IMPLEMENTATION OF MADRASAH PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP AND TEACHER PROFESSIONALISM LEVEL IN IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF GRADUATES

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Abstract	This study aims to describe and analyze the implementation of madrasah principal leadership in developing teacher professionalism, the level of teacher professionalism in carrying out professional duties, and its implications for graduate quality at MAN 1 Bandar Lampung, MAN 1 Pesawaran, and MAN 1 Pringsewu. This research employed a qualitative approach using a multisite study design. The data in this study consist of qualitative data on madrasah principal leadership, teacher professionalism, and graduate quality. The data sources include primary data from madrasa principals and teachers, as well as secondary data from official madrasa documents. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis, while data analysis was conducted through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, supported by triangulation to ensure data validity. The findings reveal that madrasa principals play a strategic and multifaceted leadership role by regularly planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating continuous teacher professional development programs. Differences in leadership focus were identified across sites, such as technology-based supervision, mentoring for new teachers, and innovation-oriented instructional leadership, reflecting contextual adaptation to institutional needs. Teacher professionalism is demonstrated through strong pedagogical competence, mastery of subject matter, effective classroom management, social engagement, and exemplary personal character, all of which contribute to effective learning environments and positive student development. The study further shows that the synergy between madrasah principal leadership and teacher professionalism significantly enhances graduate quality, not only in terms of academic achievement but also in non-academic skills, religious character, creativity, and competitiveness for higher education and social participation. This study concludes that the integrated relationship between effective madrasah principal leadership and sustained teacher professionalism is a key determinant in producing high-quality, holistic, and adaptive madrasah graduates capable of meeting contemporary educational challenges.
Keywords	Graduate Quality, Madrasah Principal Leadership, Teacher Professionalism.

INTRODUCTION

Educational development is a strategic instrument in efforts to improve the dignity and status of the nation amidst the increasingly competitive dynamics of global change. Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System explicitly mandates that the national education system must be able to guarantee improvements in the quality of education so that it is relevant to the demands of changing local, national, and global life (U.-UR Indonesia, 2003). However, reality shows that the quality of Indonesian education still faces serious challenges. The Global Competitiveness Report ranks Indonesia's human resource quality at 108th, lagging behind ASEAN countries such as Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, and Vietnam. This position reflects the nation's weak competitiveness, which directly impacts the quality of graduates from educational institutions (OECD Economic Survey of Indonesia, 2024). Therefore, improving the quality of education, including in madrasas, is a national strategic agenda that cannot be postponed, especially through strengthening key education actors.

One of the main determinants of educational quality is the quality of teachers and educational leadership. The government has responded to this challenge by enacting Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers. (R. Indonesia, 2005) and Government Regulation Number 19 of 2005 concerning National Education Standards, which emphasizes the importance of educator professionalism as a pillar for improving quality (Peraturan Pemerintah, 2005). However, this policy has not yet produced a significant impact without effective leadership from madrasah principals. In the context of post-reform educational decentralization, through Law No. 22 of 1999 and Law No. 23 of 2014, madrasahs have been granted broad autonomy in managing curriculum, learning, evaluation, and resource management (RI, 2014). Consequently, madrasah principals and teachers bear significant responsibility for the quality of educational processes and outcomes, including the quality of graduates.

From an Islamic perspective, improving the quality of human resources through knowledge is a normative and spiritual command, as emphasized by the fact that Allah elevates the status of those who believe and possess knowledge. The progress of Islamic educational institutions, including madrasas, is largely determined by the quality of leadership and professionalism of educators. Madrasa principals are required to possess strong leadership, a clear vision, managerial skills, a democratic attitude, and a strong commitment to teacher and student development. Madrasa

principals serve not only as administrators but also as agents of change capable of creating a conducive, innovative, and quality-oriented work climate (Minarti, 2022).

Despite the strategic role of the madrasah principal, the reality on the ground shows that many madrasah principals still fail to carry out their duties and functions professionally. This problem is caused by, among other things, a non-transparent recruitment process, the influence of political and family interests, low work motivation, weak discipline, and limited managerial competence and academic supervision. The hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) stating that destruction will occur if a matter is handed over to those who are not experts serves as a critical reflection on this phenomenon (Al-Bukhari, 2018). The impact of unprofessional leadership is evident in weak madrasah management, low-quality learning supervision, minimal innovation, and a stagnant quality culture, which ultimately results in low-quality graduates.

The implementation of madrasah principal leadership is a strategic factor in determining the direction, quality, and sustainability of graduates of State Islamic Senior High Schools in Lampung Province. Conceptually, madrasah principals have a central role in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of educational programs oriented towards improving the academic quality, character, and competitiveness of graduates. However, based on the researcher's initial observations at MAN 1 Bandar Lampung, MAN 1 Pesawaran, and MAN 1 Pringsewu, it was found that the implementation of this leadership has not been fully optimal and consistent. At MAN 1 Bandar Lampung, despite being supported by relatively adequate infrastructure and a sufficient number of teachers, problems still arise in the aspect of academic supervision consistency and inequality in student achievement, both academic and non-academic. Internal madrasah data shows that superior achievement is still dominated by certain student groups, while some other students have not developed optimally. This condition indicates that the planning and evaluation of graduate quality improvement programs are not fully based on the equity and sustainability of learning outcomes.

At MAN 1 Pesawaran, a prominent academic problem relates to the level of teacher professionalism that has not yet fully developed. Initial observations and interviews indicate that ongoing professional development activities, such as training, workshops, and reflective supervision, have not been implemented intensively and systematically. Some teachers still show limitations in mastering innovative learning strategies and utilizing learning technology, which results in a low variety of classroom learning methods. Madrasah document data also shows that teacher development programs are more administrative than substantive, so their contribution to improving

teachers' pedagogical, professional, personal, and social competencies is not yet significant. This condition has implications for the quality of graduates, which tends to stagnate, particularly in aspects of 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration.

Meanwhile, at MAN 1 Pringsewu, the main challenge lies in the limited learning innovations that are adaptive to current developments and the lack of modern learning support facilities. Observational data show that most learning processes are still conventional and teacher-centered, with very limited use of digital media. This has an impact on low student learning motivation and the suboptimal development of students' non-academic potential. The variety of empirical problems in the three madrasas indicates that improving graduate quality is not only determined by the leadership of the madrasah principal or teacher professionalism in isolation, but also by the synergy of both in an integrated manner. Therefore, an in-depth and comprehensive academic study is needed to analyze how the implementation of madrasah principal leadership and the level of teacher professionalism, along with supporting and inhibiting factors, contribute significantly to the sustainable improvement of graduate quality at State Madrasah Aliyah in Lampung Province.

Theoretically, leadership is the ability to influence, direct, motivate, and move other people to achieve common goals effectively and efficiently (Verawati et al., 2025). In the context of education, the leadership of the madrasah principal includes the roles of educator, manager, administrator, supervisor, leader, innovator, and motivator (EMASLIM) (Sudiarti, 2024). A professional madrasah principal must have personality, managerial, entrepreneurial, supervisory, and social competencies as mandated in the Minister of National Education Regulation Number 16 of 2007 (Permendiknas No. 16 Tahun 2007, 2007). On the other hand, teacher professionalism encompasses pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies, demonstrated through innovative learning, technological mastery, work commitment, and ongoing professional development. Synergy between the leadership of the madrasah principal and teacher professionalism is a key prerequisite for creating superior graduate quality.

Several empirical studies have shown a relationship between principal/madrasah leadership, teacher professionalism, and educational outcomes. For example, research (Mashuri & Wahyudiati, 2023) showed that principal leadership and teacher professionalism were positively correlated with student learning achievement at the Minhajul Ulum Private Middle School, Pujut District, Central Lombok Regency. Other research (Niron, 2025) found that principal leadership, teacher competence, and organizational commitment together had a significant influence on teacher performance, which is

an important variable in achieving educational quality. In addition, the study (Yusuf, 2023) shows that the leadership of the madrasah principal influences the professionalism of teachers in guiding students, although local contextual factors have not been fully unraveled. Moreover, (Mulyadi, 2023) reported that madrasah principal leadership was positively correlated with teacher performance and student learning quality, but the focus was still on one location or one dominant variable. In addition, research (Zahdi, 2025) confirms that the synergy between principal instructional leadership and teachers' ongoing professional development contributes significantly to improving the quality of learning and student character, although it has not been conducted in a cross-location framework and the context of state Islamic senior high schools. Thus, although these studies confirm the importance of teacher leadership and professionalism, there is still room for research that integrates both variables simultaneously in a cross-location context to explain variations in graduate quality more comprehensively.

However, cross-site research that simultaneously examines the contribution of madrasah principal leadership to teacher professionalism and its implications for graduate quality in public Islamic high schools is still relatively limited, particularly in the context of a specific region such as Lampung Province. Most previous studies tend to focus on one variable separately or are conducted in a single context, thus failing to fully describe the dynamics of the interaction between madrasah principal leadership and teacher professionalism in determining graduate quality. This research gap indicates the absence of a comprehensive study that integrates these two key variables within a holistic analytical framework, particularly with a cross-site approach that allows for comparison of conditions and practices across multiple simultaneously and analysis of the mechanisms of their influence on graduate quality. The novelty of this research lies in its holistic and integrative approach that connects madrasah principal leadership and teacher professionalism as two primary determinants tested simultaneously to explain variations in MAN graduate quality across Lampung Province. Thus, this research is expected to not only provide theoretical contributions to the development of Islamic education management studies, but also practical contributions as a basis for formulating policies for developing madrasah principals and developing teacher professionalism in realizing superior, adaptive, and competitive state madrasah aliyah.

This study aims to comprehensively determine and describe the implementation of madrasah principal leadership in developing teacher professionalism, teacher professionalism in implementing learning and carrying out professional duties, and the quality of graduates at MAN 1 Bandar Lampung,

MAN 1 Pesawaran, and MAN 1 Pringsewu. In addition, this study also aims to identify and analyze various supporting and inhibiting factors in the implementation of madrasah principal leadership and teacher professionalism in an effort to improve the quality of graduates at the three state madrasah aliyah, so that a complete empirical picture is obtained regarding the role of leadership and teacher professionalism in improving the quality of madrasah education.

METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a multi-site research design conducted in three State Islamic Senior High Schools in Lampung Province, namely MAN 1 Bandar Lampung, MAN 1 Pesawaran, and MAN 1 Pringsewu. The selection of research sites was carried out through a purposive sampling technique the consideration that the three madrasas have different characteristics, leadership contexts, and dynamics of teacher professionalism, thus allowing for the acquisition of rich, varied, and in-depth data. This research was conducted in the period from September 2025 to December 2025, which included the pre-field stage, data collection, verification, data analysis, and report preparation. The research subjects were determined by purposive and snowball sampling, including madrasah principals, vice-principals, teachers, education staff, madrasah committees, students, and alumni. The research data sources consisted of primary data obtained directly from the field through interactions with informants and observations of madrasah activities, as well as secondary data sourced from official madrasah documents, archives, academic reports, policies, and various relevant literature sources.

Data collection was conducted through three main techniques: moderate participant observation, semi-structured in-depth interviews, and documentation studies. Observations were used to directly capture the leadership practices of madrasah principals, teacher professionalism, and the dynamics of learning and work culture in the madrasah in a natural setting. In-depth interviews were conducted to explore the experiences, views, and meanings of informants regarding the implementation of teacher leadership and professionalism in improving graduate quality, while documentation was used to strengthen and verify the findings through data triangulation. Data analysis was conducted descriptively and analytically using the Miles and Huberman interactive model, which included data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and verification, both within-site and cross-site analysis. Data validity was maintained through extended observation, researcher diligence, source and technique triangulation, and member checking, so that

the research results have a high level of credibility, consistency, and reliability and can be scientifically accounted for.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Madrasah principal leadership and teacher professionalism are two strategic pillars in improving the quality of graduates of State Islamic Senior High Schools in Lampung Province, particularly at MAN 1 Bandar Lampung, MAN 1 Pesawaran, and MAN 1 Pringsewu. Effective leadership plays a role not only in directing madrasah policies and management but also in building a work culture, academic climate, and a sustainable teacher development system. Meanwhile, teacher professionalism is reflected through pedagogical, professional, personality, and social competencies in the implementation of learning and professional duties. The implementation of teacher leadership and professionalism requires systematic management, starting from planning, implementation, supervision, and evaluation, which is oriented towards the quality of graduates. With different institutional characteristics, resources, and organizational dynamics in each madrasah, madrasah principal leadership and teacher professionalism are key factors that determine the effectiveness of the educational process and the quality of graduates comprehensively.

Table 1. Integration of the Implementation of Madrasah Principal Leadership, Teacher Professionalism, and Graduate Quality at MAN 1 Bandar Lampung, MAN 1 Pesawaran, and MAN 1 Pringsewu

Study Aspects	Indicator	MAN 1 Bandar Lampung	MAN 1 Pesawaran	MAN 1 Pringsewu
Leadership of the Madrasah Principal	Planning	Teacher needs-based planning, internal MGMP, and performance data	Planning focuses on strengthening basic teacher competencies	Innovation-oriented planning for learning and IT
	Organizing	Curriculum development team and senior teachers as mentors	Mentoring new teachers through intensive mentoring	Formation of teacher innovation and collaboration teams
	Implementation	Digital-based training, workshops, and academic supervision	Regular coaching and personal supervision	Innovation training and project-based learning

	Evaluation	Measurable academic supervision and learning reflection	Individual evaluation through class observation	Integrated evaluation with learning innovation
	Leadership Style	Visionary and managerial	Participatory and mentoring	Innovative and adaptive
Teacher Professionalism	Pedagogical Competence	Digital, blended, and interactive learning	Collaborative learning and reinforcement of basic concepts	Project-based learning and creativity
	Professional Competence	Active training, digital literacy, and curriculum innovation	Ongoing mentoring and core competency enhancement	IT-based learning innovation
	Social Competence	Teacher collaboration and student coaching	Religious and social character development	Student leadership and group work
	Personality Competence	Professional discipline and exemplary behavior	Exemplary morals and work ethic	Integrity and responsibility
Graduate Quality	Academic Achievement	Analytical, critical, and academically excellent	Stable mastery of basic concepts	Creative and applicable
	Skills	Digital literacy and critical thinking	Communication and collaboration	Problem-solving and innovation
	Character	Discipline and responsibility	Religious and socially concerned	Leadership and cooperation
	Competitiveness	Ready to compete in college	Adaptive and collaborative	Ready to face global challenges
Related Findings	Main Impact	Strong leadership encourages teacher professionalism and superior graduate quality.	The mentor's leadership strengthens the basic professionalism and character of graduates.	Innovative leadership produces creative teachers and adaptive graduates.

Source: MAN 1 Bandar Lampung, MAN 1 Pesawaran, and MAN 1 Pringsewu, 2025

Implementation of Madrasah Principal Leadership in Developing Teacher Professionalism

The principals of Islamic schools at MAN 1 Bandar Lampung, MAN 1 Pesawaran, and MAN 1 Pringsewu exercise strategic leadership oriented toward improving teacher professionalism. Leadership extends beyond administrative functions to roles as motivators, facilitators, and academic supervisors. The principals actively design sustainable teacher development programs through systematic planning, organization, implementation, and evaluation. Field findings indicate that the principals' leadership contributes significantly to building a professional work culture and

improving the quality of learning.

The planning aspect of teacher professional development demonstrates the strategic role of madrasah principals in formulating programs based on real needs in the field. At MAN 1 Bandar Lampung, planning is carried out in a participatory manner through an internal MGMP (Students' Group Meeting) and regular meetings to map the needs of teachers' pedagogical, professional, and digital literacy competencies based on learning performance data. MAN 1 Pesawaran focuses on planning to strengthen basic teacher competencies and develop mentoring programs for new teachers to enable them to adapt to the madrasah's work culture and established learning standards. Meanwhile, MAN 1 Pringsewu emphasizes planning on developing learning innovations and utilizing information technology in response to the demands of 21st-century learning. These differences in planning focus demonstrate that madrasah principals are able to understand the context and needs of each institution, so that the teacher development programs designed are contextual, adaptive, and quality-oriented.

The organizational aspect reflects the principal's ability to effectively manage human resources to support the implementation of teacher professional development programs. In all three madrasas, the principal established a clear work structure involving the vice principal for curriculum, the MGMP coordinator, and senior teachers as mentors and assistants for other teachers. At MAN 1 Bandar Lampung, the organizational structure focused on strengthening the role of the internal MGMP as a forum for collaboration and sharing of best learning practices. MAN 1 Pesawaran emphasized organization based on intensive mentoring, especially for new teachers, through a structured mentoring system. MAN 1 Pringsewu organized teachers into learning innovation teams and cross-subject collaboration to encourage creativity and innovation in teaching methods. This pattern demonstrates the application of distributive leadership that encourages active teacher involvement and strengthens teamwork in professional development.

The implementation aspect demonstrates the principal's commitment to ensuring that the teacher professional development program runs effectively and sustainably. Program implementation is realized through various activities such as workshops, training, academic supervision, innovative learning training, and classroom practice-based learning reflections. MAN 1 Bandar Lampung excels in its implementation of data-based academic supervision and the use of digital platforms to monitor teacher performance. MAN 1 Pesawaran applies a more personalized implementation approach through routine coaching and direct mentoring by the principal and

senior teachers. Meanwhile, MAN 1 Pringsewu emphasizes the implementation of training in learning innovation, project-based learning, and technology integration in the teaching and learning process. These variations in implementation demonstrate that the principal is capable of implementing instructional leadership that is contextual and responsive to the needs of teachers and students.

Evaluation plays a crucial role in ensuring the effectiveness of teacher professional development and improving the quality of learning. At MAN 1 Bandar Lampung, evaluation is conducted through data-driven, measurable academic supervision, learning reflection, and systematic follow-up of supervision results. MAN 1 Pesawaran implements individual evaluation through classroom observation and reflective dialogue between the principal and teachers, enabling evaluation to serve as a development tool, not merely an assessment. At MAN 1 Pringsewu, evaluation is integrated with the assessment of learning innovation and teacher creativity in classroom management. Evaluation is conducted continuously to identify strengths, weaknesses, and the need for further development. These findings confirm that evaluation oriented towards continuous improvement is key to strengthening teacher professionalism and maintaining the quality of learning in madrasas.

Table 2. Implementation of Madrasah Principal Leadership

Indicator	MAN 1 Bandar Lampung	MAN 1 Pesawaran	MAN 1 Pringsewu	Indicator
Planning	Internal MGMP based on needs	Focus on basic teacher competencies	Innovation & IT learning	Planning
Organizing	Curriculum development team	Mentoring new teachers	Learning innovation team	Organizing
Implementation	Digital training & supervision	Regular coaching	Project & digital learning	Implementation
Evaluation	Data-based supervision	Personal evaluation	Innovation evaluation	Evaluation

Source: MAN 1 Bandar Lampung, MAN 1 Pesawaran, and MAN 1 Pringsewu, 2025

Teacher Professionalism in Implementing Learning and Professional Duties

The research results show that teachers in the three madrasas demonstrate a high level of professionalism and consistency in carrying out teaching and professional duties. Teacher professionalism is reflected in their ability to manage learning, mastery of teaching materials, participation in self-development, and exemplary attitudes and behaviors. Teachers focus not only on student academic achievement but also on character development, social skills, and religious

values.

In terms of pedagogical competence, teachers at MAN 1 Bandar Lampung, MAN 1 Pesawaran, and MAN 1 Pringsewu demonstrated the ability to plan, implement, and evaluate learning systematically and oriented towards student needs. Teachers were able to develop learning tools that aligned with the curriculum, student characteristics, and the demands of 21st-century learning. MAN 1 Bandar Lampung excelled in the implementation of digital-based learning and blended learning that combined face-to-face and online technology. MAN 1 Pesawaran emphasized the reinforcement of basic concepts through collaborative and interactive learning. Meanwhile, MAN 1 Pringsewu developed project-based learning that encouraged active student involvement and creativity. This variety of pedagogical practices demonstrated the teachers' ability to adapt learning strategies to the madrasah context.

In terms of professional competence, teachers demonstrate in-depth mastery of teaching materials and a strong commitment to developing their knowledge and teaching skills. Teachers actively participate in various professional development activities such as training, workshops, MGMP (National Teachers' Groups), seminars, and training, both organized by the madrasah and external parties. At MAN 1 Bandar Lampung, improving professional competence is supported by digital literacy and curriculum innovation. MAN 1 Pesawaran emphasizes improving core competencies through ongoing mentoring, while MAN 1 Pringsewu encourages teachers to develop technology-based and project-based learning innovations. These efforts make learning more effective, contextual, and relevant to students' needs.

In terms of social competence, teachers are able to build harmonious relationships with students, fellow teachers, educational staff, and the surrounding community. Teachers play an active role in creating a collaborative, communicative, and respectful school climate. At MAN 1 Bandar Lampung, social competence is reflected in collaboration between teachers and student development based on academic and non-academic activities. MAN 1 Pesawaran excels in fostering religious character and social awareness in students through intense and humanistic interactions. Meanwhile, MAN 1 Pringsewu develops student leadership and group work through various collaborative activities. These teachers' social skills contribute to the creation of a conducive and inclusive learning environment.

In terms of personality competency, teachers demonstrate exemplary behavior in their attitudes, ethics, and commitment to the profession. They emerge as disciplined, imbued with

integrity, responsible, and consistent in their words and actions. In all three madrasas, teachers serve as role models in instilling moral, spiritual, and work ethic values in students. These personality competencies strengthen teachers' role as character builders and agents of student moral development. These findings confirm that teacher professionalism not only impacts academic achievement but also contributes significantly to the holistic development of character, life skills, and graduate quality.

Table 3. Teacher Professionalism

Dimensions	MAN 1 Bandar Lampung	MAN 1 Pesawaran	MAN 1 Pringsewu	Dimensions
Pedagogy	Digital & blended learning	Collaborative	Project-based	Pedagogy
Professional	Intensive training	Mentoring new teachers	IT Innovation	Professional
Social	Student mentoring	Religious activities	Student collaboration	Social
Personality	Discipline & role model	Religious morals	Integrity	Personality

Source: MAN 1 Bandar Lampung, MAN 1 Pesawaran, and MAN 1 Pringsewu, 2025

Quality of Graduates at MAN 1 Bandar Lampung, MAN 1 Pesawaran, and MAN 1 Pringsewu

The research results show that the quality of graduates from the three madrasas is high, reflecting the leadership success of the principals and the professionalism of the teachers. Graduate quality is measured not only by academic achievement but also by non-academic skills, character, and competitiveness. Graduates demonstrate readiness to continue their education to a higher level and adapt to societal demands.

In terms of academic achievement, graduates of MAN 1 Bandar Lampung, MAN 1 Pesawaran, and MAN 1 Pringsewu demonstrated good learning outcomes and tended to increase from year to year. MAN 1 Bandar Lampung graduates excel in analytical skills, critical thinking, and digital literacy skills as a result of the implementation of technology-based learning. MAN 1 Pesawaran graduates have a strong academic foundation, especially in mastering basic subject concepts, which supports consistent learning outcomes. Meanwhile, MAN 1 Pringsewu graduates demonstrated applicable and contextual academic achievements along with project-based learning. Academic document data shows an increase in learning outcomes as well as student participation and achievement in various academic competitions.

In terms of skills, graduates of the three madrasas demonstrated mastery of skills relevant to the demands of the 21st century. Graduates of MAN 1 Bandar Lampung excelled in digital literacy

and information processing. Graduates of MAN 1 Pesawaran possessed strong communication and collaboration skills, particularly in group work and student organization activities. Graduates of MAN 1 Pringsewu excelled in problem-solving, innovation, and creativity skills developed through project-based and hands-on learning. Mastery of these skills provides essential assets for graduates in facing the challenges of further education and the workplace.

In terms of character, graduates of MAN 1 Bandar Lampung, MAN 1 Pesawaran, and MAN 1 Pringsewu demonstrate discipline, responsibility, integrity, and strong religious values. The inculcation of Islamic values, the exemplary behavior of teachers, and the religious culture of the madrasah contribute to the formation of student character. Graduates demonstrate not only good academic behavior but also positive social attitudes, such as caring, cooperation, and ethical interactions. These character traits are the hallmarks of graduates of state madrasah aliyah and distinguish them from other educational institutions.

In terms of competitiveness, graduates of the three madrasas are prepared to compete in higher education and the workplace. Graduates demonstrate adaptability to change, critical thinking skills, and confidence in facing new challenges. Their 21st-century skills, combined with positive character and religious values, give graduates a competitive advantage. These findings confirm that graduate quality is the result of a strong synergy between the leadership of the madrasah principal, the professionalism of the teachers, and a conducive madrasah culture oriented toward continuous quality improvement.

Table 4. Quality of Graduates

Aspect	MAN 1 Bandar Lampung	MAN 1 Pesawaran	MAN 1 Pringsewu	Aspect
Academic	Analytical & critical	Strong basic concept	Creative & applicable	Academic
Skills	Digital literacy	Communication	Problem solving	Skills
Character	Discipline	Religious	Leadership	Character
Competitiveness	College	Adaptive	Global ready	Competitiveness

Source: MAN 1 Bandar Lampung, MAN 1 Pesawaran, and MAN 1 Pringsewu, 2025

Discussion

The leadership of madrasah principals at MAN 1 Bandar Lampung, MAN 1 Pesawaran, and MAN 1 Pringsewu has been proven to play a strategic role in developing teacher professionalism through systematic planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating functions. This finding is in line with (I. Fauzi et al., 2025) which confirms that the principal's instructional leadership has a

direct influence on improving the quality of learning and the professional capacity of teachers. (Aminah et al., 2025) emphasizes that transformational leadership encourages teachers' commitment to self-development and changes in learning practices. (Andila & Nasution, 2025) views the principal as a key actor in creating an organizational climate that supports improving teacher quality. (Sutisna et al., 2023) added that an effective principal not only performs administrative functions but also acts as a learning leader and teacher professional coach. The findings of this study also reinforce this view (Mulyasa & Aksara, 2021), which states that a visionary madrasa principal is able to foster a professional work culture. (Ridani & Sudadi, 2025) emphasized that strong educational leadership has direct implications for improving teacher performance. (Shobri, 2025) highlights the importance of the role of madrasah principals as drivers of change in improving the quality of Islamic education. Thus, the results of this study reinforce previous findings that madrasah principals function as strategic agents of change in improving teacher professionalism.

In terms of planning and organization, the variety of leadership strategies in the three madrasas indicates that effective leadership is contextual and adaptive. The practice of participatory planning through the MGMP at MAN 1 Bandar Lampung reflects the views of (Damayanti & Ridwan, 2024), which emphasizes the importance of teacher involvement in the educational change process. The focus on strengthening basic competencies and mentoring new teachers at MAN 1 Pesawaran is in line with Gusli (2024), who states that professional community-based leadership can improve teacher solidarity and performance. The emphasis on innovation and learning technology at MAN 1 Pringsewu supports this idea. (Mesiono et al., 2024) that educational leadership must be responsive to the dynamics of changing times. (Choirunisa & Lae, 2025) emphasized that team-based organization is a primary prerequisite in educational quality management. (Kurniawan, 2025) added that the distribution of leadership and teacher empowerment positively impacted work motivation and the effectiveness of school organizations. Thus, the findings of this study confirm that the success of a madrasah principal's leadership is largely determined by their ability to understand the institution's needs and manage resources collaboratively.

In the implementation and evaluation dimensions, the madrasah principals in the three research locations demonstrated active involvement in academic supervision and teacher professional development. (Gumilar & Rosid, 2024) emphasized that the direct involvement of school leaders in supervising learning has a significant influence on improving student learning outcomes. (Carolina, 2025) views academic supervision as the core of effective instructional

leadership. (Prisilia et al., 2025) emphasized that continuous evaluation based on teacher reflection can improve the quality of learning practices. The variation in supervisory practices across the three madrasas demonstrates leadership flexibility in responding to contextual needs. (Agustriani, 2023) emphasized that systematic academic evaluation is an important instrument in controlling the quality of education. (Mahmudah et al., 2025) places continuous evaluation as the primary foundation of continuous improvement-based quality management. Thus, the results of this study reinforce the concept of continuous improvement in madrasah educational leadership.

The professionalism of teachers reflected in pedagogical, professional, social, and personality competencies in the three madrasas is in line with the findings (Alfaiz, 2024), which state that teacher quality is the main determining factor in educational success. (WARDOYO et al., 2023) emphasized that professional teachers have a direct influence on improving the quality of graduates and the competitiveness of education. (Pertiwi et al., 2025) views teacher professionalism as a reflective practice that continues to develop as the learning context changes. (Sutrisno et al., 2024) emphasizes the importance of continuous development of teacher competencies through training and practical reflection. (Nordian, 2024) shows that innovative teachers are able to improve students' academic achievement and character. (Putri et al., 2024) emphasizes that teacher professionalism is a prerequisite for creating quality learning. The findings of this study extend previous studies by showing that teacher professionalism is strongly influenced by the leadership of the madrasah principal and the madrasah's organizational culture.

The high quality of graduates at MAN 1 Bandar Lampung, MAN 1 Pesawaran, and MAN 1 Pringsewu reflects the synergistic results between the leadership of madrasah principals and teacher professionalism. This is in line with the research of Lickona (2022) that the quality of graduates must be understood holistically, including academic aspects, character, and social responsibility. (Zulaikah et al., 2024) view the quality of graduates as the result of an education system that is oriented towards the development of the whole person. (Tilaar, 2003) emphasizes that quality education not only produces intelligent graduates, but also those with character and competitiveness. (Suryanto et al., 2025) shows that strong educational leadership contributes significantly to graduates' readiness to face global challenges. (Wijaya, 2023) emphasized that teacher professionalism is a key factor in the formation of the character and competence of graduates. (M. Fauzi, 2025) concluded that schools and madrasas with effective educational management tend to produce adaptive and competitive graduates. Thus, the results of this study

confirm that graduate quality is an indicator of the success of comprehensive and sustainable madrasah educational management.

Overall, compared to approximately 20 relevant studies, this study makes an important contribution because it integrates three main aspects of madrasah principal leadership, teacher professionalism, and graduate quality in one cross-site study in the context of State Madrasah Aliyah. Most previous studies tend to examine the relationship between the two variables partially, while this study demonstrates a causal and synergistic relationship between the three variables contextually and empirically. These findings confirm that adaptive madrasah principal leadership and consistent teacher professionalism are the main foundations for improving graduate quality. Thus, this study not only strengthens the theory of leadership and teacher professionalism but also offers a conceptual model for improving graduate quality based on madrasah leadership that is relevant for the development of Islamic education policies and practices in Indonesia.

This study demonstrates novelty through an integrative and contextual approach in examining the simultaneous role of madrasah principal leadership and teacher professionalism in improving graduate quality. The research is situated in the local context of State Madrasahs in Lampung Province, enabling a nuanced understanding of leadership practices, madrasah culture, and teacher professionalism that reflect regional characteristics and real field conditions. In addition, graduate quality is measured holistically, encompassing not only academic achievement but also character, spirituality, life skills, and graduate competitiveness. The study is further strengthened by the formulation of applicable strategies that can serve as practical references for madrasah principals and teachers in developing adaptive and high-quality madrasah education grounded in Islamic values.

Despite its integrative and holistic contribution, this study has several limitations. The research scope is confined to three State of Madrasah Aliyah: MAN 1 Bandar Lampung, MAN 1 Pesawaran, and MAN 1 Pringsewu, so the findings cannot be generalized to madrasahs with different characteristics. The qualitative approach also makes the results highly dependent on the depth of observations, interviews, and documentation, with potential subjectivity despite data triangulation. Moreover, the study does not quantitatively measure the strength of relationships between variables, focusing instead on processes and dynamics. Therefore, future research is recommended to expand research locations, involve more diverse subjects, apply mixed-method approaches, and empirically test the proposed integrative model to strengthen its theoretical and

practical contributions.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study indicate that the implementation of madrasah principal leadership and teacher professionalism at MAN 1 Bandar Lampung, MAN 1 Pesawaran, and MAN 1 Pringsewu is effective, although with variations in strategies and development focuses according to the characteristics of each madrasah. Madrasah principals play a strategic role in planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating teacher professionalism development programs through academic supervision, ongoing coaching, empowering internal MGMPs, and creating a conducive work climate. Teacher professionalism is reflected through good pedagogical, professional, social, and personality competencies, which are manifested in innovative learning, mastery of material, utilization of technology, character development, and exemplary attitudes. The synergy between madrasah principal leadership and teacher professionalism has a positive impact on the quality of graduates, which is not only seen from academic achievements, but also from non-academic skills, religious character, creativity, and graduate competitiveness in continuing education and adapting to society. Thus, the quality of graduates at the three madrasahs is the result of a visionary leadership process, consistent teacher professionalism, and a madrasah culture that supports holistic learning.

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