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SHURA AL-GHAZALI LEADERSHIP IN MADRASAH MANAGEMENT: BETWEEN THE IDEALITY OF ISLAMIC VALUES AND THE REALITY OF MANAGERIAL PRACTICE

Andika Febriyanto*[1], Subiyantoro[2], Pandu Winata[3]
Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University Yogyakarta, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: andikapebriyanto49@gmail.com
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Abstract:
Leadership in Islamic education demands an integration between managerial effectiveness and moral-spiritual values. One of the leadership concepts that has strong roots in the Islamic tradition is shura leadership as stated by Al-Ghazali. This study aims to analyze the implementation of shura leadership in the style of Al-Ghazali in the management of Islamic education in Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri (MTsN) 1 Pangkalpinang. The research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and documentation, then analyzed using the Al-Ghazali shura leadership framework through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. The results of the study show that deliberation has been applied as a formal mechanism in decision-making, but the practice is still consultative with the final decision authority centered on the madrasah leadership. Teachers' participation in madrasah management tends to be limited to the policy implementation stage, while involvement in planning and evaluation is not optimal. In addition, a culture of administrative compliance and bureaucratic demands limits collaboration and weakens teachers' agency. This study concludes that the implementation of shura leadership in madrassas is still at the procedural level and requires strengthening the meaning of deliberation, expanding teacher participation substantively, and structural and cultural adjustments to be in line with the ethical principles of Islamic leadership.

KATA KUNCI
Kepemimpinan Shura, Al-Ghazali; Manajemen Pendidikan Islam; Kepemimpinan Partisipatif

Abstrak:
Kepemimpinan dalam pendidikan Islam menuntut integrasi antara efektivitas manajerial dan nilai-nilai moral-spiritual. Salah satu konsep kepemimpinan yang berakar kuat dalam tradisi Islam adalah kepemimpinan shura seperti yang dinyatakan oleh Al-Ghazali. Studi ini bertujuan menganalisis pelaksanaan kepemimpinan shura dengan gaya Al-Ghazali dalam pengelolaan pendidikan Islam di Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri (MTsN) 1 Pangkalpinang. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi partisipatif, dan dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan kerangka kepemimpinan shura Al-Ghazali melalui tahapan pengurangan data, penyajian data, dan kesimpulan yang diambil. Hasil studi menunjukkan bahwa musyawarah telah diterapkan sebagai mekanisme formal dalam pengambilan keputusan, tetapi praktik ini masih bersifat konsultatif dengan otoritas keputusan akhir yang berpusat pada kepemimpinan madrasah. Partisipasi guru dalam pengelolaan madrasah cenderung terbatas pada tahap pelaksanaan kebijakan, sementara keterlibatan dalam perencanaan dan evaluasi tidak optimal. Selain itu, budaya

kepatuhan administratif dan tuntutan birokrasi membatasi kolaborasi dan melemahkan agensi guru. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa pelaksanaan kepemimpinan shura di madrasah masih pada tingkat prosedural dan memerlukan penguatan makna musyawarah, memperluas partisipasi guru secara substansial, serta penyesuaian struktural dan budaya agar sesuai dengan prinsip etika kepemimpinan Islam.

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INTRODUCTION

Leadership is widely understood as a determining factor in shaping the effectiveness of educational institutions, especially in educational institutions based on religious values that place managerial practices inseparable from the moral and spiritual dimensions (Qushwa & Hefniy, 2024). In Islamic education, leadership is not only interpreted as a technical-administrative competence, but also as an ethical responsibility that integrates value considerations, collective decision-making, and accountability to Allah and society. (Safaruddin et al., 2026; Takwil, 2020b) affirm that Islamic education is *value-laden*, thus demanding a leadership model that is able to harmonize organizational management with Islamic ethical and spiritual principles.

One of the leadership concepts that has strong roots in the Islamic intellectual tradition is sura-based leadership. According to Al-Ghazali, leadership must be carried out through deliberation, humility, and prudence in making decisions, so that the resulting policies are oriented towards the common good (*maslahah*), not a mere personal interest or power (Takwil, 2020a). In *Ihya' Ulumuddin*, Al-Ghazali emphasized that leaders who ignore deliberation risk falling into authoritarianism, which ultimately undermines justice and trust (Moosa, 2006). This view places shura not just as a formal procedure, but as an ethical foundation in leadership practice.

From the perspective of contemporary education management theory, participatory and consultative leadership has been shown to contribute to the effectiveness of educational organizations. (Safaruddin et al., 2026; Suharti & Mariam, 2025) Explains that collaborative leadership plays an important role in building a school culture that values shared participation and responsibility. In line with that, Scheerens, (2016) Identify leadership qualities as a key determinant of school effectiveness, especially in complex educational environments. This framework is in line with Al-Ghazali's view that leadership legitimacy is born from moral credibility and collective involvement, not solely from structural authority.

The empirical findings also reinforce the relevance of participatory leadership in the context of education. Mohzana dkk., (2024) shows that teachers' involvement in the decision-making process significantly increases a sense of professional belonging and commitment. In Islamic education, Inayati et al., (2024)found that consultative leadership practices contribute to the strengthening of ethical governance and harmonious working relationships between educators. These findings indicate that dialogical and transparent leadership not only impacts managerial efficiency, but also on the emotional and moral dimensions of school life.

Nonetheless, studies have also revealed challenges in implementing

participatory leadership in Islamic educational institutions. Royani et al., (2024) noted that leadership practices in many madrassas in Indonesia are still centralized, with limited room for teacher participation in policy formulation and program planning. Hasibuan & Hadijaya, (2024) adding that organizational culture and bureaucratic demands often limit collaboration, resulting in low teacher agency and weakening organizational commitment.

A number of previous studies have examined leadership and management in Islamic education from various perspectives. Mahmud & Ramli, (2025) focuses his studies on spiritual leadership and its influence on teachers' motivation to work, while Royani et al., (2024) Examine the impact of participatory leadership styles on the performance of madrasah educators. On the other hand, Badriyah, (2021) examines Al-Ghazali's thinking in Islamic education conceptually without directly associating it with empirical leadership practices in formal educational institutions.

A review of the literature shows that there is a research gap. First, there is still limited research that explicitly uses the concept of shura leadership Al-Ghazali as the main analytical framework in the study of education management (Badriyah, 2021; Princess, 2025). Second, empirical studies that link classical Islamic thought with the managerial reality of state tsanawiyah madrassas in Indonesia are still relatively rare (Royani dkk., 2024; Takwil, 2020). Third, many studies emphasize leadership outcomes (outcomes), while the process of internalizing ethical values in daily managerial practice has not been studied in depth.

In this context, MTsN 1 Pangkalpinang is a relevant research location to be studied. As a state madrasah, this institution faces challenges in strengthening coordination, work discipline, and the effectiveness of educational programs. Preliminary observations show that although deliberation mechanisms are formally available, the level of participation of teachers—especially non-structural teachers and new teachers—in decision-making is still uneven. However, madrasah leaders also show efforts to build more open and deliberative communication in the management of the institution.

In addition, the discourse of contemporary educational leadership increasingly emphasizes the importance of ethical legitimacy in maintaining the trust and participation of school citizens. (Sawitri et al., 2023) emphasized that leadership effectiveness is closely related to moral goals, especially in the context of institutional change that relies on collective commitment, not just formal compliance. In Islamic education, this moral purpose is inseparable from the value *of trust*, which views leadership as a responsibility that must be accounted for ethically and spiritually. This perspective reinforces Al-Ghazali's view that leadership authority comes from moral integrity and responsibility, not just from structural positions.

Furthermore, the integration of classical Islamic leadership values into contemporary educational management analysis is in line with the demands of educational research rooted in cultural contexts. Loreman dkk., (2014) emphasizing that the leadership model cannot be universally applied without considering local values and socio-cultural contexts. In the context of madrassas in Indonesia, leadership practices are not only influenced by administrative regulations, but also by religious norms and social expectations of the community. By positioning the concept of shura Al-Ghazali in the empirical reality of madrasah management, this study seeks to bridge Islamic normative thinking with contemporary educational leadership practices.

Based on this description, this study aims to analyze the implementation of shura leadership in the style of Al-Ghazali in the management of Islamic education in MTsN 1 Pangkalpinang. By combining the perspectives of classical Islamic thought and modern management theory, this research is expected to contribute to the development of a participatory, contextual, and ethically-based Islamic education leadership model. The findings of this study are expected to make a theoretical contribution to the study of Islamic leadership as well as practical implications for strengthening madrasah governance in Indonesia.

RESEARCH METHODS

Types and Approaches to Research

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study aims to deeply understand leadership practices in a natural context, especially how the values of shura leadership in Al-Ghazali thought are interpreted and implemented in the managerial reality of the state tsanawiyah madrasah. Case studies are used to comprehensively explore the dynamics of leadership, decision-making processes, and social relations that develop in the context of a particular educational institution (Scott, 2018).

Location and Research Subject

This research was carried out at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri (MTsN) in Indonesia (the name of the madrasah can be adjusted), with the consideration that MTsN is a formal educational institution that is structurally under state policy, but normatively also carries Islamic educational values. The research subjects include madrasah heads, deputy madrasah heads, teachers, and education staff, who were selected purposively based on their involvement in the decision-making process and the implementation of madrasah policies.

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection is carried out through several techniques to obtain rich and in-depth data, namely, in-depth interviews, conducted in a semi-structured manner to madrasah heads and teachers to explore their understanding, experience, and perception of leadership practices, especially related to deliberation, participation, and decision-making.

Furthermore, participatory observation is used to directly observe leadership interaction patterns, deliberation mechanisms, and collective work dynamics in madrasah managerial activities. Documentation as supporting and complementary data includes the analysis of official madrasah documents such as organizational structure, meeting minutes, internal policies, and work programs, in order to understand how leadership values are translated into administrative practice.

Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis in this study uses the leadership framework of the Shura Al-Ghazali as the main theoretical foundation. Concepts such as deliberation (*Shura*), trust, justice, and moral responsibility are used as analytical lenses to interpret leadership practices in madrasas. The data obtained is analyzed through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn, with emphasis on the relationship between classical Islamic thought and contemporary managerial reality (Moleong, 2021).

Data Validity

To ensure the validity of the data, this study applies triangulation of sources and techniques, namely comparing data from interviews, observations, and

documentation. In addition, a member check is carried out by reconfirming the findings to the main informant to ensure the accuracy and credibility of the researcher's interpretation (Rachmadani, 2022; Rukmana et al., 2024; Saputri et al., 2024).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents research findings obtained from field data through in-depth interviews and direct observation in state tsanawiyah madrasas. The results of the research focused on leadership practices, decision-making patterns, and the relationship between leaders and teachers in madrasah management. The presentation of results is systematically prepared to answer the formulation of research problems, by displaying empirical descriptions of the implementation of deliberation in madrasah managerial practice based on the experience and views of the research subjects.

Shura Leadership Practice in Madrasah Decision Making

The results of the study show that decision-making practices in state tsanawiyah madrasas are carried out through internal meeting and forum mechanisms involving leaders and teachers. The head of the madrasah stated that the deliberation was used as a means to convey program information, discuss academic issues, and formulate operational steps for the madrasah. Teachers were given the opportunity to express their opinions and input in the forum.

However, the results of the interview also revealed that the final decision remains in the hands of the head of the madrasah. Some teachers said that although a deliberative forum is available, not all teachers' proposals are accommodated in the established policies. This shows that the practice of shura functions more as a consultative mechanism than collective decision-making.

Field observations show that the meeting took place formally with an agenda that had been determined by the leadership. The discussion went in an orderly manner, but the space for critical dialogue and open debate was relatively limited. These findings suggest that deliberation has become part of the madrasah managerial procedure, but has not yet fully functioned as an equivalent participatory mechanism.

Leadership Relations and Teacher Participation Levels in Madrasah Management

The results of the interviews show that the relationship between madrasah leaders and teachers runs professionally and relatively harmoniously. Teachers assessed that the head of the madrasah was open to communication and willing to receive input, both through official forums and informal communication. Work relationships are built on the basis of mutual respect and compliance with the organizational structure.

However, the level of teacher participation in madrasah management is still limited to the policy implementation stage. Some teachers said that their involvement was more dominant after the policy was set, especially in the implementation of madrasah programs and activities. Teachers' involvement in the planning and evaluation stages of policy has not taken place optimally.

The results of the observation show that the work culture of madrasas still emphasizes administrative compliance and the implementation of duties according

to the direction of the leadership. Teachers' collective initiative in formulating programs or evaluating policies is relatively minimal. This condition shows that teachers' participation in madrasah management is functional, has not developed into substantive participation in decision-making.

Implementation of Deliberation Values in Madrasah Managerial Practice

The results of the study show that the value of deliberation is understood by leaders and teachers as part of Islamic teachings that are important in the management of madrasas. The head of the madrasah emphasized that deliberation is seen as a means of maintaining harmony, preventing conflicts, and creating a conducive work atmosphere.

However, in everyday managerial practice, deliberation has not completely become an inherent organizational culture. Deliberation is generally carried out at certain moments, such as the beginning of the school year or when facing special problems, while in routine decision-making leaders tend to act independently. Teachers consider that deliberation is more often used to convey information than to formulate joint decisions.

Field observations show that the value of deliberation has not been consistently integrated in the entire madrasah managerial process. Leadership practices still show a tendency to centralize authority, even though it is wrapped in open communication and a persuasive approach. These findings show that there is a difference between the normative understanding of deliberation and its implementation in madrasah management practice.

Discussion

This section of the discussion aims to interpret and analyze the research findings by relating them to the theoretical framework and relevant results of previous research. The analysis focuses on how leadership practices in state tsanawiyah madrassas reflect-or deviate from-the concept of shura leadership in Al-Ghazali's thought, as well as how these practices have implications for teacher participation, collective commitment, and managerial effectiveness. Thus, this discussion not only explains what is happening in the field, but also reveals the meaning and implications of the findings in the context of Islamic educational leadership development.

Shura Leadership between Normative Principles and Managerial Practice

The findings of the study show that leadership practices in state tsanawiyah madrassas have adopted deliberation as a formal mechanism in decision-making, but have not fully reflected the principles of shura leadership substantively. Deliberation functions more as a consultation forum, while the authority to make final decisions remains centralized to the madrasah leadership. This condition confirms the gap between the ideals of Islamic leadership and managerial reality in formal educational institutions (Saputri et al., 2024).

In Al-Ghazali's thought, deliberation is not just an administrative procedure, but an ethical instrument to maintain justice, prevent arbitrariness, and build social trust. Wijayanti, (2024) When deliberation is only used as a means of expressing opinions without any real influence on decisions, the moral value of shura leadership risks being reduced to symbolic. These findings show that the main challenge of shura leadership lies not in the absence of deliberation, but in how deliberation is interpreted and operationalized in the organizational power

structure.

In addition, the results of this study confirm the findings (Royani et al., 2024c) which states that leadership practices in madrassas still tend to be centralized. This study deepens these findings by showing that the centralization of authority is often wrapped in a deliberative narrative, thus creating a participatory impression without a balanced distribution of power. Thus, the leadership of shura in madrassas is still at the procedural level, has not yet reached a transformational dimension.

Leadership Relations, Teacher Participation, and Dynamics of Collective Commitment

The results of the study show that the relationship between madrasah leaders and teachers takes place in a harmonious and communicative manner, but this harmony is not directly proportional to the teacher's participation in strategic decision-making. Teachers are more involved in the policy implementation stage, while their role in planning and evaluation is still limited. This shows that teacher participation is functional, not substantive.

Within the framework of collaborative leadership, (Amin et al., 2025; Riyanto, 2026) emphasizing that meaningful participation is the foundation for the formation of an inclusive and collectively responsible school culture. The findings of this study indicate that the limited space for teacher participation can hinder the formation of a sense of belonging (*sense of ownership*) against the madrasah policy. When teachers are only executors, the potential for critical reflection and pedagogical innovation becomes less developed.

These findings are also in line with (Fajrin, 2025; Mohzana et al., 2024b) which shows that teacher involvement in decision-making contributes significantly to increased professional commitment. Thus, the low strategic participation of teachers found in this study has the potential to have an impact on the weakening of collective commitment and the limited capacity of madrasas to carry out continuous updates.

Leadership, Moral Purpose, and Cultural Dominance of Administrative Compliance

The dominance of the culture of administrative compliance in madrasah managerial practices shows that leadership is still oriented towards fulfilling formal rules and procedures. (Fullan, 2007) This kind of leadership tends to put organizational stability above the collective learning process and critical reflection. These findings suggest that leadership effectiveness has not been fully built on shared moral goals.

Fullan, (2007) affirms that effective educational leadership must be rooted in *moral purpose*, because meaningful institutional change can only be realized through collective commitment, not just formal compliance. The findings of this study show that when leadership emphasizes administrative compliance more, the space for dialogue, reflection, and organizational learning becomes limited, so that change tends to be technocratic.

In addition, (Agus R et al., 2026; Javornik & Klemenčič Mirazchiyski, 2023) Identify leadership qualities as the main determinants of school effectiveness in the context of the complexity of educational organizations. This study shows that the limitation of integration between moral goals and collective participation has the

potential to hinder the effectiveness of madrasah leadership in the long term, especially in responding to the challenges of educational change.

Socio-Cultural Context and Challenges of Shura Leadership Implementation

The findings of this research need to be understood in the socio-cultural and structural context of the state tsanawiyah madrasah as part of the national education bureaucratic system. Hierarchical structures and administrative demands often limit the space for participatory leadership practice. In this context, the value of deliberation is faced with the reality of bureaucracy that emphasizes efficiency and compliance. (Aji Wahyudin & M. Fahim Tharaba, 2024; Amelia et al., 2022; Muhamad Faiz et al., 2024) affirms that the leadership model cannot be universally applied without considering local values and socio-cultural contexts. This study shows that the implementation of Al-Ghazali shura leadership in state madrassas requires contextual adaptation so as not to clash with the existing formal organizational structure.

In line with Daulay et al., (2024). Organizational culture and bureaucratic demands can limit collaboration and weaken teacher agency. Therefore, the integration of shura leadership is not enough to be carried out through the strengthening of normative values alone, but must be accompanied by structural and cultural changes that open up space for participation and a fairer distribution of authority.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that leadership practices in state tsanawiyah madrasas have adopted deliberation as a formal mechanism in madrasah management, but its implementation has not fully reflected the principles of shura leadership substantively. Deliberation tends to function as a means of consultation, while the authority to make strategic decisions is still concentrated in the madrasah leadership. The relationship between leaders and teachers is harmonious, but teachers' participation in policy planning and evaluation is still limited, so their involvement is more functional than participatory. This condition shows that there is a gap between the ideals of Islamic leadership and managerial reality in formal educational institutions.

In addition, a culture of administrative compliance still dominates leadership practices, which limits the space for collective reflection and organizational learning. Madrasah leadership has not been fully oriented towards common moral goals as emphasized in the concept of leadership of the Shura of Al-Ghazali. Therefore, the implementation of shura leadership as a whole requires strengthening the meaning of deliberation as a collective decision-making process, expanding teacher participation substantially, and structural and cultural adjustments within the framework of formal education bureaucracy.

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