

## BRIDGING THE GAP: STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT APPROACHES TO ENHANCE EDUCATIONAL QUALITY VIA TEACHER AND STAFF MANAGEMENT UNDER IASP 2020

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**Abstract :**

*This study aims to bridge the gap between theory and practice by examining the strategic management approach applied to improve the quality of education through teacher and staff management under the IASP 2020 framework at the madrasah tsanawiyah level. Using qualitative methods, this study collected data through in-depth interviews and participant observation. The findings of this study revealed that strategic management significantly improved the quality of education by encouraging professional development among teachers and staff, improving their managerial and pedagogical skills. This improvement was directly correlated with increased student achievement and engagement. However, this study also identified challenges such as resource constraints and resistance to change, suggesting that continuous capacity building and adaptive policy adjustments are essential. This study contributes to the existing literature by providing practical insights into effective strategic management in education, emphasizing the need for continued support from policymakers to ensure successful implementation. The findings are expected to offer a model for other schools aiming to improve educational outcomes through strategic human resource management.*

**Abstrak:**

*Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjembatani kesenjangan antara teori dan praktik dengan mengkaji pendekatan manajemen strategis yang diterapkan untuk meningkatkan kualitas pendidikan melalui manajemen guru dan staf di bawah kerangka IASP 2020 di tingkat madrasah tsanawiyah. Dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif, penelitian ini mengumpulkan data melalui wawancara mendalam dan observasi partisipatif. Temuan penelitian ini mengungkapkan bahwa manajemen strategis secara signifikan meningkatkan kualitas pendidikan dengan mendorong pengembangan profesional di kalangan guru dan staf, meningkatkan keterampilan manajerial dan pedagogis mereka. Peningkatan ini secara langsung berkorelasi dengan peningkatan prestasi dan keterlibatan siswa. Namun, penelitian*

*ini juga mengidentifikasi tantangan seperti keterbatasan sumber daya dan resistensi terhadap perubahan, yang menunjukkan bahwa pengembangan kapasitas berkelanjutan dan penyesuaian kebijakan adaptif sangat penting. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada literatur yang ada dengan memberikan wawasan praktis tentang manajemen strategis yang efektif dalam pendidikan, menekankan perlunya dukungan berkelanjutan dari para pembuat kebijakan untuk memastikan keberhasilan implementasi. Hasil dari temuan tersebut diharapkan dapat menawarkan model bagi sekolah lain yang bertujuan untuk meningkatkan hasil pendidikan melalui manajemen sumber daya manusia yang strategis.*

## INTRODUCTION

Strategic management has long been recognised as a key element in achieving organisational excellence in various sectors, including the education sector (Hanum et al., 2024; Sanjani, 2024). In the context of education, strategic management encompasses the process of planning, organising, leading and controlling madrasah resources to achieve long-term sustainable goals (Faiz et al., 2023; Gusrianto & Syaifudin, 2023; Raharja, 2023). One of the important elements in education management is the management of human resources, particularly teachers and education personnel, who play a vital role in determining the quality of education provided to students (Kusuma et al., 2024; Zuhdi et al., 2024).

Strategic management enables madrasahs to conduct thorough internal and external environmental analyses, identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (Nababan et al., 2023). Through this analysis, madrasahs can develop appropriate strategies to improve their performance and the quality of education they offer. Strategic management does not only focus on academic aspects, but also includes the management of human resources, infrastructure and relationships with stakeholders (Purwanto et al., 2023). By implementing good strategic management, madrasahs can improve teaching effectiveness, motivate teachers and staff, and create a conducive learning environment for students (Efendi & Sholeh, 2023). In the era of globalisation and increasingly fierce competition, the ability to strategically manage educational resources is becoming increasingly important to ensure that educational institutions can compete and excel in the national and international arena (Mahmudah & Putra, 2021).

The Education Unit Accreditation Instrument (IASP) 2020 is an effort by the Indonesian government to set clear and measurable standards in assessing and improving the quality of education in all education units. IASP 2020 not only measures madrasah performance based on student learning outcomes, but also examines the processes and conditions that influence the achievement of these results, including the effectiveness of teacher and education personnel management. The implementation of IASP 2020 in Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri (MTsN) 3 Subang presents an opportunity to understand how this standard can be effectively applied in a real and specific context, as well as the challenges that arise during the implementation process.

Although many studies have highlighted the importance of strategic management in improving organisational performance, there is a significant gap between theory and practice in the context of education management in Indonesia (Kusumaningrum et al., 2024). The literature shows that the implementation of strategic management theory often faces obstacles in its practical application in the field, especially in complex and dynamic contexts such as madrasahs in Indonesia (Retnandari, 2022). These challenges include different perceptions and understandings of strategic management concepts, as well as difficulties in adapting complex theories into practices that suit local conditions.

To bridge this gap, a more applicable and contextualised approach is needed in applying strategic management principles in the management of teachers and education personnel. This study aims to explore how a strategic management approach can be optimised to improve education quality through the management of teachers and education personnel based on IASP 2020 at MTsN 3 Subang. By highlighting local dynamics and specific education policies, this study hopes to provide concrete solutions that can be applied in the field.

Previous research in the last decade has underlined the importance of strategic management in various educational contexts. For example, a study by (Popova et al., 2022; Steyn, 2022) showed that effective strategic leadership contributes significantly to improving the quality of education. Meanwhile, research by (Samimi et al., 2022) highlights the importance of teacher professional development as part of the strategy to improve education quality. However, these studies have generally focussed on broader or different contexts and have not specifically explored the implementation of IASP 2020 in the Indonesian madrasah context. Thus, this study offers a unique contribution by focusing on the specific context of MTsN 3 Subang and the integration of IASP 2020 with a strategic management approach.

The purpose of this study is to evaluate and develop an effective strategic management approach in managing teachers and education personnel at MTsN 3 Subang, using IASP 2020 as the main evaluation framework. This research will use a case study method to examine how the policies and strategies implemented can improve the quality of education in this madrasah. This analysis is expected to provide useful practical recommendations for other madrasahs and policy makers in an effort to improve the quality of education in Indonesia.

The urgency of this research lies in the urgent need to find applicable and context-based solutions in addressing the gap between theory and practice in education management. Thus, this research not only contributes to the development of strategic management literature in education, but also provides practical guidance that can be implemented by madrasahs to improve the quality of education in real terms. The results of this research are expected to provide deep insights into effective ways to manage teachers and education personnel, as well as improve the quality of education through the implementation of national standards such as IASP 2020.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a qualitative design with a case study approach at MTsN 3 Subang to explore the implementation of strategic management in the management of teachers and education personnel (Susetyo et al., 2022). The study population was all teachers and education personnel in the madrasah, with the sample selected by purposive sampling including the madrasah head and senior teachers. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and analysis of official documents such as the madrasah's strategic plan and self-evaluation report. This comprehensive approach aims to provide a nuanced understanding of how strategic management practices are executed within the madrasah context, highlighting the roles and perspectives of key stakeholders. Through detailed interviews, the study seeks to capture the insights and experiences of the madrasah head and senior teachers, offering an in-depth perspective on the strategic management processes in place.

The data analysis technique employed in this study is thematic analysis, which involves several critical steps: data coding, identification of main themes, and the interpretation of findings based on the theoretical framework of strategic management (Anwer & Reiss, 2022). Thematic analysis is a methodical process that begins with coding the data to categorize and label significant patterns and features. Following this, the main themes are identified, serving as the central topics around which the data is organized and analyzed. The final stage involves interpreting these themes within the context of strategic management theory, providing a structured and comprehensive understanding of the findings. The primary objective of this study is to pinpoint the factors that both support and hinder the implementation of strategic management within the madrasah. By thoroughly examining these factors, the study seeks to elucidate the impact of strategic management on the quality of education. The research aims to provide insights into how strategic management practices can enhance or impede educational outcomes, thereby offering valuable information for improving administrative practices in educational institutions.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Strategic Management in Education

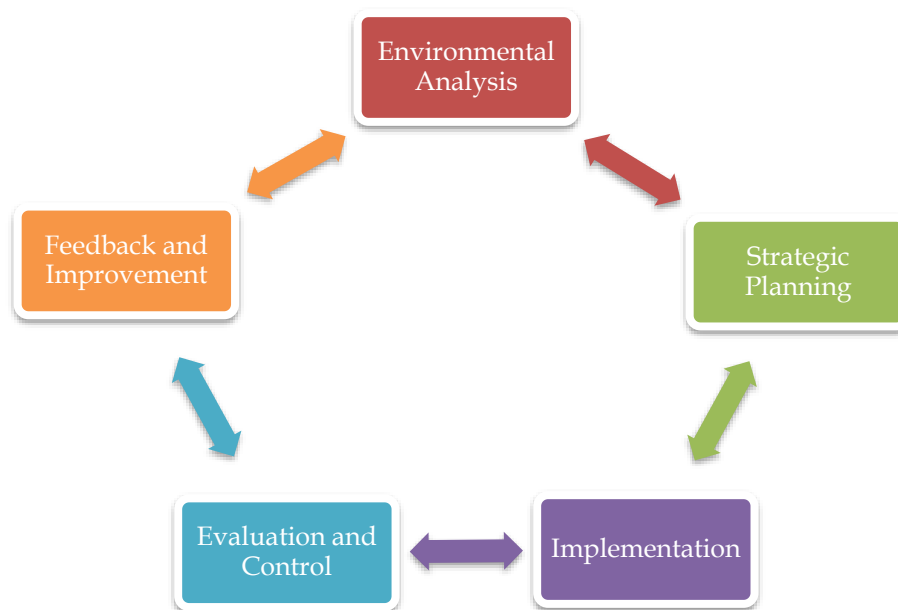
Strategic management in education refers to a series of planned and coordinated processes aimed at achieving the long-term goals of educational organisations. This process includes analysing, formulating, implementing and evaluating strategies designed to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of educational institutions in meeting the needs and expectations of stakeholders (Lyon et al., 2022). Strategic management helps educational institutions adapt to environmental changes, capitalise on opportunities, overcome challenges and achieve competitive advantage (Al-Filali et al., 2023).

The definition and basic concepts of strategic management in education involve developing a clear vision and mission, setting strategic goals, identifying and analysing internal and external factors, formulating strategies, implementing action plans, and monitoring and evaluating performance to achieve the desired results (Raharja, 2023). A vision is an aspirational statement that describes the long-term goals of an educational organisation, while a mission describes the

basic purpose of the organisation, including who it serves, what it does, and how it does it (Suarditini et al., 2023). Environmental analysis involves assessing the existing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, both from within and outside the organisation (Puri et al., 2023).

The application of strategic management in various educational sectors is essential to ensure that every educational institution can meet the expected quality standards. By implementing strategic planning, institutions can align their goals with the rapidly changing educational environment, promoting continuous improvement and success (Menteşoğulları, 2023). In the primary and secondary education sector, strategic management assists madrasahs in formulating comprehensive education quality improvement programmes, including teacher and staff management, curriculum development, and facilities and infrastructure improvement.

With the effective implementation of strategic management, educational institutions in various sectors can improve the quality of education they offer, create a conducive learning environment and achieve competitive advantage (Sanjani et al., 2024). This not only contributes to the improvement of student learning outcomes but also to the development of qualified human resources for the future (Komarudin et al., 2022).



**Figure 1. Strategic Management Cycle**

Strategic management in education is a comprehensive and dynamic process that begins with Environmental Analysis, where institutions like MTsN 3 Subang assess internal and external factors, such as student demographics, community needs, technological advancements, and regulatory changes, to understand their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Following this, Strategic Planning is crucial for setting long-term goals and determining the best strategies to achieve them, which at MTsN 3 Subang might include initiatives to enhance academic programs, integrate technology into classrooms,



and foster community partnerships. The Implementation phase translates these plans into action by allocating resources, assigning responsibilities, and ensuring staff are adequately trained and motivated. Evaluation and Control then monitor progress, measure outcomes, and compare them against objectives, identifying areas of success and improvement.

### **Education Unit Accreditation Instrument (IASP) 2020**

The Education Unit Accreditation Instrument (IASP) 2020 is an evaluation tool used to assess and ensure the quality of education in various education units in Indonesia. IASP 2020 is designed to provide a comprehensive overview of madrasah performance through a comprehensive set of standards and assessment criteria. These standards cover various important aspects of madrasah operations, including management, curriculum, learning processes, facilities and infrastructure, and the quality of teachers and education personnel. The assessment criteria aim to ensure that every aspect of education in the madrasah meets or exceeds the standards set by the government to ensure consistent and equitable quality of education across the country (Kurniasih et al., 2023).

The implementation of IASP 2020 involves a series of steps that madrasahs must follow to prepare themselves for the accreditation process. It begins with the collection of relevant data and documents, covering various aspects of madrasah operations and management. This data is then analysed and evaluated by a designated accreditation team, who will visit the madrasah to conduct a hands-on assessment. During this visit, the team will observe the learning process, interview teachers, students and education personnel, and inspect the facilities and resources available at the madrasah. This process is designed to provide an objective and thorough assessment of the madrasah's performance.

However, the implementation of IASP 2020 also faces a number of challenges that need to be addressed to achieve the desired results. One of the main challenges is the readiness of madrasahs in collecting and presenting the data required for accreditation. Many madrasahs, especially in remote areas, lack the resources and capacity to fulfil these requirements effectively (Simarmata et al., 2022). In addition, there are also challenges in ensuring consistency and fairness in assessments by accreditation teams, given the significant variations in the local conditions and contexts of madrasahs across Indonesia (Susetyo et al., 2022).

Overall, IASP 2020 is an important step in the effort to improve the quality of education in Indonesia. Although it faces various challenges, effective implementation of this instrument can help ensure that madrasahs across the country are able to provide high-quality and equitable education for all students. With a structured approach and adequate support, IASP 2020 has great potential to drive continuous improvement in Indonesia's education system.

### **Management of Teachers and Education Personnel**

The management of teachers and education personnel is a crucial aspect in the effort to improve the quality of education in madrasah (Husni & Wahyudiati, 2022). Effective management strategies include various steps

ranging from recruitment, selection, to continuous professional development (Marayasa et al., 2017). This management starts with a rigorous recruitment process to ensure that only individuals who have adequate qualifications and competencies are accepted. After recruitment, the next important step is to provide structured training and professional development, which includes training in the latest teaching methods, the use of educational technology, and the development of managerial and leadership skills for education personnel.

An effective professional development strategy involves providing teachers and education personnel with opportunities to continuously learn and improve their competencies. This can be done through various means, such as in-house training, workshops, seminars and continuing education programmes. It is also important to create a culture of collaboration and knowledge sharing among teachers and education personnel, which can enhance their ability to address complex educational challenges (Brown, 2023). Adequate administrative support and incentives also play an important role in motivating teachers and education personnel to actively participate in professional development programmes (Steyn, 2022).

The impact of effective management on the quality of education is significant. Well-trained teachers who continue to develop their skills are better able to deliver the subject matter in an engaging and effective way, which in turn improves student learning outcomes. In addition, good management also creates a conducive working environment for teachers and education personnel, which can increase their job satisfaction and commitment to duty. This positive working environment also results in better interactions between teachers and students, creating a more productive and enjoyable learning atmosphere (Qingyan et al., 2023).

### **Gaps between Theory and Practice**

The gap between theory and practice in education has been a widely discussed topic in academic literature (Anwer & Reiss, 2022). A review of the literature shows that although many strategic management theories have been developed to improve educational effectiveness, their implementation often falls short of expectations in the field. These theories offer an ideal framework for the management and improvement of educational quality, but their implementation in various educational contexts often faces significant barriers. These barriers can include limited resources, resistance to change, and a lack of understanding and skills in applying complex strategic concepts (Ngwenya et al., 2022).

A number of case studies and previous research have tried to explain this gap by looking at how theory is applied in real contexts. For example, some studies have shown that although madrasahs have good strategic plans, the lack of training and support for teachers and education personnel often hinders the effective implementation of these plans (Díaz et al., 2022). Other studies have found that education policies based on strategic management theory are often unsuccessful because they do not consider the specific conditions and local needs of different madrasahs. This suggests that there is a need to adapt the theory to

the practical realities on the ground in order for it to be implemented successfully (Fitria et al., 2022).

Overall, the gap between theory and practice in education is a complex issue. Existing literature suggests that to address this gap, a more holistic and contextualised approach is needed. Further research that connects theory with actual practice in the field is needed to develop more effective and applicable strategies. Thus, academic contributions can be more meaningful in efforts to improve the overall quality of education.

## **Results and Discussion**

This study found that using strategic management at MTsN 3 Subang, which focuses on how teachers and staff are managed, has improved the quality of education. Findings from in-depth interviews and observations of what is happening show that teachers and staff feel more motivated and engaged in continuous learning and growth. Teachers said that the training and workshops they attended gave them new ideas and skills that they could immediately use in the classroom. They feel that the madrasah head supports their efforts to be better at their jobs, so they feel more responsible and committed to their work.

In addition, staff in education said that the management training helped them do administrative work better and faster. Getting better at managerial skills not only makes the daily operations of the madrasah smoother, but also makes the workplace more organised and gets more work done. Overall, getting better at teaching and managing skills has a good effect on how well teachers teach and how the madrasah is run, making for a better and more focussed place of learning to achieve educational goals. On the other hand, seeing students doing better in exams and taking part in more extracurricular activities also shows that the management strategies were successfully implemented.

This study shows that the use of effective management strategies at MTsN 3 Subang has helped solve many problems related to handling teachers and staff. By implementing a well-thought-out and complete management plan, the madrasah was able to overcome problems such as low morale, lack of skills, and unwillingness to change. These strategies include continuous training, professional growth, and the use of good management practices, all of which help to make the performance of teachers and staff better.

The findings of this study are in line with previous studies that emphasise the importance of strategic management in improving education quality through optimal human resource management. Previous studies have also shown that madrasahs that implement strategic management tend to achieve better student learning outcomes and create a more conducive learning environment. Therefore, this study strengthens the argument that effective strategic management is the key to achieving educational excellence, especially through efficient human resource management.

However, this study also identified gaps between theory and practice, particularly in relation to resource constraints and resistance to change at the madrasah level. Although strategic management theory offers an ideal framework for improving education quality, its implementation often faces



obstacles due to the lack of resources, both financial and human. In addition, resistance to change among teachers and education staff is also a significant barrier as they may feel comfortable with the old ways of doing things or not fully understand the benefits of the newly implemented strategies.

Proposed solutions to address this gap include improving training and capacity building for teachers and education staff so that they can be better prepared and competent in implementing the new management strategies. This training should be designed on an ongoing basis and integrated into daily practices in madrasahs. In addition, policy adjustments are also needed to support the implementation of more flexible and contextualised management strategies, which allow madrasahs to adapt their management approaches to their specific conditions and needs. Thus, it is expected that strategic management theory can be effectively implemented in practice, so that it can make a real contribution to improving the quality of education.

The findings of this study have significant practical implications for the practice of strategic management in education. The findings show that by implementing effective strategic management, schools can improve the overall quality of education. The successful implementation at MTsN 3 Subang can serve as a model for other schools that want to improve their education quality. In addition, this study also encourages education policy makers to consider providing greater support in terms of training, professional development and resources needed to overcome implementation challenges in the field. Thus, this research contributes to improving the effectiveness of education management and the quality of student learning outcomes in Indonesia.

## CONCLUSION

The results of this study show that the implementation of the strategic management approach at MTsN 3 Subang has resulted in a significant improvement in the quality of education through effective management of teachers and staff in accordance with the 2020 Education Unit Accreditation Instrument (IASP). The implementation of strategic management motivates teachers and staff to be more involved in continuous professional development, improving their managerial and pedagogical skills. This, in turn, positively impacts the quality of teaching and school management, as well as student learning outcomes.

However, the study also identified gaps between theory and practice, especially in terms of limited resources and resistance to change. Therefore, it is recommended to improve training and capacity building for teachers and staff, as well as policy adjustments to support the implementation of more flexible and context-appropriate management strategies.

The findings of this study reinforce the existing literature on the importance of strategic management in education and offer practical guidance for other schools that want to improve the quality of their education through effective human resource management. The research also emphasises the importance of continued support from education policy makers.

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