

Leadership Practices in Shaping Ma'had-Based Character Education in Islamic Secondary Schooling

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A B S T R A C T

Leadership is a central determinant of institutional effectiveness in Islamic education, particularly in contexts that integrate residential and character-based learning systems. However, existing studies on madrasah leadership remain largely descriptive and provide limited insight into how leadership practices shape Ma'had-based educational environments. This study addresses this gap by examining leadership practices in developing Ma'had-based character education at an Islamic secondary school in Indonesia. Using a qualitative approach, data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation involving school leaders, educators, and institutional stakeholders. Data validity was ensured through triangulation of sources and methods. The findings indicate that Ma'had development is shaped through an integrated set of leadership practices combining collaborative planning, humanistic engagement, and value-oriented behavioral formation. Leadership operates through persuasive interaction, role modelling, and the structuring of religious and disciplinary activities, forming a coherent system that connects institutional management with students' spiritual and character development. Supporting factors include leadership commitment, student engagement, and institutional collaboration, while constraints arise from limited infrastructure and human resources affecting program consistency. This study contributes by articulating a context-sensitive model of leadership practices that integrates organizational processes and character formation within Ma'had-based education. The findings highlight the importance of adaptive and value-driven leadership in sustaining holistic student development across Islamic schooling contexts.

Keywords: madrasah principal strategy, student ma'had, character development.



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Introduction

Madrasah is a formal educational institution under the auspices of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, providing general education with Islamic characteristics (Junaris, 2023). Madrasahs play a significant role in maintaining and preserving the tradition of Islamic knowledge (Maryani et al., 2023). The

presence of these madrasahs strengthens the educational network among Muslims, considering that previously educational activities largely took place in mosques and dar al-khuttab (basic learning centers) (Kurniawan et al., 2023). According to Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System, Article 1, "Education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning environment and learning process in which students actively develop their potential to possess spiritual religious strength, self control, personality, intelligence, noble character, as well as skills necessary for themselves, society, the nation, and the state (Wibowo & Subhan, 2020).

In this context, the principal of a madrasah serves as the school leader who is fully responsible for planning all learning activities within the school. The ability and willingness to develop will grow when the principal demonstrates openness and the capacity to receive and utilize various resources that support the realization of changes in school management (Muflihah & Haqiqi, 2019). In performing this role, the principal needs to execute administrative tasks operationally through appropriate approaches, such as trait based, behavioral, or situational approaches, depending on the conditions faced (Alhabsyi et al., 2022). The principal must possess sharp analytical skills to address various educational problems, sensitivity in understanding prevailing conditions, and competence in offering precise and constructive solutions (Kadarsih et al., 2020).

The principal's strategy is crucial in determining the direction of the madrasah. The success of a school/madrasah in becoming an effective, high quality, and sought after institution is greatly influenced by the role of its principal (Thoha, 2018). In this regard, the principal is expected not only to act as a manager but also as an inspirator and facilitator capable of maintaining collegial spirit and empowering all school elements towards educational goals focused on student advancement (Nabila & Fathurroman, 2022). The madrasah principal is responsible for addressing various difficulties and challenges present in the school (Tajudin & Aprilianto, 2020). Therefore, they must have integrity, managerial skills, and strong leadership competence (Qistiyah & Karwanto, 2020).

Boarding schools, often referred to as boarding schools, began to emerge and develop in Indonesia in the mid-1990s. Ma'had, an Arabic term, generally refers to pesantren. Pesantren itself is a form of traditional educational institution where students live together in a dormitory environment to acquire knowledge (Dewi, 2016). Today, boarding schools are recognized as educational institutions that provide student discipline while prioritizing intellectual and spiritual development. Additionally, the education system in boarding schools is known for its high discipline and strict coaching standards (Wawan et al., 2018). One of the main objectives of education in boarding schools is to instill discipline as well as serve as a platform for enhanced spiritual education for students.

Dormitories are a type of accommodation intended for members or participants of a group, most commonly school students. Dormitories are buildings with rooms that can accommodate multiple occupants. Residents stay for longer periods compared to other types of lodging. Several reasons for choosing to live in a dormitory include long distances from home to school, a strong desire to study, and economic considerations, as living in a dormitory is often considered more cost-effective (Jubaedah et al., 2024). The independent curriculum is also applied in the boarding school environment because it provides flexibility and a deep learning approach (Sudrajat et al., 2019). Broadly speaking, the curriculum encompasses all activities that occur within the learning process at the school or madrasah (Huda & Musyarrof, 2023). This is essential to achieve and maintain a conducive environment for effective learning outcomes (Mahfud et al., 2024).

The leadership of the madrasah principal in developing the dormitory is critical to ensuring that the dormitory environment becomes conducive to the cultivation of Islamic values such as integrity, accountability, discipline, ukhuwah Islamiyah, and regular worship. To build a strong religious atmosphere in students' daily lives, the principal can create religious programs, habituate worship practices, and strengthen spiritual traditions (Hidayat et al., 2024). Moreover, the principal initiates the formation of learning evaluation teams, optimizes the use of learning time, and actively fosters educators, education staff, and students (Zahroh, 2013). Thus, the development of student ma'had (dormitory) is inseparable from the role and strategies of a visionary and inspiring madrasah principal who demonstrates a high commitment to the quality of education based on Islamic values (Ayyubi et al., 2024).

One form of educational development in madrasahs is the Ma'had program (student dormitory), which functions as a means of character building and strengthening Islamic values through habituation of religious activities such as congregational prayers, Islamic studies (kitab studies), Qur'an learning, and language development. The Ma'had does not only serve as a residence for students, but also as a center for Islamic character formation that is integrated with the madrasah education system. However, in practice, the management of Ma'had still faces various challenges, such as limited human resources, inadequate infrastructure, and the effectiveness of program supervision.

Previous studies have discussed the role of madrasah principals in improving educational quality and student character development. However, most studies still focus on general aspects of educational management and have not deeply explored the integration of madrasah principal leadership with Ma'had program management in the context of Islamic character formation. Specifically, there is still limited research that examines the leadership strategies of madrasah principals in

developing Ma'had as an integrated system of character building within the madrasah education framework.

Based on these conditions, this study aims to describe the leadership strategies of the madrasah principal in developing the student Ma'had at MAN 1 Pamekasan, as well as to identify the supporting and inhibiting factors in its implementation. This research is expected to contribute academically to the development of Islamic educational leadership studies, particularly in the management of Ma'had as an integral part of the madrasah education system.

Research Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with a field research design that is descriptive in nature to examine the leadership strategies of the madrasah principal in the development of the Ma'had at MAN 1 Pamekasan. The qualitative approach in this study refers to a research strategy that focuses on exploring meanings, understanding, and describing phenomena in depth within their natural context (Sidiq & Choiri, 2019).

In its implementation, this study emphasizes field investigation through direct observation of Ma'had activities, interviews with key informants, and documentation of relevant data within the madrasah. This approach is used to gain an in-depth understanding of the principal's leadership practices in managing and developing the Ma'had as part of the madrasah education system.

This study focuses on the leadership strategies of the madrasah principal in developing the Ma'had at MAN 1 Pamekasan. In its implementation, the data obtained from the field were analyzed without using statistical procedures or numerical calculations. The research data were collected directly through interviews with the madrasah principal and Ma'had administrators, observations of Ma'had activities, and documentation of various Ma'had development programs at MAN 1 Pamekasan. The findings are then presented in a narrative description supported by direct quotations from informants and field observations to comprehensively illustrate the principal's strategies in developing the Ma'had (Abdussamad, 2021).

The research was conducted at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) 1 Pamekasan, located at Jl. Lawangan Daya II No.06, Tebana, Pademawu District, Pamekasan Regency, East Java. MAN 1 Pamekasan has a religious educational environment that supports the spiritual development of students through an integrated ma'had program within the school's life. This location was chosen due to its uniqueness in managing spiritual traditions in a state madrasah environment, which is relevant to the research focus. The researcher accessed the location by obtaining official permission and establishing communication with the madrasah authorities in a persuasive and procedural manner.

In this study, data sources refer to parties or materials that can provide relevant information to address the research focus. Based on the type of data collected, data sources are divided into two categories: Primary data sources. Primary data are the main data obtained directly from parties involved in the development of the ma'had at MAN 1 Pamekasan. In this context, primary data were collected through direct interviews, observation within the ma'had environment, and available documentation at the madrasah. Parties serving as primary data sources include the madrasah principal as the central figure in formulating and implementing ma'had development strategies, the head of the ma'had or ma'had caretaker involved in daily activities, santri (students residing in the ma'had) as subjects who directly experience the ma'had development process, and boarding school supervisors or educators engaged in ma'had activities. Secondary data sources are supporting data obtained from various pre existing documents or references. These data are used to reinforce findings from primary data and provide a broader perspective on the research object. Secondary data sources in this study include school structure, documents, photographs, and so forth (Siyoto & Sodik, 2015).

The data collection procedure involves systematic steps following specific standards to obtain the necessary data. In this qualitative study, data collection was conducted intensively and continuously to ensure that the obtained data or documents were complete and valid. The researcher employed non participant observation, in which the researcher acts solely as an independent observer without directly participating in ma'had (dormitory) activities at MAN 1 Pamekasan. The interviews conducted were unstructured to obtain coherent and in depth data with additional explanations. Documentation utilized in this research includes written documents such as madrasah profiles, Ma'had organizational structures, Ma'had work programs, and photographs of Ma'had activities related to the development of students' religious spirituality. Furthermore, the researcher documented moments during interviews with the principal, Ma'had caretakers, and dormitory students (santri). These documents were used as supporting materials to examine, interpret, and strengthen the field data findings.

After collecting data from the field through observation, interviews, and documentation, the researcher conducted qualitative data analysis. The analysis aims to organize, interpret, and present data to gain an in depth understanding of ma'had development at MAN 1 Pamekasan. In this study, the researcher referred to the Miles and Huberman model, which divides the data analysis process into three main stages (Harahap, 2020): data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

In this study, data analysis was conducted qualitatively through three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. In the data reduction stage, the researcher selected and focused on data from interviews,

observations, and documentation related to the Ma'had development strategy at MAN 1 Pamekasan. Next, the data were presented narratively to describe the role of the madrasah principal, Ma'had activities, and supporting documentation such as work programs and organizational structures. The final stage involved drawing conclusions based on emerging patterns in the field and verifying them through source and technique triangulation, ensuring the validity and reliability of the research findings.

Through these steps, the researcher ensures that the findings are valid, consistent, and authentically reflect the phenomenon of ma'had development. The analysis results are then presented in a comprehensive descriptive narrative, emphasizing an in depth understanding of the principal's strategies in developing the ma'had as well as the real experiences of students in the dormitory.

Results and Discussion

Objectives of Developing the Student Ma'had (Dormitory) at MAN 1 Pamekasan

Ma'had is an educational facility that provides boarding accommodations for students, with an Islamic oriented learning model designed to achieve educational objectives effectively and produce a high quality Ma'had in terms of religious aspects. The Ma'had (dormitory) can be understood as a model of residential education within a school environment over a specific period, where all student activities are structured between learning activities and daily life (Maimun et al., 2021).

As a residential educational institution, the development of the Ma'had is crucial to ensure that its functions and objectives operate optimally. Initiating Ma'had development will produce students with noble character, who can practice Islam properly and refrain from actions that lead to sin (Alifiyah, 2023). Through effective management, the Ma'had becomes a space for character formation and directed spiritual development, thereby contributing positively to educational success.

The existence of Ma'had at MAN 1 Pamekasan is not only intended as a place for students to live, but also has a strategic function in supporting the implementation of education, particularly in character building and strengthening students' Islamic values. This Ma'had program is part of the madrasah principal's strategy in responding to students' needs, especially those coming from outside the region who face housing constraints. Through the Ma'had development policy, the principal provides a solution so that students can continue their education without being burdened by high additional costs, while also obtaining a more conducive and religious learning environment. This is also supported by an interview with No'am Afandi, who stated that:

“Ma’had is designed as a means of development that is integrated with madrasah activities, such as habituation of worship, discipline, and strengthening students’ spirituality. Inside the Ma’had, students do not only get accommodation, but also experience more structured education in an intensive religious atmosphere”

In line with this KH. Akhmad Maimun, as the Vice Principal for Ma’had, stated that:

“The strategic steps emphasize a memorization system, submission (depositing memorization), and the importance of achieving targets upon graduation. Later, students can demonstrate and take part in graduation ceremonies”

These statements indicate that development within the Ma’had environment is not merely routine, but is designed with clear achievement targets and a continuous evaluation system. This strengthens the view that Ma’had at MAN 1 Pamekasan is an integral part of the madrasah education system oriented toward character formation and the achievement of students’ spiritual competencies in a structured manner. As stated by Siregar in Surawan and Rahamat Tawakkal Sobari, educational institutions are strategic instruments in transforming values and culture in society, and Islamic educational institutions significantly contribute to the development of the teachings of the Qur’an and Hadith (Surawan & Sobari, 2022).

Moreover, the Ma’had functions not only as a residential facility but also as a center for character development and the reinforcement of Islamic traditions. Structured programs such as congregational prayers, kitab studies, Qur’an learning, and language tutoring demonstrate that life in the Ma’had is not solely about providing lodging but also serves as a center for character building and student discipline. Values taught and consistently practiced in daily life within the Ma’had eventually become ingrained in the students. Continuous repetition coupled with discipline habituates students to tangible disciplined behavior, demonstrating that education has successfully shaped their character and personality (Triyono, 2019). Thus, the presence of the Ma’had at MAN 1 Pamekasan plays a dual role as both a residential facility and a medium for character education, significantly contributing to the success of students in both academic and social aspects.

These findings align with the theoretical review presented in Chapter II, which explains that the Ma’had is an integral part of the Islamic education system, functioning as a means for developing students’ mental, spiritual, and moral capacities. From an Islamic education perspective, the Ma’had serves as an educational environment that enables the continuous internalization of Islamic values through habituation and exemplary behavior. Accordingly, the objectives of

developing the Ma'had at MAN 1 Pamekasan are consistent with the theory that dormitories are an effective medium for shaping students' religious character and noble conduct.

These findings align with the concept of Islamic boarding school education proposed by Maimun et al. (2021), which explains that Ma'had functions as an integrated educational system combining structured learning activities with students' daily life experiences to support holistic character development. This is also supported by Alifiyah (2023) and Triyono (2019), who emphasize that Ma'had serves as a medium for shaping students' religious character through habituation, discipline, and continuous practice.

Thus, the existence of Ma'had at MAN 1 Pamekasan does not only function as a place for students to live, but has also developed into an integrated educational system that is intentionally designed to shape character, discipline, and strengthen Islamic values. Through various structured and continuous development programs, the Ma'had is able to create a conducive learning environment for students' spiritual and social development. This condition shows that the Ma'had makes a significant contribution to supporting students' success, not only in academic aspects, but also in forming personality and enhancing their ability to interact in social life based on Islamic values.

The Principal's Strategy in Developing the Student Ma'had (Dormitory) at MAN 1 Pamekasan

The results of the study show that the madrasah principal's strategy in developing the Ma'had at MAN 1 Pamekasan is carried out through structured program planning based on the needs of the students. This is in line with what was stated by No'man Afandi, as the school principal, who said:

"Regarding the strategy, first we bring in tahfiz teachers. Second, the tahfiz teachers or mentors are given a schedule to enter classes according to the timetable we have set. Third, the mentors or tahfiz teachers create a book or achievement sheet for students. In this way, it can be known up to which surah or verses the students have memorized. After memorizing several surahs, there is repetition or what is called taqrir. After that, students are displayed or there is a demonstration or, after everything is completed"

In line with this, the Vice Principal for Ma'had KH. Akhmad Maimun, stated:

"The main thing is the target. The first is the memorization target. Within three years, students must memorize. So at each grade level grade X, XI, and XII there are specific targets. Because munjiyat consists of seven surahs, and the last surah, which is part of Juz 30, has already been memorized at the elementary level, each year students must memorize at least two surahs. Although in practice, many students are able to memorize munjiyat within one year. That is the first target. The second is clear strategy design for

memorization, because not all students have interest and talent in memorization. Therefore, strategies must be adjusted so that the targets can be achieved. The third is support for the program by providing special time for mentors to guide students in memorizing tahfiz munjiyat. The fourth is providing a munjiyat demonstration program to further motivate students to memorize”

Overall, these statements indicate that the Ma'had development strategy is implemented through clear target setting, structured mentoring, systematic evaluation, and motivational programs. This reflects a well-planned, goal-oriented approach to strengthening students' memorization abilities and spiritual development. This can be seen in the following table.

Table 1. Summary of Interview Results on the Ma'had Development Strategy

No.	Informant	Role	Focus of Statement	Main Findings
1	No'man Afandi	Principal of Madrasah	Integration of Ma'had with madrasah activities	Ma'had is designed as a means of student development that integrates worship habituation, discipline, and spiritual strengthening. It provides not only accommodation but also structured religious education in an intensive Islamic environment.
2	KH. Akhmad Maimun	Ma'had Supervisor	Memorization strategy implementation	Each grade level has specific memorization targets. Strategic planning is applied to ensure all students achieve the required targets, supported by guidance and structured mentoring.
3	Roby (siswa kelas XI)	Ma'had Residents	Learning experience and daily activities	Students experience a structured religious environment that includes daily worship routines, Qur'an memorization, and discipline training. The Ma'had environment helps them improve both religious understanding and personal discipline.

Strategy serves as the foundational framework that the madrasah principal must possess to achieve educational objectives. The success of any program greatly depends on the accuracy of the strategies designed and implemented. Without a clear and directed strategy, all efforts will proceed without direction and will fail to produce meaningful change. Thus, strategy becomes a key component in determining policy direction and ensuring that activities are conducted according to objectives, enabling established goals to be achieved effectively (Gunawan & Fitriani, 2021). The madrasah principal plays a central role in designing strategies focused on cultivating a competitive culture within the madrasah environment. Through proper planning and the application of discipline values, an environment open to change can be fostered (Nawawi, 2021). In the context of the Ma'had at MAN 1 Pamekasan, the principal's role is highly central in designing Ma'had development strategies through the preparation of structured and well planned religious programs.

Research findings indicate that the principal, together with the Ma'had management team, implements program planning strategies collaboratively. Planning involves the process of determining objectives, strategies, methods, and success indicators in order to ensure that predetermined goals are achieved. Planning is carried out through a series of processes used to prepare decisions regarding what is to be accomplished and the steps necessary to achieve it (Nuryasin & Mitrohardjono, 2019). The planning strategy designed by the principal and the Ma'had management team begins with evaluating the previous year's programs and formulating a list of activities and program objectives. The planning and strengthening of these programs are expected to create a conducive and directed learning atmosphere, thereby supporting the reinforcement of students' religious character. As stated by Muzhari and Sigit Priyo Sebodo, the initial stage of any management process is planning, which is crucial for executing activities properly and effectively, making structured planning essential (Muzhari & Sebodo, 2020).

In addition, the principal also applies strategies for character building and discipline through a humanistic approach, which is a hallmark of the Ma'had at MAN 1 Pamekasan. The humanistic approach is closely related to the development of positive emotions within the affective domain. This approach includes skills in establishing and maintaining good relationships with others, fostering mutual trust, and promoting openness. The humanistic approach also seeks to create learning processes that assist students in developing their potential broadly without pressure. It not only nurtures intellectual intelligence but also fosters emotional closeness with students (Kurdi, 2018).

These strategies align with the theoretical review in Chapter II, which emphasizes that the madrasah principal has managerial functions encompassing planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating educational programs. In the context of Ma'had development, collaborative program planning reflects the principal's managerial competence in empowering human resources and fostering harmonious cooperation. This is consistent with the theory that the success of an educational program is heavily influenced by the principal's ability to manage and coordinate all institutional components.

Furthermore, discipline reinforcement at the Ma'had of MAN 1 Pamekasan is implemented through persuasive and humanistic approaches rather than coercion. This strategy corresponds with leadership theories that describe the madrasah principal as a motivator, highlighting the importance of modeling, guidance, and motivation in shaping student behavior. The principal's and caretakers' exemplification in performing worship and religious activities is a key factor in nurturing students' religious awareness, as educational leaders are expected to serve as real life role models for the members of the institution they lead.

The findings of the study indicate that this strategy is effective in building student discipline and responsibility because students feel valued, enabling emotional closeness and easier guidance. This is consistent with the role of the principal in cultivating a competitive culture through values of discipline and gentleness to foster positive change. The humanistic approach becomes a central factor in successful character formation as it provides a space for reinforcing religious values through gentleness and exemplary behavior.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Implementation of the Madrasah Principal's Strategy in Developing the Student Ma'had (Dormitory) at MAN 1 Pamekasan

In the process of developing the Ma'had at MAN 1 Pamekasan, there are several factors that serve as both supporting and inhibiting elements for the implementation of the program. Supporting factors are elements that facilitate and ensure the success of a program. The supporting factors for the successful development of the Ma'had at MAN 1 Pamekasan are as follows:

Leadership and Support of the Madrasah Principal

Leadership is a crucial aspect that a madrasah principal must possess. The principal utilizes their leadership to direct, motivate, and mobilize all elements involved in a program (Minsih et al., 2019). The principal is directly involved in the development of the Ma'had at MAN 1 Pamekasan. The active involvement of the principal in providing guidance and supervision of programs has proven to be a key foundation for the success of Ma'had development. Strong leadership ensures that Ma'had programs run in a structured manner in line with the madrasah's educational vision.

The head of the madrasah stated that support from all parties has a very significant influence on the success of the Ma'had, including all elements within the madrasah, the high motivation of students, and the strong teamwork among the administrators in developing the Ma'had at MAN 1 Pamekasan. The principal explained that:

“The most important thing is the support from all parties, including teachers, Ma'had administrators, students, and parents. If everyone has the same spirit, the Ma'had program can run well. I am also grateful that the students are very enthusiastic in participating in the activities at the Ma'had. Alhamdulillah, they enjoy all the programs here. And of course, the support from the Ma'had management team is also important; their communication is good, and they help each other in making the Ma'had develop better in the future”

This statement shows that the main supporting factor in the development of Ma'had at MAN 1 Pamekasan is the strong support from all involved elements. Synergy, high enthusiasm, and good cooperation among the management team are key factors that drive the continuity and optimal development of the Ma'had program.

In line with this, Mr. KH. Akhmad Mainum, M.Pd.I as the Ma'had supervisor also expressed a similar view that the support of the madrasah principal is a major factor in the success of Ma'had development. He stated:

“For me as part of the management team, the principal is very supportive. He often comes directly to give guidance and motivation, which becomes a great encouragement for us. The students here are also enthusiastic in participating in all programs, and their parents also support us. In fact, some parents even contribute facilities such as cupboards and brooms.”

This statement strengthens the view that the success of Ma'had development is not only determined by internal madrasah factors but also by the active participation of students and the support of parents, who directly contribute to facilities and program sustainability.

Similarly, Arju Rohmatan Roby, a Grade XI student living in the Ma'had, stated that a comfortable environment is one of the main factors that makes students feel at home in the Ma'had:

“What makes me comfortable here is the atmosphere of the Ma'had. My friends are nice, we help each other, the supervisors are patient with us even when we misbehave, and the principal often gives motivation during Ma'had events. The facilities are also sufficient, and the rooms are better than before, so we feel more comfortable staying here.”

Based on the student's statement, it can be seen that togetherness, support from supervisors, attention from the principal, and improved facilities are important factors that contribute to students' comfort in participating in Ma'had activities.

Overall, the interview results from the three informants show that the supporting factors for the development of Ma'had at MAN 1 Pamekasan rely on the cooperation of all madrasah elements, including the support of the principal, student enthusiasm, the role of administrators, and parental support in providing facilities. This synergy becomes the main factor driving the success and sustainability of the Ma'had program.

These findings are also strengthened by field observations conducted by the researcher on October 18, 2025, at MAN 1 Pamekasan Ma'had. At that time, the principal was present in the mosque courtyard to provide guidance and motivation to the students. The activity took place in an orderly and family-like atmosphere, where students sat in a circle attentively listening to the guidance. The principal also delivered messages in a relaxed manner, accompanied by light jokes, creating a close and friendly atmosphere between the leader and the students.

In addition, these findings are supported by documentation of the activity, which shows the direct involvement of the principal in motivating students as well as the close interaction between the principal, administrators, and students within the Ma'had environment.

Figure 1. Principal's Advice to Ma'had Students



The image shows the madrasah principal directly providing guidance and motivation to the Ma'had students at MAN 1 Pamekasan in a friendly and conducive atmosphere. This activity reflects an active, humanistic, and participatory leadership role in supporting the development of the Ma'had, while also strengthening character development, discipline, and Islamic values among the students through direct interaction between the principal and the learners.

Student enthusiasm is a form of emotional awareness that arises from positive interactions between individuals. This spirit functions like psychological energy that can flow and influence others (Suciati, 2018). Research findings indicate a very high level of enthusiasm among students in participating in various Ma'had activities. Their motivation to comply with rules and carry out routine activities becomes an important driving factor. This positive energy supports the successful implementation of development programs and contributes to achieving the goals of character and spiritual formation of students in the Ma'had. Furthermore, the madrasah institution must remain open to progress and act as a pioneer in fostering tolerance and strengthening national unity (Kultsum et al., 2022).

Role of Teachers and Ma'had Administrators

The role of teachers and mentors in the Ma'had environment goes beyond teaching; they also act as facilitators of learning and guidance, striving to instill Islamic values through various religious programs and character development activities (Usman & Maryam, 2021). Research findings show that the active involvement of teachers and mentors is a significant supporting factor in Ma'had development. Their participation in designing, implementing, and supervising activities ensures that Ma'had programs run more effectively and in balance with the regular madrasah education. This aligns with the findings of Wayudin et al., which highlight that as Indonesia continues to develop, the government needs to prioritize the expansion of madrasahs, increase the number of qualified teachers, and support the growth of student enrollment to achieve national education goals (Wahyudin et al., 2024).

The inhibiting factors in the development of the Ma'had at MAN 1 Pamekasan are as follows:

Limited Facilities and Infrastructure

Facility limitations are a common challenge faced by many institutions. The absence of proper planning for construction and maintenance leads to suboptimal use of facilities. Improving and adding facilities is an urgent necessity to ensure the learning process runs effectively (Nurharirah & Effane, 2022). Research findings show that the Ma'had at MAN 1 Pamekasan experiences obstacles regarding facilities and infrastructure. The annual increase in the number of students causes the existing facilities to be inadequate. Dormitory rooms, bathrooms, and study spaces become crowded, which reduces student comfort and the effectiveness of their learning.

Insufficient Administrators and Staff with Multiple Responsibilities

In pesantren management, it is explained that a shortage of administrators becomes a challenge in delivering education. If the number of staff is not proportional to the workload and the number of students, the quality of guidance

often declines (Kasir, 2024). The study found a limited number of administrators and staff in the Ma'had. Responsibilities for student guidance and supervision become less optimal, and the implementation of religious programs does not always run according to plan.

These findings align with theoretical studies that state the success of educational programs is strongly influenced by human resource support and a conducive organizational climate. The madrasah principal, as a leader, plays a critical role in creating a collaborative and religious work environment so that all parties feel a shared responsibility for the continuity of Ma'had programs. On the other hand, this study also identifies inhibiting factors, namely the limitations of Ma'had facilities and infrastructure, as well as the shortage of administrators, which impact the supervision and implementation of guidance activities. These obstacles are consistent with educational management theory, which asserts that limitations in physical and human resources can affect the effectiveness of program implementation. Therefore, Ma'had development requires further planning and continuous policy support to minimize these obstacles.

Table 2. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Development of Ma'had at MAN 1 Pamekasan

No.	Category	Factors	Informant	Key Findings
1	Supporting Factor	Leadership and support of the madrasah principal	Principal	Ma'had is designed as an integrated development system that combines worship habituation, discipline, and spiritual strengthening.
2	Supporting Factor	Role of teachers and Ma'had administrators	Teachers / Ma'had supervisors	Teachers and supervisors actively guide, monitor, and evaluate student activities to ensure program implementation runs effectively.
3	Supporting Factor	Student enthusiasm	Students	Students show high motivation and discipline in participating in daily Ma'had activities such as worship, Qur'an memorization, and discipline training.
4	Inhibiting Factor	Limited facilities and infrastructure	Ma'had management	Increasing number of students causes overcrowding in

5	Inhibiting Factor	Limited administrators and multiple responsibilities	Ma'had staff	dormitory rooms, bathrooms, and study areas, reducing comfort and effectiveness. Lack of human resources causes less optimal supervision and some programs cannot be implemented effectively.
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Based on Table 1, it can be concluded that the development of the Ma'had at MAN 1 Pamekasan is influenced by supporting factors in the form of the madrasah principal's active leadership in directing and integrating development programs, the high enthusiasm of students in participating in Ma'had activities, and the role of teachers and administrators who are directly involved in mentoring and supervising activities. Meanwhile, the inhibiting factors found in the field include limited facilities and infrastructure that are not proportional to the continuously increasing number of students, as well as a limited number of administrators, which leads to multiple job responsibilities and results in suboptimal program implementation. To address these obstacles, the madrasah needs to gradually increase and optimize the Ma'had facilities and infrastructure. In addition, it is necessary to add administrative staff or implement a more effective division of duties so that the implementation of the development program can run more optimally.

Conclusion

This study found that the development of Ma'had at MAN 1 Pamekasan is implemented through the madrasah principal's strategies, which include systematic program planning, collaborative implementation, and a humanistic approach to character development. The Ma'had functions not only as a place of residence but also as a center for spiritual and character development through programs of worship, classical Islamic studies (kitab), Qur'an learning, and habituation of discipline. The success of this program is supported by the leadership of the madrasah principal, student enthusiasm, the role of administrators and teachers, as well as the support of parents, although there are still limitations in facilities and infrastructure as well as the number of administrators.

Theoretically, this study reinforces the role of the madrasah principal as a learning leader oriented toward the formation of students' religious character. Practically, the findings of this study can serve as a reference for developing a more effective and integrated Ma'had system within madrasahs. However, this study is limited by its scope, as it only focuses on a single madrasah and has not yet

explored the long-term impact of the Ma'had program. Therefore, future research is recommended to conduct comparative studies across madrasahs and examine the long-term impact of the program on students' character development.

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