



Strategies for Leadership Development in Islamic Educational Institutions: A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract. Leadership development is essential for Islamic educational institutions seeking to improve educational quality while preserving their religious and ethical foundations. This study aims to examine leadership development strategies, identify factors influencing their implementation, and explore the integration of Islamic ethical principles into leadership development. A systematic literature review (SLR) is designed using the PRISMA 2020 reporting framework and thematic synthesis. The review focuses on individual leadership competencies, organizational practices, and Islamic ethical orientation. The proposed analytical framework encompasses professional development, mentoring, succession planning, and distributed leadership, alongside organizational support, institutional culture, and opportunities to apply professional learning. It also examines how amanah (trustworthiness), ‘adl (justice), and syura (consultation) can connect leadership competence with ethical responsibility. The study’s intended contribution is an integrated conceptual framework for understanding leadership development in Islamic educational institutions and informing context-sensitive leadership programmes. Its practical implications concern leadership preparation, institutional policy, and professional learning. However, the strength of these conclusions will depend on the completeness and quality of the studies identified and included in the review. The study’s originality lies in bringing professional competencies, organizational conditions, and Islamic ethical principles into a common analytical framework.

Keywords: Educational Leadership; Islamic Education; Leadership Development; Professional Development; Systematic Literature.

1. INTRODUCTION

Islamic educational institutions operate at the intersection of academic achievement, religious formation, and social responsibility. Their leaders are expected to improve teaching and organizational performance while preserving Islamic values, institutional identity, and relationships with surrounding communities. These expectations have become more demanding as educational institutions respond to technological change, evolving professional standards, and increasing accountability. Yet, leadership development is not simply a matter of appointing capable principals or providing occasional management training. It requires sustained opportunities to develop professional judgment, instructional competence, collaborative practices, and ethical responsibility. Research on Indonesian school principals has identified persistent obstacles to continuous professional development, including excessive workloads, resistance to change, inadequate follow-up, and weaknesses in training design (Faizuddin et al., 2022). Such challenges raise important questions about whether existing development arrangements adequately prepare leaders for the complex responsibilities of Islamic education.

The issue deserves particular attention because leadership influences educational improvement partly through the professional conditions in which teachers work and learn.

Research reviews have connected school leadership with student achievement and identified mechanisms through which leadership practices shape teaching and learning (Özdemir et al., 2024). Similarly, professional learning is more likely to contribute to improvement when leaders cultivate trust, collaboration, and opportunities for teachers to examine their practices (Poekert et al., 2020; Ventista & Brown, 2023). For Islamic educational institutions, these responsibilities extend beyond conventional managerial effectiveness. Leaders must also demonstrate *amanah* (trustworthiness), *‘adl* (justice), and *syura* (consultation), translating ethical commitments into decisions concerning staff development, resource allocation, curriculum, and student welfare. Leadership development therefore needs to connect professional capability with the moral purposes of Islamic education.

Previous research provides several foundations for investigating this relationship. At the international level, studies have examined professional development for school principals, leadership preparation, distributed leadership, and the relationship between leadership and organizational improvement. Hosseingholizadeh et al. (2026), for example, synthesized research on principals’ professional development using a framework that considers context, inputs, processes, and outcomes. Their review highlights the importance of organizational support, professional networks, individual motivation, and context-sensitive learning. Mifsud (2024) similarly reviewed research on distributed school leadership, demonstrating the relevance of examining leadership as a practice involving multiple actors rather than an activity restricted to formal officeholders. Galdames-Calderón (2023) further explored how principals use distributed leadership to support teacher professional development and school improvement. These studies provide valuable insights into leadership capacity building, although their primary focus is general educational leadership rather than the integration of professional development with the distinctive ethical commitments of Islamic institutions.

Research specifically addressing Islamic education has begun to clarify the contextual dimensions of leadership. Ezzani et al. (2023) examined Islamic school leadership through the lens of social justice, highlighting the moral responsibilities and socioreligious complexities faced by leaders. Said et al. (2023) reviewed leadership qualities and practices among Islamic school principals, identifying instructional practices, ethical values, communication, relationships, adaptability, and justice as relevant themes. In Indonesia, Subiyantoro (2022) investigated leadership regeneration in madrasahs, while Sholihah et al. (2023) explored principals’ efforts to nurture teacher leadership. Other studies have examined leadership models in Indonesian Islamic boarding schools (Kusumaputri et al., 2023), charismatic leadership and character formation in madrasahs (Nurjanah et al., 2024), and transformational

leadership in Indonesian Islamic educational institutions (Ekawati & Hamami, 2026). Taken together, these studies demonstrate that Islamic educational leadership involves professional, relational, cultural, and ethical dimensions.

Despite these contributions, a synthesis problem remains. Studies of general educational leadership often emphasize professional competencies, leadership preparation, and organizational improvement, whereas studies of Islamic educational institutions frequently investigate leadership styles, ethical characteristics, institutional practices, or particular cases. These perspectives are complementary, but they do not automatically explain how leadership development strategies can be combined into a coherent framework for Islamic schools, madrasahs, and pesantren. Existing reviews have examined professional development broadly (Hosseingholizadeh et al., 2026), leadership for professional learning and equity (Poekert et al., 2020), and leadership practices in Islamic schools (Said et al., 2023). However, the relationship between development strategies, organizational enabling conditions, and Islamic ethical formation warrants further systematic examination. This gap should be understood as a need for integration and contextual clarification, rather than an assumption that no previous review has addressed Islamic school leadership.

This study consequently draws on three complementary perspectives: transformational leadership, instructional leadership, and distributed leadership, with Islamic ethical principles providing a normative foundation. Transformational leadership emphasizes shared vision and organizational change; instructional leadership focuses on teaching quality and learning improvement; and distributed leadership recognizes the contribution of multiple actors to leadership practice. Research on leadership development and educational improvement suggests that these perspectives can illuminate different aspects of capacity building (Faizuddin et al., 2022; Galdames-Calderón, 2023; Mifsud, 2024). The present study proposes that their application to Islamic educational institutions should be examined alongside *amanah*, *‘adl*, and *syura*, which help clarify the ethical purposes and boundaries of leadership practice.

Accordingly, this study aims to systematically review strategies for leadership development in Islamic educational institutions, identify factors that facilitate or constrain their implementation, and examine how Islamic ethical principles are incorporated into leadership preparation and practice. Three research questions guide the review: (1) What leadership development strategies are reported in the literature on Islamic educational institutions? (2) What individual, organizational, and contextual factors influence the implementation of these strategies? (3) How are Islamic ethical principles integrated into leadership development, and what implications follow for institutional practice? The study seeks to contribute an integrated

analytical framework, inform the design of context-sensitive professional development, and identify priorities for future empirical research. By bringing professional competencies, organizational conditions, and Islamic ethical orientation into a shared analytical discussion, it aims to clarify how leadership development can support both educational improvement and the distinctive purposes of Islamic education.

Recent comparative and context-specific studies also support the need to examine how leadership development relates to institutional practice. Widiyan & Takayoshi (2024) compared principals' support for teacher professional development in Indonesia and Japan, while Dewi & Imron Muttaqin (2024) examined leadership strategies for developing Islamic character in madrasah students. Marfán & Dibona (2026) reviewed evidence on school leadership and teacher professional learning, highlighting trust, collaboration, and teacher agency. Together, these studies reinforce the importance of examining leadership development as a context-sensitive process rather than assuming that strategies can be transferred unchanged across educational systems.

2. METHOD

This study employed a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) to examine strategies for leadership development in Islamic educational institutions. The review followed the PRISMA 2020 reporting framework to ensure transparency in the identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and selection of relevant studies (Page et al., 2021). An SLR was considered appropriate because it enables a structured synthesis of existing research and helps identify patterns, limitations, and directions for future investigation (Snyder, 2019).

The literature search was designed to cover Scopus, Web of Science, ERIC, and Google Scholar. The search period was January 2015 to October 2026, with the final search date recorded during data collection. The search terms included “leadership development,” “educational leadership,” “leadership preparation,” “Islamic education,” “Islamic educational institutions,” “madrasah leadership,” and “pesantren leadership.” Boolean operators were used to combine related terms. An example search string was (“leadership development” OR “leadership preparation”) AND (“Islamic education” OR madrasah OR pesantren). Search strategies were adapted to the requirements of each database, and the search results were documented for reproducibility.

Studies were included if they were peer-reviewed journal articles published within the specified period, written in English or Indonesian, and relevant to leadership development, leadership competencies, professional learning, or leadership preparation in Islamic

educational institutions. Research on general educational leadership was also considered when its findings offered clear conceptual relevance to the review questions. Publications unrelated to educational leadership, duplicate records, opinion pieces, and articles without sufficient methodological or conceptual information were excluded.

Study selection involved duplicate removal, title and abstract screening, and full-text assessment. Reasons for excluding articles at the full-text stage were documented, and the selection process was reported through a PRISMA flow diagram (Page et al., 2021). The methodological quality of the included studies was assessed by examining research objectives, design appropriateness, transparency of data collection and analysis, and the adequacy of evidence supporting the conclusions.

Data were extracted using a structured framework covering authorship, publication year, country, institutional context, research design, theoretical perspective, leadership development strategies, implementation factors, and principal findings. The data were analyzed through thematic synthesis, involving coding, categorization, comparison, and interpretation of recurring patterns. Three initial analytical dimensions guided the synthesis: individual leadership competencies, organizational development practices, and Islamic ethical values, including *amanah* (trustworthiness), *‘adl* (justice), and *syura* (consultation). These dimensions provided an organizing framework while allowing additional themes to emerge from the evidence. The synthesis aimed to develop an integrated understanding of leadership development strategies and identify gaps requiring further empirical investigation.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overview of the Literature

The literature examined for this preliminary synthesis suggests that leadership development in Islamic educational institutions is best understood as a combination of professional learning, organizational capacity building, and ethical formation. The available studies approach this issue from different perspectives, ranging from continuous professional development for school principals to leadership succession in madrasahs and context-sensitive leadership practices in Islamic boarding schools. These differences are important because the strategies appropriate for a formal school may not fully address the leadership needs of a pesantren with its distinctive religious authority, community relationships, and institutional traditions.

Table 1 summarizes selected studies published between 2022 and 2026 that are relevant to the research questions. This is a preliminary evidence map, not the final list of studies included in the SLR.

Table 1. Selected Studies Relevant to Leadership Development.

Author and year	Context and focus	Main contribution to the review
Faizuddin et al. (2022)	Continuous professional development for Indonesian school principals	Identifies implementation barriers, including workload, resistance to change, inadequate follow-up, and unclear training content.
Subiyantoro (2022)	Leadership cadre development in madrasahs	Examines leadership regeneration and the preparation of future institutional leaders.
Sholihah et al. (2023)	Teacher leadership in Indonesian madrasahs	Examines how principals nurture teachers' leadership capacity beyond classroom responsibilities.
Kusumaputri et al. (2023)	Leadership models in Indonesian excellence-oriented Islamic boarding schools	Highlights the importance of interpreting leadership within institutional and cultural contexts.
Implementation of the Islamic Leadership Model in Educational Administration at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (2023)	Islamic leadership in madrasah administration	Describes values such as justice, trustworthiness, competence, and patience as elements of educational leadership.
Hosseingholizadeh et al. (2026)	Systematic review of principals' professional development	Organizes the evidence around context, inputs, development processes, and outcomes, emphasizing collaborative environments and context-sensitive professional learning.

Note. The table summarizes selected publications located during preliminary research. Full bibliographic details, eligibility, and methodological quality must be verified before these studies are treated as the final SLR corpus.

Leadership Development Strategies in the Literature

The preliminary literature indicates that leadership development involves more than participation in formal training. Three broad strategies warrant examination: structured professional development, leadership succession, and distributed leadership through teacher development.

First, structured professional development provides opportunities for school leaders to strengthen managerial, instructional, and interpersonal competencies. However, Faizuddin et al. (2022) show that professional development may be weakened by unclear training content, limited follow-up, workload, and resistance to change. These findings suggest that the presence of a training programme does not necessarily demonstrate successful leadership development. Programmes need to connect learning objectives with actual leadership responsibilities and provide opportunities to apply, evaluate, and refine new practices.

Second, leadership succession is particularly relevant to institutions that depend on established religious traditions, personal authority, and long-term community relationships.

Subiyantoro (2022) examines leadership regeneration in madrasahs, directing attention to the preparation of future leaders rather than relying exclusively on recruitment when a leadership position becomes vacant. In Islamic educational settings, succession planning may help preserve institutional continuity while allowing emerging leaders to develop competencies in governance, educational improvement, and community engagement.

Third, developing teacher leadership can expand leadership capacity beyond the principal. Sholihah et al. (2023) examine how principals nurture teacher leadership in madrasahs. This approach is significant because teachers possess direct knowledge of classroom practices and student needs. When teachers participate in curriculum development, mentoring, collaborative problem-solving, and institutional decision-making, leadership development becomes an organizational process rather than an activity restricted to senior administrators.

These strategies complement one another. Formal training provides structured knowledge, succession planning creates a pathway for future leadership, and distributed leadership enables competencies to develop through practice. Nevertheless, their relative effectiveness cannot be ranked without examining comparative evidence from the completed review.

Table 2. Preliminary Synthesis of Leadership Development Strategies.

Strategy	Primary development focus	Potential institutional contribution	Issue requiring further examination
Formal professional development	Management, instructional leadership, and communication	Strengthens role-specific competencies	Whether training transfers into everyday practice
Mentoring and coaching	Reflection, feedback, and problem-solving	Connects leadership knowledge with practical experience	Availability of qualified mentors and sustained support
Leadership succession	Identification and preparation of future leaders	Supports institutional continuity	Transparency and fairness in leader selection
Distributed leadership	Teacher participation and shared responsibility	Expands leadership capacity across the institution	Clarity of authority and accountability
Islamic ethical formation	Trustworthiness, justice, consultation, and exemplary conduct	Aligns leadership practices with institutional values	How ethical commitments are translated into observable practice

Factors Facilitate or Constrain Leadership Development

The second research question concerns the conditions under which leadership development can be implemented effectively. The available literature suggests that outcomes depend not only on the content of development programmes but also on organizational support, leaders' readiness to learn, and the institutional environment.

Faizuddin et al. (2022) identify practical barriers that include workload, resistance to change, inadequate follow-up, and weaknesses in training design. These findings challenge the assumption that providing training opportunities is sufficient to improve leadership practice. A principal may acquire new knowledge but struggle to apply it when administrative demands leave little time for reflection, mentoring, or instructional supervision. Development programmes should therefore be accompanied by realistic workloads, organizational support, and mechanisms for evaluating professional growth.

Context also matters. Islamic educational institutions differ in their governance structures, resource availability, relationships with religious authorities, and expectations of the wider community. Kusumaputri et al. (2023) emphasize the importance of understanding leadership in Indonesian excellence-oriented Islamic boarding schools through their institutional and cultural dynamics. A leadership development model designed for a state school may therefore require adaptation before it can be applied to a pesantren or a community-based madrasah.

The broader evidence is consistent with the review by Hosseingholizadeh et al. (2026) which organizes principals' professional development around context, inputs, processes, and outcomes. Their synthesis emphasizes supportive organizational environments, collaborative professional networks, individual motivation, and context-responsive learning. This reinforces the view that leadership development is not an isolated intervention but a process shaped by the relationship between individual learning and institutional conditions.

Table 3. Factors Influencing Leadership Development.

Factor	How it may influence development	Implication for Islamic educational institutions
Individual readiness	Motivation and confidence affect engagement with professional learning	Conduct needs assessments and provide differentiated development pathways
Organizational culture	Trust and collaboration can support learning and experimentation	Establish professional learning communities and reflective practices
Workload and resources	Excessive duties and limited resources restrict participation	Allocate protected time and provide appropriate financial and administrative support
Institutional governance	Recruitment and decision-making structures shape access to leadership opportunities	Develop transparent selection, mentoring, and succession procedures
Cultural and religious context	Community expectations influence acceptable leadership practices	Adapt programmes to institutional traditions without compromising professional standards
Monitoring and follow-up	Limited evaluation makes it difficult to establish whether learning changes practice	Use mentoring, performance reflection, and evidence of institutional improvement

The central implication is that leadership development should be evaluated at more than one level. Participation and satisfaction are useful indicators, but they do not establish whether

leadership practices have changed. A stronger evaluation approach would also examine improvements in instructional supervision, teacher collaboration, institutional decision-making, and the quality of the educational environment. Claims about student outcomes should be made cautiously because they may be influenced by many factors beyond leadership development.

Islamic Ethical Principles Integrated into Leadership Development

The third research question concerns the relationship between professional leadership competencies and Islamic ethical commitments. The selected literature indicates that Islamic leadership is discussed through values such as justice, trustworthiness, patience, competence, and responsible conduct. The study on the implementation of an Islamic leadership model in madrasah administration, for example, identifies justice, *amanah*, *fathanah*, *tabligh*, *shiddiq*, and patience as relevant characteristics of leadership.

These values can provide a normative foundation for leadership development, but their presence in institutional discourse should not be confused with evidence that they are consistently practised. *Amanah*, for instance, can be translated into transparent financial management, reliable fulfilment of responsibilities, and responsible use of institutional resources. *‘Adl* can inform fair staff evaluation, equitable access to development opportunities, and consistent disciplinary procedures. *Syura* can be reflected in meaningful consultation with teachers, parents, and relevant community representatives.

The distinction between values and observable practices is important. An institution may formally endorse Islamic ethical principles while maintaining highly centralized decision-making or limited accountability. Ethical leadership development should therefore combine religious and moral reflection with practical cases involving recruitment, resource allocation, conflict resolution, teacher evaluation, and student welfare.

Table 4. Analytical Framework for Integrating Islamic Values Into Leadership Development.

Islamic principle	Leadership competency	Possible indicator in institutional practice
Amanah (trustworthiness)	Accountability and integrity	Transparent decisions and responsible resource management
‘Adl (justice)	Fairness and impartiality	Consistent staff assessment and equitable opportunities
Syura (consultation)	Collaborative decision-making	Documented consultation and meaningful participation
Shiddiq (truthfulness)	Honest communication	Accurate reporting and consistency between commitments and actions
Fathanah (wisdom and competence)	Sound judgment and problem-solving	Decisions informed by evidence, professional knowledge, and institutional priorities
Uswahhasanah (exemplary conduct)	Ethical role modelling	Leaders demonstrate the professional and moral standards expected of others

The framework offers a way to connect Islamic ethical leadership with professional development without treating religious values as a substitute for managerial competence. Ethical commitments can guide the purposes and boundaries of leadership decisions, while instructional and organizational competencies help leaders translate those commitments into effective educational practice.

Integrating Leadership Theories and Islamic Educational Contexts

The main insight emerging from the preliminary synthesis is that leadership development requires the integration of professional competence, organizational learning, and ethical responsibility. This interpretation is consistent with contemporary research on principal professional development, while the Islamic educational context adds a normative dimension that deserves explicit attention. The evidence does not yet establish that one leadership development strategy is universally superior; rather, it points toward the importance of alignment between development activities, institutional needs, and opportunities to apply what has been learned.

From the perspective of transformational leadership, development involves the ability to articulate a shared vision, motivate institutional members, and guide organizational change. Leithwood et al. (2020) revisited the major claims associated with successful school leadership and reinforced the importance of leadership practices in shaping school conditions and improvement. The preliminary evidence on succession planning and teacher leadership extends this perspective by drawing attention to how leadership capacity can be cultivated across different institutional roles. In Islamic educational institutions, however, a shared vision must be interpreted alongside religious and educational purposes rather than defined exclusively through organizational performance.

Instructional leadership offers a complementary explanation. It emphasizes the connection between leadership and the quality of teaching and learning. Faizuddin et al. (2022) demonstrate why professional development must be connected to actual leadership practices and supported by appropriate follow-up. Their findings are consistent with the argument that training should not be treated as an end in itself. For madrasahs and Islamic schools, this means that leadership preparation should address curriculum quality, teacher development, assessment, and student learning alongside administrative responsibilities.

Distributed leadership further explains why leadership development should not be confined to school principals. The study by Sholihah et al. (2023) provides context-specific evidence concerning the development of teacher leadership in madrasahs. This perspective broadens the unit of analysis from the individual leader to the relationships and practices

through which leadership is exercised. Nevertheless, distributed leadership does not automatically guarantee effective collaboration. Its contribution depends on clear responsibilities, appropriate professional support, and a culture in which participation is meaningful rather than symbolic.

Islamic ethical leadership adds a dimension that the three perspectives do not fully specify on their own. Transformational, instructional, and distributed leadership explain important aspects of leadership practice, but they do not independently determine the religious and moral criteria by which decisions should be judged in an Islamic institution. Principles such as amanah, 'adl, and syura provide an ethical orientation for evaluating how authority is exercised, resources are allocated, and members of the educational community are treated. The proposed synthesis therefore extends established leadership perspectives by positioning Islamic ethical commitments as an integral dimension of leadership development, rather than as an additional topic delivered separately from professional training.

Recent literature also suggests that context should be treated as a constitutive element of leadership development. Hosseingholizadeh et al. (2026) emphasize the influence of institutional conditions, professional networks, and context-responsive development processes. This finding supports an approach that adapts leadership programmes to the needs of particular institutions. A pesantren, for example, may require development activities that address religious authority, community relationships, and the continuity of institutional traditions, while a formal Islamic school may place greater emphasis on curriculum implementation, instructional supervision, and school improvement planning. These differences call for adaptation rather than the uncritical transfer of a single leadership model.

Overall, the preliminary evidence supports an integrated conceptual model in which leadership development is shaped by three interacting elements: professional competencies, organizational conditions, and Islamic ethical orientation. Professional competencies provide the knowledge and skills required for leadership practice; organizational conditions enable those competencies to develop and be applied; and ethical orientation guides the purposes and conduct of leadership. This model is a conceptual proposition derived from the literature, not a validated causal model. Its explanatory value must be examined against the complete SLR corpus and, subsequently, through empirical research.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretically, the proposed framework encourages a move beyond treating leadership development as a collection of training activities. It positions development as an ongoing process linking individual learning, institutional practices, and ethical commitments. The

framework also suggests that Islamic ethical leadership may function as a cross-cutting dimension of transformational, instructional, and distributed leadership rather than as a completely separate leadership style. This proposition offers a basis for future research examining how religious values shape leadership competencies, professional learning, and institutional improvement.

Practically, Islamic educational institutions can use the framework to design leadership development programmes around clearly defined competencies and institutional needs. Recruitment and succession planning should be linked to transparent criteria, mentoring, and opportunities to assume progressively greater responsibilities. Professional development should combine formal training with coaching, peer collaboration, and school-based projects. Institutional leaders should also establish follow-up procedures to assess whether learning has influenced decision-making, instructional supervision, teacher collaboration, and ethical conduct.

For policymakers and educational foundations, the findings suggest the importance of developing context-sensitive leadership standards that recognize both professional competence and the distinctive purposes of Islamic education. Evaluation should move beyond attendance certificates toward evidence of changes in leadership practice and organizational conditions. At the same time, religious and ethical criteria should be translated into observable practices so that they can inform professional reflection and institutional accountability.

Limitations and Future Research

This preliminary synthesis has several limitations. First, the literature presented here is a selected evidence map rather than the result of a completed systematic review. It cannot establish the prevalence of particular strategies, their comparative effectiveness, or the completeness of the available evidence. Second, studies of Islamic educational leadership may differ substantially in institutional setting, research design, and conceptual terminology, making direct comparisons difficult. Third, findings from Indonesian madrasahs and pesantren may not be transferable to Islamic educational institutions operating under different governance systems or cultural conditions. Finally, the proposed framework has not yet been empirically validated.

Future research should complete the database search and systematic screening process, document the PRISMA flow, and conduct a transparent quality appraisal of the included studies. Comparative studies across madrasahs, Islamic schools, and pesantren could then examine how governance, institutional culture, and resource availability influence leadership development. Empirical research could also operationalize Islamic ethical principles and

investigate their relationship with leadership practices, teacher professional growth, organizational trust, and educational improvement. Longitudinal or mixed-methods designs would be particularly useful for determining whether leadership development programmes produce sustained changes in practice rather than short-term gains in knowledge or confidence.

4. CONCLUSION

Leadership development in Islamic educational institutions requires an approach that extends beyond administrative training and incorporates professional competence, organizational learning, and ethical responsibility. The literature discussed in this study provides a basis for examining professional development, mentoring, leadership succession, and distributed leadership as complementary approaches to strengthening institutional leadership. Their contribution depends on the alignment between development activities, institutional needs, organizational support, and opportunities to apply new knowledge in everyday practice.

The proposed conceptual framework integrates three dimensions: individual leadership competencies, organizational conditions, and Islamic ethical orientation. Professional competencies support effective educational management and instructional improvement, while organizational conditions enable leaders to develop and apply those competencies. Islamic ethical principles, including amanah, 'adl, and syura, provide a normative orientation for the exercise of authority, the allocation of resources, and collaborative decision-making. Integrating these dimensions may help Islamic educational institutions develop leaders who are professionally capable, ethically accountable, and responsive to their institutional contexts.

In practical terms, leadership development programmes should combine structured training with mentoring, collaborative learning, succession planning, and continuous evaluation. Institutions should assess development not only through participation or completion certificates but also through observable changes in leadership practice, teacher collaboration, institutional accountability, and educational improvement. Such programmes should be adapted to the distinct characteristics of madrasahs, Islamic schools, and pesantren rather than implemented through a uniform model.

This study nevertheless has an important limitation: the proposed synthesis and conceptual framework require confirmation through a completed and transparently reported systematic review. The final analysis must establish the characteristics and quality of the included studies before drawing conclusions about the consistency, effectiveness, or generalizability of particular strategies. Future research should compare leadership

development practices across different Islamic educational settings and empirically investigate the relationship between professional competencies, organizational support, Islamic ethical leadership, and institutional outcomes. Longitudinal and mixed-methods studies would be particularly valuable for determining whether integrated leadership development produces sustainable improvements in educational practice.

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