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Emotional Intelligence and Islamic Values in the Leadership of Madrasah Principals

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ABSTRACT: *Emotional intelligence is a crucial competency in Islamic educational leadership, particularly when navigating resource constraints, decision-making processes, and conflict resolution. This study aims to analyse the application of emotional intelligence in the leadership practices of the principal of Madrasah Hurrasul Aqidah in Tarakan City, focusing on responses to pressure, the integration of empathy and Islamic values into decision-making, and conflict resolution. A qualitative approach with a case study design was employed. Data were collected over two months through participant observation, semi-structured interviews with the principal, teachers, and educational staff, as well as relevant public and private documentation. Data analysis followed the model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, encompassing data condensation, data display, and the drawing and verification of conclusions. Data validity was strengthened through source triangulation, methodological triangulation, member checking, and an audit trail. The findings indicate that the principal addresses limitations in facilities and teachers' technological competencies through internal training, mentoring, and collaboration with other institutions. Decision-making reflects a concern for the well-being of the madrasah community, guided by principles such as empathy, consultation (syūrā), justice (‘adl), and trustworthiness (amanah). When faced with pressure or organisational challenges, the principal demonstrates an orientation toward strategic adjustment, effective communication, and the pursuit of collaborative solutions. These findings suggest that emotional intelligence is manifested through supportive, adaptive, and collaborative leadership practices, which function in tandem with managerial skills and organisational support. A limitation of this study is its focus on a single institution, which restricts the broader understanding of how emotional intelligence is applied within the context of Islamic educational leadership.*

Kecerdasan emosional merupakan kompetensi penting dalam kepemimpinan pendidikan Islam, terutama dalam menghadapi keterbatasan sumber daya, pengambilan keputusan, dan penyelesaian konflik. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis penerapan kecerdasan emosional dalam praktik kepemimpinan kepala Madrasah Hurrasul Aqidah di Kota Tarakan, dengan fokus pada respons terhadap tekanan, pertimbangan empati dan nilai-nilai Islam dalam pengambilan keputusan, serta penyelesaian konflik. Penelitian menggunakan

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pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus. Data dikumpulkan selama dua bulan melalui observasi partisipan, wawancara semi-terstruktur dengan kepala madrasah, guru, dan tenaga pendidik, serta dokumentasi publik dan privat yang relevan. Analisis data mengacu pada model Miles, Huberman, dan Saldana, yang meliputi kondensasi data, penyajian data, serta penarikan dan verifikasi kesimpulan. Keabsahan data diperkuat melalui triangulasi sumber, triangulasi teknik, member checking, dan audit trail. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepala madrasah merespons keterbatasan fasilitas dan kompetensi teknologi guru melalui pelatihan internal, pendampingan, dan kerja sama dengan institusi lain. Pengambilan keputusan memperlihatkan perhatian terhadap kondisi warga madrasah dan dapat dipahami melalui prinsip empati, musyawarah (*syūrā*), keadilan (*'adl*), dan *amanah*. Dalam menghadapi tekanan dan persoalan organisasi, kepala madrasah menunjukkan orientasi pada penyesuaian strategi, komunikasi, dan pencarian solusi bersama. Temuan ini mengindikasikan bahwa kecerdasan emosional tercermin dalam praktik kepemimpinan yang suportif, adaptif, dan kolaboratif, serta berjalan beriringan dengan kemampuan manajerial dan dukungan organisasi. Keterbatasan penelitian mencakup fokus pada satu lembaga, sehingga belum dapat memperluas pemahaman tentang penerapan kecerdasan emosional dalam kepemimpinan pendidikan Islam.

Keywords: *Emotional Intelligence, Madrasah Leadership, Islamic Values, Islamic Education, Decision-Making, Conflict Resolution.*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Islamic educational institutions serve not merely as venues for learning but also as organisations that bring together individuals with diverse responsibilities, perspectives, and interests (Nabilla, 2025). These institutions involve various stakeholders—such as madrasah principals, teachers, educational staff, students, and parents—each with distinct responsibilities and interests (Dacholfany et al., 2024). Such differences can give rise to issues that require effective leadership and conflict management skills. This places a demand on a leader's ability to regulate their emotions in order to take appropriate and proactive steps toward conflict resolution. In such contexts, emotional intelligence emerges as a highly relevant competency, as it pertains to a leader's capacity to recognise emotions, manage responses, and build interpersonal relationships (Gómez-Leal et al., 2022; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Nevertheless, the ability to regulate emotions does not automatically guarantee that a leader will take the initiative to resolve conflicts proactively. A number of studies have indicated that emotional intelligence is indeed linked to leadership and conflict management within educational settings (Alabay, 2023; Gómez-Leal et al., 2022; Nwosu & Nwankwo, 2024).

Theoretically, emotional intelligence can be understood as the ability to process emotional information to facilitate thinking and decision-making. Salovey & Mayer, (1990) define emotional intelligence through an ability-based approach, whereas Goleman (1995) emphasises competencies such as self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. In the context of school leadership, such competencies are relevant for understanding how leaders respond to pressure, build

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relationships, and navigate differences within the work environment (Gómez-Leal et al., 2022; Sasere & Matashu, 2025). However, emotional intelligence should not be narrowly understood merely as the ability to restrain anger or maintain composure. It must also be viewed in relation to how a leader manages conflict, interprets situations, considers the interests of the parties involved, and determines appropriate courses of action.

Furthermore, conflict management is another essential aspect for understanding leadership practices in educational institutions. Rahim (2002) outlines several approaches to conflict management, including integration, compromise, accommodation, domination, and avoidance. The specific approach employed may vary depending on the nature of the issue, the relationships between individuals, and the desired objectives. In a school setting, research by Zhou et al. (2025) indicates that emotional intelligence profiles are linked to variations in behavior when facing conflict, while Nwosu & Nwankwo (2024) examine the relationship between dimensions of emotional intelligence and conflict resolution approaches. Similarly, a study by Raharjo & Aisyah (2025) identifies emotional intelligence and leadership style as factors associated with the conflict management skills of educational leaders. Consequently, emotional intelligence should be analysed in conjunction with the concrete actions a leader takes when addressing challenges, rather than being assessed solely based on their inherent emotional capabilities.

From an Islamic perspective, leadership is understood not merely as the capacity to direct an organisation and make decisions, but as a trust (*amanah*) that must be exercised in accordance with moral values and accountability to Allah (SWT). Leaders within Islamic education are expected to cultivate qualities such as gentleness, fairness, patience, and wisdom when navigating differences or disputes. This principle is underscored in Surah Ali 'Imran [3]:159, which emphasises the importance of gentleness and consultation (*musyawarah*) in decision-making. In the context of conflict management, these values suggest that a leader must regulate their emotional responses, listen to the perspectives of the parties involved, and consider the impact of their decisions on social relationships and the sustainability of the institution. Similarly, Surah Asy-Syura [42]:38 identifies consultation as a defining characteristic of believers when managing collective affairs. Thus, emotional intelligence can be understood as a capacity that facilitates the application of Islamic values in practical action—particularly when a leader must navigate differences of opinion, make difficult decisions, and maintain harmony within an educational environment.

Beyond gentleness and consultation (*musyawarah*), Islam establishes justice and peace as essential principles for conflict resolution. Surah Al-Hujurat [49]:9–10 emphasises resolving disputes equitably and striving to reconcile conflicting parties. This principle is reinforced by Surah An-Nisa' [4]:135, which addresses the upholding of justice, and Surah Fussilat [41]:34, which encourages responding to wrongdoing with something better. Emotional intelligence enables leaders to apply these values through empathy, the avoidance of bias, and the resolution of conflicts without compromising anyone's dignity. In this context, a study by Khasanah (2022) on Islamic emotional intelligence in conflict management at SMK Muhammadiyah Delanggu offers relevant insights into the relationship between emotional regulation and conflict resolution within an Islamic educational setting. Consequently, leadership rooted in an Islamic perspective is evaluated not merely by the successful de-escalation of conflict, but also by whether the

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resolution process is conducted justly, prioritises consultation, preserves the dignity of those involved, and fosters improved relationships and the common good.

Previous research indicates that the relationship between emotional intelligence and conflict management has been examined through various approaches. In a systematic review, Gómez-Leal et al. (2022) highlight the significance of self-awareness, self-management, and empathy in school leadership. Through an analysis of emotional intelligence profiles, Zhou et al. (2025) identified variations in behaviors—such as problem-solving, coercion, and conflict avoidance—based on levels of emotional intelligence. Meanwhile, Alabay (2023) employed a qualitative approach to explore school principals' perspectives on emotional intelligence and their preferences regarding conflict management. Analytically, existing research provides insights into the emotional competencies, behavioral patterns, and perspectives of leaders; however, it does not specifically explain how emotional intelligence is translated into managerial actions within the context of a madrasah that adheres to a particular Islamic educational orientation. Consequently, the novelty of this study lies in its analysis of the process by which emotional intelligence is applied within leadership practices—specifically, how leaders respond to pressure, account for the circumstances of those involved, and take the initiative to resolve issues

The contextual characteristics of Madrasah Hurrasul Aqidah provide a compelling rationale for examining this subject in greater depth. Preliminary observations indicate that this institution—operating under the Yayasan Hurrasul Aqidah—encompasses a Madrasah Tsanawiyah, a Madrasah Aliyah, and an Islamic boarding school (*pesantren*). The institution's educational orientation is rooted in the *Ahlus Sunnah wal Jama'ah* tradition, with a strong emphasis on academic achievement, moral character (*akhlaq*), and spirituality, fostered through a blend of local, national, and international programs. These features create a relevant context for studying leadership that must balance academic objectives with the cultivation of Islamic values and conduct. Nevertheless, these institutional characteristics alone are insufficient to conclude that the madrasah experiences a unique pattern of conflict or that its leaders encounter challenges distinct from those found in other types of institutions. Given these characteristics, this study aims to understand how emotional intelligence is manifested in the leadership actions at Madrasah Hurrasul Aqidah, rather than merely identifying a correlation between emotional intelligence and conflict management. The analysis focuses on how leaders recognise and regulate their emotions, understand the perspectives of others, incorporate Islamic values into decision-making, and determine the steps necessary to resolve problems. Utilising a descriptive qualitative approach, this research aims to develop a contextual understanding of how emotional intelligence is applied within leadership practices in madrasahs—specifically, how the regulation of emotions relates to managerial initiatives in resolving issues constructively.

II. METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach, specifically a case study design, to gain an in-depth understanding of how emotional intelligence is applied in the leadership practices of the principal at Madrasah Hurrasul Aqidah in Tarakan City. A case study was chosen because the research focuses on leadership phenomena within a specific institutional context, taking into account the experiences, behaviors, interactions, and meanings constructed by the research subjects (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2018). Data

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collection was conducted over a period of two months. Research informants included the madrasah principal, teachers, and educational staff relevant to the study's focus. Primary data were gathered through participant observation and semi-structured interviews, while secondary data were obtained from public and private documentation. Participant observation involved the researcher immersing themselves in the research setting to directly observe leadership practices, emotional regulation, interpersonal communication, decision-making, and problem-solving. The semi-structured interviews utilised a prepared set of questions while allowing for follow-up inquiries to explore the experiences, perspectives, and underlying rationales for the informants' actions (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Public documentation consisted of openly accessible information, such as the madrasah's official profile and publications, whereas private documentation comprised relevant internal records, including activity logs, institutional programs, and evaluation documents.

Data analysis was conducted interactively, following the model proposed by Miles et al. (2014), which encompasses data condensation, data display, and the drawing and verification of conclusions. Data condensation was carried out by selecting, focusing, simplifying, and organising observation notes, interview transcripts, and documents in alignment with the research focus. The data were subsequently coded and grouped into analytical themes, such as emotional regulation, empathy and interpersonal understanding, the application of Islamic values in decision-making, and managerial initiative in problem-solving. The data were presented through narrative descriptions and thematic matrices to identify patterns, interconnections, and variations in information across different sources (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). Furthermore, conclusions were formulated incrementally and verified by re-examining empirical data, comparing findings across informants, and assessing the consistency of interpretations against the available evidence. These three stages occurred interactively throughout the research process, rather than as entirely separate, linear phases (Miles et al., 2014).

Data validity was ensured through source triangulation, methodological triangulation, member checking, and an audit trail. Source triangulation involved comparing information from the madrasah principal, teachers or educational staff, and students, while methodological triangulation entailed cross-referencing data from observations, interviews, and documentation to assess the consistency of the information (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Member checking was conducted by confirming summaries of interview results or preliminary interpretations with the relevant informants to ensure the accuracy of the intended meaning. Meanwhile, an audit trail was maintained by documenting the data collection process, coding decisions, category adjustments, and the rationale behind the conclusions, thereby ensuring the analytical process remained traceable (Poth, 2023). To strengthen the credibility of the interpretations, the researcher also re-examined data that appeared contradictory or inconsistent with the identified patterns. These procedures were collectively designed to ensure that the research findings represent the empirical data in a responsible manner, rather than merely reflecting personal assumptions.

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III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Emotional Intelligence in the Leadership Practice of a Madrasah Principal

Research conducted at Madrasah Hurrasul Aqidah in Tarakan City indicates that the leadership practice of the madrasah principal is manifested through various efforts to enhance the quality of the learning process, specifically by addressing limitations in learning facilities and the varying levels of teacher competency in utilising information technology. These constraints prompted the principal to organise workshops, both internally and in collaboration with other schools and institutions. These initiatives were aimed at improving the proficiency of teachers and administrative staff in using computer-based tools, both for instructional purposes and for the management of the madrasah's administration. These findings demonstrate that leadership is exercised not merely through the establishment of rules and oversight, but also through an effort to understand the organisation's needs and provide support tailored to the specific circumstances of the madrasah community.

From the perspective of emotional intelligence—specifically the ability to recognise situations, understand the needs of others, and adapt actions to the conditions at hand—the principal does not view the limitations in teachers' competencies merely as deficiencies that must be immediately corrected; rather, the principal responds by fostering capacity development (Rachmad, 2022). In this context, workshops serve as a managerial intervention that creates opportunities for teachers to learn and adapt. Nevertheless, the mere provision of training is not sufficient to demonstrate a high level of emotional intelligence in a leader. The emotional significance of such actions must be understood through the underlying process: how the principal identifies the difficulties faced by teachers, addresses these limitations without causing embarrassment to those involved, and determines the most appropriate form of support (Filice & Weese, 2024). Thus, emotional intelligence is best understood as a quality reflected in the way a leader takes action, rather than solely by the programs they implement. This is further explored through interviews with the madrasah principal and the teachers. The head of the madrasah (SW) stated:

> "We observe that some teachers still require guidance in using technology. Therefore, rather than simply demanding that they adapt immediately, we strive to provide them with opportunities to learn and practice—for instance, by participating in relevant training programs."

Meanwhile, a teacher (RH) shared their experience:

> "Admittedly, the facilities at the madrasah are still limited, and some teachers still need to learn how to use technology. However, the head of the madrasah is clearly working to find solutions. We are given the chance to attend training sessions and learn together; if we encounter difficulties, we can ask questions and support one another. We aren't immediately pressured to be proficient; instead, we are guided so that we can gradually become more comfortable."

These interview statements reinforce the finding that teacher competency development at Madrasah Hurrasul Aqidah is carried out through a supportive and empowering approach. The head of the madrasah does not merely emphasise the demand for improved competence but also creates space for teachers to learn, receive guidance, and overcome the challenges they face. This demonstrates a leadership practice rooted in attentiveness to teachers' needs and a commitment to fostering a work environment that

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encourages professional development. In the context of emotional intelligence, this approach can be interpreted as an indication of empathy and relationship-building skills, which in turn provide teachers with the opportunity to develop their personal potential (Rokimin et al., 2025).

These findings align with previous research that identifies self-awareness, self-management, and empathy as essential competencies in school leadership. Such studies also underscore the importance of a trusting relationship between leaders and teachers for the latter's job satisfaction and performance (Gómez-Leal et al., 2022). In the context of Madrasah Hurrasul Aqidah, the significance of these findings lies in how the head of the madrasah addresses teachers' limitations through training and collaboration, rather than by simply imposing demands. This leadership practice is also reflected in the head of the madrasah's efforts to promote a more student-centered approach to learning. The head of the madrasah collaborates with teachers to develop a schedule for subject-specific consultations, implement remedial programs throughout the semester, and appoint academic mentors to help uncover students' potential. These measures demonstrate a commitment to addressing diverse learning needs and highlight the importance of ongoing support.

From the perspective of emotional intelligence, such actions can be linked to empathy—the ability to understand the needs and experiences of others, which serves as a foundation for building supportive relationships (Gómez-Leal et al., 2022; Manke et al., 2026). Previous studies have also indicated that empathy and relationship-building skills are essential competencies in school leadership, capable of supporting instructional practices by fostering collaboration and enhancing teacher effectiveness (Sasere & Matashu, 2025). In a similar vein, research by Richardson & Khawaja (2025) asserts that student-oriented leadership requires an understanding of diverse learning needs, the strengthening of teacher capacity, and the creation of school structures that facilitate more personalised learning. Nevertheless, the shift toward student-centered learning also involves pedagogical and instructional leadership competencies; therefore, not all such practices can be categorised solely as manifestations of emotional intelligence. The relevance of emotional intelligence in this context lies in how a madrasah principal fosters collaboration with teachers, understands the needs of students, and provides learning support in a responsive manner.

In explaining the relationship between emotional intelligence and these leadership practices, the theory of emotional intelligence proposed by Mayer et al. (2008) provides a crucial conceptual framework. This "ability-based" approach views emotional intelligence as the capacity to recognise emotions, utilise emotional information in thought processes, understand emotional shifts, and manage emotions. Meanwhile, Goleman (1996) emphasises competencies such as self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Both perspectives offer complementary lenses through which research findings can be interpreted: efforts to understand the challenges faced by teachers can be analysed through the dimension of empathy. At the same time, collaboration in organising training and mentorship can be associated with social skills. The research findings can also be interpreted through the study by Sasere & Matashu (2025), which examines the impact of school leaders' emotional intelligence on teachers and students. This study identifies self-awareness, empathy, and relationship management as key competencies linked to teacher performance, collaboration, and instructional practices. It further notes that cultural and institutional contexts shape the impact of emotional intelligence. This aligns with findings from Madrasah Hurrasul

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Aqidah, where support for teachers—provided through training and mentoring—serves as an effort to improve the learning process. Such practices reflect the role of emotional intelligence in the leadership of the madrasah principal, particularly in addressing teachers' needs, developing their competencies, and fostering collaboration to overcome the limitations faced by the institution.

Another significant aspect is the principal's ability to manage themselves when faced with the demands of change. Self-management is a crucial emotional intelligence skill for school leadership and management, encompassing emotional regulation, optimism, adaptability, and stress management (Pretorius, 2024). These findings offer a perspective for understanding how the principal of Madrasah Hurrasul Aqidah responds to constraints regarding facilities and technological proficiency. Consistent with earlier interview data, the efforts to build collaboration and provide training demonstrate an adjustment of actions to meet the institution's specific needs. Overall, the role of emotional intelligence in the leadership of the Madrasah Hurrasul Aqidah principal is evident in how the leader addresses teachers' needs, develops the capacity of educational staff, and promotes academic support for students. These findings are consistent with the views of Mayer et al. (2008) regarding the role of emotional abilities in understanding and managing emotions. Thus, the main findings of this study illustrate how emotional intelligence can be reflected in a leadership approach that is responsive and oriented toward developing the capacities of the madrasah community, while also acknowledging the limitations in linking specific actions to learning outcomes.

Empathy and Islamic Values in Leadership Decision-Making

Decision-making in madrasah leadership involves more than just establishing policies to achieve institutional goals; it also encompasses how the madrasah principal understands the circumstances of those affected by these decisions. At Madrasah Hurrasul Aqidah, leadership must be understood in light of the institution's character as an Islamic educational entity—one that prioritises the cultivation of character (*akhlaq*), the strengthening of spirituality, and academic achievement as core educational objectives. Consequently, the quality of a decision cannot be judged solely by its administrative accuracy; it must also be evaluated based on the underlying humanitarian considerations and moral values. This perspective aligns with the work of Mayer et al. (2008), who define emotional intelligence as the capacity to manage emotions in a way that informs and supports one’s thinking and subsequent actions.

In practice, empathy is demonstrated when a madrasah principal avoids rushing to judgment based solely on visible outcomes, choosing instead to understand the underlying circumstances and reasons behind the behavior of teachers or students. For instance, when teachers encounter difficulties in instruction or when students fail to meet expected academic standards, the situation can be addressed by considering the need for mentorship, opportunities for skill improvement, and the provision of appropriate support. This approach contrasts with a leadership style that focuses exclusively on strict adherence to rules. Manke et al. (2026) note that empathy in school leadership helps leaders grasp the needs and motivations of teachers, thereby fostering stronger working relationships. Furthermore, this capacity enables leaders to consider the perspectives of their teachers before making decisions, ensuring that policies are more responsive to the needs of the school community and conducive to a collaborative work environment.

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From an Islamic perspective, such considerations can be linked to the principles of *syūrā* (consultation), *'adl* (justice), and *amanah* (trust/responsibility). Surah Ali 'Imran [3]: 159 emphasises the importance of gentleness and consultation in collective affairs, while Surah An-Nisa' [4]: 58 underscores the obligation to fulfill trusts and render decisions justly. Together, these principles establish a normative foundation, indicating that leadership decisions should not merely prioritise the interests of the leader or a specific group. Within the context of a madrasah, these values can be manifested through a willingness to listen to the perspectives of teachers, consider the needs of students, and provide the rationale behind established policies. Previous research has also identified consultation, the fulfillment of trusts, justice, and the pursuit of the common good (*maslahah*) as principles that can integrate Islamic moral orientations into the decision-making processes of Islamic school management (Rini et al., 2025). This aligns with insights from interviews with teachers AN and NZ, who noted:

> "When an issue arises, we first need to examine what is actually happening. Not every problem can be resolved in the same way. Sometimes, it is necessary to engage teachers in dialogue to understand the specific challenges involved; this also helps to prevent misunderstandings."

> "When making decisions, the head of the madrasah takes into account the circumstances of both teachers and students. If there are differences of opinion, we aim to discuss them collectively. In my view, what matters is that the final decision is clear, acceptable to all, and remains consistent with the values taught at the madrasah."

Based on the interviews, the process can be explained through two interrelated dimensions. First, empathy—the ability to understand the situations and needs of others before determining a course of action. Second, Islamic values—a normative foundation that guides how such understanding is translated into decisions. This relationship aligns with the study by Gómez-Leal et al. (2022), which identifies empathy, self-awareness, and self-management as essential competencies within the emotional intelligence of school leaders. Their research also underscores the importance of trust-based relationships for teacher satisfaction and performance.

Furthermore, the dimension of justice becomes critical when individual needs do not necessarily align with the collective interest. A madrasah principal may need to consider a teacher's personal difficulties, yet must simultaneously ensure that student learning remains uncompromised. In such situations, empathy does not entail avoiding necessary reprimands or relaxing all rules; rather, it involves understanding the individual's circumstances while upholding professional responsibilities. The principle of justice, as articulated in Surah An-Nisa' [4]: 135, provides a moral basis for ensuring that personal or group interests do not override the obligation to act justly. Consequently, decisions rooted in Islamic values must be evaluated based on a balance between care, firmness, responsibility, and proportionate treatment—rather than solely on the leader's good intentions.

Meanwhile, *syūrā* (consultation) can enhance the quality of decisions by creating space for the exchange of information and diverse perspectives before policies are established. In educational organisations, teachers and staff possess direct experience regarding the learning process and operational challenges; their involvement can therefore help the madrasah principal gain a more comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand. A study by Rini et al. (2025) emphasises that decision-making in Islamic schools requires

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balancing technical considerations with a moral orientation that encompasses *syūrā* (consultation), *amanah* (trustworthiness/accountability), *'adl* (justice), and *maṣlaḥah* (the common good). Thus, *musyawarah* functions not merely as a procedure, but as a means to arrive at more responsible decision-making. Overall, empathy and Islamic values can be understood as complementary foundations for leadership decision-making in madrasah. Empathy enables the madrasah principal to understand the circumstances and needs of the school community, while the principles of *musyawarah*, justice, and *amanah* (trustworthiness/stewardship) provide a moral direction for the actions taken (Muss et al., 2026). Consequently, leadership decisions are not solely focused on resolving administrative issues; they also take into account the common good and the impact on the madrasah community. Integrating these two foundations is essential to ensure that every decision is both professionally accountable and aligned with the ethical and spiritual values inherent in Islamic education.

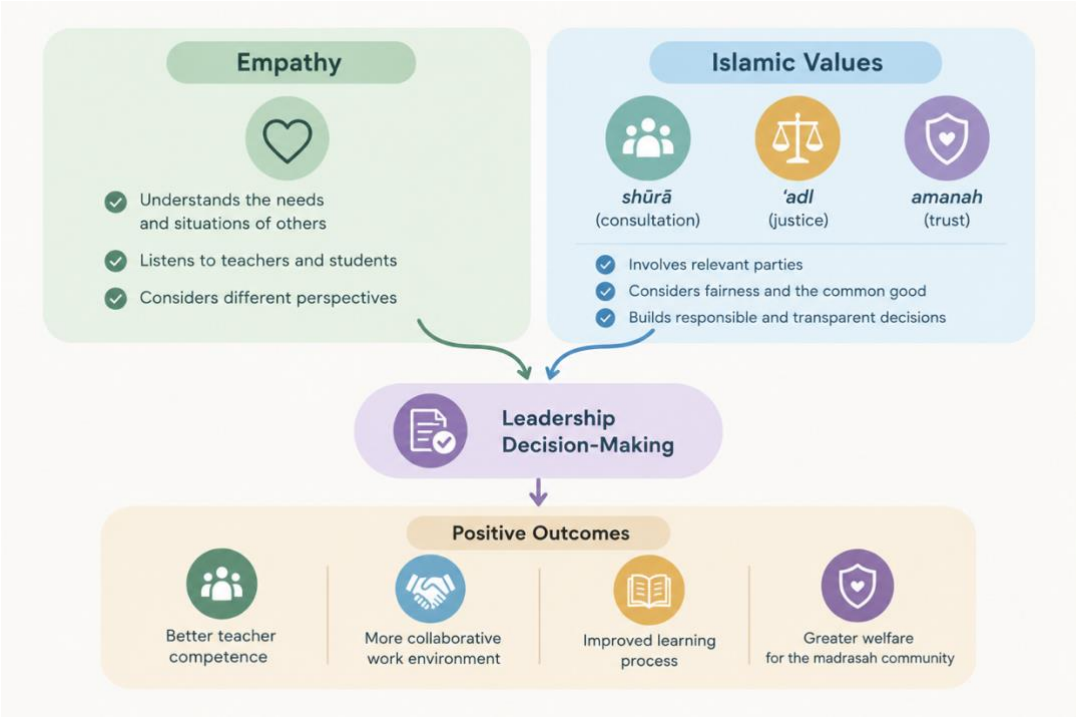


Figure 1. *Empathy and Islamic Values in Leadership Decision-Making*

Emotional Intelligence in Managing Pressure and Resolving Conflict

Managing pressure is a crucial aspect of a madrasah principal's leadership, particularly when an institution faces limitations in learning facilities, disparities in teachers' technological proficiency, and demands to improve the quality of education (Antonopoulou, 2024). In the context of Madrasah Hurrasul Aqidah, such circumstances require the principal to strike a balance between the institution's development needs and the capabilities of its available human resources. Emotional intelligence is highly relevant here, as it enables leaders to recognise their own emotional responses, evaluate situations with greater clarity, and determine appropriate courses of action. Within Goleman's (1996) framework, the ability to self-manage—a key component of emotional intelligence—relates to how an individual handles pressure without allowing fleeting emotions to dictate their actions.

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Research findings indicate that the madrasah principal addresses institutional limitations through internal training and collaborations with other schools or institutions. This approach demonstrates an adaptive strategy in response to existing challenges, ensuring that limited facilities and varying levels of technological competence among teachers do not hinder the learning process. This aligns with previous studies suggesting that school improvement and organisational change possess an emotional dimension, rooted in human interactions, policies, and established work patterns (Park & Datnow, 2022). This perspective clarifies that leadership pressure stems not only from technical issues but also from the need to maintain collaboration and steer change amidst the diverse requirements of the school community.

Beyond resolving technical obstacles, the madrasah principal must also nurture working relationships to prevent emerging pressures from escalating into prolonged tension. Floman et al. (2024) found that school leadership incorporating emotional intelligence is linked to the well-being of educators, even during times of crisis. These findings highlight the importance of considering the emotional dimension in the relationship between leaders and educators, rather than focusing solely on the successful completion of tasks. In the context of this study, training and collaboration can serve as a means to sustain support for teachers as they navigate the demands of change. Managing pressure is also closely linked to how a madrasah principal resolves conflicts (Gojali et al., 2024). Conflicts within educational institutions may arise from differences in perspective, the distribution of tasks, limited resources, or a mismatch between expectations and the capabilities of those tasked with implementation. In their research, Nwosu & Nwankwo (2024) identified a positive correlation between a principal's self-awareness and self-management, and their approach to conflict resolution. These results suggest that the ability to recognise and manage one's own responses can facilitate conflict resolution. This is further supported by interviews with madrasah principals and teachers, who revealed:

> "In managing a madrasah, obstacles inevitably arise—whether in learning activities or the implementation of programs. When faced with such situations, I first try to understand the root of the problem and determine what needs to be addressed immediately. Not every issue can be resolved all at once, so we identify the most viable course of action and discuss it with the relevant parties to ensure that the madrasah's operations continue."

> "When obstacles arise in madrasah activities, the principal typically seeks solutions to prevent the problems from dragging on. For instance, if a program does not go according to plan, we are encouraged to examine the underlying challenges and identify areas for improvement. This allows us to focus on finding a way forward rather than blaming one another."

The interview results support the interpretation that challenges are addressed through the adjustment of actions, communication, and the collaborative pursuit of solutions. Research by Alabay (2023) indicates that emotional intelligence plays a role in conflict management within educational settings, specifically through self-awareness, empathy, and self-regulation. These findings are relevant for understanding the significance of how a leader responds to conflict, rather than focusing solely on the outcome. If a madrasah principal is able to listen to the parties involved, understand the root of the issue, and steer the conversation toward a professionally acceptable resolution, such

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actions suggest that emotional skills are being effectively applied in relationship management (Rahmayanti & Nashori, 2024).

Effective conflict resolution does not necessarily mean avoiding tension or satisfying every demand of the parties involved. A madrasah principal retains the responsibility to uphold rules, maintain discipline, and ensure that the learning process continues (Kemal et al., 2023). Therefore, emotional intelligence should not be interpreted as a tendency to always concede or avoid making firm decisions; rather, it is the ability to choose an effective response tailored to the nature of the specific problem. Findings by Nwosu & Nwankwo (2024) underscore the importance of self-awareness and self-management in conflict resolution, though their application must always account for the institutional context. In practice, a firm decision can reflect effective emotional management, provided it is based on clear reasoning, communicated appropriately, and not used as an outlet for personal reactions.

Furthermore, a madrasah principal's ability to manage pressure should be viewed in relation to organisational support (Sugiarto & Rachmadhani, 2022). Limitations regarding facilities, time, or teachers' technological proficiency cannot be resolved solely through a leader’s emotional intelligence; rather, they require adequate resources, the delegation of responsibilities, and a shared commitment. A study by Floman et al. (2024) regarding educator well-being reinforces the significance of the relationship between leadership behavior and the emotional state of teachers. Consequently, the success of a madrasah principal is measured not only by their individual capabilities but also by their efforts to foster a working environment that enables teachers to better cope with the demands placed upon them. Overall, the application of emotional intelligence in managing pressure and resolving conflicts at Madrasah Hurrasul Aqidah can be examined through the adaptation of strategies, communication, and a problem-solving orientation. Internal training initiatives, alongside collaborations with other institutions, demonstrate a constructive approach to addressing limitations. This perspective illustrates that emotional intelligence does not function in isolation; rather, it operates in tandem with managerial competence to cultivate a work environment that is both adaptive and collaborative.

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Figure 2. *Emotional Intelligence in Managing Pressure and Conflict*

IV. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the application of emotional intelligence in the leadership practices of the principal at Madrasah Hurrasul Aqidah, Tarakan City, is reflected in three key areas. First, the response to limitations in learning facilities and teachers' technological competencies is addressed through internal training, mentoring, and collaboration with other institutions. Second, decision-making processes take into account the conditions and needs of the madrasah community, guided by Islamic values—specifically *syūrā* (consultation), *'adl* (justice), and *amanah* (trustworthiness/responsibility). Third, the management of pressure and the resolution of challenges are handled through strategic adjustments, effective communication, and the collaborative pursuit of solutions. These findings suggest that emotional intelligence serves as a factor supporting leadership practices that are responsive, supportive, and collaborative. However, its application functions in tandem with managerial skills and organisational support; thus, it cannot be decoupled from the institutional context that shapes how leadership is enacted. On the other hand, this study is limited by its single-case design, which precludes the generalisation of its findings to other Islamic educational institutions. Furthermore, the research focuses primarily on leadership practices and does not directly measure the relationships between emotional intelligence and variables such as the enhancement of teacher competence, the well-being of educators, or student learning outcomes. Future research should ideally involve multiple madrasahs with diverse institutional characteristics, utilising a multi-site study design or a mixed-methods approach. Such research could provide a more comprehensive explanation of how emotional intelligence is applied across various leadership contexts, and how these practices relate to conflict management, professional relationships, and the quality of the learning process.

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