

# The Relationship Between Principals' Leadership and Quality Culture with Learning Effectiveness in Islamic Junior High Schools

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the relationship between principals' leadership and quality culture with learning effectiveness in State Islamic Junior High Schools (Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri) in East Agam Regency. A quantitative correlational design was employed. The participants consisted of 169 teachers from three madrasahs selected through total sampling. Data were collected using validated and reliable questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and multiple linear regression. The results indicate that principals' leadership has a strong and significant relationship with quality culture. However, both principals' leadership and quality culture show no significant relationship, either partially or simultaneously, with learning effectiveness. These findings suggest that the influence of leadership and quality culture on learning effectiveness is indirect and contextual. Therefore, improving learning effectiveness should focus on strengthening classroom instructional practices through continuous academic supervision and enhancing teachers' pedagogical competence.

**Keyword:** *Principals' Leadership, Quality Culture, Learning Effectiveness.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Education plays a strategic role in developing knowledgeable, skilled, and morally responsible individuals while contributing to sustainable national development. According to UNESCO (2021), quality education is fundamental to achieving sustainable development because it promotes equity, lifelong learning, and human capital development. In the context of Islamic education, madrasahs are expected not only to improve students' academic achievement but also to develop their religious values, moral character, and social responsibility. Therefore, improving educational quality has become one of the major priorities of educational reform in Indonesia.

Learning effectiveness is regarded as one of the primary indicators of educational quality because it reflects the degree to which instructional objectives are achieved. Slavin (2019) explains that effective learning occurs when teachers successfully combine appropriate instructional strategies, active student engagement, classroom management, and continuous assessment. Similarly, Hattie (2023) argues that learning effectiveness is strongly influenced by evidence-based teaching practices that encourage meaningful learning experiences and maximize students' academic achievement.

Principal leadership has long been recognized as one of the most influential factors affecting school effectiveness. Hallinger (2020) states that instructional leadership enables principals to improve teaching quality through curriculum supervision, teacher development, and the creation of positive learning environments. Effective school leaders influence student

achievement indirectly by strengthening teachers' instructional capacity and establishing a shared educational vision. Therefore, principals play a crucial role in improving instructional effectiveness within schools.

Besides leadership, quality culture has become an essential component of school improvement. Sallis (2014) defines quality culture as a system of shared values, beliefs, and organizational practices that emphasize continuous improvement and customer satisfaction in education. Harvey & Stensaker (2008) further explain that quality culture encourages collaboration, accountability, innovation, and commitment among school members, thereby creating a sustainable environment for educational excellence.

The relationship between leadership and quality culture is supported by organizational leadership theory. Schein (2017) argues that leaders are the primary architects of organizational culture because they establish shared values, norms, and behavioral expectations through their decisions and actions. In educational settings, Hallinger (2020) explains that effective principals foster collaborative cultures by encouraging teacher participation, professional learning communities, and continuous instructional improvement. Consequently, leadership is considered a key driver in developing a sustainable quality culture within schools.

Several empirical studies have confirmed the relationship between principal leadership, quality culture, and educational outcomes. Instructional leadership has been shown to enhance teacher professional learning by strengthening teacher self-efficacy. Furthermore, instructional leadership positively predicts the development of a collaborative school culture, which subsequently contributes to improved school effectiveness. However, the influence of leadership on learning effectiveness may also be indirect, as teacher competence and organizational work culture can function as important mediating variables.

Despite continuous educational reforms, many Indonesian madrasahs continue to experience challenges in improving learning effectiveness. According to the Ministry of Education Research, and Technology (2023), disparities in school leadership quality, teacher competence, instructional supervision, and quality assurance systems remain significant obstacles to educational improvement. These challenges indicate that strengthening organizational management remains an important priority for school development.

The educational context of State Islamic Junior High Schools (Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri) in East Agam Regency reflects similar conditions. Although several madrasahs have achieved excellent accreditation status, preliminary observations indicate variations in leadership practices, teacher collaboration, implementation of quality assurance systems, and organizational commitment to continuous improvement. Such conditions may influence teachers' instructional performance and ultimately affect learning effectiveness.

Although numerous studies have investigated principal leadership or school quality culture separately, relatively few have simultaneously examined the relationships among principals' leadership, quality culture, and learning effectiveness within Indonesian Islamic secondary schools. This gap suggests the need for further empirical research to understand whether leadership and quality culture directly contribute to improving learning effectiveness in the unique organizational context of madrasahs.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to examine the relationship between principals' leadership, quality culture, and learning effectiveness in State Islamic Junior High Schools in East Agam Regency. Specifically, this study investigates the relationship between principals' leadership and quality culture, the relationship between principals' leadership and learning effectiveness, the relationship between quality culture and learning effectiveness, and the simultaneous relationship between principals' leadership and quality culture with learning effectiveness. The findings are expected to contribute to the literature on educational leadership and provide practical recommendations for improving educational quality in Indonesian madrasahs.

## METHODS

This study employed a quantitative correlational research design to examine the relationships among principals' leadership, quality culture, and learning effectiveness in State Islamic Junior High Schools (Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri) in East Agam Regency, Indonesia. A correlational approach was considered appropriate because the study sought to determine the degree of association among the variables without manipulating the research setting or introducing experimental treatment. The research was conducted in three State Islamic Junior High Schools, namely MTsN 1 Agam, MTsN 6 Agam, and MTsN 7 Agam. The population consisted of all 169 teachers working in these schools. Since the population size was relatively small and accessible, the study employed a total sampling technique, in which all members of the population were included as research participants.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed based on the theoretical indicators of each research variable. The questionnaire consisted of three sections measuring principals' leadership, quality culture, and learning effectiveness using a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Before being administered, the instrument was examined for content validity through expert judgment and subsequently tested for construct validity using Pearson Product-Moment correlation. Instrument reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, and all variables demonstrated reliability coefficients exceeding the acceptable threshold of 0.70, indicating satisfactory internal consistency. In addition, documentation was utilized to obtain supporting information regarding the schools' profiles and institutional characteristics.

The collected data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 25. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to describe the characteristics of each variable. Prior to hypothesis testing, the data were subjected to prerequisite analyses consisting of normality, linearity, and multicollinearity tests to ensure compliance with the assumptions of parametric analysis. The research hypotheses were then tested using Pearson Product-Moment correlation to determine the partial relationships among the variables and multiple linear regression analysis to examine the simultaneous relationship between principals' leadership and quality culture with learning effectiveness. Statistical significance was determined at the 0.05 level, while the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) was calculated to estimate the proportion of variance in learning effectiveness explained by the independent variables.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Connection Leadership Head of Madrasah with Quality Culture

Based on results analysis statistics performed on samples study related connection leadership head of madrasah with culture quality at the State Middle School of East Agam, obtained mark significance of 0.000 (more small from 0.05) with coefficient correlation positive of 0.606. With thus stated that leadership the head of the madrasa has very strong and significant relationship with culture quality.

Tabel 1

Control Variables		Correlations			
		X1	X2	Y	
-none <sup>a</sup>	X1	Correlation	1.000	.605	-.081
		Significance (2-tailed)	.	.000	.508
		df	0	67	67
	X2	Correlation	.605	1.000	-.015
		Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.	.904
		df	67	0	67
	Y	Correlation	-.081	-.015	1.000
		Significance (2-tailed)	.508	.904	.
		df	67	67	0
Y	X1	Correlation	1.000	.606	

	Significance (2-tailed)	.	.000
	df	0	66
X2	Correlation	.606	1.000
	Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.
	df	66	0

a. Cells contain zero-order (Pearson) correlations.

Based on the test results presented above, it is evident that there is a strong and statistically significant relationship between principals' leadership and quality culture. Referring to the correlation coefficient, the obtained value of 0.606 falls within the range of 0.60–0.799, indicating a strong positive relationship between the two variables.

The statistical analysis further demonstrates that principals' leadership has a strong and significant relationship with quality culture in State Islamic Junior High Schools of East Agam. This is evidenced by a significance value of 0.000 ( $p < 0.05$ ) and a positive correlation coefficient of 0.606. These findings indicate that the more effective the principal's leadership, the stronger the quality culture developed within the madrasah. Conversely, weak leadership may hinder the establishment of a sustainable quality culture.

These findings also support transformational leadership theory, which argues that effective leaders are capable of inspiring, motivating, and empowering organizational members to achieve shared goals. Bass & Avolio (1994) explain that transformational leadership contributes significantly to the development of a positive organizational culture through idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. A principal who effectively performs these leadership functions is more likely to instill quality-oriented values, such as commitment to standards, discipline, responsibility, and a culture of reflection in the teaching and learning process.

#### **Connection Leadership Madrasah Principal and Effectiveness Learning**

Results of statistical data processing on samples study about relatedness between leadership madrasah principal and effectiveness learning at Madrasah Tsanawiyah East Agam State shows mark significance 0.463 (bigger from 0.05) and coefficient correlation of 0.091 where mark This is on the coefficient correlation 0.00 – 0.199 which shows very weak relationship. With results said, can concluded that leadership the head of the madrasa has very weak relationship in a way significant with effectiveness learning at the East Agam Middle School.

Table 2

Control Variables		Correlations			
		Leadership Head of Madrasah	Effectiveness Learning	Quality Culture	
-none- <sup>a</sup>	Leadership Head of Madrasah	Correlation	1,000	-.081	.605
		Significance (2-tailed)	.	.508	.000
		df	0	67	67
	Effectiveness Learning	Correlation	-.081	1,000	-.015
		Significance (2-tailed)	.508	.	.904
		df	67	0	67
	Quality Culture	Correlation	.605	-.015	1,000
		Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.904	.
		df	67	67	0
Quality Culture	Leadership Head of Madrasah	Correlation	1.000	-.091	
		Significance (2-tailed)	.	.463	
		df	0	66	
	Efektivitas Pembelajaran	Correlation	-.091	1.000	
		Significance (2-tailed)	.463	.	
		df			

a. Cells contain zero-order (Pearson) correlations.

The results of the statistical analysis indicate that principals' leadership has a very weak and statistically insignificant relationship with learning effectiveness in State Islamic Junior High Schools of East Agam. This is evidenced by a significance value of 0.463 ( $p > 0.05$ ) and a correlation coefficient of 0.091, which falls within the category of a very weak correlation (0.00–0.199). These findings suggest that, directly, principals' leadership has not made a significant contribution to improving learning effectiveness in the madrasahs under study.

These findings support the instructional leadership theory, which emphasizes that leadership influences learning effectiveness when principals are directly involved in academic activities, such as instructional supervision, teacher professional development, curriculum implementation, and monitoring classroom teaching and learning processes. Southworth (2002) argues that principals who focus primarily on administrative responsibilities rather than instructional leadership tend to have a limited influence on the quality and effectiveness of learning. This may explain why principals' leadership in the State Islamic Junior High Schools of East Agam does not directly influence the learning effectiveness experienced by teachers and students.

These findings may also be explained by the empirical context of the State Islamic Junior High Schools of East Agam, where learning effectiveness has already been supported by standardized curricula, well-established instructional practices, and relatively competent teachers. Under these conditions, the principal's leadership is no longer the dominant factor influencing learning effectiveness but instead functions as a supporting factor. The influence of leadership on learning tends to be stronger in low-performing schools, whereas its impact becomes less pronounced in schools with more stable performance.

The weak correlation between principals' leadership and learning effectiveness should not be interpreted as indicating that leadership is unimportant. Rather, it suggests that the contribution of leadership is largely indirect and highly dependent on the organizational context. Therefore, efforts to improve learning effectiveness in the State Islamic Junior High Schools of East Agam should focus on strengthening the instructional leadership role of principals, fostering a sustainable quality culture, enhancing academic supervision, and developing teachers' professional capacity as the primary agents of the teaching and learning process.

### Connection Quality Culture with Effectiveness Learning

Based on results analysis statistics to sample research, relationships between culture quality and effectiveness learning at the State Islamic Junior High School of East Agam shows mark significance of 0.727 (bigger from 0.05) and coefficient correlation of 0.043. The figure be in range correlation 0.00–0.199 which indicates existence very weak relationship.

Table 3

		Correlations			
Control Variables		Quality Culture	Effectiveness Learning	Leadership Head of Madrasah	
-none- <sup>a</sup>	Quality Culture	Correlation	1,000	-.015	.605
		Significance (2-tailed)	.	.904	.000
		df	0	67	67
Effectiveness Learning	Effectiveness Learning	Correlation	-.015	1,000	-.081
		Significance (2-tailed)	.904	.	.508
		df	67	0	67
Leadership Head of Madrasah	Leadership Head of Madrasah	Correlation	.605	-.081	1,000
		Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.508	.
		df	67	67	0
	Quality Culture	Correlation	1.000	.043	

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Leadership	Significance (2-tailed)	.	.727
Head of Madrasah	df	0	66
Efektivitas Pembelajaran	Correlation	.043	1.000
	Significance (2-tailed)	.727	.
	df	66	0

a. Cells contain zero-order (Pearson) correlations.

The results of the statistical analysis indicate that the relationship between quality culture and learning effectiveness in State Islamic Junior High Schools of East Agam is very weak and statistically insignificant. This is evidenced by a significance value of 0.727 ( $p > 0.05$ ) and a correlation coefficient of 0.043, which falls within the category of a very weak correlation (0.00–0.199). These findings suggest that the quality culture implemented in the madrasahs has not made a significant direct contribution to improving learning effectiveness.

Theoretically, these findings can be explained through organizational culture theory, which argues that quality culture represents a latent organizational factor whose influence on organizational performance, including learning effectiveness, is indirect and long-term. Schein (2010) explains that organizational culture influences individual behavior through shared values, assumptions, and beliefs. However, its impact requires time, consistency, and strong internalization before it is reflected in actual organizational practices. Therefore, a quality culture that has not been fully internalized in the behavior of teachers and students is unlikely to have a significant effect on the learning process.

From the perspective of quality management in education, quality culture serves as a value-based framework that supports continuous improvement rather than acting as a direct technical determinant of learning outcomes. Goetsch & Davis (2014) emphasize that the success of a quality culture depends on the integration of leadership commitment, management systems, and classroom instructional practices. If quality culture exists only in the form of slogans, formal regulations, or administrative policies without being consistently implemented in teaching and learning activities, its contribution to learning effectiveness will remain minimal.

These findings can also be interpreted through learning effectiveness theory, which emphasizes that learning outcomes are more directly influenced by factors such as teachers' pedagogical competence, instructional strategies, teacher–student interactions, and students' motivation and readiness to learn. Hattie (2009), in his meta-analysis, demonstrated that instructional factors have a substantially greater impact on student achievement than broader organizational or cultural factors. Therefore, although quality culture provides an essential institutional foundation, its influence on learning effectiveness will remain limited unless it is translated into concrete and consistent classroom practices.

### **Connection Leadership Madrasah Principal and Quality Culture with Effectiveness Learning**

Based on the statistical test results, the Sig. F Change value was 0.757, which is greater than the significance level of 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that the independent variables, namely principals' leadership (X1) and quality culture (X2), do not have a statistically significant simultaneous relationship with the dependent variable, namely learning effectiveness (Y). Furthermore, the correlation coefficient (R) was 0.092, which falls within the range of 0.00–0.199, indicating a very weak simultaneous relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

The results of the simultaneous statistical analysis further demonstrate that principals' leadership and quality culture do not have a significant combined relationship with learning effectiveness in State Islamic Junior High Schools of East Agam. This is evidenced by a Sig. F Change value of 0.757 ( $p > 0.05$ ) and a correlation coefficient (R) of 0.092, which is categorized as a very weak relationship (0.00–0.199). These findings indicate that, collectively, the two independent variables are not able to meaningfully explain the variation in learning effectiveness. Therefore, learning effectiveness is likely influenced by other factors beyond principals' leadership and quality culture, such as teachers' pedagogical competence, instructional practices, student motivation, and the overall learning environment.

Tabel 4.

Model Summary									
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.092 <sup>a</sup>	.008	-.022	5.966	.008	.280	2	66	.757

a. Predictors: (Constant), X2, X1

Theoretically, these findings can be explained through contemporary educational leadership models, which suggest that the influence of principals' leadership and organizational culture on learning is primarily indirect. Philip Hallinger & Heck (1998) argue that school leadership rarely affects learning outcomes directly; instead, its influence operates through mediating variables such as teacher performance, classroom climate, academic supervision, and the quality of curriculum implementation. When these mediating variables are not included in the analytical model, the simultaneous relationship between leadership, quality culture, and learning effectiveness tends to appear statistically weak.

From the perspective of educational systems theory, a school or madrasah is viewed as a system consisting of interconnected subsystems that interact with one another. Hoy & Miskel (2013) explain that learning effectiveness is the outcome of complex interactions among inputs (students, teachers, and facilities), processes (instruction, assessment, and supervision), and contextual factors (environment, policy, and organizational culture). Principals' leadership and quality culture operate at the managerial and organizational levels; therefore, their influence on learning outcomes depends largely on how effectively these aspects are translated into classroom instructional practices.

These findings can also be interpreted through learning effectiveness theory, which emphasizes that learning outcomes are more directly influenced by factors such as teachers' pedagogical competence, instructional methods, student engagement, and the quality of teacher–student interactions. Hattie (2009) argues that instructional factors have a substantially greater influence on student achievement than leadership and organizational culture unless both are explicitly directed toward improving classroom practices. This explains why, although principals' leadership and quality culture play strategic roles in school governance, their simultaneous contribution to learning effectiveness remains very weak.

In addition, the weak simultaneous relationship may be attributed to the relatively homogeneous characteristics of the madrasahs included in this study. State Islamic Junior High Schools in East Agam generally operate under the same national regulations, curriculum standards, assessment systems, and managerial policies. Under these conditions, variations in leadership practices and quality culture among madrasahs are relatively limited, making them insufficient to explain differences in learning effectiveness statistically. Leithwood et al. (2006) argue that leadership tends to have a stronger influence in schools facing serious challenges

or demonstrating exceptionally high performance, whereas its impact is less pronounced in relatively stable schools.

These findings are also consistent with the partial analyses conducted in this study, which revealed that neither principals' leadership nor quality culture individually had a significant relationship with learning effectiveness. Therefore, the simultaneous analysis further confirms that learning effectiveness in the State Islamic Junior High Schools of East Agam is more strongly influenced by other factors, such as teachers' professional competence, students' readiness and motivation to learn, the availability of educational facilities and infrastructure, and the quality of academic supervision.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the absence of a significant simultaneous relationship between principals' leadership, quality culture, and learning effectiveness does not diminish the importance of these two variables. Rather, it indicates that their roles are supportive and contextual rather than being the primary determinants of learning effectiveness. Therefore, efforts to improve learning effectiveness should focus on strengthening the synergy between leadership, quality culture, and classroom instructional practices while also considering mediating variables that are more directly related to the teaching and learning process.

## CONCLUSION

Based on results research, can concluded that leadership the head of the madrasa has strong and significant relationship with culture quality, but good leadership the head of the madrasah and culture quality No show significant relationship, good in a way partial and simultaneously, against effectiveness learning at the State Islamic Junior High School of East Agam. Findings This indicates that influence leadership and culture quality to effectiveness learning nature No direct and contextual , and more functioning as factor supporters than determinant main . Therefore that , the increase effectiveness learning need directed at strengthening practice classroom learning through improvement competence teacher pedagogy , supervision sustainable academics , as well as integration leadership and culture quality to in the learning process in a way real . Research furthermore recommended for enter variables mediation like teacher performance, climate class, or motivation Study students to obtain a clearer picture comprehensive.

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