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Islamic Values–Based Educational Leadership in Improving Teacher Performance at Al-Hidayah Senior High School, Medan

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Abstract

Islamic values–based leadership of the school principal plays an important role in shaping the work culture and teacher performance at SMA Al-Hidayah Medan. Leadership practices are implemented by instilling the values of amanah (trustworthiness), honesty, justice, deliberation (musyawarah), and exemplary conduct in daily school life. These values are manifested through the habituation of religious activities, moral development programs, teacher involvement in decision-making processes, and the discipline and sense of responsibility demonstrated by the principal. Leadership that emphasizes guidance and a persuasive approach fosters harmonious working relationships between the principal and teachers and creates a religious and conducive school environment. The application of Islamic values in leadership is reflected in teachers' performance, which shows improvements in discipline, responsibility, teaching preparedness, sincerity, and active participation in school activities. Teachers perceive their teaching duties as an amanah and a form of worship, motivating them to carry out their responsibilities with awareness and professional commitment. A work environment grounded in justice, openness, and exemplary leadership encourages teachers to work not due to pressure, but because of intrinsic motivation. The implementation of Islamic values–based leadership is supported by structured religious activities, the principal's role modeling, strong cooperation among school members, and a religious school atmosphere. Challenges remain, particularly differences in levels of awareness, discipline, and teachers' ability to adapt to the implemented values; however, these obstacles are addressed through continuous guidance and a humanistic approach. These findings indicate that Islamic values–based leadership contributes to improving teacher performance and building a school work culture enriched with moral and spiritual values.

***Keywords**: Principal Leadership, Islamic Values, Teacher Performance*

Study Background

Teacher performance is an important indicator in determining the quality of education in schools. Teachers do not only function as transmitters of instructional content, but also as educators who play a crucial role in shaping students' character, attitudes, and values. Teacher performance reflects the level of responsibility, discipline, and professionalism in carrying out educational duties comprehensively. In recent years, various studies have emphasized that improving teacher performance cannot be separated from the role of effective school leadership that is oriented toward values (Alfaiz, 2024).

This article discusses the role of Islamic values–based leadership in improving teacher performance in Islamic secondary schools, particularly at Al Hidayah Senior High School, Medan. The authors emphasize that teachers do not merely function as transmitters of academic knowledge but also as educators who shape students' character, attitudes, and moral values. Teacher performance reflects responsibility, discipline, and professionalism in carrying out educational duties comprehensively.

In the context of Islamic education, teacher performance has a broader dimension because it involves the implementation of Islamic values such as *amanah* (trustworthiness), *ikhlas* (sincerity), *ihsan* (excellence), and honesty, in addition to professional competence and academic achievement. This is consistent with the view of Ramadani et al., (2025), who argue that Islamic education emphasizes the

integration of professionalism with moral and spiritual responsibility.

These values serve as the foundation for building a teacher work ethic that is not merely oriented toward administrative targets, but also toward the quality of dedication and exemplary conduct. Based on the results of interviews conducted with the principal of Al Hidayah Senior High School, Medan, it was found that school leadership is directed toward the implementation of Islamic values in all aspects of school management. The principal stated that teacher development is carried out not only through formal supervision, but also through exemplary leadership, courteous communication, and deliberation (*musyawarah*) in decision-making. The principal emphasized that teachers are guided to understand their teaching duties as an *amanah* that must be carried out with full responsibility. Leadership practices of this kind are in line with the view that Yudiaatmaja, (2013) which states that Islamic leadership requires leaders to integrate managerial roles with moral and spiritual responsibilities.

The results of interviews with teachers indicate that the implementation of Islamic values–based leadership has a positive impact on a more conducive working atmosphere. Teachers reported that the relationship between school leaders and teachers is built on mutual respect and trust. Teachers feel more comfortable in carrying out their duties because they are given opportunities to express their opinions and to be involved in the school's deliberative decision-making processes. These conditions strengthen the findings that Shofiyyah et al., (2023) which states that Islamic values–based educational leadership is able to create a participatory working climate and enhance teachers' commitment to their professional duties.

Nevertheless, the interview results also revealed challenges in maintaining the consistency of teacher performance. Several teachers reported that a relatively high administrative workload and differences in the level of understanding of Islamic values affect the optimization of task implementation. This indicates that the application of Islamic values–based leadership requires not only policies and directives, but also a continuous process of value internalization. These findings are in line with Irmawati (2024) which states that Islamic values in leadership need to be translated into practical actions so that they do not remain at a merely normative level.

Furthermore, recent studies also emphasize that the success of Islamic values–based educational leadership is strongly influenced by school culture and the readiness of human resources. A religious and consistent school culture will facilitate teachers in internalizing Islamic values into their professional performance (Irmawati, 2024). Without the support of a strong organizational culture, values-based leadership is likely to encounter obstacles in its implementation.

Based on the findings from field interviews and the support of recent scholarly studies, it can be concluded that Islamic values–based educational leadership plays a strategic role in improving teacher performance. However, its implementation requires exemplary leadership, effective communication, and continuous professional development to ensure that Islamic values are truly internalized in teachers' work behavior. Therefore, this study focuses on analyzing Islamic values–based educational leadership in improving teacher performance at Al Hidayah Senior High School, Medan, in order to provide a comprehensive empirical description of Islamic leadership practices at the secondary school level.

Statement of the Problem

Based on the research background, the problem context, and the focus of the study on Islamic values–based educational leadership at Al-Hidayah Senior High School, Medan, the research questions in this study are formulated as follows:

1. How is Islamic values–based educational leadership implemented by the principal at Al-Hidayah Senior High School, Medan?
2. How is Islamic values–based educational leadership reflected in teacher performance at Al-Hidayah Senior High School, Medan?
3. What factors support and hinder the implementation of Islamic values–based leadership in improving teacher performance at Al-Hidayah Senior High School, Medan?

Research Objectives

In line with the formulated research questions, the objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To analyze the implementation of Islamic values–based educational leadership by the principal at Al-Hidayah Senior High School, Medan.
2. To describe the relationship between Islamic values–based educational leadership and teacher performance at Al-Hidayah Senior High School, Medan.
3. To identify the supporting and inhibiting factors in the implementation of Islamic values–based educational leadership in improving teacher performance at Al-Hidayah Senior High School, Medan.

Research Benefits

This study is expected to provide the following benefits:

Theoretical Benefits

Theoretically, this study is expected to contribute to the development of Islamic educational leadership studies, particularly in relation to the application of Islamic values in school leadership and their influence on teacher performance. The findings of this study may enrich scholarly discourse in the field of Islamic educational management and serve as a reference for future research examining values-based leadership with moral and spiritual dimensions in educational contexts.

Practical Benefits

For Principals: This study may serve as a reflective resource and reference for school principals in implementing Islamic values–based leadership more effectively in order to foster a religious, conducive work culture oriented toward improving teacher performance.

For Teachers: The findings of this study are expected to enhance teachers' awareness in understanding their teaching duties as an *amanah* and a form of worship, thereby encouraging discipline, responsibility, and professional commitment in carrying out their roles as educators.

For Schools: This study may contribute to the development of a school work culture grounded in Islamic values, strengthen harmonious working relationships, and improve the quality of education through enhanced teacher performance.

For Future Researchers: This study may serve as an initial reference and foundation for future researchers interested in examining Islamic values–based educational leadership or related topics using different contexts and research approaches.

Method

This study will be conducted at Al Hidayah Senior High School, Medan, an Islamic-based secondary school that implements Islamic values in both teaching and learning activities as well as school management. The school was selected because it applies an educational system that emphasizes character development, discipline, and teacher professionalism grounded in Islamic values. The school's Islamic-oriented environment makes it an appropriate setting to explore how Islamic values–based educational leadership is practiced and how its implementation influences teacher performance.

Although Islamic values–based leadership has been widely discussed in educational studies, a deeper understanding of its practical implementation in Islamic secondary schools is still needed. This approach emphasizes the importance of values such as *amanah* (trustworthiness), justice, honesty, responsibility, and *musyawarah* (deliberation) as guiding principles in managing educational institutions. Through the application of these values, school principals are expected to serve as role models for teachers and to build a work culture that is honest, disciplined, and oriented toward moral and spiritual responsibility.

Islamic schools such as Al Hidayah Senior High School, Medan, provide a relevant context for examining the implementation of Islamic values–based leadership. Unlike public schools, Islamic educational institutions integrate academic learning with spiritual and character development. Routine religious activities, such as Qur'anic study sessions and congregational prayers, have a positive impact on students' moral development. In addition, the implementation of *dakwah*-based activities, such as religious speeches, forms an integral part of the school culture. According to Djamaluddin (2025), The habituation of Islamic values within the school environment can foster better discipline, responsibility, and work attitudes among teachers.

By focusing on a school that is committed to implementing Islamic values across all educational activities, this study aims to provide a deeper understanding of how Islamic values–based educational leadership is practiced at Al Hidayah Senior High School, Medan. This study also examines how the application of values such as *amanah* (trustworthiness), justice, honesty, responsibility, and *musyawarah* (deliberation) influences teachers' professional attitudes, discipline, and overall performance in carrying out their duties.

Research Design

This study employs a phenomenological case study approach to gain an in-depth understanding of how Islamic values–based educational leadership is implemented at Al Hidayah Senior High School, Medan, and how it influences teacher performance. This approach is selected because the study does not aim to measure or test variables, but rather to explore the experiences and perspectives of the principal and teachers in their daily school activities.

The phenomenological approach is used because the focus of the study lies in the participants' direct experiences (Apriyanto et al., 2022:43)**.** The principal and teachers have different experiences in implementing and experiencing Islamic values–based leadership. Through this approach, the researcher seeks to explore how they understand, experience, and interpret Islamic values such as *amanah* (trustworthiness), honesty, justice, and responsibility

in leadership practices and in carrying out their duties as educators.

A case study approach is employed because this research focuses on a single research site, namely Al Hidayah Senior High School, Medan. By concentrating on one school, the researcher is able to gain a more detailed and comprehensive understanding of the school's conditions. This approach enables the researcher to examine the relationship between the principal's leadership practices and teachers' behavior and performance within the context of an Islamic school.

Through this research design, data are collected based on the narratives, perspectives, and experiences of participants as conveyed directly by them. These data provide insights into how Islamic values–based leadership is practiced in reality and how teachers respond to such leadership in performing their teaching duties, guiding students, and fulfilling other professional responsibilities.

Research Participants

This study is planned to involve four participants consisting of the principal, the vice principal, and two subject teachers at Al Hidayah Senior High School, Medan. The participants are selected using purposive sampling based on criteria of relevance and direct involvement in the implementation of Islamic values–based leadership and efforts to improve teacher performance at the school.

The principal and vice principal are recruited because they hold strategic responsibilities in designing, directing, and implementing policies related to teacher professional development. Meanwhile, the two subject teachers are selected based on their active involvement in teaching and learning activities, religious guidance programs, and participation in teacher competency development initiatives. This selection is expected to provide diverse perspectives on how Islamic values are applied in school leadership and how such practices influence the improvement of teacher performance.

The demographic profiles of the research participants are presented in the following table:

No	Initials	Gender	Position	Educational Qualification
1	AMHS	Male	Principal	Master's Degree in Education
2	AS	Male	Vice Principal for Student Affairs	Master's Degree in Education
3	AR	Female	Mathematics Teacher	Bachelor's Degree in Education
4	SH	Female	Physics Teacher	Bachelor's Degree in Education

The participants involved in this study represent various structural and functional positions within the school, thereby providing a comprehensive depiction of the implementation of Islamic values–based educational leadership at Al Hidayah Senior High School, Medan. The principal serves as the primary policy maker who directs the school's vision and mission to align with Islamic principles. The vice principal plays an important role in carrying out managerial functions, particularly in the area of student affairs, which is directly related to the supervision and development of teachers and students. Meanwhile, subject teachers act as the main implementers of the principal's policies at the operational level, interacting directly with students and significantly influencing the success of the teaching and learning process.

The diversity of educational backgrounds and professional experiences among the participants is expected to enrich the research data, particularly in understanding how Islamic values are applied within leadership practices and how these values influence teachers' motivation, work ethic, and professionalism. By incorporating multiple perspectives, this study is able to provide an in-depth portrayal of how an Islamic leadership model can contribute to improving teacher performance and enhancing the quality of education at Al Hidayah Senior High School, Medan**.**

Data Collection

Data in this study are collected using semi-structured interviews, as this technique allows the researcher to adjust questions according to the situation and participants' responses. This approach is chosen to enable the researcher to obtain a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the experiences of the principal and teachers in implementing Islamic values in educational leadership and their impact on teacher performance (Ismail, 2024). Prior to conducting the interviews, the researcher first established rapport with the participants. This step was essential to create a comfortable and open atmosphere, enabling participants to share their views and experiences honestly and without pressure. According to Marendah Ratnaningtyas (2023), The quality of the relationship between the researcher and respondents greatly influences the depth of information that can be obtained in qualitative research.

Each participant was provided with a clear explanation of the research objectives, the benefits of the study, and their rights, including the right to refuse to answer certain questions or to withdraw from the interview at any time without any consequences. The researcher also ensured the confidentiality and anonymity of participants' identities and confirmed that all procedures were conducted in accordance with ethical principles of qualitative research.

The interviews were conducted through face-to-face meetings, with each interview lasting between 10 and 15 minutes per participant. The interview schedule was arranged flexibly so as not to disrupt teaching and learning activities at the school. All interviews were audio-recorded with the participants' consent, and the researcher also took field notes to capture important points that emerged during the interview process in order to strengthen the interview transcripts.

In addition to interviews, observation and documentation techniques were also employed to strengthen the research data. Observation was used to directly examine how Islamic values–based leadership was practiced by the principal and how teacher performance was demonstrated in daily school activities. This technique was selected because not all leadership practices and aspects of teacher performance can be fully explained through interviews alone. Through observation, the researcher was able to directly observe attitudes, actions, and interactions between the principal and teachers, ensuring that the data were not solely based on participants' statements but also on actual conditions in the field.

To ensure that observations were conducted in a focused and systematic manner, an observation guide was utilized. This guide contained specific aspects to be observed in accordance with the research focus, such as the principal's leadership behavior, the implementation of Islamic values in school activities, and teachers' attitudes and performance. The use of an observation guide enabled the researcher to record relevant data and avoid overly general or unfocused observations.

Documentation was used to collect written data related to the implementation of Islamic values–based leadership and teacher performance. The analyzed documents included the school's vision and mission statements, work programs and policies issued by the principal, supervision reports, meeting minutes, religious activity programs, and relevant teacher administrative records. These documentary data served as supporting sources and as triangulation materials to strengthen the findings from interviews and observations.

Data Analysis

Data analysis in this study employs a qualitative approach by referring to the data analysis model proposed by Miles and Huberman (Miles & Huberman, 1994). According to Miles and Huberman, qualitative data analysis is an ongoing and interconnected process that occurs continuously from the stage of data collection to the drawing of final conclusions (Miles & Huberman, 1994:10). This model consists of three main stages, namely data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification.

During the data reduction stage, the researcher selected, focused, and simplified data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation that were relevant to the implementation of Islamic values–based leadership and teacher performance. Data that were not directly related to the research focus were eliminated, while relevant data were categorized based on the main themes emerging from the field. After the data were reduced, they were presented in the form of thematic and descriptive narratives organized according to the main categories and themes identified in the findings.

Data display aims to present information in a systematic manner to facilitate the researcher's understanding of patterns, relationships among concepts, and the dynamics of the implementation of Islamic values–based leadership and teacher performance. Through structured data presentation, the researcher is able to compare data across participants and data sources, which subsequently serves as the basis for the process of drawing and verifying conclusions. The final stage is conclusion drawing and verification, which is conducted gradually and continuously throughout the data analysis process. Preliminary conclusions that emerge during analysis are not immediately regarded as final results, but are continuously verified by revisiting field data and comparing them with findings obtained from different sources and data collection techniques.

The trustworthiness of the data in this study emerges directly from this systematic data analysis process. To strengthen data validity, the researcher applied source triangulation and methodological triangulation integrated into each stage of analysis. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing data obtained from the principal and teachers to

examine the consistency of information and the alignment of perspectives among participants regarding the practice of Islamic values–based leadership and its implications for teacher performance. This comparison was intended to ensure that the information obtained was not one-sided, but rather reflected the realities as understood by various parties directly involved in the research context.

Result and Discussion

Research Findings

This section presents the research findings obtained through in-depth interviews with the principal, the vice principal, and two teachers at Al-Hidayah Senior High School, Medan. The presentation of the findings is organized according to the research questions and is presented in the form of thematic narratives supported by direct quotations from the participants. This approach is employed to provide a comprehensive depiction of the implementation of Islamic values–based leadership and its implications for teacher performance.

The Implementation of Islamic Values in the Principal's Leadership at Al-Hidayah Senior High School, Medan

Based on interviews with the principal, the vice principal, and teachers, it was found that the principal of Al-Hidayah Senior High School, Medan, has concretely implemented Islamic values in his leadership practices. The application of these values is not merely conveyed through rules or formal policies, but is realized through daily habits, religious activities, and exemplary attitudes demonstrated directly by the principal in everyday school life.

The principal explained that the Islamic values applied are primarily oriented toward moral development (akhlaq) and the strengthening of faith among all members of the school community. This is reflected in the routine religious activities conducted at the school, which involve both teachers and students.

AMHS (In-depth Interview, January 23, 2026) stated:

> "The Islamic values that I apply as a principal here are mainly focused on moral development. There are many religious activities conducted in this school, such as reading the Qur'an before lessons begin, congregational prayers, and the commemoration of Islamic holy days such as Isra Mi'raj and the Prophet's birthday. In addition, during meetings—both scheduled and impromptu—we always practice deliberation (musyawarah) in decision-making, so teachers are actively involved in the process."

The statements indicate that the implementation of Islamic values is carried out through concrete activities that have become habitual practices within the school. The routine activities of reciting the Qur'an before lessons and performing congregational prayers demonstrate the principal's efforts to instill religious values among teachers and students. These activities also help create a calmer school environment with a strong Islamic atmosphere. In addition, the implementation of Islamic holy day commemorations involving teachers shows that the principal does not focus solely on academic aspects, but also pays attention to the moral development and religious attitudes of teachers. This reflects the principal's leadership efforts to build teachers' character as educators with good morals.

The vice principal stated that the implementation of Islamic values is also reflected in the way the principal guides teachers and makes decisions. The principal is considered to emphasize the values of trustworthiness (amanah), justice, and deliberation (musyawarah) in carrying out leadership duties. As (Direct interview, January 23, 2026)

> The principal applies Islamic values by emphasizing trustworthiness and fairness. Teachers are encouraged to be responsible in carrying out their teaching duties, are guided first when mistakes occur, and are involved in deliberative decision-making processes. The approach used prioritizes advice, guidance, and openness in accordance with Islamic values.

These statements indicate that the principal prioritizes guidance over punishment. Teachers who make mistakes are not immediately given sanctions; instead, they are first provided with advice and direction so that they can improve themselves. This approach reflects values of justice and care within leadership based on Islamic principles.

The involvement of teachers in deliberation also shows that the principal provides opportunities for teachers to express their opinions. This creates a better working relationship between the leadership and teachers, and fosters mutual respect within the school environment. According to teachers, the implementation of Islamic values in the principal's leadership is experienced through the exemplary attitudes demonstrated in daily behavior.

Ar (Direct interview, January 24, 2026)

> The implementation of Islamic values can be seen in the habit of reciting the Qur'an before lessons and the involvement of teachers in

> religious activities. The principal also sets an example of discipline by arriving on time and actively participating in school activities, which motivates teachers to follow the attitudes demonstrated.

These statements show that the principal's attitudes serve as a role model for teachers. Punctuality, discipline, and direct involvement in religious activities make it easier for teachers to adopt and apply Islamic values in carrying out their professional duties.

These findings indicate that the principal of SMA Al-Hidayah Medan has implemented Islamic values in leadership through moral guidance, religious activities, deliberation, and exemplary conduct. The application of these values creates a religious and harmonious school environment and supports the establishment of a positive work culture.

The Implementation of Islamic Values as Reflected in Teacher Performance at SMA Al-Hidayah Medan

This section describes how the implementation of Islamic values in the principal's leadership is reflected in teacher performance at SMA Al-Hidayah Medan. Teacher performance is not only assessed based on teaching competence, but also on attitudes, discipline, responsibility, and awareness in carrying out duties as educators. The Islamic values instilled by the principal influence how teachers work and interact within the school environment.

The principal emphasizes that teachers must carry out their duties with full trustworthiness (*amanah*) and responsibility. Teaching is viewed not merely as a job, but also as a form of worship that must be performed earnestly. Therefore, teachers are directed to be disciplined in managing time, to prepare lessons properly, and to carry out their duties in accordance with applicable regulations. Ams (Direct interview, January 23, 2026)

> The implementation of Islamic values is reflected in teacher performance through trustworthiness and discipline. Teachers are required to be punctual, prepare learning materials, and take responsibility for their teaching duties. If violations occur, guidance is carried out gradually.

These statements indicate that Islamic values serve as the foundation for fostering teacher performance. Discipline and readiness in teaching are viewed as forms of moral and professional responsibility. The gradual guidance process shows that improving teacher performance is pursued through an educative approach rather than pressure.

In addition, teacher performance is influenced by how the principal guides and directs teachers in carrying out their duties. Teachers who demonstrate good performance are given trust, while those who are less disciplined are provided with direction and advice to help them improve. As (Direct interview, January 23, 2026)

> Teacher performance can be seen in how they fulfill the trust placed upon them in teaching. The principal consistently emphasizes teachers' responsibility toward students. Diligent teachers are guided and supported, while those who are less disciplined are not immediately sanctioned but are advised so they can improve themselves in accordance with Islamic values.

These statements show that the implementation of Islamic values is reflected in the way the principal evaluates and guides teachers. An approach that prioritizes advice and guidance reflects values of justice and care, allowing teachers to feel supported rather than blamed.

According to teachers, the implementation of Islamic values in the principal's leadership has a positive impact on work motivation and responsibility. Teachers become more aware of their obligations as educators and strive to carry out their duties more effectively. Ar (Direct interview, January 24, 2026)

> Islamic values in the principal's leadership have an impact on teacher performance. Teachers become more disciplined, more responsible, and more active in school activities, including religious programs.

These statements indicate that Islamic values influence not only teachers' performance in the classroom, but also their involvement in overall school activities. Teachers become more active in participating in religious activities and collaborating with colleagues, creating a more positive working environment.

Another teacher also stated that the implementation of Islamic values creates a comfortable working atmosphere and encourages teachers to work based on awareness rather than fear. Sh (Direct interview, January 24, 2026)

> With the implementation of Islamic values in the school, the working atmosphere becomes more comfortable. Teachers work not out of fear, but out of awareness.

These statements indicate that Islamic values influence teachers' work motivation. Teachers feel valued and guided, resulting in performance driven by self-awareness and a sense of responsibility.

This second finding indicates that the implementation of Islamic values in the principal's leadership is reflected in teacher performance at SMA Al-Hidayah Medan. Values such as trustworthiness, discipline, responsibility, and sincerity encourage teachers to carry out their duties more effectively, create a conducive working environment, and support the achievement of educational goals at the school.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Implementation of Islamic Values-Based Leadership toward Improving Teacher Performance at SMA Al-Hidayah Medan

This section describes the supporting and inhibiting factors in the implementation of Islamic values-based leadership toward improving teacher performance at SMA Al-Hidayah Medan. The implementation of Islamic values in leadership is influenced by various conditions that affect its success, both those that support and those that become obstacles in its implementation.

One of the main supporting factors in implementing Islamic values-based leadership is the existence of routine and structured religious activities at the school. The principal stated that religious activities serve as an important means of instilling Islamic values in teachers and students, while also forming positive habits in school life.

> Amh (Direct interview, January 23, 2026)
>
> The supporting factors for implementing Islamic values-based leadership include religious activities such as spiritual development programs, deliberation (*musyawarah*), and leadership by example. Meanwhile, the inhibiting factors include the presence of teachers who are sometimes less disciplined or have not fully carried out their responsibilities (*amanah*), thus requiring gradual guidance and continuous motivation.

These statements indicate that religious activities play a major role in supporting the implementation of Islamic values at the school. Activities such as congregational prayers, Qur'an recitation, and the commemoration of Islamic holy days help create a religious atmosphere that encourages teachers to be more aware of their responsibilities. In addition, the principal's exemplary conduct is an important factor that strengthens the implementation of these values.

The principal's example is reflected in discipline, direct involvement in religious activities, and the manner in which teachers are guided. This makes it easier for teachers to accept and apply Islamic values in their performance. These findings show that the success of Islamic values-based leadership is strongly influenced by the attitudes and behaviors of the leader as a role model for subordinates.

The vice principal added that another supporting factor is the existence of cooperation and openness between the leadership and teachers. Good relationships facilitate the guidance process and communication in carrying out duties.

> As (Direct interview, January 23, 2026)
>
> The supporting factors include openness, guidance, and cooperation between the principal and me as the vice principal, as well as with teachers. Everything is directed through advice and deliberation, and no one is scolded here. The inhibiting factors usually involve teachers who are not yet fully aware of their responsibilities, so they need to be reminded and guided first in order to carry out their duties properly.

These statements indicate that good cooperation between the leadership and teachers creates a conducive working atmosphere. Teachers feel involved and appreciated, making it easier to direct them to improve their performance in accordance with Islamic values. Openness in communication also helps resolve problems without causing conflict.

However, in its implementation, there are still several inhibiting factors. One of the obstacles identified is the difference in levels of awareness and discipline among teachers in consistently applying Islamic values. Not all teachers have the same level of understanding and readiness, thus requiring a continuous guidance process.

According to teachers, supporting factors for the implementation of Islamic values-based leadership also come from adequate facilities and a comfortable working atmosphere. A religious school environment makes teachers feel calmer and more focused in their work.

> Ar (Direct interview, January 24, 2026)
>
> The supporting factors for improving teacher performance, in my opinion, include the principal's exemplary conduct, which can serve as a model for us, the availability of learning facilities such as the newly provided digital TV, and religious activities. The inhibiting factors sometimes relate to differences in teachers' abilities, so time is needed to adapt to changes in learning methods such as the use of digital TV. All teachers need to adjust and develop their skills, and the principal always provides direction and guidance to us.

These statements indicate that facilities and a supportive working environment help teachers improve their performance. However, differences in teachers' abilities and backgrounds present challenges in implementing Islamic values evenly. This explains that the process of implementing Islamic values-based leadership requires time and patience.

Another teacher also stated that obstacles do not only come from individual teachers, but also from long-standing habits that are difficult to change. The process of adapting to new rules and habits requires continuous assistance.

> Sh (Direct interview, January 24, 2026)
>
> The supporting factors, in my opinion, include guidance from the principal, which is very important, as well as teacher training programs where all teachers receive training when new developments arise, and a comfortable working atmosphere. The inhibiting factors are more related to teachers' readiness to face these changes, thus requiring guidance and mentoring so that teacher performance continues to improve.

These statements indicate that changes in attitudes and behavior cannot occur instantly. The principal needs to carry out gradual guidance so that Islamic values are truly internalized and reflected in teacher performance.

Overall, these findings indicate that the implementation of Islamic values-based leadership toward improving teacher performance at SMA Al-Hidayah Medan is supported by the presence of religious activities, leadership by example, good cooperation, and a religious school environment. Meanwhile, the inhibiting factors include differences in teachers' levels of discipline, awareness, and ability to adapt to the applied values. Nevertheless, these obstacles are addressed through continuous guidance and a persuasive approach.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The implementation of Islamic values in the principal's leadership at SMA Al-Hidayah Medan indicates that leadership is understood not merely as a managerial function, but as a moral and spiritual trust (*amanah*). Islamic values serve as the main principles in policy-making, teacher development, and the formation of school culture. Leadership is carried out by emphasizing responsibility, honesty, justice, deliberation (*musyawarah*), and exemplary conduct in daily school life.

The research findings show that the implementation of Islamic values is carried out through the habituation of religious activities and a humanistic leadership approach. These values are not only conveyed normatively, but are also internalized through consistent leadership practices. This is in line with the view that Islamic leadership emphasizes moral and spiritual dimensions as the primary foundation in leading educational organizations (Susanti et al., 2024). Leadership grounded in Islamic values encourages the creation of a religious, calm, and conducive school environment.

The value of *amanah* serves as a fundamental foundation in educational leadership at SMA Al-Hidayah Medan. *Amanah* is reflected in the leader's responsibility to manage the school in a fair and transparent manner. When leadership is carried out with a strong sense of *amanah*, teachers experience fairness and openness within the school system. This condition fosters trust and encourages teachers to perform their duties with a high level of responsibility. This finding is consistent with previous research indicating that *amanah* and honesty in Islamic leadership have a positive influence on teacher performance and the overall school working climate (Na'im, 2022).

In addition to *amanah*, the value of *shura* (deliberation) also constitutes an important element in leadership practices. Open leadership that involves teachers in decision-making processes fosters a sense of ownership toward school policies. Teachers feel valued as integral members of the organization, which in turn encourages them to actively participate in achieving school goals. This approach aligns with research findings indicating that Islamic leadership that emphasizes *shura* is able to enhance teachers' motivation and commitment (Ansori et al., 2025).

Exemplary conduct (*uswah hasanah*) also constitutes an important element in the implementation of Islamic values in leadership. Leaders who demonstrate discipline, responsibility, and direct involvement in school activities are able to serve as concrete role models for teachers. Such exemplary behavior shapes an Islamic work culture that encourages teachers to emulate the positive conduct of their leaders in carrying out their duties. This finding is consistent with the study by Yaqin (2023), which states that leaders' exemplary behavior plays a significant role in shaping teachers' work ethic and professionalism.

The implementation of these Islamic values in leadership is subsequently reflected in teacher performance. Teachers carry out their teaching duties with the awareness that the teaching profession is a trust (*amanah*) and a form of worship. This awareness encourages teachers to be more disciplined,

responsible, and committed in conducting lesson planning, the teaching process, and the evaluation of learning outcomes. This condition is in line with the findings of Sunanda (2020), which demonstrates that Islamic leadership has a positive effect on improving teachers' discipline and sense of responsibility.

Furthermore, Islamic values-based educational leadership also fosters teachers' sincerity (*ikhlas*) in their work. A religious and spiritually nuanced school environment shapes work attitudes characterized by patience, consistency, and resilience. Teachers carry out their duties not merely to fulfill formal obligations, but as a form of dedication and service. These findings support the results of previous studies Fardiatama & Prayitno (2025), which state that Islamic values-based leadership enhances teachers' sincerity in their work and has a positive impact on performance improvement. The value of honesty is also reflected in teacher performance through the implementation of more objective and transparent assessment and instructional administration. Leadership that upholds honesty creates an ethical working climate, thereby encouraging teachers to perform their duties professionally. This is in line with the findings of Anisah (2025) which indicate that the ethical climate built through Islamic leadership has a significant influence on teachers' professionalism and performance.

In addition, fairness in leadership also affects teacher performance. Fair treatment in task distribution and performance evaluation creates a sense of comfort and trust in the working environment. This sense of fairness encourages teachers to work objectively and responsibly. This is consistent with the findings Dwi (2025), which state that fairness in Islamic educational leadership contributes to the improvement of teachers' motivation and performance.

Nevertheless, the implementation of Islamic values-based leadership also faces several challenges. Differences in teachers' levels of understanding of Islamic values, resistance to change, and administrative workload are factors that may hinder the optimal implementation of these values. When Islamic values are not yet fully understood in depth, their application tends to be inconsistent. This is in line with the views Indah (2025), which state that weak conceptual understanding of Islamic values can hinder the effectiveness of values-based leadership.

In addition, high work pressure and limited time also affect teachers' ability to optimally internalize Islamic values in instructional practice. These conditions may result in Islamic values not being fully manifested in teacher performance. These findings support previous research Mesalaen et al (2025), which state that a high workload can reduce the effectiveness of implementing ethical and spiritual values in the field of education.

Overall, this discussion indicates that the implementation of Islamic values-based educational leadership at SMA Al-Hidayah Medan aligns with theoretical studies and has a positive impact on teacher performance. Leadership that emphasizes *amanah*, honesty, fairness, *shura* (deliberation), and exemplary conduct is able to shape teachers' work ethic to be professional, ethical, and imbued with a sense of worship. Although challenges remain, Islamic values-based leadership continues to serve as a strategic approach to improving teacher performance in a holistic manner.

Theoretical Implications

The results of this study indicate that Islamic values-based educational leadership plays an important role in improving teacher performance. Leadership that emphasizes the values of *amanah*, honesty, fairness, *shura* (deliberation), and exemplary conduct helps create a more positive working environment within the school. These findings are consistent with theoretical perspectives which explain that Islamic leadership does not focus solely on school management, but also on the cultivation of moral and spiritual values (Nadilah & Yasmini, 2024).

The findings of this study further strengthen the view that Islamic values implemented by school leaders can influence teachers' attitudes and working practices. When the principal demonstrates responsibility and honesty, teachers tend to carry out their duties with greater discipline and awareness. Teachers perceive their work as a trust (*amanah*), which encourages them to perform their responsibilities to the best of their ability. This is in accordance with theories stating that spiritual values can enhance teachers' sense of responsibility and performance (Imron & Warsah, 2019).

In addition, this study supports theories suggesting that Islamic leadership plays a role in shaping school work culture. Leadership that emphasizes deliberation (*shura*) and justice fosters harmonious working relationships between school leaders and teachers. A comfortable working atmosphere enables teachers to be more focused and motivated in carrying out instructional activities. This condition aligns with the view that a school culture grounded in Islamic values can support improvements in teacher performance (Oktaviani, 2015)

This study also shows that the implementation of Islamic values-based leadership is influenced by the level of understanding and readiness of school members. When teachers have a strong understanding of Islamic values and the school environment is supportive, these values are more easily applied in daily performance. These findings support theories stating that the implementation of Islamic leadership requires a continuous habituation process (Na'im, 2022).

Through these findings, the study of Islamic educational leadership is further strengthened by demonstrating that Islamic values are not merely conceptual, but can be practically implemented to improve teacher performance. This study may serve as a foundation for developing Islamic educational leadership theories that are more simple, applicable, and aligned with the context of Islamic schools.

Practical Implications

The results of this study provide practical implications for the implementation of leadership in Islamic schools, particularly in improving teacher performance through the application of Islamic values. Leadership that emphasizes *amanah*, honesty, justice, *shura*, and exemplary conduct has been shown to help create a more comfortable and conducive working environment. When these values are consistently applied by the principal, teachers feel more appreciated, trusted, and motivated in carrying out their duties.

Practical implications are also evident in the way teachers perform their professional responsibilities. Islamic values-based leadership encourages teachers to view their work as a trust (*amanah*) and a form of worship. This perspective leads teachers to be more disciplined, responsible, and committed to providing the best possible learning experiences for students. A work environment grounded in Islamic values helps teachers work with greater calmness and focus, thereby positively affecting their daily performance.

Furthermore, the implementation of Islamic values-based leadership has implications for the development of a better school work culture. Practices of deliberation, mutual respect, and exemplary leadership strengthen working relationships among principals, teachers, and staff. Such a work culture supports harmonious collaboration and increases teachers' participation in school activities.

Another practical implication relates to overall school management. Leadership grounded in Islamic values helps schools focus not only on academic achievement but also on the development of attitudes and character among school members. As a result, schools are able to build an educational environment that is not only managerially effective but also morally and spiritually grounded, ultimately supporting sustainable improvements in teacher performance.

Conclusion

This article convincingly emphasizes that Islamic values–based leadership is a strategic factor in improving teacher performance in Islamic secondary schools. Its successful implementation depends on exemplary leadership, a religious school culture, participatory communication, and a continuous process of value internalization. This study contributes significantly to the literature on Islamic education by highlighting the integration of moral, spiritual, and professional values in school leadership practices.

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