



## Driving Quality Through People: Strategic Human Resource Management in Indonesian Islamic Schools

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### Abstract :

This study aims to analyze the management of human resource quality improvement at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nurul Islam Pasirian Lumajang through the managerial functions of planning, organizing, implementation, and control. Employing a qualitative approach, data were collected via interviews, observations, and documentation. The research focuses on three core programs: Subject Teacher Deliberation (MGMP), training in the development of learning instruments, and training in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) materials. Findings indicate that the principal plays a central role in coordinating these teacher development initiatives in a structured and participatory manner. MGMP facilitates collaborative lesson planning and peer reflection. Training on learning instruments enhances teachers' administrative and pedagogical readiness to implement the Merdeka Curriculum. The Madrasah Mengaji program integrates religious values into daily educational practices. The study also reveals the need for continuous mentoring and systematic evaluation mechanisms to sustain program effectiveness. The findings imply that integrated human resource management that combines professional capacity-building, religious character development, and institutional leadership can serve as a strategic model for improving educational quality in Islamic primary schools across similar contexts.

## INTRODUCTION

The rapid transformation in the global education landscape demands that educational institutions strengthen their human resource management to ensure sustainable quality improvement (Abad-Segura et al., 2020; Carmo et al., 2025; Mohamed Hashim et al., 2022). In an era defined by technological disruption and evolving social expectations, educational institutions must develop competent human resources capable of adapting to dynamic learning environments (Antonopoulou et al., 2023; Jerónimo et al., 2020; Mohiuddin et al., 2022). Within this context, madrasah education in Indonesia plays a vital role in shaping human character and professional readiness through effective human resource management (Afifuddin et al., 2025; Haddade et al., 2024; Shaturaev, 2021). The success of educational institutions increasingly depends on the quality of teachers and administrators who serve as the driving force in realizing institutional objectives (de Jong et al., 2022; Koellner et al., 2024; Koh et al., 2023).

In Indonesia, the government's commitment to improving educational quality is reflected in national policies that emphasize the development of human resources as the central axis of school transformation (Nur 'Azah et al., 2024; Pratiwi et al., 2024; Revina et al., 2023). The National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003 explicitly mandates education to cultivate students who are faithful, knowledgeable, creative, and

responsible citizens (Nur 'Azah et al., 2024). To achieve these goals, madrasah institutions are expected to manage their human resources systematically through the planning, organizing, implementing, and controlling stages. The principal thus holds a strategic role as the leader who mobilizes teachers and staff to enhance institutional performance and align programs with educational goals (Basma & Savage, 2023; Chaudhuri, P., & Mullen, 2022; Tantranont & Sawatdeenarunat, 2023).

Previous studies have shown that effective human resource management directly impacts the quality of learning and student outcomes. Empirical analyses of collaborative teacher development forums comparable to Subject Teacher Deliberations (MGMP) confirm that structured, school-based professional development is instrumental in resolving classroom challenges and sustaining pedagogical collaboration (Revina et al., 2023). Continuous professional learning aligned with curriculum implementation has also been shown to improve teachers' instructional competence and translate into measurable student gains (Darimus & Hanif, 2023; de Vries et al., 2022; Park et al., 2025). However, other studies reveal that many Islamic schools and madrasahs still face managerial limitations, particularly weak supervision systems and insufficient capacity-building for teachers, which hinder the institutionalization of HRM cycles in day-to-day practice (Pratiwi et al., 2024; Zerrad & Schechter, 2025). These disparities highlight the need for a more systematic approach to human resource quality improvement that integrates both managerial and pedagogical dimensions.

Internationally, the emphasis on teacher quality and institutional effectiveness is consistent with global best practices in school management, which show that leadership and structured human resource development form the backbone of sustained school improvement (Abakah, 2023; Tuytens et al., 2023; Zerrad & Schechter, 2025). Countries that have successfully enhanced educational quality typically employ a comprehensive management cycle encompassing planning, organization, direction, and control to maintain teacher professionalism and promote institutional growth. These practices demonstrate that quality improvement in education cannot be separated from effective human resource governance.

In the context of Indonesian madrasahs, especially at the elementary level (*Madrasah Ibtidaiyah*), improving human resource quality remains a fundamental strategy to strengthen institutional competitiveness. Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nurul Islam Pasirian Lumajang represents a distinctive example of how local educational institutions implement human resource management as part of continuous quality improvement. Programs such as MGMP, instructional design training, and the development of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) materials have been systematically organized to enhance teacher competence and ensure the relevance of learning outcomes. Nevertheless, challenges persist in maintaining program sustainability, ensuring stakeholder participation, and aligning institutional initiatives with national education policies.

This study aims to analyze the management of human resource quality improvement at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nurul Islam Pasirian Lumajang. The research adopts Sondang Siagian's management theory (1987), which includes the functions of planning, organizing, actuating, supervising, and evaluating, as an analytical framework to assess how these managerial stages operate within the madrasah's quality improvement programs (Sardiati et al., 2025). By exploring this framework, the study seeks to identify best practices and offer strategic recommendations to enhance human resource development in Islamic primary education. Accordingly, the central research question is:

How is human resource quality improvement managed through the five managerial functions at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nurul Islam Pasirian Lumajang, and to what extent does this management contribute to institutional quality advancement?.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative case study approach to explore the management of human resource quality improvement in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nurul Islam Pasirian Lumajang. The qualitative approach was chosen to understand managerial processes, institutional strategies, and practical challenges in developing teacher competencies and improving the quality of madrasah graduates (Lim, 2025; Timonen et al., 2024). The selected institution is a developing Islamic elementary school that has systematically implemented teacher training and professional development programs, making it a relevant case for examining educational quality management practices in rural madrasah contexts. The researcher acted as the primary instrument in the study, employing a naturalistic approach to capture the meaning of human resource management practices within their real context (Carter et al., 2021). Data were collected through direct observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation review (Azad et al., 2021; Doyle et al., 2020; Pretorius, 2024). Observations were conducted in classrooms, teacher meetings, and training sessions. Interviews were held with the headmaster, the vice principal for curriculum, teachers, and administrative staff who were directly involved in implementing quality improvement programs. Participants were selected purposively based on their experience and active participation in managing and implementing human resource development activities (Timonen et al., 2024).

The research instruments included semi-structured interview guides, field notes, and digital audio recorders. Data credibility was ensured through triangulation by comparing findings from observations, interviews, and documentary evidence (Hendren et al., 2023; Kwiek, 2021; Zairul, 2021). To maintain data consistency and reduce researcher bias, continuous engagement and peer debriefing were applied throughout the research process. Data analysis followed the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, consisting of three primary stages: (1) data condensation, involving the selection, focusing, and coding of field data into thematic categories such as planning, organizing, implementation, and control; (2) data display, through narrative matrices and visual tables summarizing the patterns and variations found in human resource management practices; and (3) conclusion drawing and verification, which included interpretation of patterns, explanation development, and validation through continuous reference to management theories and previous studies (Miles, Matthew B., A.M. Huberman, 2014).

In this study, data condensation was operationalized by coding interview transcripts and field notes to identify recurring themes of leadership role, teacher training effectiveness, and stakeholder collaboration (Basma & Savage, 2023; Sardiati et al., 2025). The data were displayed in comparative matrices that highlighted the coherence between the planning and implementation stages of the human resource development programs. Findings were then verified through peer discussions with fellow researchers and reflective dialogues with key informants to strengthen validity. To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, methodological rigor was maintained through prolonged field engagement, member checking, and theoretical triangulation with contemporary educational management theories (Khoa et al., 2023). This methodological framework

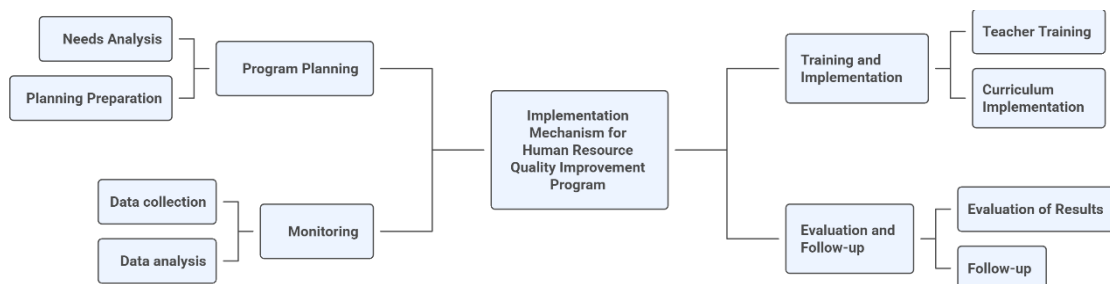
enabled an in-depth understanding of how human resource quality improvement was planned, executed, and controlled to achieve educational excellence at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nurul Islam Pasirian Lumajang.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Result

The management of improving the quality of human resources at *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) Nurul Islam Pasirian Lumajang* is a form of implementation of a planned and measurable education management system. This quality improvement program is directed to strengthen teacher competence, develop professional capacity, and integrate religious values in educational practices. Based on the results of interviews, observations, and documentation conducted in July-October 2024, it is possible to get an idea that human resource management at MI Nurul Islam is carried out through three main stages of interintegrated programs, namely (1) Subject Teacher Deliberation (MGMP), (2) training on the preparation of learning instruments, and (3) training on strengthening Islamic Religious Education (PAI) materials.

This quality improvement program is carried out under the coordination of the madrasah's head, who serves as the main driving force in planning, implementing, and evaluating activities. The head of the madrasah emphasized that all programs are prepared from the beginning of the school year, ensuring clear direction and alignment with the institution's strategic planning.



**Figure 1. Implementation Mechanism for Human Resources Quality Improvement Program**

*Source (Madrasah Program Documentation)*

Building on the exposure in Figure 1, the program's implementation mechanism to improve the quality of human resources in madrasahs is arranged in a systematic, continuous flow. The process begins with the analysis of needs and the preparation of the planning, which serves as the basis for the program plan. This stage ensures that every activity carried out is in line with the institution's real needs. Furthermore, the program is implemented through two main components: training and curriculum implementation, which focus on improving teacher competence and practical learning. The monitoring stage is carried out through data collection and analysis to assess the extent to which the program is running in line with the target. The final part consists of the consistency-follow-up functions to assess the program's improvement in results. This mechanism demonstrates a continuous quality management cycle that emphasizes planning, implementation, evaluation, and improvement of sustainability in the development of madrasah human resources.

According to the head of the madrasah, "The program plan has been prepared long before the new school year starts. All our teachers are involved to understand the direction of their respective competency development." (Interview, August 2024). The structure of the program implementation is regulated by the division of tasks among the head of the madrasah, the curriculum coordinator, and the classroom and subject teachers. All activities are carried out collaboratively to ensure continuous quality improvement.

### Subject Teacher Deliberation (MGMP)

MGMP is the main forum for teachers to share experiences, discuss learning strategies, and develop learning implementation plans that are better aligned with student needs. This forum is held monthly with a thematic learning planning agenda, discussion of learning outcome evaluation, and reflection on teaching methods. One of the teachers said, "MGMP helps us find solutions to learning problems in the classroom, as well as equalizing the direction so that student learning outcomes are more measurable." (Interview, August 2024). MGMP activities are also a means for teachers to develop a collegial work culture and to improve their analytical skills regarding student learning outcomes. In several meetings, teachers review the learning modules and determine more contextually relevant remedial strategies. The head of the madrasah considers MGMP an effective forum for ensuring the continuity of quality among teachers.

### Training on the Preparation of Learning Instruments

This training program is conducted at the start of every school year to support the implementation of *the Independent Curriculum*. All teachers participated in a joint training session facilitated by madrasah supervisors from the Ministry of Religion. This training includes preparing teaching modules, developing evaluation tools, and using formative assessment techniques. One of the teachers explained, "This training makes us better prepared for the new school year because each teacher already has a teaching module that is arranged according to the needs of the class." (Interview, July 2024).

In its implementation, the training is carried out through three main stages: supervisors presenting curriculum policies, preparing teaching modules in groups, and presenting work results for feedback. According to the madrasah's head, this activity helps teachers understand shifts in learning paradigms and improve their ability to adapt to the dynamics of educational policies.

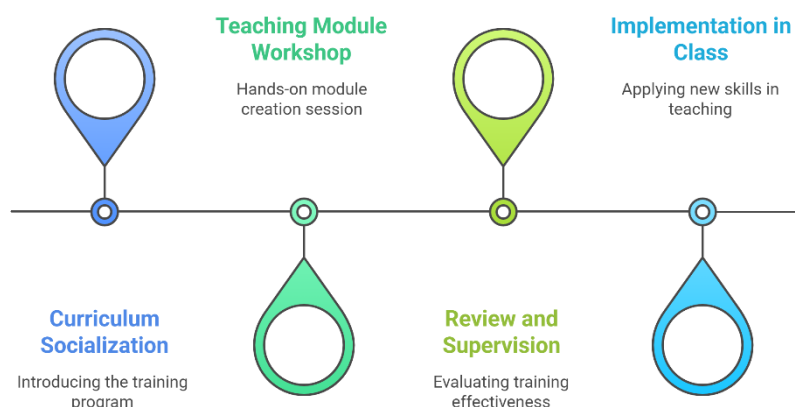


Figure 2. Stages of Implementation of Training in Preparing Learning Instruments

This training not only improves the learning administration's readiness but also builds collaboration among teachers. Teachers proficient in module preparation serve as mentors to peers, fostering a culture of mutual guidance within the madrasah.

### Training on Strengthening Islamic Religious Education Materials (PAI)

In addition to strengthening pedagogical competence, MI Nurul Islam also runs a PAI training program called Madrasah Mengaji. This program was developed in response to the community's aspirations, so that reading and understanding the Qur'an become an integral part of the school routine. The activity is carried out every morning before the lesson starts, using the Tartila method taught by teachers who have participated in a one-week special training program.

The head of the madrasah explained, "Our madrasah is designed to familiarize students with the Qur'an. Teachers are provided with training to be able to guide students with the right methods." (Interview, September 2024). Field observations show that this program not only improves students' Qur'an reading skills but also strengthens teachers' religious competence. The Madrasah Mengaji program also strengthens community involvement. Parents of students provide support by providing the Tartila mushaf and assisting in evaluation activities. The collaboration between madrasahs, teachers, and parents makes this program sustainable and widely appreciated. The PAI teacher added, "Through this program we not only foster students, but also learn to improve our own reading. So there is a spiritual and professional improvement at the same time." (Interview, September 2024).

Overall, the three programs show that the management of improving the quality of human resources at MI Nurul Islam Pasirian Lumajang has been running with participatory, planned, and sustainable principles. However, based on field findings, there is still a need for feedback mechanisms and continuous guidance to systematically measure teacher competency improvement and ensure a direct impact on learning quality. A summary of the implementation results of the three main programs to improve the quality of human resources at MI Nurul Islam Pasirian Lumajang is presented in Table 1, which shows the integration among program aspects, activity focus, implementation form, and field impacts.

**Table 1. Management Aspects of Human Resources Quality Improvement at MI Nurul Islam Pasirian Lumajang**

Program Aspects	Focus of Activities	Implementation	Impact Found
MGMP	Collaboration of teacher planning and reflection	Regular monthly meetings for learning evaluation	Improving teaching uniformity and innovation
Learning Instrument Training	Preparation of teaching and evaluation modules	Curriculum workshop with madrasah supervisor	Improving the administrative and pedagogic readiness of teachers
PAI Training (Madrasah Mengaji)	The habit of reading the Qur'an with the Tartila method	Teacher training and morning recitation program	Improving the religious competence of teachers and students' character

The mechanism for implementing the program above shows the integration between madrasah policies, teacher competence, and community participation. The

head of the madrasah succeeded in aligning all human resources around a single vision: improving the quality of the institution as a whole. This effort also shows that improving the quality of human resources at MI Nurul Islam Pasirian Lumajang is not only procedural but also transformative in building a professional and religious work culture in the madrasah environment.

## Discussion

The main objective of this study is to analyze the management of human resource quality improvement at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) Nurul Islam Pasirian Lumajang, particularly in strengthening teacher competence and institutional effectiveness. Prior studies emphasize that human resource management plays a pivotal role in improving educational quality and achieving institutional goals through systematic planning, organization, implementation, and control (Llorens, 2023; Aris, 2023; Makhmetova et al., 2025). Within Indonesia's educational policy framework, enhancing teacher competence is an integral component of school quality assurance and a determinant of graduate competitiveness at higher educational levels (Ambon et al., 2025).

Findings from this study reveal that MI Nurul Islam implements several strategic programs to enhance its teachers' competence and performance. These include (1) Subject Teacher Consultation (MGMP), (2) training in the preparation of learning instruments, and (3) strengthening mastery of Islamic Education (PAI) materials. The MGMP serves as a professional learning community that enables teachers to share experiences, harmonize teaching methods, and collaboratively resolve classroom learning challenges. This aligns with the view that structured teacher collaboration and sustained professional learning communities promote instructional improvement (Ventista & Brown, 2023).

Training in preparing learning instruments has also been systematically conducted at the beginning of each academic year. The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum required the madrasah to conduct workshops and mentoring sessions to help teachers develop learning modules aligned with curriculum guidelines. The involvement of madrasah supervisors as facilitators strengthened teachers' technical and administrative capacity, consistent with research showing that leadership commitment and teacher readiness are central to effective professional development (Makhmetova et al., 2025). However, the findings also indicate that continuous follow-up and mentoring are still needed to ensure that teachers adapt pedagogically to shifts from conventional teaching models to more student-centred approaches (Nur 'Azah et al., 2024).

The third program, focused on Islamic Education (PAI) materials and the Madrasah Mengaji initiative, represents an innovative integration of religious and academic goals. This program responds directly to community expectations for children to develop Qur'anic literacy within the formal school system. The adoption of structured recitation sessions reflects the school's adaptive response to local socio-religious demands, illustrating how educational leadership can align institutional programs with societal values (Nur 'Azah et al., 2024).

From a management perspective, analyzing these programs using the four core functions—planning, organizing, actuating (implementation), and controlling—indicates balanced implementation, though with varying levels of intensity. Planning and organizing are evident in the systematic scheduling and clear division of teacher responsibilities. Actuating is realised through motivation, mentoring, and participatory

training activities. However, the controlling function still faces challenges, particularly in monitoring the long-term outcomes of training programmes and evaluating changes in teacher performance (Hashim et al., 2022)

Comparative insights from prior research suggest that the success of human resource development programmes in educational institutions depends on strong collaboration between school leaders, teachers, and external partners (Nur 'Azah et al., 2024; Pratiwi et al., 2024; Revina et al., 2023). The role of the headmaster at MI Nurul Islam exemplifies this principle, as he acts not only as an administrative leader but also as a motivator and facilitator of professional growth. The sustained practice of participatory planning and shared responsibility among stakeholders fosters a sense of ownership and shared vision, aligning with the concept of collective performance behaviour in achieving organisational goals (Ambon et al., 2025).

This study makes a significant contribution to the field of Islamic educational management by presenting an integrated, applicable model for improving human resource quality in madrasah institutions. By applying the classical managerial functions—planning, organizing, implementing, and controlling—the research demonstrates how school principals can optimize leadership roles to manage teacher development programs in a participatory and sustainable manner. The findings enrich the literature on Islamic educational management by highlighting the importance of synergy between professional competency enhancement, religious value integration, and community engagement in fostering a culture of quality. This model also serves as a practical reference for policymakers aiming to strengthen human resource capacity in Islamic primary schools across diverse regions.

Based on the findings, improving the quality of human resources at MI Nurul Islam requires not only well-designed programs but also sustainable leadership support, adequate institutional resources, and consistent collaboration among stakeholders. The *MGMP*, curriculum workshops, and *Madrasah Mengaji* are valuable innovations that can serve as models for other madrasahs aiming to enhance teacher professionalism and graduate quality. However, future initiatives should address supervision frequency, continuous evaluation, and documentation of teacher progress. Strengthening these aspects will ensure that human resource development in madrasah education aligns with both national quality standards and local community expectations.

## CONCLUSION

This study confirms that the management of human resource quality improvement at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nurul Islam Pasirian Lumajang is systematically implemented through the managerial functions of planning, organizing, implementing, and controlling. Core programs such as the Subject Teacher Deliberation (MGMP), training in the development of learning instruments, and strengthening of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) content have proven effective in enhancing teachers' professional competence and reinforcing religious character. The principal's role as coordinator and facilitator is central in ensuring stakeholder participation and sustaining program implementation. These findings highlight that an integrated approach combining pedagogical development, religious values, and institutional leadership serves as a strategic model for improving educational quality in Islamic schools. The study emphasizes the significance of sustainable, collaborative, and context-sensitive human resource governance in supporting the transformation of primary Islamic education.

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