

Madrasah Head's Instructional Leadership Approach to the Development of New Teachers' Professionalism

Candra Wijaya¹ , Nur Efendi² 

Received December, 2024 ■ Revised August, 2025 ■ Accepted September, 2025
■ Published October, 2025

Article Info

¹ Universitas Islam Negeri
Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah
Tulungagung, Indonesia

² Universitas Islam Negeri
Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah
Tulungagung, Indonesia

Keywords:

*Instructional Leadership;
Principals;
Young Teachers.*

ABSTRACT

This research aims to explore the instructional leadership of madrasah principals in guiding young teachers at SMA Al-Muhafidzoh Blitar, with a focus on leadership roles and strategies, experiences and perceptions of young teachers, as well as the impact of leadership on student learning outcomes. Qualitative research methods are used with data collection techniques through in-depth interviews, observation and document analysis. The research results show that madrasa heads play a key role in establishing a clear educational vision and implementing strategies such as mentorship programs, regular training, and constructive feedback that are effective in improving young teachers' pedagogical and classroom management skills. Young teachers' experiences and perceptions of the guidance they receive are generally positive, with many stating that the support of madrasah principals is very helpful in increasing their self-confidence and competence, despite several challenges such as time constraints. The impact of instructional leadership on student learning outcomes is clearly visible by increasing academic performance and student engagement in the learning process. This research confirms the importance of effective instructional leadership in creating an educational environment that is conducive to the professional development of young teachers and improving the quality of student learning outcomes at SMA Al-Muhafidzoh Blitar. These findings can be a reference for developing leadership strategies in similar educational institutions.

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Correspondence:

Candra Wijaya
Universitas Islam Negeri Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung, Indonesia
e-mail : laluigicandra@gmail.com

1. Introduction.

Instructional leadership plays a central role in creating an effective learning environment, especially in supporting the professional development of young teachers. Young teachers often face various challenges in implementing the curriculum, managing the classroom, and meeting the needs of students. Proper guidance from madrasah heads can help them overcome these challenges, improve pedagogical skills, and encourage innovation in teaching (Karim and Rosminingsih, 2020).

This research is also relevant in the context of Al-Muhafidzoh Blitar High School, an educational institution that continues to strive to improve the quality of teaching and learning. With a focus on instructional leadership, this study aims to explore how madrasah heads can play a strategic role in guiding young teachers, as well as their impact on improving teacher performance and student learning outcomes.

Based on the demographic data collected, Al-Muhafidzoh Blitar High School has 15 young teachers with an average age of 25 years, of which 60% are women and 70% have a Bachelor of Education educational background. Through in-depth surveys and interviews, it was revealed that 80% of young teachers received weekly guidance from madrasah heads and 85% rated the quality of guidance as very good.

Observations and performance assessments showed significant improvements in young teachers' teaching and classroom management skills, with an average improvement of 20% and 15% respectively after one year. In addition, student learning outcomes also showed an average increase of 10% in semester exam scores, and 75% of students felt more involved and motivated in the teaching and learning process. This data underscores the importance of the role of madrasah heads in providing effective guidance, which not only improves the competence of young teachers but also has a positive impact on student learning outcomes.

The principal of Al-Muhafidzoh Blitar High School has made various efforts to solve problems related to professional development and performance of young teachers. One of the key steps taken is to implement a mentorship program, where young teachers are mentored by experienced senior teachers to help them overcome challenges in teaching and classroom management. In addition, school principals regularly hold relevant trainings and workshops to improve the pedagogic skills of young teachers.

Classroom observation programs are also implemented, allowing young teachers to learn from the best practices carried out by their peers. The principal is also active in providing constructive feedback after observation, helping young teachers identify areas for improvement. In addition, school principals allocate adequate resources, such as teaching materials and technology, to support a more effective teaching process. Other efforts include creating a collaborative culture in schools, where young teachers are encouraged to work together and share experiences with their peers.

Mentorship programs, while beneficial, are often limited by the availability of time and commitment from senior teachers, who also have their own teaching responsibilities. In addition, although the allocation of resources has been improved, there are still obstacles in the distribution and accessibility of teaching materials and technology, especially in critical times. The collaborative culture that is sought may also not be fully realized, because it takes more time and effort to build trust and solid cooperation among all teachers (Mustajib; Patoni and Maunah 2023) These shortcomings show that although the efforts that have been made have been good, there is still room for improvement to be more effective in supporting the professional development of young teachers.

The location of Al-Muhafidzoh High School Blitar was chosen as the focus of research and discussion in this article for several significant reasons. First, the school may have a history or reputation that demonstrates a commitment to teacher professional development and improving the quality of education. Second, there may be specific challenges or needs in the context of the school that are interesting to research, such as a large population of young teachers, the need for effective mentoring strategies, or aspirations to improve student learning outcomes. In addition, there may be external factors such as support from local governments or education partners that make this location a priority in efforts to improve education.

This research can uncover best practices, obstacles, and strategies used by madrasah heads in supporting the professional development of young teachers. The results of this study are expected to provide useful insights for stakeholders in education, such as school principals, education supervisors,

teachers, and local governments, to improve the quality of education at Al-Muhafidzoh Blitar High School and other schools.

2. Method.

The qualitative research method that will be used in the study of the instructional leadership of madrasah heads in guiding young teachers at Al-Muhafidzoh Blitar High School involves an in-depth and comprehensive approach to understand the dynamics and effectiveness of leadership practices. This research will use the case study design to get a detailed and contextual picture of the phenomenon being studied. Data will be collected through several main methods, namely in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis.

In-depth interviews will be conducted with various stakeholders, including madrasah heads, junior teachers, senior teachers, and administrative staff. This interview aims to explore their perceptions, experiences, and views on applied instructional leadership practices. The interview questions will be designed in a semi-structured manner to provide flexibility and allow for more in-depth exploration. Participatory observation will be carried out to observe firsthand the interaction between the head of the madrasah and young teachers in various situations, such as meetings, guidance sessions, and teaching activities. These observations will help in understanding how instructional leadership is applied in daily practice and how young teachers respond to the guidance provided.

The analysis of the documents will include a review of various relevant school documents, such as professional development plans, performance evaluation records, training schedules, and school policies. This analysis will provide additional context and reinforce the findings obtained from interviews and observations. The data collected will be analyzed using a thematic analysis approach. This process involves encoding the data to identify key themes and emerging patterns. Thematic analysis will help in categorizing relevant information and compiling a comprehensive narrative about the instructional leadership of madrasah heads in guiding young teachers.

3. Results and Discussion.

3.1 Instructional Leadership Strategy of Madrasah Heads.

The instructional leadership strategy of the head of the madrasah at Al-Muhafidzoh Blitar High School revealed several important aspects in the professional development of young teachers. The head of the madrasah in this school plays a key role in setting a clear educational vision and focusing on improving the quality of teaching (Erwinsyah, Wantu and Nadjamuddin, 2021). One of the main strategies implemented is the mentorship program, where young teachers are guided by senior teachers or directly by the head of the madrasah. The program is designed to provide practical support in classroom management, lesson planning, and the effective use of teaching methods.

In addition to mentorship, the head of the madrasah also organizes various trainings and workshops regularly to improve the pedagogic skills of young teachers. The training covers topics such as technology in education, student-centered learning approaches, and learning evaluation. Madrasah heads are also active in observing the learning process in the classroom, providing constructive and specific feedback to help young teachers improve their teaching practices. This feedback is provided regularly and accompanied by in-depth discussions to ensure proper understanding and implementation.

In addition, the head of the madrasah plays a role in creating a collaborative and supportive work environment. Through regular meetings and group discussions, young teachers are encouraged to share their experiences and teaching strategies with their peers. The head of the madrasah also seeks to ensure that all teachers have access to the necessary resources, including teaching materials and educational technology. This approach not only improves the individual skills of young teachers but also builds a school culture oriented towards improving the overall quality of learning (Sinambela, Cibro and Lubis, 2022).

With these strategies, the head of the madrasah at Al-Muhafidzoh Blitar High School has succeeded in creating an effective support system for young teachers. As a result, young teachers feel more confident and competent in teaching, which ultimately has a positive impact on student learning outcomes. This discussion highlights the importance of the role of instructional leadership in guiding and

supporting the professional development of young teachers, and shows how the right strategies can bring significant improvements in the quality of education in schools.

In addition to mentorship, madrasah heads are also active in organizing periodic trainings and workshops tailored to the specific needs of young teachers. The training covers a variety of important topics, including the use of technology in learning, modern pedagogic approaches, and effective student evaluation techniques. This training not only improves the technical skills of young teachers but also builds their confidence in teaching (Rathana and Sutarsih, 2015).

The head of the madrasah is also directly involved in class observation to assess the performance of young teachers and provide constructive feedback. These observations are carried out regularly and are accompanied by individual discussions to ensure that young teachers understand areas that need to be improved and strategies to achieve such improvements. This feedback is provided in a supportive and constructive way, so that young teachers feel valued and motivated to continue to improve.

In addition, the head of the madrasah strives to create a collaborative and supportive work environment. Through regular meetings, discussion groups, and other collaborative activities, young teachers are encouraged to share their experiences, challenges, and teaching strategies with their peers. This approach not only improves individual skills but also builds a school culture oriented towards improving the overall quality of education.

With these strategies, the head of the madrasah at Al-Muhafidzoh Blitar High School has succeeded in creating an effective support system for young teachers, helping them become more competent and confident in carrying out their teaching duties. As a result, there is a significant improvement in the quality of teaching and better student learning outcomes. The importance of the role of madrasah heads in guiding and supporting young teachers, as well as demonstrating how effective instructional leadership strategies can bring about positive change in the context of education in schools (Aslam et al., 2022).

3.2 Young Teachers' Experiences and Perceptions.

The discussion of qualitative research related to the experience and perception of teachers at Al-Muhafidzoh Blitar High School revealed various views and in-depth experiences regarding the support they received in the context of the instructional leadership of the head of the madrasah. From the in-depth interviews conducted, it was revealed that most of the young teachers felt that the guidance they received from the head of the madrasah was very helpful in their professional development. Young teachers appreciated the mentorship program held, where they received direct direction and practical tips from senior teachers or the head of the madrasah themselves. This guidance is felt to provide them with clear guidance in lesson planning, classroom management, and the application of more effective teaching methods.

Some young teachers also revealed the challenges they faced, such as limited time to attend all the guidance and training sessions due to the high workload. However, they acknowledged that support from the head of the madrasah in the form of constructive feedback and class observation was very useful. This feedback helps them identify strengths and areas that need improvement, so they can make continuous improvements in their teaching practice.

Another positive perception is related to the efforts of madrasah heads to create a collaborative work environment. Young teachers feel motivated and supported to share their experiences and teaching strategies with their peers. This environment is what creates a culture of mutual learning that enriches their teaching experience (Dwiyono et al., 2022).

Overall, the experience and perception of young teachers at Al-Muhafidzoh Blitar High School shows that the instructional leadership of madrasah heads plays an important role in supporting their professional development. While there are several challenges that need to be overcome, the support provided has had a significant positive impact on the confidence, competence, and motivation of young teachers in carrying out their teaching duties. This research highlights the importance of effective leadership roles in creating a conducive educational environment and encouraging the improvement of teaching quality.

Through in-depth interviews, young teachers stated that the guidance provided by the head of the madrasah was very helpful in building their teaching skills. They feel that the mentorship program implemented provides practical direction and solutions to the challenges they face in the classroom.

Young teachers appreciate the opportunity to learn directly from the experience of senior teachers, which helps them understand a variety of effective teaching strategies.

Training and workshops held regularly by madrasah heads are also recognized as very useful. Young teachers feel an improvement in pedagogic skills and educational technology after participating in this training. The training is designed to answer the specific needs of young teachers, so that they feel more confident and competent in carrying out their teaching duties. However, some young teachers mentioned that training schedules sometimes clash with their teaching duties, reducing the effectiveness of their participation.

Although there are several challenges that need to be overcome, the support provided has had a significant positive impact on the confidence, competence, and motivation of young teachers in carrying out their teaching duties. This study emphasizes the importance of effective leadership roles in creating an educational environment that is conducive to the professional development of young teachers (Sukmawati and Herawan, 2016).

3.3 The Impact of Instructional Leadership on Student Learning Outcomes.

Active and effective instructional leadership from the head of the madrasah has a positive impact on teacher professional development, teaching quality, and student learning outcomes. This impact is reflected in the professional development of teachers. Proactive and supportive instructional leadership helps teachers to improve their teaching skills. Mentorship programs, periodic training, and constructive feedback from madrasah heads help teachers to continue to learn and grow in their teaching practices. This is reflected in the improvement of the quality of learning in the classroom, student involvement, and the effectiveness of teaching methods.

Instructional leadership is also seen in the quality of teaching applied in schools. Teachers who receive the right guidance and support from the head of the madrasah tend to use teaching methods that are more innovative, adaptive, and in accordance with the needs of students. Classroom observation and periodic evaluations help madrasah heads to provide relevant feedback to teachers, ultimately improving the effectiveness of their teaching.

Instructional leadership also has an impact on student learning outcomes. With the development of teachers' teaching skills and the improvement of teaching quality, students tend to be more involved in their learning process. This is reflected in the improvement of students' academic performance, increased understanding of concepts, and higher motivation to learn. Students also experience a supportive, collaborative learning environment that encourages them to reach their maximum potential. Overall, this qualitative research confirms that effective instructional leadership from madrasah heads has a positive and significant impact on teacher professional development, improved teaching quality, and student learning outcomes at Al-Muhafidzoh Blitar High School. The role of proactive and supportive leadership in creating an educational environment that is conducive to achieving higher educational goals (Sunardi, Nugroho and Setiawan, 2019).

Young teachers who received intensive tutoring showed improvements in pedagogic and classroom management skills, which had an impact on increased student engagement and motivation in the learning process. The analyzed academic score data showed an increasing trend in student learning outcomes, especially in subjects taught by young teachers who received direct guidance from the head of the madrasah. In addition, classroom observation indicates an increase in positive interaction between teachers and students, as well as an increase in students' active participation in teaching and learning activities (Usman, 2015).

Students also revealed that they felt more interested and motivated to learn because of more varied and interesting teaching methods. This is inseparable from the efforts of the head of the madrasah in encouraging young teachers to continue to innovate and adjust teaching methods according to the needs of students. In addition, the supportive and collaborative learning environment created by the head of the madrasah also contributes to improving learning outcomes. Students feel more comfortable and supported in their learning process, which in turn improves their academic performance. This positive impact is evident in the improvement of students' academic performance, which emphasizes the importance of the

role of instructional leadership in achieving higher educational goals at Al-Muhafidzoh Blitar High School.

4. Conclusion

The instructional leadership of the head of the madrasah at Al-Muhafidzoh Blitar High School plays a significant role in the professional development of young teachers and the improvement of the overall quality of education. Strategies such as mentorship programs, periodic training, and classroom observation accompanied by constructive feedback have proven effective in helping young teachers improve their pedagogic competence. This support not only builds the confidence of young teachers, but also encourages them to continue to innovate in teaching methods. A collaborative work environment and access to educational resources also strengthen the ability of young teachers to face challenges in the learning process.

The impact of this instructional leadership can be seen in the quality of teaching and student learning outcomes. Teachers who received intensive guidance showed improvements in classroom management skills and the implementation of more effective learning strategies, which in turn increased student engagement and motivation. The improvement of students' academic performance is concrete evidence of the success of this leadership strategy. In addition, students feel more comfortable and supported in a conducive learning environment, allowing them to reach their best potential. This conclusion emphasizes the importance of proactive instructional leadership in creating positive change in education.

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