life pressures (Paramita & Afandi, 2021). These values are strongly relevant in building teachers' mental resilience, enabling them to face work pressures more adaptively, proportionately, and wisely. Internalizing Islamic values within the organizational culture of education can serve as a preventative strategy to maintain teachers' emotional stability and create a harmonious work climate.

This study aims to analyze in depth the management of teacher stress management strategies at Nailul Marom Kindergarten, Kaliwates, Jember through the stages of strategy formulation, implementation, and evaluation from the perspective of Islamic Education Management. This study focuses on understanding how educational institutions formulate teacher stress management policies, implement stress management strategies in institutional activities, and evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies in maintaining psychological stability, improving emotional well-being, and strengthening teacher professionalism. In addition, this study also aims to examine the internalization of Islamic values, such as patience, trust (*Tawakal*), deliberation, and sincerity, as a spiritual foundation in building teacher mental resilience and creating a humanistic, religious, and conducive organizational culture in an Islamic-based early childhood education environment (Dermawan et al., 2018).

Nailul Marom Kindergarten in Kaliwates, Jember, is an Islamic-based early childhood education institution with a dynamic and high-intensity learning environment. Based on initial observations, teachers at the institution face various work pressures stemming from administrative demands, the complexity of student character, and professional responsibilities in maintaining the quality of learning and character development. Furthermore, teacher stress management mechanisms have not been systematically formulated in institutional policies, resulting in individualized stress management and integration into the school's management system. This situation demonstrates the need for teacher stress management through a strategic management approach integrated with Islamic values as the organizational culture of the educational institution.

This study was conducted to analyze the stress management strategies of teachers at Nailul Marom Kindergarten, Kaliwates, Jember, through the stages of strategy formulation, implementation, and evaluation. This study aims to describe the process of formulating teacher stress management strategies, analyze the implementation of these strategies in institutional activities, and evaluate the effectiveness of these stress management strategies in maintaining psychological stability and teacher work effectiveness. This study also aims to examine the internalization of Islamic values in the process of teacher stress management as part of the organizational culture of Islamic education.

Integration of strategic management concepts with stress management based on Islamic values in the context of early childhood education. This study views teacher work stress not only as an individual psychological problem but also as an organizational phenomenon that requires systematic, strategic, and spiritual institutional intervention. Therefore, this study is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of Islamic Education Management studies, particularly in human resource management based on psychological well-being and organizational

spirituality. Furthermore, this study is expected to provide practical contributions in formulating a humanistic, preventative, strategic, and sustainable model for teacher stress management in Islamic educational institutions.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a phenomenological approach. This approach was chosen because it aimed to understand teachers' subjective experiences of work pressure and the strategies used by institutions to manage stress in depth and context. The location is Nailul Marom Kindergarten, Kaliwates, Jember, located at Jalan Gajah Mada XII No. 19 A, Jember Regency. The location was selected purposively because the institution has Islamic-based educational characteristics and demonstrates human resource management dynamics relevant to the research focus.

The research subjects included the principal and teachers of Nailul Marom Kindergarten, selected based on their direct involvement in stress management and institutional activities. Data collection techniques included participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies. Data analysis used the Miles and Huberman model, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data validity was achieved through source triangulation, technical triangulation, and extended researcher presence in the field.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Formulation of Teacher Stress Management Strategies

The research results show that the formulation of stress management strategies for teachers at Nailul Marom Kindergarten, Kaliwates, Jember, was carried out through an identification process of the sources of work pressure experienced by teachers in their daily educational activities. These work pressures include high demands on learning administration, the complexity of managing the character of early childhood learners, limited working hours, communication demands with parents, and the moral responsibility of maintaining the quality of Islamic-based learning. These conditions cause some teachers to experience emotional exhaustion, decreased work motivation, and difficulty maintaining psychological stability when facing the dynamics of learning.

From a managerial perspective, the strategy formulation process is carried out through interpersonal communication between the principal and teachers in meetings, learning evaluations, and daily informal interactions. The principal attempts to map the psychological state of teachers through a humanistic and familial approach, allowing for a more in-depth identification of the various issues teachers face. This process demonstrates that strategy formulation is not solely based on an administrative approach, but also considers the emotional aspects and psychological needs of teachers as part of human resource management in educational institutions.

From a strategic management perspective, strategy formulation is the initial stage that determines the direction of organizational policy. Fred R. David explains that strategy formulation involves the process of identifying an organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to produce targeted policies. Based on research findings, the formulation of stress management strategies at Nailul Marom Kindergarten has not been carried out through formal analysis based on modern management instruments, but has shown a pattern of contextual identification of organizational needs through an interpersonal approach and a humanistic organizational culture.

Table 1. Indicators Stress Management

Aspect	Indicator
Work Sources	Administrative workload, student behavior management, limited working time, parent communication, moral responsibility for Islamic-based learning.
Stress Impact	Emotional exhaustion, reduced motivation, psychological instability.
Strategy Formulation	Interpersonal communication, meetings and evaluations, humanistic/familial approach, psychological mapping of teachers.
Organizational Culture	Open communication, psychological safety, supportive relationships.
Islamic Values	Patience, sincerity, trust in God (<i>tawakkal</i>), consultation (<i>musyawarah</i>), work as worship.
Outcomes	Teacher resilience, adaptability, professionalism, meaningful work orientation.

Table 1 indicate that teacher stress management is built through the integration of managerial, psychological, and spiritual approaches within a humanistic organizational culture. In-depth analysis shows that the principal's interpersonal approach significantly influences the emergence of a sense of psychological safety in the workplace. Teachers feel they have an open communication space to express their stress and difficulties without fear of organizational stigma. This situation suggests that a culture of open communication can function as a preventive tool in reducing teacher psychological stress. In the context of Islamic Educational Management, humanistic communication patterns reflect the values of deliberation and brotherhood, which are essential principles in building healthy organizational relationships.

Furthermore, strategy formulation is also carried out through the internalization of Islamic values within the institution's work culture. The values of patience, sincerity, trust in God, and deliberation serve as the normative foundation for building teacher mental resilience. Teachers are encouraged to view their profession as a form of devotion and worship, so that work pressure is understood not merely as an administrative burden but also as part of the process of strengthening their spirituality and professionalism.

An analysis of these conditions shows that integrating spiritual values into strategy formulation has important implications for fostering teacher resilience. A spiritual approach can foster a deeper sense of meaningful work, enabling teachers to develop a work orientation that is not merely material and administrative, but also transcendental (Pradhan et al., 2023; Madin et al., 2022; Saxena & Prasad, 2023). From an organizational psychology perspective, individuals who attach spiritual meaning to their work tend to have better adaptability when facing work pressures. Thus, the formulation of stress management strategies at Nailul Marom Kindergarten shows the integration of managerial, psychological, and spiritual approaches in building a more humanistic and adaptive human resource management system.

Implementation of Teacher Stress Management Strategies

The implementation of teacher stress management strategies at Nailul Marom Kindergarten was carried out through problem-focused coping and emotion-focused coping approaches. Both approaches were applied simultaneously according to the characteristics of the work pressures teachers face in their daily educational activities. In terms of problem-focused coping, teachers employ various direct problem-solving strategies, such as prioritizing work, dividing tasks among teachers, improving coordination with the principal, and building more effective communication with parents. The principal also provides institutional support through regular evaluation forums, personal coaching, and providing a discussion space for teachers to address the various issues they face.

The implementation of this strategy demonstrates that the institution has strived to create a collaborative work culture to reduce teacher work stress. The collective work patterns developed at Nailul Marom Kindergarten help teachers reduce the psychological burden caused by individualistic work. From the perspective of Lazarus and Folkman's coping theory, problem-focused coping strategies are effective when individuals have the ability to directly control sources of stress through rational action and problem-solving.

An in-depth analysis of the strategy's implementation shows that collaborative work patterns significantly influence increased social support in the workplace. Social support between teachers and principals creates a sense of togetherness in the face of organizational pressures. This leads to increased organizational solidarity and decreased levels of teacher psychological isolation. In organizational behavior studies, social support is a key factor in reducing burnout and increasing employee job satisfaction.

In addition to problem-focused coping, stress management strategies are also implemented through an emotion-focused coping approach. Teachers engage in various spiritual and emotional activities such as group prayer, *Zikir*, increased worship, strengthening interpersonal relationships, and fostering more harmonious emotional communication among fellow teachers. These activities serve as a means of psychological relaxation that helps teachers maintain emotional stability when facing work pressures (Mulyadi et al., 2024; Alegre & Labajo, 2023).

The spiritual approach implemented demonstrates that stress management is not only understood as a psychological issue, but also as a process of strengthening individual spirituality. From an Islamic educational perspective, spirituality plays a crucial role in fostering inner peace and self-control. The values of patience, trust, and sincerity internalized within the organizational culture can profoundly shape teachers' mental resilience. The spiritual approach functions as a transcendental coping mechanism, a stress management mechanism oriented toward strengthening an individual's relationship with divine values. This approach has a positive impact on developing teachers' emotional stability, as individuals feel they have spiritual support when facing work pressures. In the context of Islamic educational organizations, organizational spirituality can be a crucial instrument in building an emotionally and morally healthy work environment.

The implementation of stress management strategies is also evident in the principal's more humanistic and participatory leadership style. The principal not only performs administrative functions but also serves an emotional role as a mentor and mediator for teachers. This leadership approach creates more harmonious organizational relationships and reduces the psychological distance between leaders and subordinates.

An analysis of these leadership patterns shows that a humanistic leadership style significantly contributes to building organizational well-being. The principal acts as an emotional support system, helping teachers cope with work pressures more adaptively. From an Islamic Educational Management perspective, humanistic leadership reflects the values of mercy, deliberation, and service (servant leadership), which are key principles in managing Islamic educational institutions. Thus, the implementation of stress management strategies at Nailul Marom Kindergarten shows that managing teachers' psychological well-being requires a multidimensional approach that includes structural, social, emotional, and spiritual aspects simultaneously.

Evaluation of Teacher Stress Management Strategies

Evaluation of teacher stress management strategies is conducted through observations of changes in behavior, emotional stability, work quality, and interpersonal relationships within the school environment. The principal regularly monitors discipline, work enthusiasm, social

interactions, and learning effectiveness as indicators of the success of the implemented stress management strategies.

The research results show that the stress management strategies implemented have a positive impact on teachers' psychological well-being. Teachers are better able to control their emotions, maintain interpersonal relationships, improve their work comfort, and demonstrate a greater commitment to their professional duties. A more supportive work environment also helps improve teachers' sense of psychological safety in carrying out educational activities.

In-depth analysis shows that the success of stress management strategies is influenced not only by organizational policies but also by an organizational culture that supports teachers' psychological well-being. A humanistic, religious, and collaborative work culture creates an organizational climate more conducive to the development of teachers' mental health. From an organizational behavior perspective, a supportive organizational culture has a significant influence on increasing employee job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

However, this study found that stress management evaluations at Nailul Marom Kindergarten are still conducted in a rudimentary manner and are not based on measurable psychological assessment instruments. The school does not yet have a formal system for periodically assessing teachers' stress levels, burnout, or mental well-being. Evaluations are still conducted based on behavioral observations and interpersonal communication between the principal and teachers.

An analysis of these conditions indicates that teacher stress management in educational institutions still requires strengthening in terms of evaluation systems and institutional policies. From a strategic management perspective, evaluation is a crucial step in measuring strategy effectiveness and determining ongoing organizational improvement measures (Zagkas et al., 2023; Samsinar et al., 2023). Therefore, educational institutions need to develop more systematic assessment instruments for teacher psychological well-being so that stress management can be carried out objectively, measurably, and sustainably.

Furthermore, the research findings indicate that the spiritual and humanistic approach implemented at Nailul Marom Kindergarten has the potential to be developed into an Islamic-based organizational well-being model. This model focuses not only on reducing work stress but also on creating a healthy, harmonious, and productive work environment, both psychologically and spiritually. Thus, the evaluation of stress management strategies at Nailul Marom Kindergarten shows that the successful management of teachers' psychological well-being requires integration between managerial policies, organizational culture, humanist leadership, and internalization of spiritual values in the Islamic education system.

CONCLUSION

Teacher stress management at Nailul Marom Kindergarten, Kaliwates, Jember, is carried out through three interconnected stages: strategy formulation, implementation, and evaluation. The formulation stage focuses on identifying sources of work-related stress and integrating Islamic values into the organizational culture, while the implementation stage applies both problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies that address technical, psychological, and spiritual needs. The evaluation stage involves continuous monitoring of teachers' emotional well-being and work performance. The findings indicate that effective teacher stress management requires not only individual coping efforts but also institutional support through strategic educational management. Furthermore, Islamic values such as patience, sincerity, deliberation, and trust in God (*tawakkal*) play an important role in strengthening teachers' psychological resilience and adaptability. Therefore, this study contributes to the development of Islamic educational

management by highlighting the integration of organizational strategies and teacher well-being and provides practical guidance for educational institutions in developing preventive, systematic, and spiritually oriented stress management systems.

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