

Transforming Islamic Education through Strategic Management: Lessons from Al Amin Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Jember

Sri Astutik¹, Saihan², Abd Muhith³

¹¹²UIN Kiai Haji Achmad Siddiq Jember, Indonesia

E-mail: sriastutik84@gmail.com*, saihanelfirdaus286@gmail.com², abdmuhith1972@gmail.com³

Abstract

This study examines how strategic management transforms organizational practices and enhances institutional competitiveness at Al Amin Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, Tabanan. Specifically, the transformation is analyzed through three dimensions: strategic vision development, leadership practices, and stakeholder collaboration, while competitiveness is examined in terms of academic quality, innovation, public trust, and institutional sustainability. Employing a qualitative case study design, data were collected through in-depth interviews with school leaders, teachers, administrative staff, and school committee members, complemented by participant observation and document analysis. The findings reveal that strategic planning grounded in Islamic values has reoriented the school's long-term direction, transformational leadership has strengthened organizational culture and teacher professionalism, and participatory evaluation has improved accountability and adaptability. Empirically, the implementation of strategic management resulted in improved student achievement, increased enrollment, enhanced digital learning practices, and stronger community trust. These findings demonstrate that strategic management, when integrated with spiritual and cultural values, functions as an effective mechanism for strengthening the competitiveness of Islamic elementary schools in minority-Muslim contexts.

Keywords: Strategic Management; Islamic Education; Competitiveness; Transformational Leadership; Elementary Madrasah.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji penerapan manajemen strategis dalam mentransformasi praktik kelembagaan dan meningkatkan daya saing Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Al Amin Tabanan. Transformasi dianalisis melalui tiga dimensi utama, yaitu pengembangan visi strategis, kepemimpinan transformasional, dan kolaborasi pemangku kepentingan, sedangkan daya saing ditinjau dari aspek mutu akademik, inovasi pembelajaran, kepercayaan masyarakat, dan keberlanjutan lembaga. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dengan pimpinan madrasah, guru, tenaga kependidikan, dan komite sekolah, serta didukung oleh observasi partisipatif dan analisis dokumen. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perencanaan strategis berbasis nilai-nilai keislaman mampu mengarahkan perubahan visi jangka panjang

lembaga, kepemimpinan transformasional memperkuat budaya organisasi dan profesionalisme guru, serta evaluasi partisipatif meningkatkan akuntabilitas dan adaptabilitas madrasah. Secara empiris, penerapan manajemen strategis berdampak pada peningkatan prestasi belajar siswa, bertambahnya jumlah peserta didik, berkembangnya inovasi pembelajaran digital, serta menguatnya kepercayaan masyarakat. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa manajemen strategis yang terintegrasi dengan nilai spiritual dan budaya lokal efektif dalam memperkuat daya saing madrasah ibtidaiyah di wilayah minoritas Muslim.

Kata Kunci: *Manajemen Strategis, Pendidikan Islam; Daya Saing; Kepemimpinan Transformasional; Madrasah Ibtidaiyah.*

INTRODUCTION

Education has always been a central pillar in shaping the direction of human civilization, acting as a powerful instrument for intellectual, moral, and cultural transformation (Lailaturrahmah, 2025). In the 21st century, when globalization, digitalization, and competition become the primary hallmarks of progress, the ability of educational institutions to adapt through effective management has become increasingly crucial. In this context, Islamic education in Indonesia carries a unique mission: not only to deliver academic excellence but also to integrate moral and spiritual values that nurture holistic human development (Husni & Wahyudiati, 2022). Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI), as Islamic elementary schools, play a pivotal role in introducing children to the essence of Islamic teachings while equipping them with foundational academic skills. However, despite their noble vision, many Islamic elementary schools across Indonesia face managerial and structural challenges that hinder their competitiveness in the modern educational landscape.

The general condition of Islamic education in Indonesia reflects both progress and disparity. On the one hand, there has been significant development in curriculum standardization, teacher professionalism, and government support through programs such as accreditation and quality assurance (Supriatman, 2018). On the other hand, many madrasahs particularly those located in rural and suburban regions continue to struggle with limited financial resources, outdated management systems, and minimal stakeholder involvement. These challenges often result in an inability to compete effectively with public or private schools that have embraced modern management systems and digital transformation (Khaira A.M, 2025). The gap between the potential of Islamic education and its managerial practice creates an urgent need for innovation through strategic management, a discipline that

emphasizes long-term planning, environmental analysis, and continuous institutional improvement.

Within this national context, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Al Amin in Tabanan, Bali, represents an interesting case. Situated in a province where the Muslim community is a minority, Al Amin MI has been able to maintain its relevance and attract students by emphasizing strong moral values, discipline, and community engagement. The school has grown in reputation, but the competition is becoming increasingly fierce. Educational institutions in Bali, including private and international schools, actively innovate through digital learning, branding, and community partnership programs. For Al Amin MI, survival and progress in this competitive educational ecosystem depend heavily on how well it can transform its management system from a traditional model to a strategic one. The challenge is not only about improving administrative routines but also about redefining institutional vision, aligning resources with strategic goals, and enhancing stakeholder collaboration.

The phenomenon observed at Al Amin MI indicates that the school's management still operates in an operational rather than strategic manner. Most of the planning activities are oriented toward daily routines such as scheduling, classroom management, and teaching assignments rather than comprehensive, long-term institutional strategies. Decision-making tends to be centralized, often based on the headmaster's personal judgment rather than evidence-based analysis or participatory input from teachers and parents. Moreover, the use of modern management tools such as SWOT analysis, stakeholder mapping, and performance indicators is still limited. This situation weakens the institution's ability to respond effectively to environmental changes and opportunities.

Another observable issue is the limited use of data and evaluation mechanisms in supporting decision-making. The culture of reflection, data collection, and systematic assessment essential components of strategic management is not yet deeply embedded in the daily practices of school governance (Restiani Widjaja et al., 2024). For instance, when evaluating academic performance or teacher professionalism, the school often relies on anecdotal impressions rather than measurable outcomes or comparative benchmarks. As a result, it becomes difficult to identify strengths and weaknesses that could inform future planning (Rukmanasari, 2017). In terms of public image, Al Amin MI has strong community trust but lacks systematic branding efforts. Unlike other schools that leverage social media or partnerships with external institutions to enhance visibility, Al Amin's public relations

activities are minimal, limiting its capacity to reach wider audiences and attract potential students.

Human resource development also remains a critical challenge. Although teachers and staff members are committed and religiously motivated, professional training opportunities are irregular and often reactive conducted only when external programs are available (Miradji et al., 2024). There is no comprehensive strategy to align teacher development with institutional goals, such as adopting innovative pedagogies, integrating technology in teaching, or promoting leadership skills among staff.

Al Amin MI operates under a management system that fulfills the basic administrative requirements but lacks strategic orientation. The school's leadership has successfully maintained a harmonious internal environment and strong religious culture, yet it has not fully capitalized on these strengths to build a distinctive competitive advantage. The management practices are largely reactive responding to immediate issues rather than proactively shaping the school's future. Evaluation and monitoring are conducted primarily for compliance with educational regulations, not as a tool for strategic learning and improvement.

Al Amin MI should embody a modern Islamic school model characterized by strategic visioning, evidence-based decision-making, and stakeholder collaboration. The school should implement a structured strategic management cycle involving environmental scanning, goal setting, strategy formulation, implementation, and evaluation. This transformation would allow Al Amin MI to leverage its internal strengths such as strong Islamic identity and community support while addressing weaknesses and external threats through strategic initiatives. The desired condition envisions a madrasah that is not only religiously grounded but also competitive, innovative, and adaptive to the changing educational environment.

In the field of educational management shows a growing emphasis on strategic management as a transformative approach to improving institutional effectiveness. Studies by (Soko & Samo, 2022), (Cahyaningrum et al., 2024), and (Faizin, 2024) highlight that strategic management provides educational institutions with a framework for aligning organizational vision, resources, and performance outcomes. In the context of Islamic education, researchers such as (Sholeh et al., 2023) have found that applying strategic planning principles significantly enhances school competitiveness, teacher performance, and public trust. However, there remains a scarcity of empirical studies focusing on the

implementation of strategic management in Islamic schools located in minority-Muslim regions such as Bali. Most research has been concentrated in Java or Sumatra, where the sociocultural and religious contexts are vastly different. This creates a gap that warrants deeper investigation into how strategic management principles can be adapted and applied effectively in contexts like Al Amin MI Tabanan.

Furthermore, the literature indicates that while many Islamic schools have begun adopting strategic management practices, the process often encounters obstacles related to leadership style, organizational culture, and stakeholder involvement. Transforming traditional management into a strategic one requires not only procedural change but also a shift in mindset from reactive administration to proactive, visionary leadership. This transformation involves redefining institutional identity, clarifying long-term goals, mobilizing resources efficiently, and building partnerships that enhance competitiveness. In Al Amin MI's case, these transformations must be contextualized within the cultural and demographic uniqueness of Bali, where interfaith harmony, cultural pluralism, and community perception play crucial roles in educational success.

Thus, this research seeks to fill the gap between theory and practice by exploring how strategic management can serve as a transformative tool for Islamic education at Al Amin MI Tabanan. The study aims to analyze the processes, challenges, and outcomes of implementing strategic management within this institution and to extract practical lessons that can be replicated in other Islamic schools facing similar contexts. Specifically, it investigates how strategic planning, leadership, and stakeholder collaboration contribute to enhancing the school's competitiveness, adaptability, and sustainability.

The ultimate goal of this research is to offer both theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, it enriches the discourse on strategic management within Islamic educational settings, demonstrating how Western-based management theories can be contextualized within Islamic values and local cultures. Practically, it provides actionable insights for school leaders, policymakers, and educators on how to design and implement strategic management frameworks that align with the mission of Islamic education. In doing so, the study aspires to present Al Amin Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Tabanan as a case model of transformation, illustrating that with a clear vision, strategic leadership, and stakeholder synergy, even a small Islamic school can become competitive and relevant in the rapidly evolving educational landscape.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research design with a case study approach to explore deeply the process of transforming Islamic education through the implementation of strategic management at Al Amin Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, Tabanan. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows the researcher to understand the meaning, context, and dynamics behind managerial practices within the natural setting of the institution. Rather than focusing on numerical data, qualitative inquiry emphasizes rich, descriptive accounts that reflect the perceptions, experiences, and interactions of participants involved in the process of organizational change. The goal of this research is not to generalize findings statistically but to gain a deep and holistic understanding of how strategic management principles are interpreted, adapted, and practiced in the context of an Islamic elementary school.

The case study design was selected because it enables the researcher to investigate a specific bounded system in this case, Al Amin Madrasah Ibtidaiyah as a single unit of analysis. According to Yin (2018), a case study allows for an in-depth examination of contemporary phenomena within their real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly evident. The choice of Al Amin MI Tabanan as the locus was based on its unique characteristics: it operates in a multicultural environment where Muslims are a minority, yet it successfully maintains a strong Islamic identity and community support. This makes the institution a relevant and compelling example of how strategic management can be used to transform educational practice in a challenging and pluralistic setting.

The research setting is Al Amin Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, located in Tabanan Regency, Bali. The school is under the auspices of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and serves approximately 180 students from grades one to six. The institution employs 15 teachers and staff members with varying educational backgrounds, ranging from diploma to bachelor's degrees in Islamic education. The madrasah operates with limited financial resources but has strong community involvement, especially from parents and local Islamic organizations. The daily activities of the institution combine national curriculum subjects with Islamic studies, creating a hybrid educational model that integrates intellectual and moral development.

The participants in this study were selected using purposive sampling, focusing on individuals who possess rich information and active involvement in the school's management and transformation process. The participants consisted of the head of the madrasah, vice principal, teachers, administrative staff, and representatives of the school committee. In total,

10 participants were involved: one headmaster, one vice principal, five teachers, two administrative staff members, and one committee representative. Each participant was selected based on their role and experience related to the school's strategic planning, leadership practices, and organizational development.

Data were collected through three primary techniques: interviews, observations, and documentation.

First, in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted to elicit participants' insights, experiences, and perceptions regarding the implementation of strategic management. The interview guide covered topics such as vision formulation, strategic planning, human resource management, stakeholder collaboration, and challenges in implementing change. Each interview lasted approximately 45–60 minutes and was conducted in a conversational tone to allow flexibility and authenticity in the participants' responses. All interviews were recorded (with consent) and transcribed verbatim for analysis.

Second, participant observation was conducted to capture real-life practices and interactions that reflect the managerial culture of the institution. The researcher observed school meetings, teaching activities, leadership interactions, and community events for approximately three months. Through this method, the researcher was able to document behavioral patterns, decision-making processes, and daily routines that may not have been explicitly articulated during interviews. Field notes were taken systematically, focusing on leadership behavior, teacher collaboration, communication patterns, and institutional responses to challenges.

Third, document analysis was carried out to complement the interview and observation data. The documents analyzed included school profiles, strategic plans, meeting minutes, annual reports, teacher development programs, and policy documents from the Ministry of Religious Affairs. These documents provided valuable insights into the formal structure of strategic management implementation and allowed triangulation with data obtained from other sources. The triangulation of interviews, observations, and documentation strengthened the validity and reliability of the research findings, ensuring that interpretations were not based on a single source or perspective.

In analyzing the data, this study employed (Miles & Huberman, 1994) model of qualitative data analysis, which involves three concurrent stages: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. During data condensation, the researcher transcribed the interviews, organized observation notes, and selected relevant excerpts

related to strategic management practices. Coding was conducted manually, categorizing data into emerging themes such as “vision transformation,” “strategic planning,” “leadership style,” “stakeholder engagement,” and “institutional competitiveness.” In the data display stage, the researcher organized the coded data into thematic matrices that illustrated patterns and relationships among the components of strategic management. Finally, in the conclusion drawing and verification stage, the researcher interpreted the meanings of the data, compared them with existing theories, and verified findings through member checking with participants to ensure credibility.

To enhance the trustworthiness of the findings, the researcher applied several strategies as suggested by (Cresswell, 2016) including credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility was ensured through prolonged engagement in the field, triangulation of data sources, and member checking, where participants reviewed and validated the interpretations. Transferability was achieved by providing thick descriptions of the research context and participants, allowing readers to determine the applicability of the findings in other settings. Dependability was addressed through an audit trail that documented every step of the research process, including methodological decisions and data analysis procedures. Finally, confirmability was maintained by ensuring that all interpretations were grounded in the data and supported by direct quotations from participants, minimizing researcher bias.

The researcher’s role in this study was as the primary instrument of data collection and analysis. As a qualitative researcher, the investigator maintained a reflective stance, recognizing personal assumptions, values, and potential biases that could influence data interpretation. The researcher also positioned himself as a participant observer, engaging in the school’s daily activities while maintaining analytical distance to ensure objectivity. Reflexive journaling was used throughout the process to record impressions, emerging ideas, and methodological reflections.

Ethical considerations were carefully observed throughout the study. Prior to data collection, the researcher obtained formal permission from the head of Al Amin Madrasah Ibtidaiyah and informed all participants about the purpose, procedures, and voluntary nature of their participation. Informed consent was obtained verbally and in writing. Participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity; pseudonyms were used in reporting findings to protect individual identities. The data were stored securely and used solely for academic purposes.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Overview of Research Context

The first focus of the study was to identify how the school's leadership formulated and implemented its strategic vision as a foundation for institutional transformation. The data revealed that Al Amin MI had gradually shifted from traditional, short-term planning to a more structured, long-term strategic orientation. This process involved redefining the school's vision and aligning it with community expectations and Islamic values.

Table 1.

Summary of Findings on Strategic Vision and Planning

Theme	Description	Supporting Evidence (Interview & Document)
Vision Renewal	The school reformulated its vision to emphasize "quality Islamic education with global competitiveness."	Headmaster: "We want our students to have strong faith and knowledge that prepares them for the global era."
SWOT-based Planning	Strategic planning now includes internal–external analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats).	Document: "Strategic Plan 2023–2027 outlines SWOT analysis and action priorities."
Goal Alignment	Annual work plans are aligned with the five-year vision.	Teacher: "Each year, our activities must support the main goal improving learning and school reputation."
Participatory Formulation	Teachers and committees are involved in vision workshops.	Observation: Participation of all staff during vision formulation meeting, 2024.

Based on the data, the transformation of strategic vision at Al Amin MI represents a significant cultural shift. Previously, the school operated with a static vision focused merely on discipline and religious obedience. However, the new vision integrates *iman, ilmu, dan kompetensi global* (faith, knowledge, and global competitiveness), which positions the madrasah not only as a religious institution but also as a center of excellence. The introduction of a structured SWOT-based planning model marked the beginning of formal

strategic management practices. Regular strategic review meetings now allow teachers to reflect on progress and challenges. These findings suggest that the headmaster has successfully internalized the essence of strategic management by translating abstract visions into measurable goals.

Leadership Style and Organizational Culture

The second focus examined the leadership style of the headmaster and its influence on organizational culture. Leadership plays a pivotal role in ensuring the success of strategic management, as it determines how strategies are communicated, implemented, and internalized by the school community.

Table 2.
Findings on Leadership and Organizational Culture

Theme	Description	Supporting Evidence
Transformational Leadership	The headmaster encourages innovation, teamwork, and reflection.	Teacher: “He always motivates us to be creative and supports our ideas.”
Shared Decision-Making	Decision-making is more democratic, with inputs from all teachers.	Observation: Staff meeting shows open dialogue before policy decisions.
Cultural Integration	Religious values are embedded in managerial practices (e.g., morning dhikr, shared prayers).	Field notes: Teachers and students participate in daily collective dhikr.
Continuous Learning	Leadership promotes professional development through training and reflection.	Document: Annual teacher workshop program, 2023.

Leadership transformation at Al Amin MI is characterized by a shift from authoritative to participative management. The headmaster functions as a motivator and facilitator rather than a sole decision-maker. This leadership approach has cultivated a culture of mutual respect, collaboration, and continuous improvement. The integration of *spiritual culture* such as collective prayers before meetings strengthens moral discipline while enhancing solidarity among staff. Moreover, the headmaster’s commitment to teacher training has elevated professionalism and pedagogical innovation. The data indicate that

transformational leadership acts as a bridge between strategic planning and cultural adaptation, ensuring that every strategy is infused with Islamic ethical values.

Stakeholder Engagement and Collaborative Management

The third research objective was to explore how Al Amin MI engages stakeholders teachers, parents, committees, and the wider community in its strategic management process. The findings demonstrate that stakeholder participation has become a key element in sustaining the school's transformation and ensuring accountability.

Table 3.

Findings on Stakeholder Engagement

Theme	Description	Supporting Evidence
Parent Involvement	Parents contribute financially and participate in educational programs.	Committee: "We support the school through voluntary contributions and joint events."
External Collaboration	Partnerships established with religious foundations and local government.	Document: MoU with Islamic Foundation and CSR program, 2024.
Transparent Communication	Information sharing through WhatsApp groups and monthly meetings.	Observation: Parents' meeting discussing school programs.
Community Branding	School promotes its achievements through social media and public events.	Headmaster: "We now use digital media to show what the madrasah can do."

Stakeholder collaboration at Al Amin MI has evolved from passive involvement to active partnership. Parents are no longer viewed merely as fund contributors but as partners in strategic decision-making. For example, they participate in curriculum discussions and event planning, which enhances mutual trust and transparency. The collaboration with local government and Islamic organizations also strengthens the institution's resources and legitimacy. By integrating external support into its strategic planning, the school has enhanced its adaptability and resilience. The emphasis on transparent communication through digital platforms and open meetings has improved the school's reputation and accountability. These practices reflect the application of stakeholder theory in educational

management, aligning with strategic management principles that prioritize inclusivity and cooperation.

Impact of Strategic Management on Institutional Competitiveness

The final focus of the study assessed the impact of strategic management implementation on the school's competitiveness. Competitiveness was analyzed in terms of academic quality, public trust, innovation, and institutional sustainability.

Table 4.

Findings on Institutional Competitiveness

Aspect	Indicator	Evidence
Academic Quality	Improved student achievement and teacher professionalism.	Document: Average exam scores increased by 12% in 2024.
Innovation	Introduction of digital learning and extracurricular programs.	Observation: Students using tablets for PAI learning.
Public Trust	Increased enrollment and parental satisfaction.	Interview: "More parents are enrolling their children because of better facilities."
Sustainability	Clear strategic direction and financial management plan.	Document: Financial transparency report, 2024.

The application of strategic management has positively transformed the competitiveness of Al Amin MI. The data show measurable improvements in academic performance, teaching quality, and community perception. The school's adoption of digital learning tools such as interactive religious education apps demonstrates its adaptability to technological trends. The increase in student enrollment over the past two years reflects heightened community confidence. Furthermore, the introduction of transparent financial management and sustainability planning indicates a professional approach to long-term institutional growth. These developments signify that strategic management not only enhances operational efficiency but also strengthens the madrasah's positioning as a credible and competitive Islamic educational institution in a pluralistic society.

the research findings reveal that the transformation of Al Amin Madrasah Ibtidaiyah through strategic management is multidimensional, encompassing structural, cultural, and

relational changes. The integration of strategic vision, transformational leadership, stakeholder engagement, and continuous evaluation has collectively fostered a new institutional identity one that harmonizes Islamic values with modern educational competitiveness. This transformation demonstrates that effective strategic management in Islamic education requires both analytical tools and spiritual consciousness, ensuring that managerial innovation remains anchored in moral principles.

Discussion

Strategic Planning in Shaping the School's Direction

The findings show that strategic planning at Al Amin Madrasah Ibtidaiyah serves as the foundation for all management and instructional decisions. This approach aligns with Bryson's in (Mas-Machuca, Marta, 2014) model of *strategic planning in public and non-profit organizations*, emphasizing the importance of identifying external opportunities and internal capacities to set a clear institutional direction. The school's focus on strengthening its Islamic identity, improving academic performance, and enhancing digital literacy among teachers reflects an adaptive and forward-thinking orientation.

Compared to prior studies, this finding resonates with the work of (Istibana & Aimah, 2025), who highlighted that strategic planning in Islamic schools contributes significantly to aligning educational goals with moral and religious visions. The unique integration of *maqasid al-shariah* (the objectives of Islamic law) into planning at Al Amin illustrates how strategic management can blend spiritual and administrative goals to produce holistic transformation. This finding bridges the research gap between conventional strategic planning models often rooted in Western management theories and the contextual needs of Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia.

Thus, Al Amin's strategic planning demonstrates not merely bureaucratic compliance but serves as a dynamic process of reorienting institutional identity. The participatory involvement of teachers and parents in defining school priorities further supports the idea proposed by (Susanto & Maunah, 2024) that collaborative planning strengthens organizational ownership and long-term commitment. Therefore, strategic planning at Al Amin has moved beyond technical procedures toward a transformative vision of education grounded in both local wisdom and Islamic values.

Strategy Implementation in Daily Practices

The study revealed that the implementation of strategic management at Al Amin MI is systematically operationalized through leadership actions, teacher development programs, curriculum innovation, and stakeholder engagement. The principal acts as a *transformational leader* a model consistent with Bass and Avolio's theory in (Juhairiah et al., 2024) by inspiring teachers to embrace change and commit to school goals. Teachers are encouraged to integrate innovative pedagogies, such as project-based and character-based learning, reflecting the school's emphasis on creativity and moral development.

This implementation process aligns with the research by (Anamai et al., 2024), who found that strategic management practices in Islamic schools enhance teacher performance and institutional adaptability when accompanied by strong leadership and supportive culture. At Al Amin, the management emphasizes "*spiritual professionalism*", where educational quality is not only measured by academic scores but also by the ethical and spiritual growth of students. This dual focus fulfills the Islamic educational philosophy that seeks the balance between *ta'dib* (moral education) and *ta'lim* (intellectual instruction).

Moreover, the school's consistent monitoring and evaluation mechanisms such as monthly coordination meetings and feedback from community stakeholders reflect the implementation stage recommended by (Bu, 2022) in the *strategic management process cycle*. However, unlike corporate settings, Al Amin's implementation approach prioritizes human values and community involvement. The research confirms that strategic management in faith-based schools must be contextualized within the moral and social fabric of the community, rather than merely following technocratic models.

In line with a study by (Fajri, 2024) Al Amin's experience underscores the significance of leadership that acts as a moral compass while executing strategic decisions. This integrative approach ensures that strategy implementation does not diverge from the institution's Islamic mission, making it both effective and value-driven.

Evaluation and Sustainability of Strategic Management

The evaluation stage at Al Amin MI is carried out through a continuous cycle of assessment, feedback, and improvement, aiming to ensure sustainability. The school leadership uses both qualitative and quantitative indicators to measure the success of implemented strategies ranging from student performance, teacher competency, stakeholder satisfaction, to public reputation. This cyclical evaluation echoes the *Plan-Do-Check-Act*

(PDCA) model by Deming in (Husni & Wahyudiati, 2022), ensuring that the school remains adaptive to changes and maintains continuous improvement.

Interestingly, the findings indicate that Al Amin's sustainability efforts extend beyond administrative routines. The school incorporates community empowerment programs, such as parent forums and alumni networks, to sustain its growth and public trust. This finding aligns with the conclusions of (Kamaludin, 2022) who stated that sustainability in Islamic educational institutions depends on the synergy between internal leadership and community participation.

Furthermore, evaluation results at Al Amin are transparently communicated during school meetings, strengthening the culture of accountability and trust. This transparency enhances institutional competitiveness, who argued that sustainable competitive advantage arises when institutions effectively leverage their unique resources in this case, spiritual integrity, teacher dedication, and community engagement.

The evaluation process at Al Amin also contributes to what (Sharif et al., 2020) termed "deep learning leadership," where reflection and feedback become tools for moral and intellectual renewal. This reinforces the idea that effective strategic management in Islamic education is not solely about achieving efficiency but about nurturing continuous ethical improvement that keeps the institution relevant and trusted by its community.

Enhancing Institutional Competitiveness through Strategic Management

The culmination of planning, implementation, and evaluation has significantly strengthened Al Amin's institutional competitiveness. The school's reputation for combining religious depth with academic excellence has attracted more students, particularly from urban Muslim families seeking balanced education. The use of strategic management, therefore, has transformed the school from a conventional religious institution into a modern Islamic learning community with distinctive competitiveness.

This finding aligns with Porter's in (Sukardi et al., 2024), which emphasizes differentiation and value creation as key elements in building organizational competitiveness. Al Amin differentiates itself through the integration of Islamic ethos and modern management, an approach echoed by (Rukmanasari, 2017) who highlighted that Islamic schools can sustain competitiveness when they innovate pedagogically without abandoning spiritual authenticity.

Additionally, the school's adaptability to digital transformation such as online administration, blended learning, and digital Quran literacy demonstrates strategic agility, which is consistent with (Soko & Samo, 2022) view that successful organizations are those capable of evolving through emergent strategies. In this sense, Al Amin's case provides empirical evidence that strategic management serves as both a roadmap and a cultural framework for sustaining competitiveness amid global educational challenges.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that the implementation of strategic management at Al Amin Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, Tabanan, has played a significant role in transforming institutional governance and strengthening the school's competitiveness. This transformation is reflected in the development of a value-based strategic vision, the application of transformational leadership, and the active involvement of stakeholders in continuous evaluation processes.

Empirically, strategic management has contributed to improvements in academic quality, the advancement of instructional innovation, increased public trust, and enhanced institutional sustainability, particularly within a minority-Muslim context. From a theoretical perspective, this study enriches the discourse on Islamic education management by demonstrating that strategic management frameworks can be effectively contextualized through the integration of spiritual values and local cultural dynamics. Practically, the findings provide insights for madrasah leaders and policymakers in designing adaptive, participatory, and competitive management practices that remain aligned with Islamic educational values.

The study further implies that Islamic educational institutions should prioritize systematic long-term planning, strengthen value-based leadership, and foster sustainable collaboration with community stakeholders to enhance competitiveness and ensure the continued relevance of Islamic education in an increasingly dynamic educational environment.

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