Exploring Indonesian Principals’ Leadership Practices in Islamic-Based Senior High Schools (Madrasah Aliyahs): Address Challenges and Enhance School Performance

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A thesis submitted to the University of Canberra in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Faculty of Education

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To my family--

For always loving and supporting me.
For their inspiration, patient, and faith because they always understood.
ABSTRACT

This research explores the ways in which school principals’ leadership practices address challenges and develop the performance of Madrasah Aliyah (Islamic-based senior high schools) in Indonesia. Islamic-based schools are significant educational institutions since they provide Islamic education to the people of Indonesia, which is a predominantly Muslim nation. However, the principals face substantial challenges, such as school infrastructure and learning facilities, finances, leadership, teachers’ professional development, and community engagement. As the senior leader in a madrasah, the role of principal is significant. Principals are catalysts for change among staff, students, and other stakeholders.

The overarching question of this study is: How do principals in Madrasah Aliyahs address challenges and enhance their schools’ performance? The first sub-question is: What are the strategies implemented by principals to manage Madrasah Aliyahs and address the challenges? The second sub-question is: What leadership practices are implemented by principals to develop principal–teachers’ engagement, and principal–community engagement? This research study examines the perspectives of leaders and teachers in Madrasah Aliyahs and investigates the school environment by observing madrasah facilities and infrastructure. The research is significant in fulfilling the gap identified in the literature regarding leadership practices, especially in the context of Indonesian Islamic schools. This study also provides an in-depth analysis of indigenous leadership practices in leading Islamic-based schools, from the perspectives of principals and teachers.

A multiple case study was conducted in two areas of Indonesia: South Tangerang and Bekasi. A qualitative approach to data collection and thematic analysis was used. The primary method of data collection was in-depth interviews and observation. This method provided opportunities for seven Madrasah Aliyahs with eight participants from each school (56 participants in total) to share and discuss their experiences, opinions, and contributions to their schools’ performance and leadership practices. The participants consisted of a principal, a deputy principal of curriculum affairs, a deputy principal of administration and finance, and a deputy principal of student affairs, as well as two permanent and two honorarium teachers. Interviews were conducted in Bahasa Indonesia by the researcher, and the transcripts were translated into...
English, by Indonesian-speaking academics, for analysis. A manual process of cutting and pasting (Basit, 2010) was used to help data coding.

Major findings reveal three classifications of Madrasah Aliyahs: developed, emerging, and challenging schools. The classification is based on four factors, including school finance, infrastructure and facilities, leadership approach, and community engagement. A predominance of Islamic values and the uniqueness of Indonesian cultures shed light on the indigenous leadership practices of catalytic, servant, and kinship leadership.

Catalytic leaders enact their leadership to recognise opportunities that have value and mobilise stakeholders to collaborate effectively and productively. In this study, a school principal who is a catalytic leader is described as a change agent, entrepreneur, collaborator, mediator, and buffer. The primary principle of servant leadership is demonstrated by leaders who provide service and tend to guide followers to improve their performance. In the context of Madrasah Aliyahs in Indonesia, some principals displayed a servant leadership approach through offering stewardship and sympathy, while being a listener, mentor, and friend. In kinship leadership, a leader creates kin-based relationships with their followers, as well as a sense of unity, by developing equality among members in an organisation. The findings of this study show that principals in Madrasah Aliyahs unite their members by showing themselves as role models and father figures, and by being trustworthy and humble.

These research findings reveal that community engagement influences school performance. For instance, well-educated and wealthy families that are interested in acquiring religious knowledge are often found in communities around a developed school. However, low socio-economic status (SES) families that lack motivation for learning about religion are more common in the communities around challenging schools.

Finally, this research contributes insight into leadership development, school improvement, and community engagement in Madrasah Aliyahs. The study has potential to contribute to the academic discourse on indigenous leadership in the Indonesian school context. Catalytic leadership can lead to the improvement of school performance. Servant leadership helps to empower high-quality school staff. Kinship leadership strengthens the emotional relationships among members in the school.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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Finally, to my family, you are the best supporters and motivators in my life. To my husband Firman Wahyudi, I am so grateful to have you by my side. Thank you very much for your patience with my mood swings during this journey. To my two handsome sons, Patih Keito Al Haq and Patih Ano Jaga Al Haq, thank you so much for your support of mommy in completing this candidature. You two were so powerful that you could always boost my spirit in facing every challenging moment during this journey.

From the deepest place in my heart, I express my gratitude to all!
Table of Contents

ABSTRACT.........................................................................................................................................................i

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORSHIP OF THESIS ................................................................................................. iii

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .......................................................................................................................................... v

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES.................................................................................................................... xvii

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS ................................................................................................................................. xix

GLOSSARY ..........................................................................................................................................................xxi

Chapter 1 Introduction ........................................................................................................................................ 1

1.1. Introduction .................................................................................................................................................. 1

1.2. Research context ........................................................................................................................................ 1

1.2.1. Curriculum ............................................................................................................................................. 1

1.2.2. Learning materials ................................................................................................................................. 2

1.2.3. School infrastructure and facilities .................................................................................................... 3

1.2.4. Madrasah financial management ......................................................................................................... 5

1.2.5. Teacher development ............................................................................................................................ 6

1.2.6. Community participation ...................................................................................................................... 8

1.2.7. Leaders in Madrasah Aliyahs ................................................................................................................ 9

1.3. Research rationale and significance .......................................................................................................... 10

1.4. Research questions and objectives ........................................................................................................... 11

1.5. Research methodology .............................................................................................................................. 13

1.6. Encountering the Researcher’s Insiderness ............................................................................................. 15
1.7. Structure of the thesis ................................................................. 16
1.8. Chapter summary ................................................................. 19

Chapter 2 Literature review ........................................................................... 21
2.1. Introduction .................................................................................. 21
2.2. Context and school education system in Indonesia .............................. 21
  2.2.1. History of madrasah development in Indonesia ......................... 22
  2.2.2. Indonesian school education system ....................................... 26
2.3. Aspects influencing school performance .......................................... 29
  2.3.1. The role of management systems in developing school performance 29
  2.3.2. Influence of school financial management, infrastructure, and facilities on improving school performance ................................................................. 34
  2.3.3. Role of principal in curriculum development .......................... 38
  2.3.4. Community engagement and parents’ involvement in school education .............. 40
2.4. School leadership practice ............................................................. 46
  2.4.1. Principal leadership and teacher performance .......................... 51
  2.4.2. Leader as change agent ............................................................ 57
  2.4.3. Leader who provides service .................................................... 60
2.5. Culture and leadership practice ....................................................... 65
  2.5.1. Indigenous leadership and its influence on leadership practice ......................... 68
  2.5.2. Leader and kinship-based relationships .................................... 72
2.6. Research gaps .............................................................................. 74
2.7. Chapter summary ........................................................................................................76

Chapter 3 Research Methodology ..................................................................................79

3.1. Introduction ................................................................................................................79

3.2. Research paradigm .....................................................................................................79

3.3. Methods ........................................................................................................................82

3.4. Research questions .....................................................................................................84

3.5. Research setting ..........................................................................................................85

3.6. Participants ..................................................................................................................86

3.7. Data collection ............................................................................................................91

3.7.1. Interview ................................................................................................................94

3.7.2. Observation .............................................................................................................97

3.8. Data coding and analysis ..........................................................................................99

3.8.1. Data coding .............................................................................................................99

3.8.2. Data analysis ........................................................................................................101

3.9. Researcher as an ‘Insider’ ........................................................................................104

3.10. Ethical Considerations .............................................................................................106

3.11. Chapter summary .....................................................................................................109

Chapter 4 Research Findings: Vignettes of Contextual Analysis in Seven Case-Study

Madrasah Aliyahs ..........................................................................................................111

4.1. Introduction ................................................................................................................111

4.2. MAS1: a developed public Madrasah Aliyah in South Tangerang .........................113
4.2.1. Madrasah profiles: The first public Madrasah Aliyah in South Tangerang ..............114
4.2.2. Developed infrastructure and learning facilities .....................................................115
4.2.3. Two financial sources for the madrasah .................................................................116
4.2.4. Madrasah leadership and member disharmony ......................................................116
4.2.5. In competition with other mainstream schools ......................................................118
4.3. MBS2: a developed private Madrasah Aliyah in South Tangerang .........................119
   4.3.1. Madrasah profiles: The private madrasah under the public university foundation 119
   4.3.2. Outstanding school environment .........................................................................120
   4.3.3. Centralisation of financial management ...............................................................121
   4.3.4. Academic quality of madrasah leaders and teachers .............................................121
   4.3.5. Well-educated community ..................................................................................122
4.4. MBS3: a challenging private Madrasah Aliyah in South Tangerang .......................123
   4.4.1. Madrasah profiles: Obstacles to financial self-sufficiency ....................................123
   4.4.2. Degradation of infrastructures and the financial crisis .......................................124
   4.4.3. Problematic leadership and teacher empowerment ..............................................125
   4.4.4. Struggle to promote an Islamic education ............................................................126
4.5. MAW4: a developed public Madrasah Aliyah in Bekasi ........................................126
   4.5.1. Madrasah profiles: turning from private to public Madrasah Aliyah ...................127
   4.5.2. Infrastructure development .................................................................................127
   4.5.3. Parents’ involvement in supporting the madrasah finance ...................................128
   4.5.4. New leader and the improvement of teacher performance ..................................129
4.5.5. Community awareness of religious education .................................................. 130

4.6. MBW5: A high-performing private Madrasah Aliyah in Bekasi, West Java ............. 131

4.6.1. Developed working system .................................................................................. 131

4.6.2. Appropriate infrastructure and learning facilities .............................................. 132

4.6.3. A stable financial condition .............................................................................. 133

4.6.4. Outstanding leader .............................................................................................. 134

4.6.5. Religious community .......................................................................................... 135

4.7. MAW6: An emerging public Madrasah Aliyah in Bekasi, West Java ..................... 136

4.7.1. Challenge of improving student outcomes ......................................................... 136

4.7.2. Technology inclusion .......................................................................................... 137

4.7.3. Transparent approach to financial management ................................................ 138

4.7.4. Friendly work environment .............................................................................. 139

4.7.5. Labour community ............................................................................................. 140

4.8. MBW7: A challenging private Madrasah Aliyah in Bekasi, West Java ..................... 141

4.8.1. Challenge to compete with mainstream schools ................................................. 141

4.8.2. Un-upgraded school infrastructure ................................................................. 142

4.8.3. School minimum income .................................................................................. 142

4.8.4. Catalytic leadership ............................................................................................ 143

4.9. Chapter summary .................................................................................................. 144

Chapter 5 Research Findings  Madrasah Performance and Management ....................... 147

5.1. Introduction ............................................................................................................. 147
5.2. Madrasah Aliyah performance in Indonesia ................................................................. 148

5.2.1. Deficient factors in challenging Madrasah Aliyahs ............................................. 150

5.2.2. Developing factors in supporting an emerging Madrasah Aliyah ...................... 152

5.2.3. Established support in developed Madrasah Aliyahs ............................................. 154

5.3. School finance ........................................................................................................... 155

5.3.1. Financial issues of challenging Madrasah Aliyahs ............................................. 156

5.3.1.A. Low number of student enrolment ................................................................. 156

5.3.1.B. Lack of self-sufficient budgeting ..................................................................... 157

5.3.1.C. Low-income student guardians ................................................................. 158

5.3.1.D. Non-transparency of school finances .............................................................. 159

5.3.2. Proper financial management in emerging and developed Madrasah Aliyahs .... 160

5.3.2.A. Centralised financial budgeting system ......................................................... 160

5.3.2.B. School budgeting plan ..................................................................................... 161

5.3.2.C. Financial transparency ...................................................................................... 162

5.3.2.D. Parent involvement in budgeting support ..................................................... 164

5.4. Infrastructure and learning facilities ........................................................................ 165

5.4.1. Obstructive infrastructure in relation to the learning process ......................... 166

5.4.2. Degradation of learning facilities in challenging Madrasah Aliyahs .............. 168

5.4.3. Enhancement of infrastructure and facilities in emerging Madrasah Aliyahs ...... 170

5.4.4. Infrastructure and learning facilities improvement in developed Madrasah Aliyahs. ................................................................................................................ 173
Chapter 6 Research Findings Leadership Approach and Community Engagement

6.1. Introduction

6.2. Catalytic leadership

6.2.1. Leader as a mediator

6.2.2. Identifying value-creating opportunities

6.3. Servant leadership

6.3.1. Leaders as a listener

6.3.2. Leader as an effective communicator

6.3.3. Leader provided empathy

6.3.4. Leader as a true guide

6.3.5. Leader as a role model

6.3.6. Friendship-based leadership in Indonesian Madrasah Aliyahs

6.4. Kinship leadership

6.4.1. MAS1 principal: a devout and decent leader

6.4.2. MBS2 principal: a firm but fun “father”

6.4.3. MAW4 principal: a good listener and religious personality

6.4.4. MBW5 principal: trustworthy and low profile

6.5. Community engagement

6.5.1. Community engagement as a funding support

6.5.2. Community engagement as a network
Chapter 7 Discussion: Understanding Three Prominent Leadership Approaches in the Indonesian Context

7.1. Introduction .................................................................................................................. 207

7.2. Catalytic leadership ...................................................................................................... 210

7.2.1. Change agent: a catalytic mechanism in developing a vision .................................. 210

7.2.2. Entrepreneur: promoting madrasah to gain the trust .............................................. 213

7.2.3. Collaborator: building partnership among stakeholders ......................................... 214

7.2.4. Mediator and buffer: avoiding conflicts and misunderstanding among members ... 217

7.3. Servant Leadership ...................................................................................................... 218

7.3.1. Stewardship: leader commitment to provide service .............................................. 219

7.3.2. Listening to understand .......................................................................................... 220

7.3.3. Sympathy and acceptance ...................................................................................... 221

7.3.4. Leader as a mentor ................................................................................................. 222

7.3.5. Friendship-based relationship ............................................................................... 226

7.4. Kinship leadership ....................................................................................................... 229

7.4.1. Role model of an organisation ............................................................................... 230

7.4.2. Trustworthy ............................................................................................................ 232

7.4.3. Spirituality .............................................................................................................. 234

7.4.4. Father figure ........................................................................................................... 236

7.4.5. Humble .................................................................................................................... 238
Appendix 5 participant information sheet and informed consent in Bahasa Indonesia ....299

Appendix 6 Institutional Letter of Approval in Bahasa Indonesia........................................303

Appendix 7 Sample of the colouring coding system...............................................................305
# LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table 1</td>
<td>The Characteristics of Madrasah and Mainstream Schools</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 2</td>
<td>Criteria for Selecting the Madrasah Aliyah</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 3</td>
<td>The Planning of Time Allocation for Interviews and Observations in Bekasi, West Java Region</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 4</td>
<td>The Categories of Madrasah Aliyah in the Research Setting</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 5</td>
<td>Leadership Approaches in Madrasah Aliyah in the Indonesian Context</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 1</td>
<td>The demonstration of thematic networks analysis</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2</td>
<td>The classification of Madrasah Aliyah performance in Indonesia</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 3</td>
<td>A dynamic level of Madrasah Aliyah performance</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADB</td>
<td>Asian Development Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APBD</td>
<td>Anggaran Pendapatan dan Belanja Daerah (Regional Revenue and Expenditure)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APBN</td>
<td>Anggaran Pendapatan dan Belanja Nasional (National Revenue and Expenditure)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AusAID</td>
<td>Australian Agency for International Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAN S/M</td>
<td>Badan Akreditasi Nasional Sekolah/Madrasah (National Accreditation Board for Schools/Madrasahs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOS</td>
<td>Biaya Operasional Sekolah (School Operational Budget)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DP1</td>
<td>Deputy principal for curriculum affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DP2</td>
<td>Deputy principal for administration and finance affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DP3</td>
<td>Deputy principal for student affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIPA</td>
<td>Daftar Isian Pelaksanaan Anggaran (The Budget Implementation List)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and Communication Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KTSP</td>
<td>Kurikulum Satuan Tingkat Pendidikan (School-Based Curriculum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAS1</td>
<td>A high-performing public Madrasah Aliyah in South Tangerang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBS2</td>
<td>A high-performing private Madrasah Aliyah in South Tangerang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBS3</td>
<td>A low-performing private Madrasah Aliyah in South Tangerang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAW4</td>
<td>A high-performing public Madrasah Aliyah in Bekasi, West Java</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBW5</td>
<td>A high-performing private Madrasah Aliyah in Bekasi, West Java</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAW6</td>
<td>A low-performing public Madrasah Aliyah in Bekasi, West Java</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBW7</td>
<td>A low-performing private Madrasah Aliyah in Bekasi, West Java</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoRA</td>
<td>Ministry of Religious Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoNE</td>
<td>Ministry of National Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoHA</td>
<td>Ministry of Home Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBL</td>
<td>Project-Based Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SES</td>
<td>Socio-Economic Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPP</td>
<td>Sumbangan Pembangunan Pendidikan (Education Development Donations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T1</td>
<td>Senior/permanent teacher 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2</td>
<td>Senior/permanent teacher 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T3</td>
<td>Junior/honorarium teacher 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T4</td>
<td>Junior/honorarium teacher 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TPA</td>
<td>Taman Pendidikan Al Quran (Al Quran Educational for Children)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## GLOSSARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adab</td>
<td>Islamic manner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al Quran</td>
<td>Islamic holy book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akidah akhlaq</td>
<td>Islamic morals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bahasa</td>
<td>Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhuha</td>
<td>Morning praying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eid al-Fitr</td>
<td>A celebration of the end of fasting month Ramadhan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eid al-Adha</td>
<td>A celebration of the end of Hajj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiqh</td>
<td>Islamic jurisprudence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hadith</td>
<td>A record of the words, actions, and the silent approval of the Islamic prophet Muhammad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hisab</td>
<td>The reckoning of all acts of worship when someone lives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiayi or Ustadz</td>
<td>Islamic leaders/scholars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madrasah</td>
<td>Formal Islamic-based school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madrasah Ibtidaiyyah</td>
<td>Islamic-based primary school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madrasah Tsanawiyah</td>
<td>Islamic-based junior high school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madrasah Aliyah</td>
<td>Islamic-based senior high school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muhadhoroh</td>
<td>Islamic speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nahwu</td>
<td>Arabic grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pancasila</td>
<td>The five pillars of Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pendidikan Agama</td>
<td>Religious education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pesantren</td>
<td>Islamic boarding school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pramuka : Boy scout
Raudhatul Athfal : Islamic-based kindergarten
Sharaf : Arabic vocabulary/sentence structure
Surau : Small mosque
Taman Pendidikan Al Quran (TPA) : Al Quran education for children
Taqwa : Being conscious, mindful, and pious to God
Tauhid : Monotheism
Wilde schoolen ordonantie : The wild educational institutions
Chapter 1
Introduction

1.1. Introduction

This chapter introduces a study of principals’ leadership in Islamic-based senior high schools, or *Madrasah Aliyahs*, in two cities: South Tangerang, Banten, and Bekasi, West Java, Indonesia. Madrasahs face numerous challenges relating to curriculum, school infrastructure and facilities, finances and teacher performance (Muhajir, 2016), and the madrasah principals struggle to address such problems.

This chapter outlines the context and focus of this research and includes a detailed explanation of the history of Madrasah Aliyahs and leadership practices followed in them. This chapter also discusses the context, rationale, significance, research objectives, approach, research questions and methods of study. Further, this chapter outlines the structure of this thesis and provides a chapter summary.

1.2. Research context

Since the conception of madrasahs in the early twentieth century (Parker & Raihani, 2011), these schools have played a significant role in the Indonesian educational system. However, madrasahs face significant issues that challenge leaders in the development of teaching and learning processes. These issues are discussed below.

1.2.1. Curriculum

The curricula of madrasahs identify Islamic knowledge as one of a school’s most significant learning subjects, alongside secular subjects such as science, chemistry, physics, biology, mathematics, and English. Thirty per cent of madrasah subjects are Islamic, such as *Akidah*
akhlq (Islamic morals), tauhid (monotheism), Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), and Al-Qurán (Islamic holy book). The remaining 70 per cent of subjects are secular disciplines, however, the combination of a focus on both Islamic and secular subjects creates several challenges.

One of these challenges is that the large number of subjects taught in madrasahs reduces the effectiveness of the teaching–learning process (Tan, 2015). Additionally, the standard curricula for religious and secular subjects have significant differences. Religious subjects have adopted Curriculum 2013 (Karli, 2014) in which student character-building is prioritised. However, secular subjects are based on a curriculum adapted from the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) called a school-based curriculum, or Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan (KTSP), in which knowledge is the centre of learning. Problems have become more significant because this KTSP is developed based on individual school needs, while Curriculum 2013 is developed by the central government. Education staff, including teachers and principals, need to work harder to carry out the administration for both curricula (Karli, 2014; Marlina, 2013).

1.2.2. Learning materials

Learning resources pose additional challenges in the process of teaching and learning in madrasahs. However, these issues primarily affect private madrasahs. While the national government provides all the textbooks required by students in public madrasahs, it does not provide such resources to private madrasahs as these are considered private institutions that require independent funding. Therefore, support in the form of provision of learning materials is not deemed a government responsibility and textbooks for students in private madrasahs are funded by the pupils’ parents. Providing textbooks is not an issue for parents who are well-resourced financially. However, most students in private madrasahs are from middle- to lower-income backgrounds and thus many cannot afford to buy textbooks (Muhajir, 2016).
Fortunately, organisations such as the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) donate textbooks required in Indonesia madrasahs. However, such donations primarily consist of textbooks for secular subjects like English and mathematics (ADB, 2006).

1.2.3. School infrastructure and facilities

Some madrasahs experience challenges in relation to inadequate school facilities and infrastructure. This problem is more prevalent in private madrasahs. It has been reported that some school facilities, such as computer, biology and language laboratories, represent a critical element of the student learning process in madrasahs (ADB, 2006; Muhajir, 2016). Further, it was found that if there were an inadequate number of classrooms in madrasahs, students had to take turns in using the classroom with other students, resulting in some groups of students using the classrooms in a morning session while other groups would use it in the afternoon session.

A qualitative study on a Madrasah Aliyah in Medan, Indonesia (Asry, Jaya, & Lubis, 2017), found that the deterioration of school infrastructure and facilities influenced student motivation to learn. The substandard infrastructure and facilities had a negative impact on learning and student satisfaction with the school environment. Students felt uncomfortable and physically unsafe at the school. The study found that students in the madrasah did not meet satisfactory learning outcomes (Asry et al., 2017).

Another quantitative study in a Madrasah Aliyah in Tasikmalaya, West Java, Indonesia (Kurniadi, Prihatin, Komariah, & Sudarsyah, 2017), showed that madrasah infrastructure influenced both student and teacher performance psychologically. This study examined how
infrastructure could create a good teaching environment for teachers, so that they could perform their work professionally. However, the study found that the school examined lacked adequate infrastructure and learning facilities such as a library, practicum class and tools, internet access, and media and technology. Researchers recommended that principals maintain and develop madrasah infrastructure and facilities in order to support teacher professionalism (Kurniadi et al., 2017).

A descriptive research study conducted by Nurkholida (2018) revealed that developing adequate infrastructure and learning facilities in a public vocational madrasah in Krecek, East Java, Indonesia, was challenging. Based on interviews with madrasah board leaders and members, the findings revealed that a major issue in improving madrasahs was improving school facilities. Although this study gained information from madrasah leaders, its findings did not examine any leadership strategies used to address the challenges.

In summary, the provision and standard of infrastructure and facilities in madrasah in Indonesia remains problematic. Some studies found that most madrasahs in Indonesia lack infrastructure such as proper buildings and classrooms. In addition to a lack of learning facilities, inadequate technology support and internet access have a negative impact on student and teacher performance and outcomes. Most studies have focused on problems influencing school infrastructure and facilities. This research project will explore the specific elements that hinder the development of Madrasah Aliyah infrastructure and learning facilities in certain areas, which then influence the school performance, and will investigate how school principals address those challenges.
1.2.4. Madrasah financial management

Educational policies have been decentralised since 2001 (Muhajir, 2016), providing madrasahs the authority to manage their schools independently. The positive impact of the shift to decentralisation has been to initiate change toward improving madrasah schools based on the needs of the local culture. In some circumstances, such autonomy might challenge madrasahs to increase their performance to compete with other madrasahs or mainstream schools. They need to research, allocate, prioritise, manage, and take responsibility for their own empowerment (Muhajir, 2016). Consequently, the decentralised system influences the financial management of schools, and this is found to be an issue in school-based management.

A school that is well-managed with good sources of finance will face fewer challenges in administering the budget of the institution. However, a school with a small budget and low income may struggle to manage its financial situation. Although the Indonesian government has allocated funding to support both public and private madrasahs, some of the schools use such funding to pay for teachers’ salaries and expenses like monthly electric and water bills (Muhajir, 2016).

For example, a qualitative study found that in the madrasah in Lhokseumawe, Aceh, Indonesia, the school budgeting system was not effective for two reasons (Harun, Khairuddin, & Niswanto, 2018). Firstly, the budget for infrastructure and learning facilities was relatively low, so the madrasah could not afford to improve the quality of these. Secondly, funding from sources including government, community, and parents was problematic. The system of transferring government funds to madrasahs is slow and poorly managed, and needs improvement. Parents from low socio-economic status (SES) backgrounds were unable to contribute to the madrasah budget. The study suggests that the madrasah does in fact have a
good financial system, however inadequate sources of finance and low engagement with stakeholders have compromised the effectiveness of the madrasah in gaining more funding (Harun et al., 2018).

To sum up, school-based management resulting from the decentralisation of education policy has a negative impact on some schools, particularly private madrasahs. Studies show that problems with funding sources and stakeholder support are the biggest factors thwarting madrasah performance and survival. Consequently, madrasahs face challenges in improving their performance that make it difficult to compete with other schools in Indonesia.

Following on from the studies mentioned above, this research aims to investigate how school principals manage and increase school funding. This study explores strategies used by principals to organise school finances in order to support the performance of Madrasah Aliyahs. In addition, this research also examines how principals interact with parents, the community, companies, governments, and others who contribute to school budgets.

### 1.2.5. Teacher development

Previous research indicates that most teaching–learning issues in madrasahs relate to teacher performance (Ahid, 2014; Bahri, Basalamah, Kamse, & Bijang, 2018). This presents a significant challenge for madrasahs as they tend to lack adequately trained teachers. Ahid (2014) recorded data from 90,441 teachers of Madrasah Aliyahs; 65,073 (72 per cent) had a qualification at undergraduate level or higher, while 25,368 (28 per cent) did not hold undergraduate qualifications. Some teachers who hold undergraduate degrees teach subjects unrelated to their qualifications (Ahid, 2014), and this may negatively influence student learning and their comprehension of subject content.
Bahri et al. (2018) conducted research in Makassar, Indonesia, and argued that teacher performance in Madrasah Aliyahs is influenced by work discipline, salaries, and principal leadership. The study concluded that teacher performance in the madrasah is still poor. This could occur because many teachers receive low wages from schools. Madrasah leaders provided less attention and supervision to teachers in the madrasah, and thus teachers had to rely on their own efforts to maintain their performance.

In regard to developing curriculum and learning materials, principals must determine how to manage two different curricula and balance these with the vision of their madrasahs. Therefore, it is necessary to examine principals’ planning, application, and evaluation strategies in madrasah curriculum development. The issue of textbooks in private madrasahs poses an additional problem.

The provision of adequate school facilities and infrastructure present significant challenges for principals, since it is their responsibility to ensure learning facilities are optimal, and principals are prompted to invest greater efforts to develop madrasah facilities and infrastructure of madrasahs. To develop adequate madrasah facilities, infrastructure, and teacher and staff salaries, principals and their deputies must be cautious and strict in their financial management practices. Thus, this research asks also: what kind of strategies might be effective in managing school finances and how can these ensure school needs are met?

Regarding the poor level of teaching performance and teacher qualifications in madrasahs, principals face at least two challenges. Firstly, principals challenges to do teacher recruitment practices and requirements. Secondly, they have lack resources to supervise and evaluate teaching performance annually. In some circumstances, these challenges are difficult to manage because it is hard to recruit qualified teachers on a limited school budget. The same
situation may also occur during teacher evaluations because principals are often hesitant to assess teacher performance (Bahri et al., 2018)

1.2.6. Community participation

The community participation at madrasahs has been problematic. A study conducted by Parker and Raihani (2011) revealed that community involvement was poor because parents responded to madrasahs negatively. The study found that madrasahs, particularly those in Yogyakarta, Central Java, and West Sumatra, did not ensure students were adequately skilled to successfully apply for a job. The findings mentioned that the community questioned whether students were equipped to continue their education to a higher level. Such attitudes occurred because interaction between madrasahs and the community was very limited. The study found that most madrasahs in West Sumatra tended to prevent parents and the community from being involved in the school programs. The madrasahs believed that parents and the community were expected to provide funds for the school. As a result, the madrasahs and communities failed to develop mutual trust.

Recent research (Fauzi, Rosyadi, & Baharun, 2019) found that several factors contributed to the lack of community trust in madrasahs in Indonesia. Firstly, the community perceived madrasah quality as low, producing poor student outcomes. Secondly, the community had different expectations from what the madrasah offered. For instance, the madrasah offered more religious subjects than secular subjects. Lastly, these differences created low motivation and an unwillingness for parents and the community to send children to study at madrasahs.

As leaders of madrasahs, principals play a significant role in improving community participation in these schools. Principals need to develop skills and capabilities to work cooperatively with teachers and the community to create a high-quality school (Nurhayati,
This study examines principals’ perceptions and strategies for maintaining interaction with the community, and how principals can develop community trust and engagement to improve madrasah performance.

1.2.7. Leaders in Madrasah Aliyahs

As the head of the school, principals should take primary responsibility for improving school performance and management, including ensuring adequate facilities, and curriculum and teacher development (Muhammad, Marzuki, & Hussin, 2015; Munir & Khalil, 2016). The implementation of leadership strategies may influence leadership practices in madrasahs as leaders, such as principals, headmasters, head teachers, or presidents, play a role in guiding an institution (Gunter, 2016).

In Indonesia, a school principal is an executive leader who manages the school and supervises the teaching and learning process. Additionally, principals encourage staff to maintain communication and interaction within the organisation (Jawas, 2017b; Sofo, Fitzgerald, & Jawas, 2012). Hence, a principal is a key figure who leads school improvement efforts. In curriculum development, a madrasah principal must manage two different curriculum administrations, namely Curriculum 2013 and school-based curriculum (KTSP), which have different learning purposes.

In managing a school, a leader has some important tasks, including planning the school’s vision, setting organisational objectives, providing resources to support the teaching–learning process, supervising and evaluating teachers, maintaining the quality of staff, and ensuring effective communication and interaction among staff members (Wildy & Dimmock, 1993). These become distinctive challenges for madrasah principals where madrasahs lack facilities and funding (ADB, 2006; Muhajir, 2016).
Some studies indicate that teachers in Madrasah Aliyahs are not adequately qualified to teach general subjects, such as mathematics and science, since these teachers have a poor knowledge of the teaching materials and limited ability with the technologies required to facilitate learning (Ahid, 2014; Z. Rohmah, 2015). A teacher is the main agent of instruction in helping students understand. Empirical studies suggest that teaching quality significantly influences student achievements (Darling-Hammond, 2008; Gess-Newsome et al., 2016).

As a leader, a principal should embrace teacher development as part of his or her responsibilities. The Ministry of National Education (MoNE) notes that principals must lead their institution and optimise human resources (MoNE, 2007). Practical leadership skills enable the identification and implementation of solutions to develop the quality of teaching staff in Madrasah Aliyahs. For instance, principals could explore new models of learning, and share and discuss these with teachers to improve teaching performance (Heck, 2011).

1.3. Research rationale and significance

This chapter has introduced the research project, which aims to provide an empirical insight into previous studies that examined challenges that influenced the performance of madrasahs in Indonesia. These studies found that most madrasahs in Indonesia were facing challenges, especially in financial management and resources, developing infrastructure and learning facilities including curriculum and learning materials, and teacher development. Scholars argued that weak involvement of stakeholders and a lack of community participation contributed to compromising the improvement of madrasahs. Most of these studies described madrasah challenges and proposed that stakeholders, especially madrasah foundations and governments, offered solutions. However, few of them considered the leadership strategies of madrasah principals as a way to overcome the problems.
Despite the role of madrasahs in the educational system in Indonesia and although some previous research has investigated improving the performance of madrasahs (Ahid, 2014; Azra, 2015; M. M. Choiri & A. Fitriani, 2011; Muhajir, 2016; Nurhamzah, 2016; Rasyid, 2012; Sofanudin & Rokhman, 2016; Walid, 2015; Witanti, 2016), little is known about the leadership practice of madrasah principals and how leaders address challenges that might affect a madrasah’s performance.

Previous research about madrasah leaders in developing teacher professionalism (Muhammad, Marzuki, & Hussin, 2017; Tanjung, Azmi, & Siahaan, 2017), curriculum (Azra, 2014; Newhouse & Beegle, 2006), and madrasah management (Muhajir, 2016; Munir & Khalil, 2016) focus on the effects of principals to resolve the challenges of the madrasah. However, these studies did not investigate the key behaviours and practices school leaders implement to address challenges. Therefore, this study will provide new understanding and insights into the role that leadership practices have in improving the development of madrasah performance.

1.4. Research questions and objectives

Research questions

The overarching question of this study is: ‘How do principals in Madrasah Aliyahs address challenges and enhance school performance?’. Two research sub-questions are:

(1) What are the strategies used by principals to manage Madrasah Aliyahs and address challenges?
   a. How do principals manage school finances?
   b. How do principals develop school infrastructure and facilities to support teaching and learning?

(2) What leadership practices are enacted by principals to develop principal–teachers, and principal–community engagement?
a. How do principals promote teacher performance and how do principal–teacher interactions affect teacher performance?
b. How do principals optimise community engagement to support the madrasahs?

The objectives of this study are to:

(1) identify challenges that may compromise Madrasah Aliyah performance;
(2) identify the principals’ approaches to developing Madrasah Aliyah facilities and infrastructure and school finance;
(3) identify the leaders’ approaches to developing interactions between principals and teachers to develop teacher performance; and
(4) identify principals’ approaches to fostering community engagement to support the performance of Madrasah Aliyahs.

To obtain an in-depth understanding of leadership practice in Madrasah Aliyahs, the study will examine the perspectives of leaders, deputy leaders, and teachers in Madrasah Aliyahs. This study will also investigate the school environment by documenting madrasah facilities and infrastructure.

This research aims to bring together an understanding of leadership approaches and their use in solving the challenges of madrasahs in Indonesia. Specifically, this study will explore the leadership practices of Madrasah Aliyah principals and investigate how these principals address challenges such as finances, adequate school facilities and infrastructure, good teacher performance, and community engagement in order to improve madrasahs. Since leadership practice research studies have mostly been conducted in Western countries and many leadership concepts were established in a Western context (Zhang et al., 2012), this study intends to present a nuanced understanding of indigenous leadership in the context of Southeast Asia, especially Indonesia.
This is important because Indonesia has a diverse and unique cultural character as well as a commitment to the values of Islam, which are embraced by most people in the country. Indonesian indigenous values might influence the leadership approach in many institutions including madrasahs. Finally, this study provides recommendations to the central government, such as the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA), which administers the madrasahs, principals, teachers, and stakeholders.

1.5. Research methodology

This research project primarily used a qualitative approach. Semi-structured in-depth interviews and school observations were conducted with principals and teachers in Madrasah Aliyahs in South Tangerang and Bekasi, West Java. The principals, deputy principals, and teachers were interviewed to determine their perceptions of leadership practices in the school context. The interviews focused on principals’ and deputy principals’ perceptions of school visions, school missions, and strategies, as well as teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ strategies in leading the Madrasah Aliyahs to address challenges. Principals’ approaches were examined for how they would help to address the challenges faced by Madrasah Aliyahs including curriculum, providing and maintaining adequate school infrastructure and facilities, ensuring adequate finance, enhancing teacher performance, and maintaining community engagement.

Observations were conducted to gain an understanding of teaching–learning activities and how leaders developed teacher performance. The researcher created a journal to record any reports provided by the principals with the aim of maintaining and developing school and teacher teaching performance. For example, the researcher observed activities such as school assemblies, staff meetings, and professional development meetings. School facilities and
infrastructure were also observed to determine their influences on the educational process at Madrasah Aliyahs. Additional details about interview questions and observation protocols are provided in Chapter Three. These observations were used to complement interview data that could strengthen or refute principals’ perceptions regarding madrasah infrastructure and management.

Interview data were analysed using thematic analysis with thematic networks tools. The researcher labelled or coded the dataset to enable the retrieval of thematic passages in the data (Attride-Stirling, 2001; Bryman, 2012). Interview themes were highlighted in different colours (Stuckey, 2015). A thematic analysis method was appropriate for this research because it provided a methodological overview of the data, helped identify conceptual themes and categories, and allowed the researcher to make comparisons and discover thematic connections (Attride-Stirling, 2001). The detailed research methodology is presented in Chapter Three.

This study dealt mainly with principal leadership practices in Madrasah Aliyahs. The setting of the research was designed based on the geographical conditions of the area of study. The researcher identified two groups of Madrasah Aliyahs in South Tangerang and Bekasi, West Java. The settings were chosen for geographic convenience and access. Three Madrasah Aliyahs were selected in South Tangerang and four Madrasah Aliyahs in Bekasi, with seven Madrasah Aliyahs in total. The Madrasah Aliyahs were categorised into high- and low-performing schools. The categorising was based on data released by the National Accreditation Board for School and Madrasah (BAN/SM) Republic of Indonesia (BAN S/M, 2017). The high-performing Madrasah Aliyahs were ranked as ‘A’ and ‘B’, and low-performing Madrasah Aliyahs were ranked as ‘C’ or unaccredited.
1.6. **Encountering the Researcher’s Insiderness**

The researcher has some familiarity with this research area as the madrasah has been part of her life. She was born into a family that ran and managed a madrasah, and her father and brother were principals of madrasahs. This researcher graduated from *Madrasah Ibtidaiyyah* (primary school), *Madrasah Tsanawiyah* (junior high school), *Madrasah Aliyah* (senior high school) and Islamic university. Therefore, this researcher is aware of the educational philosophy, organisational culture, and social culture prominent in madrasahs.

After finishing her bachelor degree, this researcher was employed by an Islamic education foundation in Jakarta. She was asked to design the framework of an Islamic school featuring English as the primary language of instruction. The school was under the administration of MoRA; thus, the school was positioned equally alongside traditional madrasahs. For about six months, this researcher designed the curriculum, hired teachers and staff, and developed a team to provide technical guidance. After five years (2003–2008), she became the principal at the school. Since then, she has enhanced her understanding of how to manage and build interactions among teachers, staff, and stakeholders. She has also gained experience in how to develop her personal, managerial, supervisory, and social competencies while leading the school. As a lecturer of education at the State Islamic University of Jakarta from 2009 to 2016, this researcher has shared her leadership experience with her students. She realises that in the future, her students will be teachers or principals in other madrasahs.

From the experiences outlined above, the researcher believes that her status as an insider (Teusner, 2016) can provide greater insight into madrasahs. Her educational background in madrasahs and her experience as a principal in a madrasah provide her with the skills and experience of leadership practice, curriculum implementation, and management of Islamic-
based schools. She understands the madrasah educational system, which focuses on the development of religion, and how this can be integrated with mainstream subjects, and thus, how madrasah alumni are able to compete with mainstream school graduates. As a former manager of a madrasah, this researcher understands how to develop interaction and communication with stakeholders including governments, the community, companies, and parents. Additionally, it is significant for this researcher to break madrasah social and organisational culture barriers so that madrasahs are not simply exclusive religious institutions that provide only distinctive Islamic education but can instead create high-level spiritual and intellectual quality outcomes.

1.7. **Structure of the thesis**

This thesis consists of eight chapters. The aim of Chapter One is to introduce Madrasah Aliyahs in Indonesia as the site of this research. Chapter One also demonstrates the issues and challenges faced by Madrasah Aliyahs, through an examination of curricula, learning materials, infrastructure and learning facilities, finance, teacher development, and community participation. This examination leads to a consideration of principal leadership practices that are put in place to address the madrasah challenges. This chapter also describes the research questions, significance, purposes, and objectives of this study. A brief explanation of this study’s methodology is also provided in this chapter to explain how the data were collected and analysed in this research project.

Chapter Two examines the literature relating to this study’s research context and school educational system, particularly aspects influencing school performance, and school leadership practice in Indonesia. The literature review also examines studies about leadership practice
based on indigenous leadership values. The chapter also discusses how Indonesian cultures and religions influence leadership characteristics when leading an organisation.

Chapter Three offers an overview of this study’s research methodology. The chapter provides a description of the research paradigm, design, setting, participants, instruments, procedures, and data coding and analysis. This study explored Madrasah Aliyah leadership practices in order to improve school performance. A qualitative approach to the interpretative paradigm was used as an appropriate design to collect the data. This researcher selected two regions in Indonesia with qualification of urban and suburban area in which to conduct this study. The participants were divided into two groups: Madrasah Aliyah leaders (principal and deputy principals) and members (teachers). The research project used interviews and observations as instruments for the collection of data. Semi-structured and in-depth interviews were the main data sources for this study, while observations were carried out to provide supportive data to complement the interview data. The data was coded manually with colour-coding, and analysed with thematic networks analysis as promoted by Attride-Stirling (2001). The study was limited to a focus on school settings, participants, and research instruments. Ethical considerations included informed consent, a guarantee of confidentiality and anonymity for participants’ safety and identity security, an awareness of harm and risk requiring a focus on the protection and rights of research participants, and the use of language in interviews. The interviews used Bahasa Indonesia since participants speak Bahasa in daily life.

Chapter Four is a contextual analysis that contains an overview of seven case studies. This chapter was written as a storyline and presented vignette versions of the seven case-study Madrasah Aliyahs. These vignettes covered the background, infrastructure and facilities, financial management, leadership, and community engagement of Madrasah Aliyahs that might influence school improvement.
Chapter Five describes the findings and interpretation of this study. Descriptions focus on school performance in the seven case-study Madrasah Aliyahs. Important quotations from participants have been highlighted to strengthen the analysis. In this chapter, the researcher reveals a surprising finding about school performance from two levels, namely, low-performing and high-performing Madrasah Aliyahs, separating them into three levels: challenging, emerging, and developed schools.

Chapter Six consists of a description of data findings that focus on school leadership approaches to managing, communicating, and interacting with teachers, staff, and stakeholders. Madrasah Aliyahs in the case studies demonstrated distinctive approaches and showed how their principals attempted to address the madrasah challenges. The research findings revealed three significant approaches used by principals in Madrasah Aliyahs. These are catalytic, servant, and kinship leadership approaches.

Chapter Seven is a discussion chapter, encompassing the research questions, discussion of findings, and implications of this research. This chapter primarily discusses principal leadership approaches in Madrasah Aliyahs, and covers principals’ personality, behaviour, and attitude while they were leading a school, as well as strategies they developed in communicating and interacting with their subordinates.

Finally, Chapter Eight presents a summary of the study results and conclusions, the implications of this study, and recommendations for future research. The study results specifically identify key findings relating to performance in two settings (South Tangerang and Bekasi) and principal leadership approaches in Madrasah Aliyahs. Two implications relating to theory and practice are presented in this chapter, outlining new insights into indigenous leadership in the Indonesian context and the promotion of new ideas relating to leadership.
approaches to communication and interaction with teachers and staff. Recommendations based on these research findings are directed to several groups, including the Indonesian government, madrasah stakeholders, and school principals, offering ideal leadership practices for improving Madrasah Aliyah performance.

1.8. Chapter summary

This chapter has outlined the rationale of this research and identified knowledge of leadership practice, especially in the context of Madrasah Aliyahs in Indonesia. The gap in this knowledge centres on madrasah leaders, who play a significant role in addressing the schools’ challenges. There are limited numbers of studies that focus on how madrasah leaders enact their leadership practice and develop approaches to managing madrasahs in order to improve school performance. This chapter briefly explains the concept of leadership practice, its significant connection to management, and why this is important for improving madrasah performance.

There is a strong emphasis on financial problems among madrasah in Indonesia as most madrasahs are struggling to obtain sufficient funds due to a lack of students enrolling. The limited number of students also affects the nominal subsidy provided by the government. Consequently, several interrelated effects have been observed, including infrastructure that cannot be upgraded, a limited budget to ensure proper learning facilities, and a decline in the quality of teachers due to a lack of income and teaching training. In other words, financial problems are at the core of the issues faced by most madrasahs in Indonesia.

Finally, this chapter briefly describes the study’s research methods and the instruments used to gather data, as well as presenting an analysis of the data that were gathered. The chapter starts with a research rationale, outlining the significance of the study and its purposes and objectives, followed by the questions investigated, and a description of the approaches undertaken to gain data. The chapter also describes the researcher’s role as an insider who has a deep understanding of this
research area, which provides her with an opportunity to contribute to the development of madrasah performance in Indonesia.

The next chapter will present a literature review relating to this research area. This chapter will analyse research in international and national (Indonesian) contexts in order to ascertain the gap between this current research and other studies.
Chapter 2
Literature review

2.1. Introduction
This chapter explores the literature on educational systems, factors influencing school performance, and school leadership practice in the Indonesian context. In the first section, the researcher describes the education system in Indonesia and government policy within this system. The second section explores some factors that influence the performance of schools. These include school management, finance, infrastructure and facilities, teacher performance, curriculum, outcomes, and community engagement. In the school leadership practice section, the researcher examines the general understanding of leadership practice and its application in order to develop school performance and improvement.

The chapter also discusses indigenous leadership in regard to local values of leadership approaches in the Indonesian context. Some elements, such as religion, culture, and language, provide strong influences on leaders. The discussion will focus on the role of a school leader as the facilitator in connecting and supporting teachers to develop their teaching performance.

2.2. Context and school education system in Indonesia
The following sections discuss a history of madrasahs and how they link to the mainstream educational system in Indonesia. They also present relevant information and regulations that influence the development process for madrasahs in Indonesia. For instance, the fact that madrasahs are administered by the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA) is not only to distinguish a madrasah from a mainstream school, but also highlights that madrasahs are distinctive educational institutions where Islamic and general knowledge are integrated. Hence, madrasahs might be an ideal learning place for Muslim students since they will obtain a general
education with a strong religious training. However, madrasahs still face some challenges that leave them in a position behind that of mainstream schools (Islam, 2017).

2.2.1. History of madrasah development in Indonesia

Madrasah is based on the Arabic word *madrasatun*, which translates to ‘school’ (Azra, 2014; BAN/SM, 2017). It is used to distinguish between mainstream schools and Islamic-based schools. Historically, madrasahs were first built as Islamic-based schools in the colonial era in 1905 (Mubin, Hilmi, & Ramli, 2015). Initially, Islamic education was taught in some *surau* (small mosques) and *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools) (Azra, 2015; Choiri & Fitriani, 2011; Tan, 2015). At that time, madrasahs had a mission to spread Islamic knowledge and influence people in Indonesia to fight against colonialism. Thus, Islamic education was inspired by thoughts of independence and movements against the Dutch government.

Eventually, in 1933, the Dutch government prohibited the madrasah as a formal education institution in Indonesia. This policy was known as *wilde schoolen ordonantie* (the wild educational institutions) (Choiri & Fitriani, 2011). After the rule was enacted, madrasahs struggled to carry out their Islamic education mission. However, this did not dampen the spirits of Muslims in Indonesia. Many communities secretly established madrasahs to continue educating Indonesian people with Islamic values (Choiri & Fitriani, 2011; Tan, 2015).

After Indonesian independence in 1945, the Indonesian education system gradually changed. In 1975, based on the decree of three ministries including the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA), Ministry of National Education (MoNE), and Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA), madrasahs were included as part of the education system in Indonesia (M. M. Choiri & A. Fitriani, 2011). Madrasahs become independent, formal, Islamic-based educational institutions
where the graduates received graduation certificates equivalent to those awarded by mainstream schools.

There are some characteristics that distinguish madrasahs from mainstream schools in Indonesia. The divergences are presented in Table 1 as follows:

**Table 1**

*The Characteristics of Madrasah and Mainstream Schools*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Madrasah</th>
<th>Mainstream Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Administration</strong></td>
<td>Ministry of Religious Affairs</td>
<td>Ministry of National Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Systems</strong></td>
<td>Semi-traditional, based on <em>Kiayi</em> or <em>Ustadz</em> (Islamic leaders/scholars)</td>
<td>Modern, based on scholars and intellectuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subject content</strong></td>
<td>30% Islamic subjects, such as <em>Fiqh, tahuhid, hadits and Akidah akhlaq</em></td>
<td>Islamic knowledge might be integrated into secular subjects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Output</strong></td>
<td>Religious intellectual graduates</td>
<td>Intellectual graduates</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* Compiled with reference to (Azra, 2014; Cita, 2008; Daulay & Tobroni, 2017; Tan, 2015).

Table 1 indicates that madrasahs are governed by MoRA, while mainstream schools are administered by MoNE. Regarding learning systems and subject content, madrasahs and
mainstream schools have significant differences. Madrasahs adopt a semi-traditional system in which the curriculum and subjects are based on *kiayi* (Islamic leader) recommendations. Therefore, some Islamic subjects, such as *Akidah akhlaq* (Islamic morals), *hadith* (a record of the words, actions, and the silent approval of the Islamic prophet Muhammad) and *fiqih* (Islamic jurisprudence), are provided in the schools. Conversely, mainstream schools adopt the MoNE curriculum and up-to-date learning systems in which Islamic knowledge is merged with other subjects such as mathematics, languages, and science (Cita, 2008).

The mainstream schools attract students from various religious and ethnic identities, while the madrasahs only accept Muslim students. Mainstream school starts from kindergarten and continues through primary school, junior high school, and senior high school. Similarly, madrasahs are also divided into four levels: *raudhatul athfal* (kindergarten), *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* (primary school), *Madrasah Tsanawiyah* (junior high school) and *Madrasah Aliyah* (senior high school) (Kemenag, 2015).

Mainstream schools place a strong emphasis on sciences, mathematics, English, and social knowledge, and devote only two hours per week to *Pendidikan Agama* (religious education). In contrast, the madrasah schools emphasise religious (Islamic) content (Nilan, 2009; Rasyid, 2012; Wekke & Hamid, 2013), such as *Fiqh* (jurisprudence), *Akidah akhlaq* (Islamic civic education), *Tawhid* (monotheism), Arabic, Al Quran and *Hadits, Nahwu* (Arabic grammar), and *Sharaf* (Arabic vocabulary/sentence structure).

The *Educational Act of No 2/1989* deemed that qualifications obtained from the two types of schools are equivalent and graduates may continue their studies at either Islamic or secular public universities (Elisabeth & Parker, 2008; Tan, 2015; Zuliati, 2012). This policy obliged madrasahs to add new subjects that exist in MoNE’s curriculum, such as English, biology,
physics, maths, sociology, Bahasa Indonesia, and chemistry. Conversely, secular schools only needed to include the Pendidikan Agama (religious education) subject, which is taught for just two hours a week.

The two orientations that emerged, general and Islamic knowledge, have made madrasahs unique learning institutions that provide greater choice for parents who want their children to have both types of knowledge. These orientations should attract positive interest from society. However, the madrasahs are commonly placed as the second educational choice after mainstream schools (Islam, 2017; Walid, 2015). This is because madrasahs face challenges in areas such as curriculum, school facilities and infrastructure, financial management, and teacher qualifications and performance. These hinder madrasahs’ ability to improve their quality and compete with other schools. Therefore, in 2014, MoRA enacted a strategic plan to improve Islamic education in Indonesia (Marannu, 2016).

The strategic plan requires that all madrasahs, including elementary, middle and upper level, must be accredited with at least a ‘B’ score (Marannu, 2016). This is not a simple task for MoRA because most madrasahs lack the funding needed to gain this accreditation. They are private schools, in which parents are charged by the school. To minimise expenditure, madrasahs are forced to reduce the quality of their services, including the school facilities and teacher salaries. As a result, most Indonesia madrasahs do not meet the national educational quality standards outlined in Regulation No.19/2005 (Marannu, 2016). This indicates that madrasahs need to improve their performance.
2.2.2. Indonesian school education system

The educational system in Indonesia is based on the values that occur in Pancasila (the five pillars of Indonesia) and the 1945 Constitution of Indonesia (MoNE, 2013). The five pillars of Pancasila consist of:

1. Belief in One Supreme God (this includes Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Christianity and Confucianism)
2. A just and civilised humanity
3. Indonesian [internal] unity
4. A people’s democracy led by wisdom through deliberation and representation
5. Justice for all Indonesian people.

The values within the Constitution of Indonesia and Pancasila should be developed to maintain the character of the state. Desirable traits include being faithful and cautious to God Almighty, having a noble character, maintaining health, intelligence, capability, creativity, and independence, and becoming responsible citizens of democracy (MoNE, 2013). The five pillars are set as the basic characteristics of the state and are embedded in every element of society, such as the economy, culture, and education. For example, within the national education system, the government aims to develop these characteristics through Regulation No. 20/2003 (MoNE, 2003).

Regulation No. 20/2003 is a grand design of the education system in Indonesia that redesigned the previous Regulation No. 2/1989 (MoNE, 2003). The most significant difference between the two laws is the orientation of learning development. In the new regulation, the purpose of learning focuses on the development of the students’ character. There are at least 18 characteristics that need to be established through the teaching and learning process. These
involve being religious, honest, tolerant, disciplined, hardworking, creative, independent, democratic, curious, nationalistic, patriotic, appreciative, communicative, friendly, peacefully appreciative, caring for the environment, caring for society, responsible, and developing a reading hobby (MoNE, 2003).

These characteristics are used to assess student outcomes in both mainstream and madrasah schools. They are then applied to three aspects of student achievements: attitude, social skills, knowledge and life skills (BAN/SM, 2017). The ‘attitude’ aspect represents the essence of global, national, and local cultures. A social character is how students respond and display their personal characteristics while interacting with others. This includes being honest, polite, caring, responsible, healthy, and respectful. Knowledge and life skills relate to the students’ factual knowledge, for example, in science and technology; conceptual knowledge, procedural knowledge, and metacognitive knowledge, including metalinguistic awareness and self-awareness (Yusra & Lestari, 2018).

In Regulation No. 2/1989, the educational system was still limited to two educational sectors: education inside and outside the school (MoNE, 1989). Regulation No. 20/2003 covers formal, non-formal and informal sectors (MoNE, 2003). Formal education is provided in formal schools with a clear path for progression, advancing from primary education, through secondary education to higher education. Non-formal education is an educational path outside formal education that is implemented in a structured and tiered sector. Non-formal education is most prevalent in early childhood education and primary education. Examples include the Taman Pendidikan Al Quran (TPA) or Al Quran Education for children (MoNE, 2013). These are common in mosques or Sunday schools located in all churches.
In addition, there are various forms of non-formal education, some examples being music courses and tutoring. Informal education is a path offered by family and environmental education in the form of self-learning activities that are conducted consciously and responsibly. The results of informal education are recognised as formal or non-formal education after the learner passes an exam in accordance with the national standard of education. Home-schooling is an example of informal education. Students who pursue in-house education are considered to have an education equivalent to students who receive a formal or non-formal education. However, there are no predefined levels in home-schooling education (MoNE, 2003).

Under Regulation No 20/2003, educational funds are allocated at least 20 per cent of the state’s education budget, known as the National Revenue and Expenditure Budget or Anggaran Pendapatan dan Belanja Negara (APBN), and at least 20 per cent of the Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget or Anggaran Pendapatan dan Belanja Daerah (APBD) (Ashari, 2014). This means that all schools, including mainstream schools, madrasahs, private, and public schools, receive the same operational subsidies from the government.

This regulation also assigns quality standards for schools and teachers. To meet this need, the government created the National Accreditation Board for School/Madrasah, or Badan Akreditasi Nasional untuk Sekolah/Madrasah (BAN S/M). According to the Minister of National Education (MoNE), Muhajir Effendy, the accreditation scores of schools/madrasahs issued by BAN S/M can be used as a reference and evidence of the quality of the school. Community members can choose the appropriate schools for their families, based on the accreditation ratings (Kuado, 2017). The following sections will explore some of the aspects which influence school quality and performance.
2.3. Aspects influencing school performance

Findings of some empirical studies reveal that a school performance is influenced by a number of aspects, such as school management (Elahi & Ilyas, 2019; Masci, De Witte, & Agasisti, 2018), finance (Bertoni et al., 2018a, 2018b; Kenayathulla & Ibrahim, 2017; Lafortune, Rothstein, & Schanzenbach, 2018), infrastructure and facilities (Beauregard & Ayer, 2018; Gomes & Duarte, 2017; Jamil, Mustafa, & Ilyas, 2018; Omar & Ruslan, 2019), teacher performance (Ali, Dahie, & Ali, 2016; Chamundeswari, 2013; Hervie & Winful, 2018), curriculum (Bleazby, 2015; Lee, Cheng, & Ko, 2018; Yuen, Boulton, & Byrom, 2018), and community engagement (Adams, 2019; HiattMichael & Evans, 2015; Smith, Larkin, Yibarbuk, & Guenther, 2017).

In the Indonesian context, the National Accreditation Board/Badan Akreditasi Nasional (BAN) reviews schools’ and madrasahs’ performance. To do this, BAN S/M sends assessors to schools and madrasahs to inspect, observe, measure, and confirm documentation. Assessors then consider the performance standard of the school or madrasah. Accreditation is published for community circulation. There are numerous standard measurements of school and madrasah quality such as standards of content (curriculum), process (teaching strategies), competence of graduates (outcomes), education personnel (teacher performance), facilities and infrastructure, management, and financing (BAN/SM, 2017). Some standards will be discussed in the next section.

2.3.1. The role of management systems in developing school performance

One important aspect in improving school performance is a management system (Elahi & Ilyas, 2019; Jacobson, 2018; Kontagora, Watts, & Allsop, 2018; Masci et al., 2018). Jacobson (2018) suggests that to improve school performance, the management systems should focus on instructional leadership, organisational learning, and culturally responsive practices.
Instructional leadership is directly linked to student achievement. Organisational learning focuses on developing teachers’ professional practice and their group interactions. Culturally responsive practices emphasise that understanding students’ and parents’ cultural diversity is a prerequisite for improving student learning outcomes.

Masci et al. (2018) point out that the school management needs to primarily deal with two issues: how the school principal governs the school, and academic program development. The first issue sees the principal enacting their role to build interactions with teachers and students, manage networks with colleagues (other school principals), and develop connections with stakeholders. The second issue is academic programming, which includes class arrangements, identifying school aims, developing strategy, and decision-making. The findings revealed that effective interaction between leaders and teachers, students, and stakeholders influence the quality of the school. From there, the school performance could be improved.

Slightly differing from Masci et al. (2018) is a study conducted by Elahi and Ilyas (2019), which observed that the school quality depends on school management that is centred on a customer (parents)-focused approach. The cultural-based approach as a management process has been proven to enhance the school’s quality. A customer-focused approach invites parents’ trust and loyalty, encouraging them to contribute to developing the quality of the school.

Kontagora et al. (2018) prioritise structural management for improving the quality of school performance, especially in the Nigerian context. This study stressed that significant school improvement is highly dependent on teacher performance. Therefore, teacher management needs to be addressed, for example, methods of teacher recruitment and development, payment and remuneration, training and support, and teacher aspirations and expectations.
In the Indonesian context, school management tends to cover normative processes such as planning, implementing, and evaluating the school programs (Andriansyah, Taufiqurokhman, & Wekke, 2019; Ghofur, BR, & Ahmad, 2017; Gunawan, 2017; Mulyono & Wekke, 2018; Purwadhi, 2019; N. Rohmah, Riyanto, & Moedjiarto, 2018; Setiawan et al., 2017; Suroto & Hung, 2018; Winarti, 2018). Overall studies focus on the management process in order to improve student outcomes and strengthen learning strategies.

For instance, Setiawan et al. (2017) have created a program called *School Management System Based Information Technology and Communications (SMS-ICT)* that focuses on the ICT-based school management where all school programs are designed and recorded through the internet. The link provides and records school programs, started from planning, implementing, controlling, and evaluating. A qualitative study in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, conducted by Suroto and Hung (2018) encouraged professional establishments, such as factories, companies, and offices, to be partners in the school management, especially in vocational schools, in order to design professional outcomes. This might include the development of school curriculum, facilities, infrastructure, teachers, and learning materials. The investigators argued that partnerships between schools and industrial companies can create balance and enable efficient technological development among students. As a result, students can adjust and improve their workplace skills effectively. This also provides a benefit for graduates who will obtain two certifications, both from the school and the company.

A learning program in school management focuses on curriculum development and teacher strategy in applying it. Gunawan (2017) explained in his qualitative study that school management is based on instructional management. The management process involves a learning plan, its implementation, and evaluation. The research revealed that instructional management was not properly implemented by teachers in most public high schools in Malang,
East Java, Indonesia. Teachers might create the lesson plan; however, they still had difficulties in applying their learning models and undertaking student assessment. The findings revealed that teachers were weak in applying a scientific approach to the delivery of programs. They also had less than optimal learning resources to enable student comprehension of the subject being taught. Moreover, teachers were not confident in assessing student outcomes. Gunawan (2017) recommended the schools provide supervision and evaluation of the teachers’ performance and encouraged an alternative solution to resolve the problems by providing mentoring and guidance for teachers in developing and implementing the curriculum.

Another qualitative study that complements and builds on Gunawan’s work was conducted by Ghofur et al. (2017). They showed that thorough implementation of teachers’ teaching strategy is the basis for success in school learning programs in junior high schools in Lamongan, East Java, Indonesia. The observations revealed that some teachers have created good learning strategies, which cover planning, process, and evaluation, to meet the standards of the national curriculum. However, teachers still have challenges in implementing these learning plans in the classroom because most schools have limited facilities. Consequently, some students feel bored and find it difficult to follow the lessons.

In the context of madrasah schools in Indonesia, Ay, Arifin, and Suriansyah (2017) stress that the madrasah performance relies on a quality management plan that includes curriculum, instructional programs, teachers, staff, facilities, budget, and strategies. A multiple case study in three Madrasah Ibtidaiyyahs (primary schools) in Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan, revealed that self-development and religious content are required to be implemented in all subjects taught in madrasahs. Relevant training for teachers and staff is needed to improve their teaching and management skills. A moving class is found to be a good strategy to facilitate students’ learning of subject matter. Moving class is a learning technique that uses certain classes along
with media and teaching aids that support student learning in class. This concept refers to student-centred learning to provide a dynamic environment in accordance with the field being studied. Finally, the combination of parents and government as sources of finance is important to support the activities of the madrasah.

In summary, school management provides a necessary influence on school improvement, especially in evolving instructional, organisational, and cultural development. In fact, most studies revealed that principals as the main manager of the school are a significant influence for supervising and monitoring the management process. Masci et al (2018) and Jacobson (2018) stress that principals’ leadership practice in managing the schools significantly depends on each principal’s personal characteristics, such as gender, age, educational background, and experience. Elahi and Ilyas (2019) conclude that the manager (principal) needs to put effort into developing respect for the customer (parents) when making decisions, to take into account the fact that the two parties have different characteristics and backgrounds. If the principal is willing to become more understanding of the parents’ culture and background, the school improvement process might proceed well.

In the Indonesian context, school management is highly oriented towards the school program and implementing strategies to enhance student outcomes. Technology inclusion (Setiawan et al., 2017) is initiated to support a school management program, so that it can facilitate schools and teachers in increasing their productivity. Suroto and Hung (2018) note that including professional elements when developing school management processes is necessary in order to create professional outcomes. Some other researchers place the focus of management development on the improvement of teachers’ teaching. Ay et al. (2017), Suroto and Hung (2018) and Gunawan (2017) consider that management of curriculum, teacher quality,
instructional strategy, facilities, and finance in schools should emphasise the maintenance of the school’s performance.

In the madrasah context in Indonesia, school management should be strong, not only in teaching strategies, but also in the need to include self-development and religious values in the curriculum (Ay et al., 2017). Fatayan, Hanafi, Sari, and Ghani (2019) encouraged madrasahs to offer committee and community support in school program development because the community understand the learning context and its role in fulfilling student learning needs.

The government (MoRA) has created an integrated curriculum combining general and religious knowledge, as well as promoting this concept to madrasahs in Indonesia (Siswanto, 2019). However, one study argues that it needs more effort for teachers to develop the integration between self-development and religious understanding in all subjects in the madrasah curriculum (Ay et al., 2017). Therefore, it is important to conduct more study into the madrasah learning orientation for students in order to identify the disconnection between the two areas of study.

2.3.2. Influence of school financial management, infrastructure, and facilities on improving school performance

Some international scholars agree that school finances impact student achievement because the funds impact additional school resources and facilities (Brunner & Vincent, 2018; Kenayathulla & Ibrahim, 2017; Lafortune et al., 2018; Lazareva & Zakharov, 2019). In addition, Lazareva and Zakharov (2019) stress that school funding should be allocated with priority given to teachers’ remuneration since education is a human capital-intensive sector. They state that teacher remuneration influences teacher quality and effort, which can affect students’ outcomes. This statement is supported by the results of research from Hendricks
(2015) and Leigh (2012), which show that raising teachers’ wages has a positive effect on their performance.

The sources of school funding are mostly government and society (Schiefelbein & McGinn, 2017), arranged by the school management to meet the needs of the school. There are three approaches in managing and spending the school budget. Modernisation is when a developing country learns and adopts the practice of an advanced country. The advanced country is categorised by its enrolment rates, number of certified teachers, teacher experience, and total spending on instruction. A development approach relies on working with the political and economic conditions in a country. The school budget for spending is calculated by estimating the amount of the country’s schools’ needs. This is then confirmed in the form of government policy and regulation. The estimates are based on the economic, political, and sociological situation of the country. It can be assumed that the development approach may face a variety of modifications, depending on the dynamics of change prevalent in the country. A globalisation approach represents progress as the result of competition with other countries. If the instruction provided to schools in one country results in a high level of contribution to the economic and political development in that country, its government may be able to seek more financial contributions to their budget than can another country that has a lower contribution to development through its education system (Schiefelbein & McGinn, 2017).

In the Indonesian context, most schools and madrasahs obtain funding through government subsidies, which are supplemented by annual payments from students (BAN/SM, 2017). The country adopts a development approach in managing the school budget, where the spread of funding depends on the needs of schools. Therefore, different areas might obtain different amounts of funding (Ohno, 2019; Sulisworo et al., 2017). Studies indicate that schools and madrasahs expend their budgets on facilities (Nurjanah & Sari, 2017; Ohno, 2019),
infrastructure (Agseyoga, Deguchi, Anwar, Wijatmiko, & Ueda, 2015; Wahyudin, Yulianto, & Solikhah, 2018), human resources (Nurjanah & Sari, 2017; Sirait, 2016), salaries (Sulisworo, Nasir, & Maryani, 2017), and school maintenance (Agseyoga et al., 2015).

A quantitative study conducted by Ohno (2019) revealed that financial input on education affects school quality in Indonesia, because budgets mainly invest in facilities that influence the academic achievement of students. Ohno (2019) also mentioned that school budgets strongly support teaching and learning processes, while teacher quality does not seem to influence student achievement.

According to Wahyudin et al. (2018), the school budgeting in Indonesia is important in order to develop and maintain school infrastructure. School finances provide great support to school facilities and infrastructure because these provide significant foundations for teaching and learning processes (Nurjanah & Sari, 2017). However, government regulation and circulation of school budgets is not optimal and many schools in Indonesia still face challenges in getting sufficient funding. To resolve this, the Indonesian government needs to increase its commitment to providing more finance to schools, especially funds for maintaining school infrastructure, as well as optimally managing the circulation of funding (Agseyoga et al., 2015).

By improving human resources, school finances also have significant influence on increasing the quality of educational staff such as teachers at schools (Nurjanah & Sari, 2017). However, statistical data gained by Sirait (2016) reveal that a lower education budget means a deficit in teacher quality, especially in rural areas of Indonesia. This happens because the allocation on teacher training and development still gets insufficient attention from the central and regional governments. This problem is also related to the government budgeting for teacher welfare (Sulisworo et al., 2017). Although the national budget for education has increased 20 per cent
since 2009, Sulisworo et al. (2017) argued that teachers’ welfare is still an issue. It happens because the government does not anticipate and calculate accurate data about the increasing number of teachers every year. As a result, teachers (especially the honorarium teachers) are paid less than the standard national wage.

In summary, some scholars argue that school finance is one of the significant elements that support school performance. By increasing and maintaining learning and teaching facilities, the school budget supports students and teachers in their learning process. Others argue that good school funding promotes the development of teacher performance because increased allocations to teacher remuneration and salary significantly improves teachers’ teaching quality. There are three approaches, comprising modernisation, development, and globalisation, described by Schiefelbein and McGinn (2017) for countries in managing their educational budgets.

In the Indonesian context, the budget is important to support school infrastructure and facilities. Hence, some scholars agree that the school budget provides a positive effect for schools in increasing their performance. However, scholars also stress that it is not optimal for the funding providers to be central and local governments. It has been found that the equity and equality of fund dissemination is an issue in Indonesia. For instance, the government accepts there is a problem in distributing permanent and honorarium teachers’ payments fairly, especially in rural areas in Indonesia. Therefore, although the education budget has been increased 20 per cent since 2009, teachers have not received this amount of increase in their salaries (Sulisworo et al., 2017).

Most previous studies have concentrated on financial management in mainstream schools, for example, Nurjanah and Sari (2017), Sulisworo et al. (2017), Wahyudin et al. (2018), and Ohno
There has been a lack of research focus on financial management in madrasahs. The investigation of the madrasah budgeting system is an important issue that needs to be addressed (Harun et al., 2018; Muhajir, 2016). The investigation should focus on how madrasahs deal with a lack of funding sources and how they manage their finances within their organisations. For private madrasahs, it is critical to identify the madrasah foundation that manages their fund, as well as to investigate the foundation’s transparency to the madrasah members and stakeholders.

2.3.3. Role of principal in curriculum development

Curriculum materials are resources designed and used by teachers in the classroom to guide their instruction, and may include textbooks, modules, and other learning media (Remillard, 2005). The curriculum can play an important role in improving student outcomes. Roblin, Schunn, and McKenney (2018) argue that a curriculum significantly impacts students’ and teachers’ learning. Their study revealed that the materials in a curriculum tend to yield a positive student outcome. A comprehensive curriculum that covers content and practice in a unit of instruction can help students to develop their understanding. However, Roblin et al. (2018) stress that teachers’ support is also significant in applying the resources in the curriculum.

The role of principal is significant to support teachers in developing a curriculum. A principal participates as a “referee,” the one who blows the whistle, waves a flag, and calls a penalty (Jenkins & Pfeifer, 2012). This means that a principal should understand the detail of a curriculum before the teachers do. The principal should watch and measure as the curriculum is developed and implemented by the teachers. The principal also needs to develop a
professional team by increasing the numbers of professional teachers and working with them to achieve the aim of the curriculum (Li, Hallinger, & Walker, 2016).

In the Indonesian context, curriculum relates to teachers’ and principals’ activities in developing teaching strategies, materials, and media that focus on the social skills and knowledge of students. The phenomenon of regular changes in curriculum requires attention from all education elements in Indonesia, since keeping relevant with changes in society tends to be a complex and extensive project (Prihantoro, 2015). This might create a struggle for school teachers to manage and implement the curriculum in the learning process (Qoyyimah, 2017). There is a place for additional roles for school and madrasah leaders in maintaining the curriculum, such as counsellor, supervisor, source of information, school and madrasah committee, and education provider (BAN/SM, 2017).

As counsellors, principals provide mentoring for teachers and staff to support the development of their teaching quality in a school. For example, the principal can encourage teachers to upgrade and utilise technology devices in the teaching process (Ekosiswoyo, 2016). In order to maintain teacher and staff performance, principals perform supervision and guidance. School principal supervision focuses on what has been done by the teacher to improve their performance, as well as what they need to do to reach their potential (Fitrah, 2017). Leaders as a guidance indicate that school principals are the information repositories for teachers and staff to access to support their performance.

As part of the school committee and an education provider, a principal is needed to provide support (as a supporting agency) and to meet the needs of the school, play a significant role in decision-making, supervise school management, and act as a mediator between the government and the community (Hanafi & Ma’sum, 2015). In organising a school committee, the principal
involves parents for their input and opinions. This strategy encourages the prioritisation of schools in fulfilling the needs of education in the community. In addition, as an education provider, the principal preserves the harmonisation between parent input and curriculum design to optimise the learning process (Suryana, 2002).

In summary, to fulfil the standard of content in the curriculum, a school principal takes a significant role, not only as an education conceiver; the one who creates school program concepts, but also as an executor of the school plan. Alongside teachers, school staff and parents are able to be involved as principals’ partners in developing learning plans. For teachers and staff, a principal acts as a source of information, mentor, and supervisor, so that school members can improve their teaching performance. As a means to connect a school and its parents, a principal takes the role of mediator, to encourage parents to share their opinions and feedback regarding the school’s purpose.

2.3.4. Community engagement and parents’ involvement in school education

Beabout and Boselovic (2016) stated that community engagement provides a positive support for school development. The community has a strong vision and is able to build the structures and power to achieve their mission. Stacy and Lindsey (2016) argue that community engagement in school education is important to help schools survive. They stress that a higher level of community engagement generates higher standards of student outcomes. It is stated that community engagement demonstrates a positive effect, not only for individual student achievement, but also as a catalyst for school improvement by encouraging the school culture to support students (McAlister, 2013). A program called the School Improvement Grants (SIG) provides space for a community to participate in selecting a model for curriculum planning and applying a school’s program. The SIG also develops good relationships between community,
parents, teachers, and students. The SIG project suggests a new framework that specifies community engagement as a core priority for the building of knowledge and skills of educators and families, through which they can fulfil the educational outcomes expected of them by the state (McAlister, 2013).

Other findings revealed that family engagement has been associated with positive effects in relation to student outcomes and students’ emotional development (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002; Fan & Chen, 2001; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Leo, Wilcox, & Lawson, 2019; Mo & Singh, 2008). For example, a longitudinal study conducted by Mo and Singh (2008) revealed that community engagement is interpreted as parents’ participation. The study was conducted on middle school students in Portland, United States. The study observed parents’ relations with students in six situations, which involved parents and students: (1) talking about schoolwork; (2) working on school projects; (3) talking about other things when students were at school; (4) talking about school grades; (5) paying attention to anything that happened to students; and (6) having fun together. The results of the study indicated that parental involvement had positive effects on the student’s development, especially on their cognitive, emotional, and behavioural development, which provided a positive influence on their learning achievements.

From the discussion above, it can be concluded that community (especially parents or family) engagement makes a significant contribution to developing and maintaining school performance and outcomes. Family engagement with students’ learning positively impacts on a range of student achievement, including grades, course rigour, test scores, social skills, and behaviour. These engagement results occur throughout all ethnic and socio-economic groups, as well as persisting through all levels of schooling (McAlister, 2013).

In the Indonesian context, community engagement is mostly centred on higher education, which focuses on how communities can provide support as partners in university research or
other projects (Heryadi & Dewi, 2017; Karliani, Kartadinata, Winataputra, & Komalasari, 2019; Suckale et al., 2018; Symaco & Tee, 2019). For example, big universities like University of Gadjah Mada (UGM) and University of Indonesia (UI) promote community involvement to solve significant problems like the management of natural disaster risks that are prevalent in Indonesia. Such projects need community participation for the development of a useful program that might meet community needs. Therefore, these universities invite civil engagement to disseminate knowledge about disaster risks, and to advocate systems for mitigation and emergency relief when disasters occur. The targets are mostly mature adults who are able to understand and prevent the worst situations that could happen during disasters (Symaco & Tee, 2019).

However, community engagement in K12 schools mostly emphasises parental involvement in school programs (Savitri, Setyono, Cahyadi, & Srisayekti, 2015, 2018; van der Werf, Creemers, & Guldemand, 2001; Yulianti, Denessen, & Droop, 2018). An experimental project conducted by van der Werf et al. (2001), namely the Primary Education Quality Improvement (PEIQP) project, was undertaken in six provinces in Indonesia (Aceh, North Sulawesi, West Sumatra, Yogyakarta, Bali, and South East Nusa) comprising 440 primary schools in total. This research involved parents of primary students in school activities to determine how their participation could increase student achievement. Parental involvement comprised parents’ financial contributions, voluntary assistance with educational matters, agreement with homework regulations, and monitoring of student homework. Parents were encouraged to provide opinions and feedback relating to the school curriculum, and reported whether the learning materials had fulfilled student needs. Parents were allowed to manage the agreement with the school about how much homework their children needed daily, as well as taking responsibility for supervising students doing their homework. The study revealed that parental
involvement in student learning and school development was significantly effective in improving school outcomes and quality. This proved that most students in the participating schools reached the optimum outcomes for test results as recorded by the team running the project.

A similar result in the latest research conducted by Yulianti et al. (2018) revealed that community participation and parental involvement in school programs have a significant influence on children’s educational improvement. The study indicates that communities (parents) who live in an urban setting have a higher level of education, respect for parenting, and excellent communication skills, and show a high involvement in school development by volunteering, decision-making, and promoting collaboration among communities. This study found that Indonesian parents show more substantial involvement in children’s learning at home than at school. For instance, most parents make sure their children do their homework and talk actively about what their children learned and did at school (Yulianti et al., 2018).

Other studies conducted by Triwiyanto and Juharyanto (2017) and Fauzi et al. (2019) indicated that community and educational institutions are two important elements that cannot be separated. Community participation provides positive impacts on schools’ quality since the community provides decision-making related to the schools’ needs (Triwiyanto & Juharyanto, 2017). They also found that community involvement increases the chance for schools to provide education based on local resources. Thus, schools can afford to fulfil the educational needs of the community. This study revealed that schools have problems regarding the involvement of the community in school development. They record that few of the communities support school development. Most parents, for instance, do not take on the responsibility of involvement in school meetings. The number of parents who are willing to
attend and provide permission for involving the school programs is low (Triwiyanto & Juharyanto, 2017).

In the context of madrasahs in Indonesia, community engagement is important for the maintenance of the local and religious values of their society. A case study in one madrasah in Sorong, West Papua, Indonesia showed that when the madrasah was established within one community it represented the religion and cultural identity of that one community (Wekke, 2017). The madrasah existed to encourage a comprehensive understanding of religious values in the community’s everyday routine. To do that, the madrasah needed to meet and match the community’s viewpoint in the social context since the community also took a role in measuring student outcomes. Inviting the community to be involved in the madrasah development was important. This study revealed that the madrasah invited many people to join in the school development. Person-to-person contact was important to facilitate the recognition of their concerns when developing the social aspects of the community in the area. The community development was not for the Muslim community only, but included all ethnicities and religions, since the development of a good community affects all people in a social area (Wekke, 2017).

Another study revealed that community engagement provides a positive influence in improving the quality of madrasahs. For example, a qualitative study conducted by Fatayan et al. (2019) revealed that a partnership with the school committee and community had improved the quality of a Madrasah Tsanawiyah (junior high school) in Jakarta. The study stated that the community took on the role of an advisory, supportive, and controlling agency for the madrasah. For instance, the madrasah allowed the community to become involved in developing the school curriculum, because the community understood the context of developing and implementing religious lessons in the curriculum. It was considered that their advice could support student learning needs in the madrasah.
However, there are also deficiencies in community, especially parents’, involvement in some students’ study. For example, parents’ participation is not visible in rural settings in Indonesia (Yulianti et al., 2018). The statistical results of this study revealed that parents in a rural area mostly came from a low socio-economic background. They spent most of their time working and farming. Parents in this area who came from a higher education background preferred to work out of the village in order to gain more income. The study indicated that parents in a rural area had lower participation in school programs than did parents in urban areas (Yulianti et al., 2018).

There can be disadvantages to parents’ involvement in school processes. For instance, a quantitative study conducted by Savitri et al. (2018) indicated that parental involvement might provide a negative impact on school engagement. This research project was run in five cities; in Indonesia, including Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, and Bekasi. This study revealed that some parents were paying excessive attention to children’s school life, visiting their schools, and developing discussions directly with children. It was found that parents interfered in schools, strongly imposed their perspective, and sometimes used a harsh tone of voice while controlling their children. Consequently, children were hindered in feeling at ease while following the learning process, as well as teacher autonomy being affected while educating their students (Savitri et al., 2018).

In summary, the international literature mentioned that community engagement is essential to support school development and student achievement. In the Indonesian context, community engagement study is mostly conducted in higher education institutions. However, there is some research in the context of school education. In most of the studies, community engagement is interpreted as parents’ involvement in the school program and learning process. These studies found that parents’ participation is proven to improve students’ learning achievements. In
particular, educated parents with knowledge of parenting strategies and the ability to develop excellent communication skills provided a positive influence on school development. However, overly intense and excessive involvement of parents might create a negative impact on a school attempting to improve its performance.

Fatayan et al. (2019) and Wekke (2017) suggested in their studies that community participation is necessary to support madrasahs in fulfilling students’ needs and creating learning outcomes that address the needs and values of the community. However, the two studies did not explain clearly how the community contributes to the impact of madrasahs’ improvement. Therefore, it is critical to investigate the madrasah perspective (from principals, deputy principals, and teachers) regarding the diverse forms of community participation and how each of these influences the development of madrasah educational programs in Indonesia.

2.4. School leadership practice

A basic definition of leadership involves two functions: providing direction, and exercising influence (Leithwood, 2016). Providing direction is how a leader uses his or her ability to provide guidance to followers seeking to achieve an organisational objective. At the same time, it is the role of a leader to influence their followers. These two functions could be applied to interpret the actions of followers, select the vision of the institution, organise the activities to achieve the purpose of the program, motivate followers, maintain team relationships and develop relationships with people, groups, and organisations outside the institution (BAN S/M, 2017).

In terms of school improvement, the leadership roles and other factors, such as proper organisational structures and the school situation, influence the process of development (Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2004). However, among all the factors, (Philip Hallinger & Lu, 2014) stressed the principal’s leadership as being highly significant in developing and
maintaining school performance and student achievement. It is stated that a good leader tends to work in a good school. The quality of school structures, programs, and the process of instruction in a school indicated the success of the leadership practice in the institution (Hallinger & Heck, 1998). Some scholars believe that leadership is a set of behaviours that creates different leadership styles, including autocratic, democratic, laissez-faire, employee-oriented, directive, task-oriented, and relationship-oriented (Spillane et al., 2004).

A conceptual framework of leadership practice in school education focuses on the relationship between leaders and school innovation (Spillane et al., 2004). Leadership practice is an immediate cause of innovation. Previously, Leithwood and Jantzi (2000) argued that leadership is the effort of developing organisational quality. It means that the focus of the investigation on individual leadership practice will not provide a comprehensive understanding of the practice of a school principal. Teacher–leaders are also a significant element in school improvement. To integrate the two definitions about leadership practice theory, it can be stated that the interaction and cross-understanding between principal and teachers should be clearly seen in order to create innovation for school improvement.

In the process of developing school performance, leadership practice needs to encompass factors including task, actors, action, and interaction (Spillane et al., 2004). “Task” is skill dissemination through environment and culture and through other people’s collaboration to achieve a mission, for instance, a pilot’s task might be determining how to land an aeroplane. “Actor” is the human activity of using tools to complete the task. “Action” is how an actor develops a common understanding, and draws on cultural, social, and historical norms in order to fill the needs of the community according to its values. “Interaction” is how to maintain the tension between an institution and its followers, for instance, by providing an acknowledgement when an individual succeeds in fulfilling the task (Spillane et al., 2004).
A leader is an important actor in the completion of the task, and creates actions and interaction in their efforts to meet the community needs by providing a high-performing school that produces good outcomes. All factors should be integrated to support others. A leader as an individual involves and influences the development of the school. Their preparedness will allow them to lead the process of development to fulfil the goal of the institution (Wang, Olivier, & Chen, forthcoming). The community also significantly influences the school’s performance (Epstein et al., 2018). The well-educated community, for instance, might support the development of school quality by offering ideas and academic input in support of the process of the development. However, as argued by Wang, Olivier, and Chen (2018), individual readiness is the core element for changing a school from a challenging to a developed school. Leaders need to coordinate tasks and interaction among school members and the community surrounding the institution. Without this ability, it is doubtful whether the school can achieve its goals.

From the explanation above, it is clear that a principal must possess leadership skills in order to manage an institution successfully. The main purpose of the leadership practice is to maintain tasks and interaction appropriately. Gurr (2015) proposed that leadership skills are also necessary in lower-level staff; leadership practice is not only for top-level staff members. Leadership skills may also be possessed by middle- and lower-level members of an organisation.

In improving student outcomes, there are three factors that might influence student performance (Gurr, 2015): impact from teaching–learning, leadership, and context. The impacts are categorised into three levels. Level one concerns the relationship between teachers and students. Level two focuses on leadership practice in developing teachers and educational staff performance. The last level focuses on student learning achievements.
In level one, the impact is focused on teachers’ influence on students. Leadership in this context is a teacher’s direct effect on student achievements (Gurr, 2015). The area of the work includes curriculum, pedagogy, assessment and reporting, students’ learning involvement, the use of ICT in the teaching–learning process, and teachers’ development of an appropriate learning atmosphere.

The interventions of leadership are seen in teachers who can create a dynamic curriculum as part of the teaching process. Teachers’ knowledge of curriculum is essential to the enrichment of student outcomes (Hume & Berry, 2011). The dynamism of the curriculum has a strong correlation with teaching strategy. To exercise leadership, teachers need to develop their teaching expertise (Gurr, 2015) by attending professional training and sharing knowledge with colleagues inside or outside the school (Hu, 2013). In the assessment and reporting area, teachers need to design proper assessments that should align with learning purposes. Another important leadership intervention for teachers is developing students’ motivation in learning. This is correlated with teachers’ creativity in developing an environment conducive to learning and utilising technology to support learning (Gurr, 2015).

A number of studies examined teachers’ influence on student learning achievements (Akiba & Liang, 2016; J. Allen et al., 2013; R. Goddard, Goddard, Sook Kim, & Miller, 2015; Malloy & Leithwood, 2017; Ronfeldt, Farmer, McQueen, & Grissom, 2015). Most studies discovered that teachers’ roles in the teaching–learning process and teachers’ collaborations on developing the learning concept significantly influenced student achievements. Other studies focused on teachers’ leadership and student learning outcomes (Collins, 2015; Gonzales & Lambert, 2014; Hsieh, Hsiao, & Wang, 2015; Mitchell & Tarter, 2016; Nappi, 2014), and concluded that teachers were involved in designing and applying the teaching program of the school. Teachers
were invited to exercise their creativity in applying the teaching strategy and measuring the effectiveness of learning in the classroom.

In level two, the impact is focused on the school leader and his or her capacity to develop the quality of teachers and other adults in an institution, including staff, parents, and community members (Gurr, 2015). This is known as capacity building. Capacity building is the optimisation of individual skills or institutional support in an organisation (Jörgens, 2013). Capacity building in an educational institution includes personal capacity, professional capacity, organisational capacity, and community capacity (Gurr, 2015). These capacities focus on the leadership character of the school leader (principal).

Gurr (2015) explained that personal capacity in leadership should include the proper character of a leader, showing traits such as optimism, persistence, trust, tolerance, empathy, alertness, curiosity, resilience, benevolence, honesty, openness, respectfulness, and humility. These personal capacities should be a part of the leader’s personality. The professional capacity tends to focus on a school leader’s ability to develop staff. Leaders also improve the quality of the school by connecting it to other organisations and the community.

There are a number of studies that investigate leadership capacity in the development of teachers and school quality (H. Heck & Hallinger, 2014; Philip Hallinger & Lu, 2014; Hariri, Monypenny, & Prideaux, 2014; Harris et al., 2017; Hoppey & McLeskey, 2013; Jay, 2014). The studies indicate that the role of leadership in developing teachers and managing the school is inseparable from the personal and professional characteristics possessed by the principal. These qualities are subsequently embedded in the school culture and become characteristics of the school. Interestingly, power-sharing by the principal with his followers is an excellent activity because new ideas and constructive criticism often eventuate.
The final level, which examines students’ achievement, is influenced by the context of the learning, that is, the development of an educational environment that aligns with students’ culture and social capital. Contextual education requires awareness by leaders of the organisation, parents, and other external contexts into which the school purpose and social culture is integrated.

As the top manager, the principal is responsible for school management. The principal sets the activities of planning, organising, implementing, and leading all efforts to achieve educational objectives. When planning, the principal is a perpetrator who is always involved and often even becomes a foundation in the planning and development of curriculum (Phillip Hallinger & Lee, 2014; Hariri et al., 2014). The principal organises the elements required, both human and non-human. Cultural and social values become significant in leadership practice (Gurr, 2015; Jawas, 2017a). The right leadership performance is a leadership that connects with the culture and environment of the community. Different settings or geographical areas might create different styles of leadership. For example, a leadership style in Western countries that focuses on professionalism might be different from the style in Asian countries where people expect that senior and junior roles are significantly visible in an organisation (Hallinger, Heck, & Murphy, 2014) The following sections discuss how principal leadership approaches might influence teacher, staff, and student performance.

2.4.1. Principal leadership and teacher performance

As discussed previously, school leaders have significant direct and indirect impacts on student outcomes. It has been stated that school leadership practice, including communication with, attention to, and appreciation of teachers, has clear connections to teacher performance as an influence on student achievements (Gurr, 2015; Hallinger et al., 2014; Larsen, Wanless,
Rimm-Kaufman, & Curby, 2015). Direct influence is wielded when the school leader facilitates and involves students in the learning process. For instance, principals determine the weighting of units and expected learning outcomes. The way in which leaders develop the quality of teachers’ performance and interaction with students has an indirect impact on students’ learning outcomes. Leading teachers to improve their teaching performance has the ultimate effect of reaching learning objectives (Gurr, 2015; Larsen et al., 2015).

A study conducted by Larsen et al. (2015) identified two leadership impacts on student achievement in learning mathematics. Direct and indirect effects may have a significant influence on students’ learning. They used a multigroup, multilevel structural equation model to test the strength of direct and indirect relationships between principals, teachers, and students from 24 elementary schools in the mid-Atlantic district, United States. The study found that the control class (Responsive Classroom/RC) indicated a positive relationship between both direct and indirect influences on students’ mathematics achievements. In the process of the research, the RC students were exposed to activities such as morning meetings, rule creation, interactive modelling, positive teacher language, and logical consequences. The pattern indicated effective interaction between principals, teachers, and students.

From the example above, it can be concluded that the interactions between principal and teachers, and teachers and students, are significant in relation to achieving organisational and learning objectives. The direct and indirect influence must be recognised by school management to ensure all elements of a school can support each other. Working together, sharing power and motivation are crucial to effective interactions between members of the school.
The interaction between school leaders and teachers is like *platonic* relationship where the two parties provide and accept advantages. For school principals, the interaction may provide information, evaluation, and solutions that may help them maintain the quality of the school. Likewise, the mutual interactions may assist teachers to maintain high performance standards and improve student outcomes. Positive interactions between management and staff enable strong and clear communication, which helps prevent conflict. For example, during teacher evaluations, teachers will not feel judged by the school principal because they understand the potential benefits to their professional development.

An empirical study examined teacher evaluation and how school leaders secure teachers’ trust (Rigby, 2015). In this research, leaders did not actively monitor or evaluate teachers’ performance in the class. Rather, the school leader preferred to share their experiences, to inspire and encourage teachers. The principal encouraged all teachers to share any advice or ideas, so all teachers could develop their own understandings and conclusions. In this study, self-reflection was deemed more effective than evaluation conducted by others.

Emotion plays a key role in the interaction since both principals and teachers are subjective in terms of measuring performance. A leader may have evaluation tools that can measure teacher performance, although the leaders’ superior position may make teachers feel subordinate or obliged to be obedient. Therefore, it is necessary for both parties to consider emotions when communicating. Berkovich and Eyal (2017) measured teachers’ and principals’ perceptions of their emotions and how they influence the effectiveness of transformational leadership practice in 69 primary schools in Israel. Findings indicated that emotional intelligence in the cross-level relationship between principals and teachers resulted in indirect effects on teachers. The connection between school leaders’ emotional abilities and teachers’ emotional experiences were mediated by school leaders’ transformational behaviours (Berkovich & Eyal, 2017).
Another study examined the success of interactions between principals and teachers (Kiboss & Jemiryott, 2014). The study correlated the leadership style with teachers’ job satisfaction in Nandi South District in Kenya. The leadership style that developed an interaction between the two revealed significant impacts on the working atmosphere, which improved teachers’ job satisfaction. The importance of a democratic style of leadership was emphasised in the findings of this study. Conversely, an autocratic leadership style was associated with negative implications for teachers’ job satisfaction.

It can be concluded that interactions between principals and teachers should be based on clear communication and positive treatment. Some studies revealed that positive interactions tend to create a productive work atmosphere that motivates teachers. Teachers’ satisfactions with school leadership practice also results in positive interactions between teachers and students in the classroom.

In the teaching–learning process, the connection between teachers and students is significant. It is important to discuss this connection because it affects the quality of student performance. Several studies have examined the interaction between teachers and students. An interesting study conducted by Osowski et al. (2013) observed the interaction between teachers and kindergarten students in the provision of food education. The study stressed how teachers can interact with students and teach them the importance of behaving well during meals. Teachers were divided into three roles: social role, educators, and an evasive role. Teachers in the sociable role would turn mealtime into a time of social interaction. Conversations, monologues, and jokes were prominent in this group. The educator role had an intermediate level of interaction with children and strove to educate them about food and meals. The mealtime largely involved one-way communication, in which teachers instructed students. The last category was the evasive role, in which teachers interacted passively with students during the
meal. The study found that the social interaction group achieved the most effective teaching. It concluded that two-way communication encouraged self-awareness and self-esteem in students. This kind of interaction would avoid misunderstanding and miscommunication among teachers and students. Thus, it could potentially minimise conflict in the teaching–learning process.

However, in any interaction, conflicts can happen, and require careful management to overcome. Pinchevsky and Bogler (2014) examined teachers’ strategies to overcome conflict with students. The survey was completed by 625 Israeli teachers. The study found that teachers’ self-efficacy was the most important factor in overcoming conflict with students. Self-efficacy refers to the capability of teachers to take charge and solve problems with maturity. Experienced teachers empower students to develop their perspective. In other words, students are invited to solve their problems under the guidance of their teachers.

In the Indonesian context, a study on the interaction between teachers and students indicated that there was an influence on improving student learning outcomes. Misbah et al. (2015) conducted a comparative study on teachers’ interactions with competence-based education (CBE) students and non-competence-based education (non-CBE) students. After the treatments, CBE students were used to speaking their mind because their learning cultures were conducive to this. The effective two-way communication between teachers and students ultimately motivates students to improve their learning outcomes. In other words, an interaction between teachers and students is necessary to build learning effectiveness. Misbah et al.’s (2015) study concluded that two-way communication, social interaction, and student-centred education help students to solve problems and engage positively in their learning.
Finally, principal–teacher and teacher–student interaction are two important elements in maintaining effective school management. Firstly, sharing power between principals and teachers tends to increase the understanding and communication between the two parties. Therefore, the educational program can be implemented as planned. Secondly, the interaction between teachers and students has a significant impact on school management; positive interaction is believed to motivate students to learn. These two models of interactions should be maintained in leadership practice and school management.

In the development of school infrastructure and student learning achievement, the principal leadership practice should begin with the professionalism of the principal in leading the institution. The school leader takes a role to provide service to his followers instead of providing order (Malingkas, Senduk, Simandjuntak, & Binilang, 2018). The concept of leadership practice entwines with interaction between the institution members and community. This produces the concept of a leader who is able to provide the institution with a better future, and a leader who provides service in guiding their members to achieve the institutional goals.

These two concepts are known as catalytic and servant leadership. Servant leadership is when leaders are willing to provide stewardship to followers (Luke & Luke, 1997). Leaders cultivate the development of members of their organisation based on their ability and their interaction with the community (Harris et al., 2003). Catalytic leadership means leaders tend to look for the best strategies to change the institution in a positive way. This kind of leader is categorised as a change agent (Greenleaf, 2002). The following sub-theme will discuss the approaches in detail.
2.4.2. Leader as change agent

Luke and Luke (1997) study has a question that asks, “How do you provide effective leadership to address difficult interconnected public problems?” They nominate catalytic leadership, which develops a framework through custom-tailored strategies devised by those who want to be a catalyst for positive change in addressing issues. Luke and Luke (1997) introduces four tasks in addressing the problems: (1) focusing on and paying attention to the specific problem, so that it can be solved properly; (2) selecting capable people who have an interest in dealing with the problem; (3) creating strategies and options to address the issue; and (4) applying and maintaining the strategies through appropriate interaction and interconnection with members of the institution, and through sharing and giving feedback to each other.

For instance, a study based on a needs analysis conducted by Morse, Brown, and Warning (2006) indicated that catalytic leadership was appropriate in the development of extension education in Iowa. In this case, the issue was how extension educators adopt and adapt a catalytic leadership practice to communicate with staff in an institution that is involved in developing extension education. All four of Luke and Luke (1997) approaches were adopted in the research. Firstly, the extension program administration discussed the importance of catalytic leadership roles for the leaders in order to develop communication with their staff. Secondly, the state organisation reviewed and rewrote the job description for the program leader to encourage the notion of the leadership. In other words, the organisation encouraged the hiring of staff with the skills needed for catalytic leadership. Thirdly, training was provided to develop the catalytic leadership skills of the staff. Fourthly, the program was maintained by providing an incentive for staff to be involved in the particular community initiatives that use catalytic leadership.
As change agents, a predominant role of catalytic leaders is to develop stakeholder capacity to identify and solve problems, and to build trust to enable stakeholders to work collaboratively to reach their goals (Clark, 2012; Luke & Luke, 1997; Williams & Sullivan, 2011). Research conducted by Tsuchiya et al. (2018) describes catalytic leadership as a multidimensional leadership approach whereby a leader encourages collaboration with communities in enacting systems and policy. Tsuchiya et al. (2018) note that catalytic style leaders provide an opportunity for stakeholders to be partners, working together to create opportunities in an organisation. A study by Acintya and Ghazali (2017) revealed that a catalytic leader is required to be a person who can ensure a positive future by providing a vision and purpose for the organisation. They also need to be creative in order to encourage followers and stakeholders to pursue the organisation vision.

In educational leadership, some scholars define catalytic leadership as part of collaborative leadership (Ansell & Gash, 2012; Philip Hallinger & Heck, 2011; Jawas, 2014). Ansell and Gash (2013) note that a catalytic leader is a leader who identifies value-creating opportunities and mobilises stakeholders for effective and productive collaboration. The catalytic role tends to build opportunity through negotiation and mediation in pursuit of greater accomplishments.

In the school leadership context, Hallinger and Heck (2010) and Jawas (2012) describe the leader as a change agent for school improvement and educational reform in order to develop student learning achievement. Jawas (2010) identifies the school principal as a link in the development in work quality of individuals, teams, and organisations. However, Hallinger and Heck (2010) indicate that the contribution of leadership as an agent in producing school improvements depends on both the nature of the leadership and its impact, as well as the historical and current condition of the school. The leader’s contribution involves academic
structures, school norms, and on-going organisational processes such as participating in decision-making.

In the Indonesian school context, being a change agent is supposed to be the desire of a school principal when developing a school (Juharyanto, 2017). There are other characteristics that are important for principals to adopt, such as cultural awareness, skill in communication, and creativity. A leader should reflect cultural awareness when making policies in a school. The policy is made according to the culture of the members and the organisation.

Creativity is quite important for principals who act as change agent leaders. Creative leaders will always have the ability to invest and dare to take risks in solving organisational challenges (Juharyanto, 2017). A study conducted by Syam, Akib, Patonangi, and Guntur (2018) found that a change agent principal applies entrepreneurial competence in managing a school. Such a leader needs to display creativity and innovation in leading the school to meet its goals. In the process of capacity building, the principal draws on the efforts of the members, including teachers and staff, as well as inviting stakeholders to be partners in the school’s development. To facilitate this action, entrepreneurship skills are necessary for the leader to be able to gain and maintain trust from stakeholders, so that they might continue to provide support for the institution’s development (Morse, 2010)

From the statements above, it can be concluded that catalytic leadership tends to be the development framework for addressing problems by inviting appropriate members of the group to work on dealing with the issue, creating multiple strategies and options for action, as well as implementing the strategy and maintaining the working group. However, the studies above present a limited understanding of school principals developing a process to address school
issues, creating policy and action, as well as implementing excellent communication among school members.

Therefore, there is a need to examine how leaders take a role as a change agent, especially in the Madrasah Aliyah context, as well as how their management creativity can achieve the purpose of the organisation. There is also a need to investigate the Madrasah Aliyah leaders’ understanding of cultures, values, and norms, to connect the members of the group or society in addressing the challenges of the madrasahs. The investigation is necessary to see how leaders’ efforts to improve their communication approaches relate to teachers, staff, and stakeholders.

2.4.3. Leader who provides service

A leader who provides service will place other people’s needs, goals, and wellbeing above his or her own in order to produce a positive transformation among followers; this is called servant leadership (Sahawneh & Benuto, 2018). The servant leadership definition encompasses multiple meanings (Van Dierendonck, 2011). Graham (1991) describes servant leadership as an additional component of social and transformational leadership. Greenleaf in Sendjaya and Sarros (2002) states that the servant leadership presents the leader, not as a central controller, but as one who serves their followers instead. In other words, it is focused on the followers' needs, with an emphasis on the relationship between the leader and the followers (Russell & Gregory Stone, 2002; Van Dierendonck, 2011). The nature of servant leadership is that it is purely concerned with serving the followers. Such a leader needs to have the ability to work with the followers by creating a comfortable working atmosphere and making the followers feel accepted in the workplace. A servant leader should be a caretaker and role model to their
staff, and be able to inspire responsibility, loyalty, and collaboration among the members (Russell & Gregory Stone, 2002).

Servant leadership focuses on a social responsibility to serve, rather than a leader making the choice to lead. Such leaders come to support and motivate followers to carry out their tasks in order to achieve the organisation’s purposes (Andersen, 2018; Greenleaf, 2002; Russell & Gregory Stone, 2002; Shaw & Newton, 2014). Greenleaf (2002) and Spears (2010) include ten features in servant leadership as follows: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualisation, foresight, stewardship, commitment, and building community.

Listening to understand is the first approach taken by servant leaders when analysing problems that occur in an organisation (Green, Rodriguez, Wheeler, & Baggerly-Hinojosa, 2016). A natural servant leader automatically responds to any problem by listening first (Greenleaf, 2002). Empathy helps leaders to accept what followers are experiencing, and validating followers by allowing them to be recognised as a person instead of a machine in an organisation (Spears, 2010). It also permits leaders to understand and accept their followers’ background and character. For a servant leader, this kind of attitude is significant in creating a comfortable workplace. Members gain space to express their feelings and feel free to make mistakes without worrying about being rejected by the organisational community (Ferris, 2018).

Healing is one of the abilities of servant leaders, so that they are competent to heal themselves and their relationship to others. Although such an ability is part of being human, servant leaders recognise this ability and take it as an opportunity to help people around them (Green et al., 2016; Spears, 2010). The awareness maintained by servant leaders is necessary for them to understand issues related to ethics, power, and values (Spears, 2010).
Persuasion is another quality of servant leaders, allowing them to influence and convince people around them through their objective thought (Greenleaf, 2002; Spears, 2010). Conceptualisation means that leaders are able to think beyond day-to-day realities (Spears, 2010), making use of their creativity to solve problems not only in the present but also in the future. Therefore, foresight is also significant, as it relates to conceptualisation in servant leadership. These leaders need to understand the present situation and past events to predict future issues that may arise (Greenleaf, 2002).

Stewardship prioritises the commitment to serving the needs of others. Leaders should understand their position and the responsibilities they take on, which will drive them to lead well (Greenleaf, 2002; Spears, 2010). The primary function of a servant leader is to be an inspiration for their followers. Inspirational motivation is supported by a leader’s commitment to goals, their appropriate communication to followers, and their expression of their enthusiasm about the vision they have created (Gregory Stone, Russell, & Patterson, 2004). These are entred on role modelling, mentoring or teaching, and empowering followers. Empowering and developing people requires self-motivation to be embedded in a leader, so that they can support followers to have personal power. Empowering the organisation members can encourage them to take action themselves to deal with challenges and they should be invited to take part in deciding how to address the challenges.

Another characteristic of servant leadership is humility or modesty (Van Dierendonck, 2011). A servant leader will generously admit others’ achievements. They show interest in any ideas that are suggested by their followers and give them essential support to develop them (Greenleaf, 2002). Authenticity is the third character trait of servant leadership. This character trait describes the true self of the leader. Consistency, honesty, and relevancy represent the character trait of authenticity. Russel and Stone, cited in Van Dierendonck (2011) note that
authenticity also includes other character traits, such as doing what is promised, visibility within the organisation, honesty, and vulnerability.

A correlation study conducted by Afaq et al. (2017) found that the characteristics of servant leadership have a strong relationship with teachers’ job satisfaction in Pakistan. The study indicated that the behaviour of educational leadership as a servant leadership has an influence on teachers’ satisfaction. Well-organised job descriptions for the teachers, delegating authority, sharing information, and acting as an open channel of communication with others are the significant indicators that invite the development of teacher empowerment.

A case study conducted by Crippen (2017) indicated that servant leadership in Vancouver Canucks hockey club in Canada has influenced the organisational culture. The leaders maintain a solid work ethic, an attitude of humbleness, respect, responsibility, and accountability not only for the leaders themselves, but also for the team and organisation. Those character traits are the manifestation of the six servant leadership characteristics. A solid work ethic builds success in the teamwork of a group. This concept works even better when supported by hard work, integrity, and caring provided by leaders.

In a school education setting, servant leadership is crucial to developing individual (teacher and staff) and school organisation (Hung, Tsai, & Wu, 2016). This quantitative study revealed that principal servant leadership increased teachers’ job involvement significantly in schools in Taiwan. This approach motivated teachers and staff to apply democracy, sincerity, community, and service. The study found that the organisational climate, such as the principal’s supportive behaviour and teachers’ friendly attitude towards colleagues, can improve teachers’ job involvement. It meant that during working hours, teachers cooperated, shared experience, enhanced teaching skills, and joined in other school activities. This study concluded that when
the leader understands members’ thoughts and needs, they can give them assistance and increase strong job involvement (Hung et al., 2016).

In the context of school education in Indonesia, servant leadership has an effect on developing teacher performance (Indra & Kustati, 2019; Waruwu, 2019). A qualitative study based on teacher interviews conducted by Waruwu (2019) revealed that principal servant leadership in a Catholic primary school in Bandung, Indonesia, had increased teacher motivation, built self-confidence, increased teacher empowerment, and given teachers the vision to reach the school’s aims. The study identified that the principal was a good listener, honest, with integrity, fair, and wise, which had built the teachers’ commitment to maintain their performance.

Another study in Islamic education in Indonesia identified that servant leadership is included as an ethical leadership approach (Indra & Kustati, 2019). These ethics cover values such as serving, justice, honesty, and community development. A survey instrument was used to explore these factors among 80 teachers at an Islamic Secondary School in Padang, West Sumatra, Indonesia. The findings revealed that, according to teacher perceptions, the ethical leadership assessment consisting of four dimensions, including serving, justice, honesty, and community development, were performed very well by the principal (Indra & Kustati, 2019).

To sum up, the effectiveness of leaders depends on their capacity to develop productive teamwork among followers. Servant leadership might be the correct option since it emphasises service to others, team consensus, and the development of the organisational members. The servant leadership elements of empowering and developing people, humility, authenticity, interpersonal acceptance, providing direction, and stewardship are ideal primary character traits entrenched in the style. Leaders who employ a servant leadership style need to consider these characteristics if they are to succeed in improving their organisation.
In the Indonesian school context, the school principals lead their followers with some servant leadership values, which strengthen the leader who provides service. However, the two studies conducted by Indra and Kustati (2019) and Waruwu (2019) did not clearly present servant leadership as that performed by school principals. For instance, Indra and Kustati (2019) only focus on the teachers’ perspective into how the principal performs in service to the school members. Waruwu (2019) focused his research only on how principals implement the servant leadership criteria, such as being a good listener, honest, having integrity, fair, and wise, in the process of leading the school.

The two studies did not clearly explain that the principal also needs to build teacher awareness in order to address school problems. It needs to be clarified that the principal should explain how to deal with any important issues that need to be addressed. A principal also needs to raise teachers’ awareness, to recognise their authority, and to include them in the process of decision-making so as to engage them in school problems. For these reasons, it is important to investigate deeply the principal leadership approach in serving teachers, to recognise teachers’ areas for improvement and to develop their potential to provide greater benefit to the institution.

2.5. Culture and leadership practice

In leading an organisation, a leader needs to entrench the culture that matches with the value of their community. Leaders should have a full knowledge of the identity of the culture in order to manage the organisation effectively. Culture is part of the social interaction that is deeply connected by symbolism, family interaction, values, and language. According to Lees (2002), the organisation is the micro culture inside the macro culture. The macro culture is a broader culture that exists in the state or a large community. The macro culture is also known as the national culture (Irawanto, 2009). This culture cannot be separated from the micro culture since
it is embedded in the country that is the host of the management practice. An organisation needs to adopt and adapt the macro culture in their management operations.

For instance, in the context of Indonesia, Irawanto (2009) noted that in every *Idul Fitri* (Moslem Islamic celebration), most companies, whether national or international, made a practice of giving a bonus called THR (*Idul Fitri* Bonus) to their employees. This has been regulated in national workforce policy. It shows that Muslim customs affect the operating systems of all companies in the country, due to Muslims being the largest population group in Indonesia. In other words, the organisation (micro culture) should include the national (macro) culture, in which the country’s values are embedded.

Schein (2006) illustrates that culture and leadership are two sides of a coin, neither of which can be understood by itself. On the one hand, cultural norms of the nation or organisation will define the leadership, so the leader will gain trust from their followers to lead based on the existing values. On the other hand, the most important part of the leader’s task is to create and manage culture. In other words, leaders should work to create and change the culture when they find that the current culture is preventing effectiveness in organisational performance. Schein (2006) suggests that culture is a set of values, beliefs, and understanding that is shared by the members of an organisation. Values and beliefs consolidate internal relationships. For instance, religion and local wisdom in a group may be selected as the crucial reasons for bringing members into that group. People who do not accept those values should be prepared to be excluded from the group.

In the educational context, a variety of values and beliefs may exist in an organisation. There are at least six suggested models of characteristics of school management, which are the formal, collegial, political, subjective, ambiguous, and cultural (Bush, 2003). The formal model defines the school organisation as a hierarchical system. Leaders have a legal authority to run the
institution. The collegial model operates through collaborative management in which heads of departments and colleagues work collectively and through teamwork to achieve specific goals.

The political model assumes that institutional policy emerges through the process of negotiation and bargaining. Group interests might be involved significantly when producing the policy. Educational systems are greatly influenced by the political conditions of a country. The subjective model puts the individual at the centre of the organisation. An organisation has a different meaning for various members of an institution.

The ambiguous model has a lack of clarity on the goals of the organisation. Teachers, for instance, identify their educational purpose and act in accordance with the aims of their professional activities. The cultural model emphasises the values, beliefs, and norms of organisation members. In this model, leadership practice centres on the moral and instructional. Moral leadership itself is centred on the developing values, beliefs, and ethics of the leaders (Harris et al., 2017). Instructional leadership tends to develop a school through the social and academic capital of students and the intellectual and professional capital of teachers (Walker & Hallinger, 2015).

Each leadership model has distinctive concepts and perceptions. This researcher is focusing on the last model where a leader can be understood as leading the process of cultural influence that leads to the vision of the school. The concept is articulated by the leader and invites the commitment of the members and stakeholders in order to create a successful future for the institution. As stated previously, Western and Eastern leadership performances might be different since the context and culture of the two areas are different.

In the Indonesian context, for instance, leaders need to negotiate the cultural diversity that is present in the country. They are expected to recognise the various characteristics that unite the
members in pursuing the goals of the organisation (Suutari, Raharjo, & Riikkilä, 2002). In such situations, leaders need to develop their creativity in designing interactions and communication among the followers and in the surrounding environment. Improving organisational performance depends on the success of this strategy.

2.5.1. Indigenous leadership and its influence on leadership practice

A major difference in leadership practice in the East compared to the West is the tradition where religion, beliefs, wisdom, and family are considered when managing an organisation (Gladstone & Pepion, 2017; Seah, Hsieh, & Weng, 2010; Wetherell, 2012). In the Indonesian context, the indigenous concept of leadership tends to connect with two particular cultural values: religious values and basic moral values (Intan, 2006). As a multicultural country, Indonesia has unique local cultures and wisdom. However, people of Indonesia attend to their religious beliefs in such a way that they become the significant rules in their daily lives (Capwell, 2015). As a result, religions influence most of the cultures in Indonesia. There are at least five religions in Indonesia: Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, and Islam (Wanandi, 2002).

Historically, Hinduism was the first religion embraced by Indonesians. Majapahit Kingdom was one of the largest kingdoms in Indonesian history. This kingdom had a wide-ranging area of power from the east to the west of Indonesia and also to the neighbouring country, like Malaysia (Sadana, Suteja, Firstianti, Erdi, & Miranda, 2017; Wanandi, 2002). At that time, Hinduism was adopted by the kingdom and its inhabitants. However, at the end of the rule of the Majapahit kingdom, when the last king converted to Islam, the royal government changed the way of life for their people, including their dress, their rituals, and some habits, in
accordance with the teachings of Islam. As a result, the Indonesian culture is strongly rooted in both Hinduism and Islamic philosophy (Wanandi, 2002).

The cultural and religious understandings of Indonesians have created characters that are committed to their beliefs. This influences their ways of thinking, attitudes, and behaviour. For instance, the culture in some areas of Indonesia, including Sumatra, Aceh, and Java, have been significantly influenced by Islam as this religion is followed by the majority of people in the area. Other sites, such as Maluku, Southeast Nusa, and Papua, are influenced by Christianity and Bali is influenced by Hinduism (Bauto, 2014).

Due to the existence of multiple religions and cultures in Indonesia, it is necessary to identify a common value that may encompass all the religions and cultures as well as promote democracy, tolerance, and human rights. On the 1st June 1945, Pancasila, the five pillars, were defined as the basic values of the nation of Indonesia as a democracy (Abbott, 2017; Intan, 2006). The five pillars are as follows: 1) Belief in One Supreme God (this includes Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Christianity and Confucianism); 2) A just and civilised humanity; 3) Indonesian [internal] unity; 4) A people’s democracy led by wisdom through deliberation and representation; and 5) Justice for all Indonesian people (Abbott, 2017). These values encompass an understanding of multiple aspects of cultures and religions in Indonesia. Pancasila provides a foundation for all people in the Indonesian nation to respect and tolerate their differences.

Since Indonesia is the largest Muslim society in the world, with 200 million Muslims in a total population of 220 million Indonesians (95% of the population) (Joakim & White, 2015; Wanandi, 2002), Islam has a significant impact on Indonesian culture. The indigenous people of Indonesia are generally treated and educated following Islamic principles that are embedded
in the family, formal schools, and the social environment (Capwell, 2015). These influences may also affect leadership behaviour. A unique cultural and religious understanding should direct the way of thinking for a leader when leading an organisation. Their style and leadership strategies will reflect their beliefs and culture. A pious person will follow their religious way in leading an organisation. For example, a Muslim leader will follow the Islamic characteristics that are taken from Al Quran, such believing in one God, developing Islamic morals (Akhlaq), and applying Islamic manners (Adab) in the process of leading the organisation (Halstead, 2010).

Departing from cultural groups presented by Dimmock and Walker (2005), the societal culture group and organisational culture group are differentiated by the process of the culture developed by the leader. A societal culture is derived from the environment in which the person is born and lives (Dimmock & Walker, 2005). Societal culture greatly affects the personality of a person who continues to live where the culture is prevalent. Meanwhile, organisational culture tends to be superficial practices as reflected in the recognition in particular symbols, heroes, and rituals. This organisational culture can be changed and managed (Dimmock & Walker, 2005).

Indigenous leadership promotes religions and cultures that are embedded in leaders. Religion has a unique influence on the values, attitudes, and character of a leader and the environment in which their beliefs are shared (Egel & Fry, 2017). A leader who is nurtured with good religious knowledge and guidance, for example, will almost certainly carry their religious character into their leadership practice. Eventually, their style of religious leadership will create a religious work environment. A religious environment has a positive effect on the management of madrasahs, which may deliver the values into the educational programs. In other words, organisational culture is more superficial than societal culture, although it is strongly
influenced by societal culture (Dimmock & Walker, 2005). The cultural values in an organisation may or may not align with the surrounding societal cultural values.

For instance, Forster and Fenwick (2015) conducted a study into how Islamic values influence management practice in Morocco. Ideally, Islamic values are the main influence on the management of organisations in Morocco. This had two motives: most Moroccans are Muslim and the Islamic philosophy in Moroccan culture is called Moroccan Islam. These values should occur and be applied in management practice. The current management of areas such as social-economy, family, and education and gender is based on Islamic values. However, the findings stated that the Islamic values were shaped by individual social culture. In the other words, the management practice was not really following Islamic values. In the education area, for example, Moroccans have resistance to be more modern. They assume that education in Morocco is acceptable in its current form and does not require external input of global and modern knowledge. The pure Islamic values in education are creativity, hard work, transparency, trust, and honesty within the workplace. Creativity itself needs a broad-minded person to be capable of managing an organisation properly.

In the Indonesian context, leadership would be centred on a leader’s behaviour in leading the school. Cultural beliefs and understandings that are embedded in a leader’s character might significantly influence the way they administer the organisation. An indigenous character carries embedded Indonesian culture, as seen in leaders with kinship values (Irawanto, 2009). Kinship values might result in the development of emotional relationships among members of an organisation. This promotes the development of coordination, control, and motivation (Zakia & Pritasari, 2018). Therefore, a kinship attitude is significant when applied in Indonesia to increase the trust and loyalty in an organisation. A detailed description of kinship-based leadership will be discussed in the next section.
2.5.2. Leader and kinship-based relationships

Academic discussion about kinship and leadership practice is very rare. However, kinship terms can be found in some sociological and business theories. They describe kinship as family relationships, such as those between mother, father, children, and siblings (Butler, 2002; Karra, Tracey, & Phillips, 2006; Nicholson, 2015; Peng, 2004). In indigenous theory, kinship is described as family, clan, and individuals who have tried to engage in a joint enterprise such as business or commerce (Dana, 2015; Fortes & Evans-Pritchard, 2015). From these two descriptions, it can be understood that the basic understanding of kinship is that it is a system that prescribes how people living together should interact with another (Prideaux, 2006). A kinship relationship is concerned with the development of emotional connections to strengthen the relationships among the group (Zakia & Pritasari, 2018).

In the Asian context, the kinship-based relationship relates to a stronger culture and climate, coordination and control, and internal or personal motivation for taking on responsibility (Prideaux, 2006; Zakia & Pritasari, 2018). Van Vugt (2017) stated that kinship is a suite of social leaders to prioritising their goals and action. They tend to develop teamwork based on equality of thought and purposes. From a psychological perspective, people will feel anger when one member of the group fails to reciprocate their cooperative action. In a kinship-based relationship, people feel more intertwined with the other members of the organisation. The feeling of being accepted and the sense of belonging among the group motivates the members to work well in order to achieve the goals of the group.

In the context of leadership practice, kinship leadership expresses a kin-based relationship between heads and followers. Kinship leadership starts from equality in community, language, culture, habits, and religion that creates a sense of principled unity in running an organisation (McClellan, 2016). Ancestral cultural heritage has a strong influence on the practice of
leadership in an organisation. For example, in Ecuador, the foundations of leadership are hugely influenced by Inca society. This leadership context employs military prowess, divine right, and kinship (McClellan, 2016).

In the Indonesian context, kinship leadership is strongly influenced by cultural understanding based on the geographical setting. However, distinctive Indonesian values such as a friendly society, a welfare system, and life assurance are generally included in each culture (Prideaux, 2006; Zakia & Pritasari, 2018). It is stated that Indonesia society is friendly, open-handed, and tolerant. This character influences Indonesian leadership performance (Mulder, 1994). It is argued that the leader in an organisation in Indonesia takes the role of a father who is expected to behave wisely and honestly (Irawanto, 2009). Further, an Indonesian leader has moral responsibilities that are influenced by their noble qualities and religious yearnings. Therefore, leaders in Indonesian culture maintain their duties both in their tasks and in their relationships with their people (Irawanto, 2009).

In the school education context in Indonesia, Sanjaya (2019) defines kinship-based leadership as “relative nature relationship” which emphasises collegiality and reciprocity of care between leaders and members. He stresses that the school principal should support kinship and togetherness in organisational culture, as these complement Indonesian cultural values. The study reveals that principals, teachers, and staff consider the school to be a second home where all members are part of one big family. Sanjaya concludes that a big family as “relative nature relationship” becomes an organisational identity (OI) in schools in the Indonesian context.

This is strengthened by a quantitative study conducted by Tuerah, Pangalila, Korompis, Santie, and Lonto (2018). This study indicates that togetherness and solidarity provide a sense of unity which results in shared interests, so that school members, including principals, will support each other and contribute towards achieving common goals. The study revealed that group
solidarity in elementary school provides a positive effect on teachers’ job satisfaction. This arises from a feeling of kinship based on togetherness and responsibility both between teachers and fellow teachers, and between principal and teachers.

In summary, kinship leadership is significantly influenced by the historical background of the geographical location, cultural understanding, and beliefs of the leaders. The kinship-based relationship in leadership performance creates a positive impact in developing interaction among members. Leaders with kinship relations who perform the role of a parent for their followers have the potential to share wisdom and integrity with their followers. In the Indonesian context, kinship leadership emphasises that togetherness and solidarity should be embedded in the organisational culture. In this way, leaders and members have the opportunity to care for and support each other in order to reach the goals of their institution (Sanjaya, 2019; Tuerah et al., 2018).

Two studies conducted by Sanjaya (2019) and Tuerah et al. (2018) have not provided a clear picture of how school leaders develop togetherness and solidarity in a big family in order to accommodate all members. Therefore, there is a need for an investigation into how to strengthen indigenous values that are embedded in principal leadership approaches to interaction with followers and how these values can develop unity among members of the Madrasah Aliyah.

2.6. Research gaps

School improvement is discussed widely from many perspectives in international contexts. Previous literature has examined some essential factors that significantly influence school improvement, such as school management systems (Elahi & Ilyas, 2019), finance (Lafortune et al., 2018), infrastructure and facilities (Jamil et al., 2018), and community engagement (Smith et al., 2017). Likewise, the role of leadership practice that is enacted by school
principals also supports teacher engagement in improving students’ achievements and school performance (Gurr, 2015; Spillane et al., 2004).

Few studies examined school performance in the Indonesian context. The existing works of literature on school performance are mostly conducted in Indonesian mainstream schools, for instance, a case study related to financial inputs for school quality in a high school in East Nusa (Ohno, 2019), a qualitative study on developing industry-standard curriculum conducted in a vocational school in Yogyakarta (Suroto & Hung, 2018), and a study of parental involvement and its influence on student achievement conducted in a primary school in Indonesia (Yulianti et al., 2018).

Although it is true that some studies have been conducted to examine school improvement in the Indonesian context, limited studies focus on the investigation of the madrasah school context (Ay et al., 2017; Ghofur et al., 2017). It may appear that several studies have investigated school improvement in madrasahs; however, those primarily focus on infrastructure, curriculum, and teacher performance (Ay et al., 2017; Fatayan et al., 2019). There are limited studies that examine madrasah principal leadership practice for improving madrasah performance. The fact that madrasahs in Indonesia are struggling to improve their performance has become a long-term problem which is difficult to address (Ahid, 2014; Harun et al., 2018; Muhajir, 2016; Tan, 2015). There is a need to specifically examine madrasah principal leadership practice to identify madrasah challenges and develop strategies to address those challenges. It is important to investigate the principals’ approach to building and maintaining communication with madrasah members and community, to improving teacher performance and to obtaining external support.

In regard to research methodology, most existing studies that the researcher reviewed had examined leadership practice in madrasahs in Indonesia in quantitative studies (Ihsana El
Khuluqo & Yunani, 2019; Jawas, 2017b; Muhammadi et al., 2015; Muhammadi et al., 2017; Wahyuddin, 2017). However, a few studies have used a qualitative approach (Hidayat, Kultsum, & Wang, 2020; Shulhan, 2018). For instance, a case study conducted by Shulhan (2018) investigated the Madrasah Aliyah leadership style for motivating, mobilising, and evaluating teacher performance in order to integrate Islamic knowledge and technology science in Tulung Agung, East Java, Indonesia. Hidayat et al. (2020) explored principal leadership practice in developing internal communication in a Madrasah Aliyah in Indonesia. The two studies agreed on the ways in which principals’ leadership practice was effective in developing good connections with their teachers and staff in order to improve the madrasah. However, the studies did not mention specifically how community engagement influences the school performance.

Therefore, it is essential to conduct an exploratory study on principal leadership practice in Madrasah Aliyahs in order to address the madrasah challenges and improve their performance, as well as to develop communication, interaction, and engagement between principal, teachers, staff, and community. This can be done by performing in-depth interviews with Madrasah Aliyah principals, teachers, and staff. An observation of school infrastructure might be needed to strengthen the interview data. To the knowledge of the researcher, these two indicators are essential to gain complete information about how Madrasah Aliyah performance could be improved and problems reduced by principal leadership practice.

2.7. Chapter summary

This chapter has provided a contextual analysis and critical review of the literature related to madrasahs in the Indonesian context and their history as part of the educational system in Indonesia. This chapter has also explored some factors that influence school performance, such
as school management systems, financial systems that significantly influence school infrastructure and facilities, curriculum, and community engagement.

A discussion of school leadership practice and societal culture have been included as part of the literature analysis. Two salient leadership approaches noted were leaders as change agents in catalytic leadership, and leaders who provide services in servant leadership. An in-depth discussion considered principal leadership and its influence on teacher performance. These two themes are important to address because principals and teachers are the direct and indirect actors of school quality and student learning outcomes. The literature review scrutinised leaders who develop kinship interactions as a way of maintaining relationships among organisation members. This kinship approach promotes an indigenous leadership in the Indonesian context, as a unique combination of religion and culture. McClellan (2016) stresses that kin-based leadership stems from equality in community, language, culture, habits, and religion.

Finally, the discussion of the literature identifies some gaps that are necessary for examination in further research. Firstly, the performance of madrasahs, especially Madrasah Aliyats, becomes a priority subject to be studied since most of the literature concerns investigation of mainstream schools in Indonesia. Secondly, there is limited previous literature investigating principal leadership practice in relation to developing strategies in order to address the Madrasah Aliyah challenges. Thirdly, there are few studies that focus their investigation on principal approaches for building communication and interaction among Madrasah Aliyah members and improving community engagement in order to support school performance. Lastly, investigation of Madrasah Aliyah performance and principal leadership practice in qualitative form is limited in previous literature. Therefore, it is important to conduct a qualitative study on current cases in order to enhance the available insight into school challenges, principal leadership practice, and Madrasah Aliyah performance.
Chapter Three will discuss research design based on a qualitative approach. This chapter will describe the research paradigm, questions, settings, and participants. Chapter Three includes details of the data collection process, which also describes how to code and analyse the data from the study. This chapter also examines the researcher as an insider, and ethical considerations required to provide assurance about the researcher’s credibility when undertaking the project.
Chapter 3
Research Methodology

3.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the research methodology, approach, instruments, and data analysis. Firstly, the chapter will describe the research paradigm that is linked to the basic philosophy of the current research. This is followed by the research methodology, which will explain all elements of research methods and tools, including the instrument of the study, samples, data collection, and data analysis. To ensure reader understanding, the research questions are presented once more in this chapter.

3.2. Research paradigm

The research paradigm is a framework that explains how a researcher views the facts of social life, and how the researcher treats a particular area of science or theory. The research paradigm also describes how the researcher understands a problem and how they test criteria as a foundation for answering research problems. A paradigm is constructed on three basic assumptions: ontology, epistemology, and methodology (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Davies & Fisher, 2018).

An ontological question deals with theories of existence that describe the reality around us. An epistemological question is known as a theory of knowledge, which discusses in depth the process of our efforts to acquire knowledge. It focuses on the meanings attributed to the concepts of knowledge, resources, criteria of knowledge, and the kind of knowledge. An epistemological paradigm guides researchers’ views on knowledge and how it can be developed. It is necessary for researchers to develop a methodological paradigm that provides them with a strategy for discovering how the knowledge they seek can be uncovered (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Davies & Fisher, 2018).
In some research methodology literature, there are four main research paradigms discussed: positivist/post-positivist, constructivist/interpretivist, transformative, and pragmatic. Positivism aligns with hypothetical deductions that need some variables to be experimented upon; thus this paradigm focuses on quantitative study (Park, Konge, & Artino Jr, 2019). Positivism is a philosophical concept that rejects the metaphysical and theological elements of social reality. This paradigm is also called a traditional, experimental, or empiricist paradigm. In quantitative research, it is believed that the only valid knowledge is science. The knowledge begins based on sensory experience and is then processed by reason (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Park et al., 2019).

In contrast to a quantitative approach, O'Donoghue (2018) describes qualitative (interpretative) research as research that may have multiple realities or interpretations of a single event. In this approach, researchers do not look for knowledge; they construct it. Interpretivist has the same meaning as constructivist (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Knowledge is created through the process of interaction between researchers and the subjects of the research. This paradigm is categorised as qualitative inquiry. The qualitative approach is a model of humanistic research, which places humans as the main subjects of social or cultural events. The humanist nature of this school of thought is evident from the view of the human position as the main determinant of individual behaviour and social phenomena (Bryman, 2012).

Qualitative research focuses on social reality. The answers examine not only the cause of reality, but also the meaning behind the social reality. To obtain the meaning of this social reality, data need to be collected face-to-face. Respondents or selected informants are considered to know or understand certain entities such as events, people, processes, or objects, based on their perspectives, perceptions, and belief systems (O'Donoghue, 2018).
A transformative paradigm is also known as a critical paradigm, which is associated with participatory and emancipatory study (Davies & Fisher, 2018). The purpose of this paradigm is to increase awareness and promote social change. This research predominantly empowers marginalised groups or investigates discrimination or social injustice. In order to do this, a critical paradigm generally uses a qualitative approach to collect data and pursue participant involvement in the process of the research in order to investigate how those participants are taking actions for themselves to address inequalities (Davies & Fisher, 2018).

The last paradigm is pragmatic, that is, mostly associated with mixed-methods inquiry, which mixes qualitative and quantitative approaches in data collection (Shannon-Baker, 2016). A pragmatic paradigm demonstrates the complete information in the proportions of its two different source data sets.

This current study is interpretative research that uses a qualitative approach. The interpretative approach is an ontological belief that there exist multiple social realities in the world. A relativist view approaches this subjectively and differs from one person to another (Davies & Fisher, 2018). The questions asked of Madrasah Aliyah principals, deputy principals, and teachers when conducting this research were based on their experience, feelings, beliefs, and practices. The researcher took an interest in and explored the meanings, ideas, feelings, beliefs, and practices that appeared in the interviews (Creswell & Poth, 2017).

The qualitative approach was chosen in order to explore principal leadership practice in Madrasah Aliyahs in Indonesia, and to support the researcher in developing an understanding of the data she collected. Since the data provided an accurate reflection of participant views, the qualitative method was appropriate to use to collect and analyse the data (Lincoln, 2007).
The researcher faced multiple realities in the research setting that needed to be observed and interpreted. Ultimately, she gained and developed knowledge by collecting the data.

3.3. Methods

Identifying an appropriate research method is very important since the method provides the means to answer the research question. Punch (2013) stated that ‘the matching between research questions and research method should be as close as possible.’ Punch stressed that the connection between research questions and design is fundamental because the logic of the two is framed clearly into quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods. Very often, the research questions focus entirely on the data themselves, in which those data can be measured or not measured. For instance, in a qualitative project such as ethnography by case study, researchers have already conceptualised the research questions that focus on interpretation, meaning, and cultural significance of a case. This involves qualitative data, and the research questions match the qualitative design, which might include interviews and observations (Punch, 2013; Thomas, 2003).

One of the approaches in qualitative inquiry is a case study, which may satisfy some of the following purposes: a) Answering ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions; b) Preventing the researcher from interfering in the behaviours being studied; c) The researcher may include the contextual conditions if it is relevant to the phenomenon in the study; and d) The boundaries are not clear between the phenomenon and the context (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Types of case study include explanatory, exploratory, descriptive, multiple-case studies, intrinsic, instrumental, and collective study (Baxter & Jack, 2008). A case study entails a detailed and intensive analysis of a single case (Bryman, 2012; Yin, 2013), with emphasis placed on a descriptive report. In the single case study, the researcher has a single focus; however, in the multiple case study, they will explore more information about the study (Gustafsson, 2017).
The administration of a multiple case study is necessary if the study includes more than one case or examines the differences and similarities between cases (Gustafsson, 2017; Yin, 2013). The multiple case study can be adopted by others to predict similar results (a literal replication), or it may predict results but for predictable reasons (a theoretical repetition). In the multiple case study approach, the evidence is stronger and more reliable than in a single case study. Thus, the researcher will have more scope to clarify the findings of the research (Gustafsson, 2017).

In this current research, the researcher pursued a multiple case study. The rationale was that the data collected came from different levels of performance in Madrasah Aliyahs; some madrasahs were selected during the research process. Data were collected at the sites where participants had experienced the issue under research (Creswell, 2009). The data collection often involved observing participants’ behaviour and interviewing participants (Bryman, 2012; Creswell, 2009; Silverman, 2004).

This research investigated madrasah principals’ leadership approaches and features that might influence leadership practices in Madrasah Aliyahs. One focus of investigating principal leadership practices was the strategies used to address school challenges. This research examined how leaders of Madrasah Aliyahs faced and addressed financial issues, infrastructure, and learning facilities matters, as well as community engagement, which might influence school performance. School observations and semi-structured in-depth interviews were used to collect the data. A semi-structured in-depth interview was conducted with Madrasah Aliyah principals, deputy principals, and teachers; in addition, school observations were conducted to explore the effect of leadership practice on the performance of Madrasah Aliyahs. The researcher also focused on the investigation of principals’ efforts to maintain and develop teachers’ performance.
3.4. Research questions

The overarching question is: ‘How do principals in Madrasah Aliyahs address challenges and enhance school performance?’ The two sub-research questions are:

(1) What are the strategies used by principals to manage Madrasah Aliyahs and address challenges?
   a. How do principals manage school finances?
   b. How do principals develop school infrastructure and facilities to support teaching and learning?

(2) What are the leadership practices that are enacted by principals to develop principal–teachers, and principal–community engagement?
   a. How do principals promote teacher performance and how do principal–teacher interactions affect teacher performance?
   b. How do principals optimise community engagement to support the madrasahs?

To answer the questions, the researcher conducted semi-structured in-depth interviews with Madrasah Aliyah principals, deputy principals, and teachers. A semi-structured in-depth interview is an interview that invites meaningful information in the form of narration. To prepare for this type of interview, the researcher designed questions related to the topic of discussion as invitations for telling stories. Participants were expected to answer these questions by telling stories based on their experience and knowledge (Mahat, Neimeyer, & Pitcho, 2019). The researcher conducted face-to-face interviews and used a semi-structured in-depth interview design to reveal the participants’ leadership practice in Madrasah Aliyahs.

To gain more supported interview data for the case study, the researcher conducted observations. The observation was necessary to provide a comprehensive impression of each situation, capture context and process, and solicit information about the influence of the physical environment (Creswell & Poth, 2017). It provided insight for the researcher in developing her understanding of the case. In the observation activities, the researcher created
a daily journal to record all the information she found in the Madrasah Aliyahs. The information was used to support and complement the data gained from interviews.

The researcher also observed principals’ behaviour in managing the school program, education staff, madrasah infrastructure, and learning facilitation. Regarding the role of leadership practice in developing communication and interaction with teachers and staff, the researcher examined any strategies used by the leader to develop the school and teacher performance.

3.5. Research setting

The research was conducted in Madrasah Aliyahs (public and private) around South Tangerang and Bekasi, West Java, Indonesia. Specifically, South Tangerang (Banten area) and Bekasi (West Java area) have been chosen as the sites for the research. There were three rationales for choosing the samples. Firstly, due to the status of the area: the two settings were categorised as an urban and suburban area. South Tangerang and Bekasi are corridor connections for the capital city, Jakarta. However, the two cities have different statuses. South Tangerang is designated the second metropolitan city after Jakarta. Some prestigious businesses, such as the mega-mall and luxury residences, are built in the city (Spreitzhofer, 2017). It influences many factors of living styles, including education and culture. Most of the citizens in South Tangerang enjoy good living facilities, education, and information access (Winarso, Hudalah, & Firman, 2015). Consequently, it creates a more civilised local community in the area (Spreitzhofer, 2017; Winarso et al., 2015).

By contrast to South Tangerang, Bekasi is categorised as a district or suburban area and is targeted to be a centre of industrial land (Hudalah, Viantari, Firman, & Woltjer, 2013), especially Cikarang, which is the target of the research setting of the study. There is a total of 6,000 hectares in Cikarang area, which has become the most significant industrial centre in
Southeast Asia over the past two decades (Hudalah et al., 2013). The industrial area attracts domestic and foreign private investors to build their factories in Cikarang. However, economic acceleration is not happening in the local area but in Jakarta instead, since business administration is mostly done in the capital city. Cikarang is only used as the hub of production for Jakarta. As such, it does not impact directly on the local community. Moreover, it might weaken the function of local government and society (Hudalah et al., 2013; Winarso et al., 2015).

Secondly, the researcher is familiar with the area and has access to the sites due to her university’s link with the schools. Finally, due to the limitation of the researcher’s time and finance, the two cities are appropriate choices, since South Tangerang and Bekasi are adjacent. This allows the researcher sufficient time and financial resources to collect adequate data.

3.6. Participants

*Purposive sampling*

Purposive sampling was used in the selection of the Madrasah Aliyahs in South Tangerang and Bekasi, West Java. Purposive sampling is defined as a random assortment of sampling units within the part of the population with the most information on the characteristic of interest. The selection of the sampling is subjective since the investigator depends on their own experience and judgement (Guarte & Barrios, 2006). According to Etikan, Musa, and Alkassim (2016), there are seven selection criteria for participants in the purposive sampling method: homogenous, heterogeneous, typical case, critical case, extreme/deviant, total population, and expert sampling. Heterogenous sampling is when the researchers select participants from a range of situations in order to derive good information from many angles. Homogenous
sampling is a strategy used when the researchers need to find specific participants to meet specific aspects of the research design.

Typical-case sampling is a strategy used when investigators conduct a large research project that involves standard or typical participants who are chosen based on their likelihood of behaving like everyone else in the group. For example, if a researcher wants to study how a type of educational curriculum affects the average student, then they choose to focus on average members of a student population. The researchers conduct a critical-case sampling strategy to examine one distinctive case in order to get insight which can be applied in other cases.

An extreme/deviant sampling strategy is used if the researchers want to study problems that deviate from certain norms or values. The sample taken aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the issue and how it can be resolved. A total population sampling is a technique used when all the participants in a population meet the criteria, e.g., experience or specific skills. This strategy is chosen to avoid missing puzzles in collecting the data. Total population sampling is used for populations comprising low numbers. An expert sampling strategy is chosen to explore participant expertise in particular skills or knowledge. This technique is effective when investigating a new area of research.

In this study, the four sampling characteristics identified were heterogenous, homogenous, critical case, and expert sampling. The first type selected, heterogenous sampling, enables researchers to achieve greater understanding since they have a wide variety of samples. Heterogenous sampling involves participants across a broad spectrum of the research topic (Etikan et al., 2016). In this study, heterogeneous sampling included Madrasah Aliyah principals, deputy principals, and permanent and honorarium teachers. Those groups were
questioned in regard to the research topic, including madrasah challenges, leadership, and school performance.

The second type of sampling selected, homogenous sampling, focuses on participant-specific characteristics such as background, experience, and cultures (Etikan et al., 2016). This study selected the homogenous research case and participants based on background, culture and religion, and school administration. The background similarities of the seven case studies were that they were all Madrasah Aliyahs, Islamic-based schools that integrated religious and general knowledge. Most of the principals, teachers and students of the madrasah are also part of the homogenous community. Most of them came from Muslim society and the schools were administered by the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA).

The third type of sampling used is critical case sampling, which Etikan et al. (2016) describe as “if it happens there, it will happen anywhere.” It means that a critical case is selected and subjects that might have problems are examined, as a basis for determining how these problems might also be problems for other subjects. The current research has fulfilled the critical case element by categorising low- and high-performing Madrasah Aliyahs in urban (South Tangerang) and suburban (Bekasi, West Java) areas. These cases are representative of those madrasah schools in Indonesia that are also grouped as low- and high-performing madrasahs, and that are also found in urban and suburban areas of the country. Some of them might also be categorised as emerging madrasahs.

The fourth type of sampling is expert sampling, which is defined as identification of a participant expert in a particular field. This skill can be elaborate and observable by researchers (Etikan et al., 2016). The current study involved principals as premier participants, with competence to be able to practice leadership in a way that addresses the Madrasah Aliyah
challenges. It was found that a principal has to take the “fit and proper” test as a condition of becoming a school leader (Gaus, 2011). A successful candidate with a certain standard of scores, such as the ability to lead and manage an institution, will be promoted to the position of school principal. As a result, all principals are assumed to have proficiency in leading and managing schools. In this study, a semi-structured in-depth interview was used to explore their expertise as a principal and how this expertise could be applied in leading a Madrasah Aliyah. Another interview was done to identify the principal leadership approaches based on subordinate opinions.

**Number of participants**

In qualitative research, there is no fixed number of samples. This is because qualitative research is concerned more with meaning than with a hypothesis statement (Crouch & McKenzie, 2006) and frequencies. Also, qualitative research is very labour intensive, and analysing large sample numbers can be time-consuming and impractical. In the current research, three schools were selected from South Tangerang, and the other four of schools were selected from Bekasi, West Java. Table 2 describes the categories of schools, which were selected based on the value/score of school accreditation published by the BAN (BAN S/M).
### Table 2

**Criteria for Selecting the Madrasah Aliyah**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Madrasah Aliyah in Indonesia</th>
<th>Regions</th>
<th>Madrasah category</th>
<th>Accreditation Score</th>
<th>Category of Participants</th>
<th>Total Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Tangerang</td>
<td>MAS1</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>1. MAS1-P1 5. MAS1-T1 2. MAS1-DP1 6. MAS1-T2 3. MAS1-DP2 7. MAS1-T3 4. MAS1-DP3 8. MAS1-T4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MBS2</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>1. MAS1-P1 5. MAS1-T1 2. MAS1-DP1 6. MAS1-T2 3. MAS1-DP2 7. MAS1-T3 4. MAS1-DP3 8. MAS1-T4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MBS3</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>1. MAS1-P1 5. MAS1-T1 2. MAS1-DP1 6. MAS1-T2 3. MAS1-DP2 7. MAS1-T3 4. MAS1-DP3 8. MAS1-T4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total participants in a region</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bekasi, West Java</td>
<td>MAW4</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>1. MAS1-P1 5. MAS1-T1 2. MAS1-DP1 6. MAS1-T2 3. MAS1-DP2 7. MAS1-T3 4. MAS1-DP3 8. MAS1-T4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MBW5</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>1. MAS1-P1 5. MAS1-T1 2. MAS1-DP1 6. MAS1-T2 3. MAS1-DP2 7. MAS1-T3 4. MAS1-DP3 8. MAS1-T4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MAW6</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>1. MAS1-P1 5. MAS1-T1 2. MAS1-DP1 6. MAS1-T2 3. MAS1-DP2 7. MAS1-T3 4. MAS1-DP3 8. MAS1-T4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MBW7</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>1. MAS1-P1 5. MAS1-T1 2. MAS1-DP1 6. MAS1-T2 3. MAS1-DP2 7. MAS1-T3 4. MAS1-DP3 8. MAS1-T4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total participants in a region</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Participants in All regions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The selection of Madrasah Aliyahs was categorised based on criteria including public and private, and high-performing and challenging categories, as well as schools that were selected based on the value/score of school accreditation published by the BAN (BAN S/M) (BAN S/M, 2017). The less-challenging schools were categorised as those with ‘A’ accreditation. The more-challenging schools have a score of ‘B,’ ‘C’ or unaccredited. Unaccredited means that...
the schools have not met the quality standards of BAN. The selected participants consisted of
eight people in each school: one principal, three deputy principals, covering curriculum, student
and financial and administrative deputies, and four teachers. There were 56 participants in total.
They were interviewed to record their perceptions on leadership practice, school management,
and teacher performance in Madrasah Aliyahs.

These private and public madrasahs were chosen because the researcher wanted to identify and
examine the significant challenges that madrasahs faced based on school status. It was assumed
that madrasahs with different statuses tended to face different challenges. Due to the terms of
low- and high-performance madrasahs being accepted concepts in Indonesia schools, the
researcher needed to classify the madrasah category based on their performance. The leadership
quality was also identified from the schools’ performance. The possibility was considered of
using challenging madrasahs and developed madrasahs during the data collection phase and
test suitability in the Indonesian context.

3.7. Data collection
The data were collected over a period of two months. The researcher spent one month in South
Tangerang (16 April-12 May 2018) and the other month (16 May-16 June 2018) in Bekasi,
West Java. Communicating through emails and phone calls, discussions were undertaken about
the purpose of the research and timing of school observations; interviews with all participants
was organised before the fieldwork started. A pilot study was conducted to measure the validity
and reliability of the interview questions. The pilot study was conducted in mid-March 2018
by undertaking a phone interview with a principal and two teachers in two locations, Bogor
and Depok, Indonesia. Based on the pilot results, the researcher made some revisions of her
research instruments. The pilot interview details will be explained in the next sub-section
(3.7.1.).
The researcher then obtained the agreement of each madrasah before starting the observations and interviews. There were two ways of connecting to the institutions. Firstly, the researcher communicated with the institution formally by sending an information sheet, interview guide and consent form, which were approved by University of Canberra Human Ethics Committee (see Appendix 5). Secondly, the researcher contacted the principals or teachers personally and formally approached the institution once the participants agreed to be interviewed. After the participants had agreed to be interviewed and observed, the researcher and participants discussed the meeting schedule. Fortunately, the first approach completed the preparations for six of the case-study Madrasah Aliyahs: MAS1, MBS2, MAW4, MBW5, MAW6, and MBW7. The second approach applied only to MBS3.

After the participants agreed to do interviews and approved a meeting schedule, the researcher visited and met each of the participants in the Madrasah Aliyahs. She spent five days in each case-study school. During her visit, the researcher completed the observations by recoding any information she gained in a daily journal. The observation data were collected to support the interview, which was primary data. Table 3 describes the planning of time allocation for the interviews.
Table 3

*The Planning of Time Allocation for Interviews and Observations in Bekasi, West Java Region*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Madrasah category</th>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Length of interview in minutes</th>
<th>Total hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MAW4</td>
<td>1 P</td>
<td>1 P = 60 min</td>
<td>1 hour day 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 DP</td>
<td>3 DP @ 60 = 180 min</td>
<td>3 hours, day 2, 3, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 TCR</td>
<td>4 TCR @ 30 = 120 min</td>
<td>2 hours, day 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6 hours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Observation</td>
<td>2 hours /day x 5 Days = 10 hours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total hours and days in one madrasah</td>
<td>6 hours interviews +10 hours observation = 16 hours within 5 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBW5</td>
<td>1 P</td>
<td>1 P = 60 min</td>
<td>6 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 DP</td>
<td>3 DP @ 60 = 180 min</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 TCR</td>
<td>4 TCR @ 30 = 120 min</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6 hours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Observation</td>
<td>2 hours /day x 5 days = 10 hours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total hours and days in one madrasah</td>
<td>6 hours interviews +10 hours observation = 16 hours within 5 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAW6</td>
<td>1 P</td>
<td>1 P = 60 min</td>
<td>6 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 DP</td>
<td>3 DP @ 60 = 180 min</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 TCR</td>
<td>4 TCR @ 30 = 120 min</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6 hours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Observation</td>
<td>2 hours /day x 5 days = 10 hours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total hours and days in one madrasah</td>
<td>6 hours interviews +10 hours observation = 16 hours within 5 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBW7</td>
<td>1 P</td>
<td>1 P = 60 min</td>
<td>6 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 DP</td>
<td>3 DP @ 60 = 180 min</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 TCR</td>
<td>4 TCR @ 30 = 120 min</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6 hours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Observation</td>
<td>2 hours /day x 5 days = 10 hours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total hours and days in one madrasah</td>
<td>6 hours interviews +10 hours observation = 16 hours within 5 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total hours</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>64 hours in 20 days</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 provides details of 24 hours allocated for the interviews. These included a one-hour interview with a principal, a one-hour interview each with deputy principals of curriculum, administration and finance, and student affairs; equalling three hours in total. There was a 30-minutes interview with each teacher. This study took four teacher participants, equalling 120
minutes (2 hours) in total for interviewing all teachers. Thus, the total hours of interviewing in one case study school was six hours. This added up to 24 hours in total for interview sessions in the four case-study schools in Bekasi, West Java. In addition, the researcher spent 40 hours for observations in this region (i.e. Bekasi). Each school required two hours of observation on each visit and the researcher made five visits, equalling ten hours of observation in total in one case-study school.

It took one month for the researcher to collect the data in four Madrasah Aliyahs in one region, i.e. five days (Monday to Friday) in each Madrasah Aliyah. For each principal and deputy principal, the interview took 60 minutes. Thus, a principal and three deputies required a four-hour time allocation. Each teacher required about 30 minutes of interviewing time. The interviews with four teachers took approximately 120 minutes (two hours). This research was feasible with an appropriate time allocation of six hours of interview time in one school over one week.

3.7.1. Interview

As stated previously, the primary data collection in this research project was a semi-structured in-depth interview. The copy of the interview protocol is included at Appendix 1. Silverman (1998) emphasises that an in-depth interview opens direct access to participants’ experience, which fosters understanding between participants and researcher. He also mentions that the interview only tells us what the interviewee is feeling and thinking; researchers must avoid making presumptions about their interviewees.

In this research project, an in-depth interview was conducted to explore principal leadership practice in Madrasah Aliyahs. This interview was delivered to madrasah principals, deputy principals, and teachers. The participant details have been explained in Subsection 3.6 above.
The interview guidelines were designed under three main topics: 1) the principal’s understanding of Madrasah Aliyah challenges, 2) the principal’s experience and approach in addressing the Madrasah Aliyah challenges, 3) the principal’s activity in developing communication and interaction with madrasah members in order to improve teachers’ performance. Interview questions were formulated under each topic to gain specific information from participants. The following paragraph describes some types of questions that were included in the interview protocol, which were adopted from Creswell and Poth (2017).

The heading included date, place, name of interviewer, and name of interviewee. This section was used to strengthen the identity of data retrieval. Essential instructions for the interviewer to follow were listed so that the researcher would be focused on the questioning procedures. Questions covered the topics of demographics, experience, opinion, and knowledge questions.

In this research, the researcher started the interview with demographic questions such as name, age, gender, educational background, and employment history. Experience questions related to how long the participants had worked in Madrasah Aliyah and what positions they held. Opinion questions were asked of the participants in order to gain information regarding participants’ ideas and views about Madrasah Aliyah challenges and the leadership practice performed in the school. For instance, “What significant challenges are still faced by Madrasah Aliyah?” “What is/are your plans to address the challenges?” “How do you communicate and interact with school members?”, and “How do you lead the members of Madrasah Aliyah?”; and for teachers, “What do you think of the way the principal/s perform their leadership?”.

Knowledge questions were asked in order to understand participants’ knowledge of factual information, regardless of it being true or false. These questions include those such as: “What do you know about Madrasah performance?”, “How do you manage the madrasah finance?”,
and “What sort of things support school performance?”. The complete interview is presented in Appendix 1: Interview protocol.

Questions were tested in a pilot interview with one Madrasah Aliyah principal and two teachers (permanent and honorarium) in Bogor and Depok, West Java, Indonesia, who did not participate in this research project. The pilot interview was necessary to confirm the content validity and to enhance the format of the interview protocol (Creswell & Poth, 2017). According to Castillo-Montoya (2016), pilot interviews are significant for trialling the questions and gaining practice in interviewing. He also emphasised that a pilot interview provided critical information about the duration of time required to complete the interview, and was a way of being able to adjust the strategy of delivering questions to avoid participant confusion. In some circumstances, the pilot participants might provide an evaluation of the question they obtained. The researcher can then revise those questions as necessary, so that they can present them well in the formal interview.

The pilot interview in this current study showed that participants understood most of the questions, although some questions needed more time for giving answers. The interview focused on school performance, challenges, and the principals’ strategy for addressing the challenges. The questions also focused on how principals applied their leadership approaches to develop teacher performance, as well as their strategies for interacting with the school members and community. The participants ticked and ranked those questions based on the topic and recommended researchers put them in order so that the interview would be more focused and follow coherently from one question to the next. Following the pilot participant feedback, the researcher refined the original interview protocol. Some additions and removal of irrelevant questions were made to meet the purpose of the study.
This research interview was conducted in the participants’ language, Bahasa Indonesia, and recorded by a digital voice recorder. Field notes were provided by the researcher in support of the recorded data and to record salient information that might be necessary to be discussed in the research findings. All transcripts were written and filed in separate files for each case study. The quotes reported in this thesis were translated into English and were checked for accuracy by an independent Australian native speaker.

3.7.2. Observation

Besides interviews, this research project also conducted observations to collect source data, as Angrosino (2016) has said that the observation in qualitative study tends to use the naturalistic approach in a natural setting. In other words, observations in a qualitative inquiry process involve watching people interacting in their natural settings. The observations study their behaviours and words, which can be categorised by topic. Creswell (2009) highlights that, in an observation, researchers use themselves as a filter to describe their reactions to situations and as a means to describe the difference in the responses of others.

Based on these statements, the purpose of observation in this study was to obtain insight into how participants, particularly Madrasah Aliyah principals, perform their leadership duties in the schools. The observations were also directed towards Madrasah Aliyah infrastructure and learning facilities. Through these observations, the researcher could recheck any statement of the leaders and teachers regarding the schools’ condition. Gestures, behaviour, and the character of participants during the interviews were also observed by the researcher. The researcher adopted the observation protocol from Creswell (2009) (see Appendix 2 for further details).
An observation protocol consists of two main frameworks, including descriptive notes and reflective notes. Descriptive notes include details of observation records, including time frames, comments, and behaviour. Reflective notes are considered as a researcher's interpretation about what they hear, see, and feel in response to the situations they face (Angrosino, 2016; Creswell, 2009).

During the observation in this study, the researcher took the role of participant-observer (Merriam, 2009), in which she considered herself to be more of an observer than a participant. The observations were carried out in a naturalistic environment (Angrosino, 2016), which meant the researcher did not arrange the setting and situation, but accepted it as it was when it was presented to her. Observations were conducted every time the researcher visited the madrasahs.

In the observation protocol, there were several aspects that were noticed in the activities. Firstly, the researcher observed madrasah infrastructure and facilities. She recorded every facility available in the madrasah and how well it supported the teaching and learning process. Any deficiencies that the researcher found were reconciled to the principal's plan and strategy to meet the need for improvements. Secondly, she made observations on principal activities undertaken at the madrasah such as coordination meetings conducted by the principal and his staff, coordination between principals and teachers, teacher and teacher coordination, and how the atmosphere created in these meetings.

Finally, in relation to teacher development, the researcher observed the principal's behaviour in encouraging interactions among staff and teachers at the Madrasah Aliyah. Most of the observations relied on how the principals apply their leadership practice in managing the
Madrasah Aliyah. The observation data were used as supporting data to complement the interview data.

In order to do the observations, this researcher allocated approximately two hours to walk around the school alone or with a companion such as a teacher, deputy principal, or principal. She recorded what she found in her journal. At the end of the observations, she immediately wrote her reflections about what she had observed that day.

3.8. Data coding and analysis

According to Creswell and Poth (2017), the case study method explores a real-life, contemporary bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information, and reports a case description and case themes. It needs appropriate tools to analyse and manage the wide-ranging data. In this study, the researcher conducted multiple case studies using semi-structured in-depth interviews as the primary instrument and observations to support the primary data that were collected in the interview.

3.8.1. Data coding

After each interview was completed, the data were transcribed verbatim to prepare themes for analysis; the data were coded and interpreted. Coding is one of the significant tasks undertaken during analysis to classify and make sense of raw textual data (Basit, 2003). Codes are usually attached to words, phrases, sentences, or entire paragraphs that are connected or unconnected to a specific theme of study (Miles, Huberman, Huberman, & Huberman, 1994). It is essential for the presentation of salient findings to be analysed. In categorising research data, Basit (2003) shows two methodologies: manual and electronic coding. Manual coding is when researchers follow basic procedures of selecting important data by cutting-and-pasting and
using note cards. Alternatively, electronic data coding uses computer programs to segment and manage the data by marking and selecting.

In this research, the data were reviewed to seek clear evidence of leadership practice in Madrasah Aliyahs. School observations were conducted to clarify and triangulate the information gained from the interviews. School infrastructure such as classrooms, libraries, laboratories, and technology were considered as the objects of observation during the research. All the observation data were recorded in the daily researcher journal; photographs were also taken to strengthen the evidence. Observation included examining Madrasah Aliyah principals’ and teachers’ attitudes while interacting with the researcher in formal (interview session) and informal interactions. The researcher recognised and recorded all the information through her daily journal and highlighted the salient findings, which were essential for discussion in her research report.

The researcher used a colouring-code strategy to categorise the data based on research themes and questions. This process was inspired by Stuckey (2015), who categorised data according to the colour of highlighting markers. Each colour represented one category for example, yellow coded one type of data and others colour-coded other data. Following the colour-coding, the data were organised by connecting with lines drawn onto the transcriptions.

In a slight deviation from Stuckey’s (2015) method, which used coloured markers to highlight the data coding, this researcher used a computer’s text highlighting features and saved the data in a computer file. In this system, yellow-coded data related to madrasah finance, purple-coded data related to madrasah infrastructure and facilities, blue-coded data related to madrasah leadership, and green-coded data related to community engagement. Grey-coded data referred to data unrelated to the research questions (See Appendix 7).
After highlighting salient information from interview data, this researcher started to develop storylines based on research questions. These data were presented in vignettes (see Chapter Four). The use of vignettes in describing the variations of answers in semi-structured interviews was both interesting and enjoyable because the findings were compiled into scenarios that constructed a story (Stravakou & Lozgka, 2018). This particular technique assisted the researcher to interpret the data findings effectively. This vignette explored all data through various scenario themes, including madrasah profiles, budgeting management, infrastructure and learning facilities, leadership practice, and community engagement. Each scenario presented one Madrasah Aliyah case, which provided insight into participants’ subjective perceptions and opinions about school performance and the leadership approach enacted by principals. Further, this researcher also introduced her observations data into the vignette to support the interview data.

3.8.2. Data analysis

One of the significant challenges when conducting an analysis in qualitative data is the open-ended nature of data that does not consist of numbers only, such as interview transcripts, newspaper articles, questionnaire responses, diaries, videos, images, and field observations (Braun, Clarke, Hayfield, & Terry, 2019; Castleberry & Nolen, 2018). Thematic analysis is a helpful approach in qualitative inquiry. Castleberry and Nolen (2018) and Braun et al. (2019) underline that thematic analysis method is used to identify, analyse, and report patterns or themes within data. This analysis is flexible enough that it can classify and remove unidentified data in a qualitative study (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018).

In analysing the data of this research, the researcher applied thematic analysis to identify two research focuses: school challenges that influenced its performance and leadership approaches
enacted by principals at Madrasah Aliyahs in South Tangerang and Bekasi, West Java. This required the researcher to identify and cluster the dataset based on the key categories (Attride-Stirling, 2001). More specifically, the researcher determined and analysed the themes in the dataset to answer the research questions.

A thematic networks analysis was used as a tool in clustering the dataset. The thematic network as an analytic data tool that identifies core features is common to many approaches in qualitative analysis (Attride-Stirling, 2001). The salient data are sought in the thematic analysis, and thematic networks aim to facilitate the structuring and depiction of these themes. According to Attride-Stirling (2001), thematic networks systemise the extraction of: (a) lowest-order premises evident in the text (or basic themes); (b) categories of basic themes grouped together to summarise abstract principles (organising themes); and (c) superordinated themes encapsulating the principals’ metaphors in the text as a whole (or global themes) (Attride-Stirling, 2001).

This study adopted thematic networks and analysis tools based on Attride-Stirling’s (2001) theory, as explained above. Figure 1 depicts the salient themes and illustrates the relationships between them. The basic theme is the most basic or lower-order theme derived from the documented data. Basic themes are simple characteristics of the data. On their own, they say very little about the text or group of texts as a whole. However, together they become an organising theme. Organising themes are middle-order themes that organise the basic themes into a cluster based on the same issue. These themes are more general than basic themes. Organising themes are compiled based on the basic themes found in the field. A group of organising themes should constitute a global theme. A global theme is a superordinated theme that encompasses the key metaphors in the data (Attride-Stirling, 2001).
The global map shown in Figure 1 describes the leadership practice of Madrasah Aliyahs in South Tangerang and Bekasi, West Java. Leadership practice is placed at the centre of the principals’ role. The school challenges as part of school performance are set as organising themes. Other elements that may be involved in each organising theme, such as school finance, infrastructure, and facilities are grouped in basic themes.

**Figure 1. The demonstration of thematic networks analysis**

Figure 1 demonstrates leadership practice in Madrasah Aliyahs. The leadership practice is the global theme with connected supporting themes. The basic themes are the specific groups that
illustrate the global theme. For instance, the map mentions the four groups of organising themes that the researcher aimed to investigate. The organising themes include some elements, such as madrasah challenges, leadership styles, teacher empowerment, and community involvement that were found in the interviews with the Madrasah Aliyah participants. The basic themes are the most specific items of the themes. The basic themes select any indication that might support the organising themes. For instance, the organising theme of the madrasah challenges is supported by basic themes like a financial problem, infrastructure, and facilities issues as basic challenges in the school performance; these have been mentioned in Section 1.2. This Figure 1 is only a demonstration of thematic network analysis, and the data and keywords mentioned will be discussed in Chapter Five.

3.9. Researcher as an ‘Insider’

It is essential for the researcher to be able to play an insider role in qualitative research, especially in case study research (Patton, 1999; Unluer, 2012). This researcher role is essential to show their credibility in conducting the research. There are at least two roles that the researcher could take in a research setting, including as an insider and an outsider (Unluer, 2012). An insider researcher generally understands and belongs to the group that is being studied; an outsider researcher does not belong to the group. This insider is expected to know about the group that is being studied and to know how to approach them. The insider is generally able to engage with their research domain (Breen, 2007).

The role of the researcher in this current study was as an insider. As explained in Chapter One, Section 7, madrasah is part of this researcher’s life. She completed her education in madrasah and graduated from Islamic University. This helped her in identifying and understanding the madrasah educational system and learning atmosphere. She also developed her career related to education in Islamic-based schools. Her experience as a principal in a madrasah created her
comprehension in administering and managing a madrasah. In addition, she developed an understanding of leadership approaches while leading the madrasah. This experience provided advantages for the researcher in gaining her data. For example, as an insider, the researcher easily discerned leadership perceptions and opinions that came from participants during the interview. She also understood clearly the management operations and challenges that were faced in the case study schools. This facilitated her interpretation and development of data analysis related to madrasah performance and principal leadership approaches.

Another advantage of being an insider was that the researcher could share her experience as a madrasah principal to develop trust with participants, so they became comfortable in discussing sensitive issues that only principals face while they were performing leadership roles in madrasahs (Breen, 2007). The researcher was able to comprehend symbolic meanings or body language expressions (Bonner & Tolhurst, 2002) of school leaders and deputy leaders when they shared the madrasah issues. She could also share her common experience to invite the sharing of information by participants. This researcher could recognise teachers’ attitudes, opinions, and perceptions of madrasah and principal leadership performance since she had experience in dealing with teachers when she worked as a madrasah leader.

However, taking an insider role in a study could create disadvantages. For example, the researcher might find it difficult to separate their personal experience from that of the research participants. It is argued that an insider might create a potential bias in their interpretation of the data as a result of their closeness and shared experiences (Kerstetter, 2012).

To prevent this situation, the researcher of this study maintained her professionalism as a researcher, developing clear distance while building rapport during the interviews. As a result, the researcher found that her neutrality was clear, which allowed her to explore the information closely. The researcher recorded all interviews and allowed participants to crosscheck any
information they had provided. This process was done to avoid insider bias and was important to confirm credible, trustworthy data.

3.10. Ethical Considerations

In qualitative research that involves humans, one of the early stages of the study process is meeting the requirements of the research ethics committee (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). According to Orb, Eisenhauer, and Wynaden (2001), research ethics are important in order to avoid harm and protect human subjects or participants from violation of their human rights. It is stated that qualitative research mostly focuses on exploring, examining, and describing people in their natural environment. Researchers sometimes feel a strong desire to obtain large amounts of data from unwilling subjects. An awareness of human ethics is important to prevent such exploitation of the research target (Orb et al., 2001). Punch (2013) stresses that other factors need to be considered by researchers before starting to collect data from human subjects.

The following paragraphs explain the guidelines.

Firstly, informed consent is important for the researcher to ensure all participants understand the research and research procedures correctly. This includes the reasons why and how the researchers chose them to be a participant in the study. The researcher in this study distributed the information sheet and consent form to be signed by the participants before data collection started. The sheets consisted of information about the research and the reasons why the current participant was important to her study.

Secondly, confidentiality and anonymity guarantee participants’ safety and identity. A research project needs to maintain its participants anonymity and respect confidentiality in relation to all information. Readers will not recognise participants since their names must be changed into coding keys, initials, or other names. In this study, the researcher assigned participants coding
keys such as madrasah principal coded as P-1, deputy principal for curriculum affairs coded as DP-1, permanent teacher coded as T1, and so on. The researcher also informed all participants in the first meeting of their interviews that any information about them was confidential. The participants were given the contact number of the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) at the University of Canberra, as well as the researcher’s primary supervisor, in case there was any inappropriate treatment or reason for complaint. There has been no complaint addressed to the committee and supervisor from any participant during the process of preparing this thesis.

Thirdly, consideration of harm and risk focuses on the protection of research participants. The research must not cause harm or create a risk to the participants, including to their health and safety. In this study, semi-structured in-depth interviews and observations were conducted during school days, and these took about 60 minutes with the principal, 180 minutes with three deputy principals, and 120 minutes with four teachers. These interviews were conducted on different days, consecutively. There were several possibilities for scheduling the interviews, including before, during, and after class hours. Some participants might have needed to adjust their schedules if the interviews were conducted before and after school. It may have created a risk of missing activities that they need to do before and after school hours. To minimise this, the possibilities were discussed by the researcher and participants so that all persons who participated were well-informed about the date of the interview.

During the observations, the researcher attended some coordination meetings in the madrasah, sitting with the participants. Some participants might have felt uncomfortable being watched during these activities. However, before the observation was conducted, the researcher talked personally with the participants and explained their participation in the study. If they did not agree to be observed, the researcher had the option of finding another participant or not attending the meetings.
Fourthly, participants’ rights were explained clearly. These included the right to withdraw from the research, the right to be protected, and the right to access the publication of the research. This research mentioned participation in the study in the consent forms (see Appendix 3). It also suggested that participants have the right to refuse to answer the interview questions, and that they could withdraw at any time without providing any explanation. This data-collecting process was designed to encourage participants to be part of this study.

This research addresses the fact that participants in this study are Madrasah Aliyah principals, deputy principals, and teachers in Indonesia and non-English speakers. Ethical consideration was required in relation to the use of language. The interview instrument, participation information, and consent form were designed and piloted to ensure the language used and instructions were clear. It was feasible that it should be conducted in Indonesian, given the context. Finally, the language used during research activities, including in the research instrument, was Bahasa Indonesia, which is the national language of instruction. Communication and cultural understanding were considered when designing the research instrument. Bahasa Indonesia was used in the interviews because the researchers and all participants use Bahasa Indonesia as medium of communication. Bahasa Indonesia was also used to avoid misunderstandings in communication between participants and researcher. This enabled the researcher to explore information and data effectively and completely.

To achieve ethical approval, the researcher in this current research outlined and practised the ethical procedures in order to minimise harm and ensure the protection of all participants who might appear in the research field. This research project, number 20180136, was approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC), University of Canberra, on 1st March 2018.
3.11. Chapter summary

This chapter discussed the research methodology and design in detail. The qualitative research with multiple case study approach provided data on leadership practice in seven Madrasah Aliyahs located in South Tangerang and Bekasi, West Java. Semi-structured in-depth interviews and school observations were conducted to investigate the research questions. Participants were purposefully selected and included Madrasah Aliyah principals, deputy principals, and teachers in seven schools around South Tangerang and Bekasi, West Java Indonesia. The madrasahs were categorised as public and private, challenging and high-performing Madrasah Aliyahs.

For effective data analysis, the researcher coded the data through colour-coding, which uses a different colour to differentiate each item of data. Next, the researcher used thematic analysis based on a model designed by Attride-Stirling (2001). The map consists of global, organising, and basic themes that are interlinked.

The next chapter will present research findings and contextual analysis in seven case-study Madrasah Aliyahs in South Tangerang and Bekasi, West Java. The chapter will be presented in the form of vignettes that include Madrasah Aliyah performance, finance, infrastructure and facilities, leadership, and community participation in the support of school development.
Chapter 4
Research Findings:
Vignettes of Contextual Analysis in Seven Case-Study
Madrasah Aliyahs

4.1. Introduction
This chapter aims to answer the overarching question of the study: How do principals in Madrasah Aliyahs address challenges and enhance school performance? In this analysis, the researcher uses seven case studies of Madrasah Aliyahs to discuss the way in which principals address challenges in their schools, such as infrastructure and learning facilities, the financial situation, leadership, and community engagement. This chapter also describes the school profiles in regard to their history and development. In the section on infrastructure and learning facilities, she explains the current situation in madrasahs with regard to their buildings, classrooms, offices, and teaching and learning facilities. The financial situation of the school has a significant influence on the school’s performance. In the section on leaders and members of the Madrasah Aliyah, the researcher describes the research participants including their educational background and work experience. Finally, in a section on the community and social culture, the researcher portrays the environment surrounding the Madrasah Aliyah, including the socioeconomic status (SES) of the community and the impact that culture might have on the performance of Madrasah Aliyahs.

This chapter will be presented in the form of vignettes derived from seven selected Madrasah Aliyahs, based in South Tangerang and Bekasi, West Java. These have been grouped into three categories: ‘developed,’ ‘emerging,’ and ‘challenging’ Madrasah Aliyahs. The categories are described in Table 4.
### Table 4

The Categories of Madrasah Aliyah in the Research Setting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Code</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Accreditation rating</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Background &amp; characteristics</th>
<th>Financial resources</th>
<th>Infrastructure</th>
<th>Teacher quality</th>
<th>Org. climate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MAS1</td>
<td>South Tasering</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>501 students</td>
<td>50 teachers</td>
<td>Developed school with education orientation on sports, arts, and music</td>
<td>DIPA, the Budget Implementation List of MoRA</td>
<td>Musical instrument, Lab, science, language, biology, computer, Sport fields</td>
<td>Most of the teachers graduated from education department.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBS2</td>
<td>South Tasering</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>138 students</td>
<td>24 teachers</td>
<td>Developed school with research-oriented Madrasah</td>
<td>Parents' committee, BOS</td>
<td>Limited space, Complete labs, Sport hall</td>
<td>24 teachers are graduated in Bachelor of Education, Some of them have graduated in Master of Education, The school provide scholarship for teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBS3</td>
<td>South Tasering</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>5 students</td>
<td>12 teachers</td>
<td>Most of student come from low SES family, Madrasah was in an area frequented by prostitutes</td>
<td>Poor financial condition, Self-sufficient funding</td>
<td>Poor building condition, Lack of learning facilities, no library, Limited classroom</td>
<td>12 teachers, One teacher could teach more than one subject, Teachers and principal have two jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAW4</td>
<td>Bekasi</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>800 Students</td>
<td>40 Teachers</td>
<td>Developed school with small challenge, including infrastructure and finance, Surrounded by a community which have awareness of religious education</td>
<td>Need more financial resources besides funding from MoRA and MoBKH</td>
<td>The MA needs bigger classrooms with a bigger number of students, The MA need parking area for teachers, Limited internet access for students</td>
<td>Teachers' professionalism used to be developed, Some of them tended to reflect additional and related with their task, Ambiance worked well between permanent and honorarium teachers due to the job hours and salary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBS5</td>
<td>Bekasi</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>623 students</td>
<td>54 teachers</td>
<td>Developed school with a bearing concept of education, Religious community and high engagement to the school, Well organized working system</td>
<td>A stable financial condition, Centralized financial management from school foundation, Madrasah got fixed budget annually</td>
<td>Appropriate infrastructure and learning facilities (lab, music studio, large sport fields, mathematics workshop), Large classrooms for 30 students</td>
<td>More teachers were hired from school alumni, Teachers had proper time management and workload, Teachers did not contribute to administrative work, Teachers were trained to develop teaching materials and methodologies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows the categories of madrasah based on the research setting. The categories cover public and private Madrasah Aliyahs. These schools were grouped based on their performance. The performance criteria were based on the accreditation scores released by the National Accreditation Board for Schools and Madrasah (BAN S/M). Score ‘A’ was categorised as developed, score ‘B’ as emerging, and score ‘C’ or unaccredited was categorised as a challenging Madrasah Aliyah.

4.2. MAS1: a developed public Madrasah Aliyah in South Tangerang

A sub-theme of this research provides a profile of a developed public Madrasah Aliyah in South Tangerang (MAS1). It also reveals the way principals address challenges to enhance the performance of their madrasah by focusing on music and sport. According to one principal, traditional music and sport are significant components of the curriculum and are important for students’ development. This was one of the approaches employed by the school to enhance students’ engagement and academic achievement.
The principal’s theory is supported by literature that mentions that students who learn music and play sports can improve their learning performance. According to Swaminathan, Schellenberg, and Khalil (2017) and Laborde, Dosseville, and Allen (2016), music (Swaminathan et al., 2017) and sport (Laborde et al., 2016) were the two most significant elements that can improve students’ academic and emotional intelligence. Swaminathan et al. (2017) found there was a correlation between musical training and non-verbal intelligence; as well as a significant correlation between musical aptitude and improvement in the intelligence of children and adult students. Longitudinal research conducted by Laborde et al. (2016) indicated that sport and exercise could develop emotional intelligence (EI). It was found that athletes who performed some level of physical activity have a high EI score correlating with a feeling of wellbeing: a pleasant feeling. It can be concluded from this that music practice and sporting activities are useful approaches used by school principals to improve students’ intellectual and emotional intelligence.

4.2.1. Madrasah profiles: The first public Madrasah Aliyah in South Tangerang

MAS1 was built in 1998 and was the first public Madrasah Aliyah in South Tangerang. As a new Islamic-based school, this madrasah faced many challenges, such as its low number of enrolled students, its remote location, and having to compete with other high-performing, mainstream schools nearby. To deal with these challenges, the madrasah worked together with the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA) and local government to develop its infrastructure. In early 2000, the madrasah added more buildings and upgraded its learning facilities, including computers, musical instruments, and sports equipment. Eventually, the madrasah began to enrol more students. Recently, the madrasah had 501 students and 30 teachers, 20 of whom were permanent (public servant teachers) and 10 of whom were honorarium. Honorarium
teachers are non-permanent teachers who are paid based on their teaching hours each month (Sariwulan, Agung, Sudrajat, & Atmadiredja, 2019).

4.2.2. Developed infrastructure and learning facilities

The findings show that MAS1 provided traditional music facilities, laboratories, and some extracurricular activities such as a marching band, a traditional music club, and martial arts. The principal was found to be enthusiastic about traditional music activities because he believed that music could stimulate students’ intelligence and he believed that sport was important for maintaining students’ health and emotional intelligence. In order to facilitate those activities, the madrasah provided more rooms and an area for sports on the school campus. MAS1 had a vast sports field that could also be used for assembly and the general meeting of all students. In addition, a music room had been provided to store the musical instruments and to provide a space for students to practice.

This researcher observed that the madrasah had a number of laboratories for science, biology, computer studies, and language studies. These laboratories appeared to work well, and they adequately accommodated the teaching process. During the researcher visits, most of laboratories were used almost every day. Each laboratory was controlled by a teacher in a specialised field of study. The researcher was also shown a room full of traditional musical instruments; teachers and students were playing Angklung (a traditional musical instrument from West Java) in preparation for the performance on Kartini Day (a national day for women in Indonesia).
4.2.3. Two financial sources for the madrasah

In order for schools to improve their performance they need an adequate financial system and sufficient funding. In MAS1’s situation, financial support mostly came from the government and the parents’ committee. Represented by MoRA, the government provided two programs—*Daftar Isian Pelaksanaan Anggaran/The Budget Implementation List (DIPA)* and *Biaya Operasional Sekolah/School Operational Budget (BOS)—to support the school budget* (Mannuhung, 2019; Shunhaji, Nawawi, & Khoirunnisa, 2019). BOS funding was transferred twice a year, and the allocated amount was dependant on the number of enrolled students. Funding was Rp. 1,400,000 or approximately AU$95 per student. Most of the BOS budget was used for maintaining the madrasahs’ learning facilities, whereas the DIPA budget was more focused on building maintenance.

The parents’ committee was another source of finance for the madrasah. According to MAS1-P1, the madrasah collected money from parents and guardians every year. The budget was used to support school facilities by paying for items such as electricity bills, internet, daily needs (food, tea, coffee, and sugar), as well as to pay the salaries of the honorarium teachers. This was in contrast to the money provided by the government, which was a fixed amount for each student. The madrasah did not specify whether they wished parents to donate a certain amount.

4.2.4. Madrasah leadership and member disharmony

The madrasah was led by a principal (MAS1-P1), a deputy principal of curriculum affairs, a deputy principal of administration and infrastructure affairs, and a deputy principal of student affairs. The principal had come from an Islamic educational background, graduating from a Madrasah Aliyah and continuing his study on Islamic education in a state Islamic institution. He was initially hired as an Islamic religion teacher in MAS1 in 2004, and was promoted to
principal in 2014. He explained that the madrasah had to be continuously improved, especially with regard to its infrastructure and student learning outcomes, and he needed to address the quality of the school’s teachers.

The principal’s approach to leadership was to build a family and friendship style of interaction (Erol & Senturk, 2018; Forck, 2011). From his point of view, all members of MAS1 were part of the same family and he preferred to build fraternity among them. The principal believed that this would help to avoid conflict amongst students and staff. Teacher participants and deputy principals agreed that the principal’s kinship leadership style had helped to unite the madrasah members. However, a small amount of conflict did arise between some of the permanent and honorarium teachers.

At the time of this study, MAS1 had ten honorarium teachers to support permanent teachers who were shouldering a heavy workload. However, the researcher interviews with two permanent and two honorarium teachers disclosed that there existed a disharmony between these teachers. The honorarium teachers argued that a few senior teachers were more dominant in the madrasah. Consequently, this created a divide and disrupted a healthy interaction between the two groups. This researcher found that the imbalance in the workload of permanent and honorarium teachers was likely to have caused this tension. Permanent teachers believed they had fulfilled their weekly quota of work (24 hours), and thus tended not to take on any additional tasks. This meant that the honorarium teachers were expected to take on more of the administration duties than permanent staff, and conflict arose when the madrasah did not pay honorarium teachers for these duties. While the permanent teachers had a maximum weekly workload of 24 hours per week, the honorarium teachers often worked up to 30 or 40 hours per week.
MAS1-P1 explained that the 24-hour workload for permanent teachers was regulated by the government in Article Number 15, 2018 about teacher workload (MoNE, 2018). Therefore, he felt the need to hire more honorarium teachers to handle the extra workload. Despite the principal stressing that the more hours an honorarium had, the more payment they could earn, an honorarium teacher mentioned that with a 30-hour weekly workload, she still earned less than a permanent teacher.

4.2.5. In competition with other mainstream schools

As mentioned in Section 4.2.1, this madrasah was located in the middle of the city of South Tangerang and was surrounded by several high-performing mainstream schools. It was a significant challenge for the madrasah to maintain quality, especially with regard to teaching–learning facilities, infrastructure, and learning outcomes. Therefore, the madrasah leaders and teachers needed to develop certain strategies to remain competitive with the other schools. The principal believed that by focusing on arts (particularly music) and sport, the school could offer a distinctive program that would attract parents. He assumed that integrating religion, art, and sports in the curriculum would allow the madrasah to combine religious and modern education. The principal added that the local urban community were aware of the importance of religious education for their children and therefore parents wanted to send their children to the madrasah. As a result, the madrasah received around 500 applications every year. However, it only accepted 160 students per year in order to maintain the quality of outcomes and the effectiveness of the teaching–learning process. A deputy principal of curriculum affairs mentioned that the madrasah’s placement test was of a high standard, covering holistic student skills, including a written test on academic competency in mathematics, science, religious knowledge, and Bahasa Indonesia, as well as an Arabic and English test (reading, speaking, and writing), and a Quranic recital test.
4.3. MBS2: a developed private Madrasah Aliyah in South Tangerang

MBS2 was designed as a research-informed Madrasah Aliyah. The teaching and learning processes in this madrasah were based on problem-solving and enquiry learning. MBS2’s teaching staff comprised high-quality teachers who had obtained their teaching and research training from national and international academic institutions. The madrasah also provided its staff with professional learning and development opportunities in other national and international schools. As a result, most of its graduates were accepted into national and international universities.

4.3.1. Madrasah profiles: The private madrasah under the public university foundation

Most of the communities in South Tangerang want their children to have a religious education. Therefore, a madrasah was established in 1992 under the State Islamic University Foundation. The university also had a plan to set up an educational laboratory as part of the Teaching and Education Faculty. During its development, the madrasah obtained considerable support from both the university and government (MoRA).

Recently, MBS2 established a good school management structure, including curriculum and classroom management, as well as a good finance system. The management is directly controlled by the university foundation. The university hired a chief executive officer (CEO) who was also studying at the university. The CEO then supervised the three principals of Madrasah Ibtidaiyyah (Islamic based primary school), Madrasah Tsanawiyah (Islamic based secondary school), and Madrasah Aliyah (Islamic based high school) to maintain close links with the university.
4.3.2. Outstanding school environment

The campus area of MBS2 is smaller than Madrasah Ibtida’iyah (primary) and tsanawiyah (junior high) and this resulted in some laboratories being built outside the madrasah. Consequently, for students to reach these laboratories, they need to walk for more than five minutes and pass several residential houses along the way. This might interfere with the effectiveness of student learning since considerable time was needed to move from one area to another. The deputy principal of student affairs had to supervise the students’ movement because some students stop and chat at the small shop along the way.

Furthermore, the madrasah did not have a mosque or a designated classroom in which to practice religious activities. According to the deputy principal of curriculum affairs, the madrasah should develop a mosque inside the madrasah campus. This would facilitate student Islamic rituals such as praying, reciting, and understanding Al Quran. A classroom for religious activities was important for students to practice Islamic jurisprudence, such as Islamic funerals, Islamic banking, and Islamic treasury. In the meantime, students and teachers used a public mosque near the madrasah to practice their Islamic activities.

Although the madrasah was located in a small area, it had been very well-maintained and has excellent learning facilities. The researcher’s observations found that the madrasah campus appears very clean and neatly arranged. All students and teachers took off their footwear before entering the classrooms and offices. Each classroom had a computer, projector, and two air conditioners. To provide an effective teaching and learning environment, the classroom had been designed to accommodate 25 students. Most of the walls were decorated with large photos and certificates won by the students in various competitions. Their trophies were displayed in
a glass cabinet directly in front of the principal’s office. The floor was clean and comfortable enough for the students to sit on during their lunch time.

4.3.3. Centralisation of financial management

Eighty per cent of the financial resources for MBS2 were obtained from parents and the remainder from government. The foundation adopted a ‘one-door’ financial system to manage the madrasah’s finance, in which they distribute funding to all levels of the madrasah based on their annual plans, and the principals and their deputies did not hold any authority to manage the budget. In order to obtain its funds, the madrasah must submit a funding proposal to the foundation every year. This proposal would describe the programs and activities proposed for the coming year and their estimated budget.

The principal stated that such a system was an effective way to control the expenses of the madrasah. For instance, MBS2 required more funds than other madrasah levels because it needed to support the madrasah research program. However, the Madrasah Aliyah did not have sufficient funds because of its low numbers of students. Therefore, the foundation transferred some funds from the Madrasah Ibtidaiyyah’s (primary school) budget to support MBS2. Madrasah Ibtidaiyyah had the greatest number of students and therefore received the most funding.

4.3.4. Academic quality of madrasah leaders and teachers

MBS2 was led by a principal, a deputy principal of curriculum, a deputy principal of management and infrastructure, and a deputy principal of student affairs. The madrasah currently had 24 teachers who had graduated from university. Six of them had a master’s degree in education, and two were still completing their master’s degree in education at the time of
this study. The madrasah foundation provided an unconditional allowance and scholarship for any teachers wishing to continue, or finish, their studies.

The principal (MBS2- P1) held a Master of Education degree from the State Education University in Jakarta. He was also a lecturer in education management at the university and it was due to these qualifications that the foundation hired him as principal from 2009 to 2013 and from 2014 to 2018. Under his leadership, the principal created a program called ‘research-informed madrasah.’ This program was developed to meet parents’ expectations that the madrasah provided a religious and science education. Thus, the outcomes were equivalent to other mainstream schools.

The madrasah strengthened the local curriculum by developing project-based learning (PBL). A PBL approach focuses on a student’s output, such as a report paper, journal article, or mini project. The teaching and learning activities were centred on developing the students’ abilities to research and solve problems. The madrasah also emphasises foreign language teaching, specifically English and Arabic, to strengthen the students’ language proficiency. It was the principal’s goal to ensure that the students performed well and were able to be admitted to any national or international university.

4.3.5. Well-educated community

MBS2 was situated in a university area and surrounded by lecturers’ residences and university student dormitories. Hence, many lecturers sent their children to study there. As the school principal explained, this was one of the benefits of the madrasah being located in an intellectual community. The school received a lot of support from community members and parents. For instance, the research-based Madrasah Aliyah program was initiated by the parents.
In 2018, the madrasah had 336 enrolled students, most of whom came from well-off families, since the school fees were quite high. Students who had a parent who was an Islamic university lecturer or university researcher might receive a fee discount or scholarship.

4.4. MBS3: a challenging private Madrasah Aliyah in South Tangerang

According to the National Accreditation Board for Schools and Madrasah (BAN S/M), MBS3 was categorised as a challenging or low-performing Madrasah Aliyah in South Tangerang. The poor performance of the madrasah could be due to two factors. Firstly, the madrasah was surrounded by a community in which most members had a low level of education, and there was a general lack of awareness about the importance of Islamic education. The community’s low socio-economic status (SES) prevented their children from continuing their education to a higher level. Secondly, the foundation gave them full autonomy over the development of their financial system. In other words, the foundation did not provide any financial assistance for MBS3. Consequently, the madrasah’s income was dependent upon the tuition fees from the small number of students.

4.4.1. Madrasah profiles: Obstacles to financial self-sufficiency

The MBS3 was established about 35 years ago in South Tangerang. Initially, it was developed by the foundation along with Madrasah Tsanawiyah (junior high level). The tsanawiyah performed better than MBS3; it invited more students and became established quite rapidly. MBS3 kept struggling to improve its performance, which was difficult because it was located near high-performing mainstream and vocational schools, and parents had various options for their children’s education. As an Islamic-based school, MBS3 needed to convince the local population that its graduates would be as successful as students from other schools. This had not happened and while parents sent their children to study in the mainstream and vocational
schools to prepare them for entry into state universities, the number of students at MBS3 continued to decrease. The Madrasah Tsanawiyah supported the MBS3 financially until the tsanawiyah needed the money for developing its own new building. In 2000 the madrasah moved to another small area in South Tangerang and separated its management from the tsanawiyah. According to the principal, this has allowed MBS3 to be independent and self-sufficient.

The madrasah continued to struggle to develop its infrastructure and learning facilities, and to achieve a stable financial position. Many of the madrasah’s teachers had resigned, some joining other schools and others working elsewhere. Recently, the madrasah had only 12 teachers which meant that some teachers had to teach more than one subject.

4.4.2. Degradation of infrastructures and the financial crisis

As mentioned previously, the enrolled students mostly came from a low-SES family background and their parents were unable to afford the tuition fees and monthly payments. Consequently, MBS3 could not afford to upgrade its buildings, offices, classrooms and learning facilities (laboratories, computers, internet access, in-focus, and sports field). The study found that most teachers only had access to a textbook and a whiteboard. According to the deputy principal of curriculum, most of the books were out of date and did not match the new curriculum’s standards. The researcher’s observations indicated that the madrasah had only three computers: two of which were used for administration, and the other of which was broken. The school building was located behind a mosque, and students needed to walk around the mosque to get to it. Consequently, on her first visit to the school, it could not be found on GPS and the researcher had to ask a local to show the way. The madrasah had three classrooms, an office, a teachers’ room, and the principal’s room. Although the madrasah had a basketball
field, it was turned into a parking area for people visiting the mosque. Although the principal and her team wished to improve the madrasah’s infrastructure, they did not have sufficient funds. The principal explained that most of their funds come from the students, many of whom cannot afford to pay.

4.4.3. Problematic leadership and teacher empowerment

There were some additional factors that might influence the performance of MBS3: Firstly, due to the limited human resources, some teachers taught more than one subject and took on additional tasks and responsibilities, and it was a similar situation for the homeroom teachers, deputy principals, and school administrators. Secondly, some of them taught subjects for which they were not qualified. For example, a permanent teacher mentioned that she had graduated in economics but was teaching arts and Bahasa Indonesia. Another permanent teacher had a background in Islamic jurisprudence, but was teaching sociology and Islamic knowledge. The teachers were aware that they should not be teaching subjects unrelated to their educational background; however, due to the lack of funds, the madrasah could not afford to hire more teachers.

The madrasah was led by a female principal who has graduated from the Islamic University in Jakarta. In addition to working as principal of MBS3, she was also a teacher in a public madrasah in South Tangerang. Her teaching schedule was quite hectic and took up most of her time. Therefore, she could only come to the MBS3 on Mondays and Fridays. She admitted that it was insufficient time for her to lead the madrasah effectively. However, she had a situation where she had to work two jobs to support her family’s needs.

The minimal presence of the principal severely limited the amount of communication she had with the school members. According to MBS3-DP1, it was difficult for him to develop a
working relationship with her, and likewise for the other teachers. Based on my observations, those teachers who didn’t work on Mondays or Fridays would never see the principal. In addition, some of the male teachers hesitated to interact with the principal because she is a woman. They prefer to coordinate with the deputy principal. They did not specify reasons for this, but the deputy principal mentioned that it was common for male members not to build a working relationship with a woman, even when she was their leader. Similarly, the principal did not feel comfortable communicating with the male members, and she used to ask the deputy principal to communicate with them. Ultimately, this led to poor communication between staff in the madrasah.

4.4.4. Struggle to promote an Islamic education

The MBS3 location was surrounded by a low-SES community. According to the principal and deputy principal, the madrasah was located in an area frequented by prostitutes. This created a significant obstacle to the madrasah in promoting Islamic education in the community. The deputy principal of curriculum affairs explained that he needed to knock on each resident’s door and invite them to send their children to the madrasah. Only some of them agreed, others hesitated to let their children study in the madrasah considering its limited finances, or they preferred their children to work rather than study. Despite allowing parents to defer the tuition fees, only 45 students attended the madrasah. The deputy principal felt that many parents believed that an Islamic education was unnecessary for their children.

4.5. MAW4: a developed public Madrasah Aliyah in Bekasi

MAW4 was a developed public Madrasah Aliyah that produces high-quality outcomes, with all of its students passing the national examination in 2018. Although there were some problems in areas such as teacher empowerment and school infrastructure, the madrasah was
well-managed by its leader. The principal obtained the position in early 2018, after holding the position of principal in a public Madrasah Aliyah in West Java for almost eight years. Therefore, as the principal stated, he had extensive experience in school management.

4.5.1. Madrasah profiles: turning from private to public Madrasah Aliyah

From 1995, MAW4 was managed by a private Islamic foundation; however, due to its lack of finance, limited human resources and limited facilities and space, it faced significant constraints in developing its education program, school facilities, and infrastructure. As a consequence, student enrolments decreased for some years. To avoid the collapse of the madrasah, the local government took over its management, and in 2003, in association with MoRA, they turned the private madrasah into a public madrasah, MAW4. First of all, the government expanded the infrastructure by moving the madrasah to a new space in a suburb. The madrasah had been built in the form of two-storey buildings on a 4,800m² area. Afterwards, the school started the recruitment of new teachers through national registration for civil servant teachers. In 2005, the madrasah met the quality standards set by the National Accreditation Board for School and Madrasah (BAN S/M) and MAW4 was certified with an ‘A’ score. MAW4 now had new teaching and learning facilities, new school infrastructure, and was supported by qualified teachers.

4.5.2. Infrastructure development

Recently, the madrasah had improved its infrastructure and learning facilities, including laboratories, a library, a refectory, internet access, in-focus, computers, and a sports field. However, this researcher found that some classrooms and internet access still needed to be upgraded because students’ learning was being hindered. In addition, the learning process was also being affected by the vast number of students and the lack of air circulation.
With regard to the school’s location, people had no difficulty gaining access. The madrasah was located in a suburb near the main road. Because so many students and teachers came to school on motorcycles, the madrasah had a parking area for students and teachers. However, many teachers tended to park their vehicle in the school because the parking area was full of students’ motorcycles.

According to the MAW4-DP2, a deputy principal on financial and management affairs, MAW4 had initiated physical infrastructure development to address these challenges. He stated that the madrasah aimed to build more classrooms to accommodate the increasing number of students attending each year, and it had plans to build another building; however, this would not occur until the school has sufficient income.

4.5.3. Parents’ involvement in supporting the madrasah finance

Proper learning facilities and infrastructure help improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools (O’Donoghue & Clarke, 2015). In the case of the MAW4 school, financial management became a significant challenge for the madrasah and much of the budget was allocated to infrastructure development. Although the government provided financial support through BOS funding, much of it was used to cover other expenses, such as facilities for learning, payment of electricity and internet bills, and payment of honorarium teachers. Consequently, the madrasah had no choice but to ask the parents to support the cost of the school’s development. The principal realised that it might not be in agreement with the government’s rule that students study at madrasah free of charge, however, there was no alternative. According to MAW4-P1, most parents agreed to provide the amount of money on a monthly or annual basis. The principal stated that they were happy to do that knowing that they would see an improvement in the madrasah infrastructure and learning facilities.
Furthermore, the principal and his deputies facilitated an annual meeting with the parents to report on how the money raised had been spent.

4.5.4. New leader and the improvement of teacher performance

MAW4-P1 graduated from education department and obtained an academic qualification in school management. During his career, MAW4-P1 had been an honorarium teacher and a permanent teacher. Before taking on the running of MAW4 in 2018, he led a Madrasah Aliyah in West Java from 2010 to 2017. The principal stated that he did not need more time to adjust to his leadership position since he was already familiar with the madrasah academic program, with managing teachers, and communicating with the madrasah members. He might need more time, however, to get to know the personality of each teacher and staff member.

On the other hand, the madrasah deputy principals, teachers, and staff were struggling to adjust to his leadership style. According to MAW4-DP1 and all teacher participants, the leadership style of the new principal was quite different from the previous one. The new principal tended to be a listener instead of a decision-maker. It was quite the opposite with the former leader, who worked quickly and effectively to solve problems. Most of teachers were aware of how they needed to interact with their leader. They hesitated to create a misunderstanding or cause conflict with him. The deputy principal claimed that the current principal had a different cultural background from the previous one. The previous leader came from an urban culture where issues tended to be voiced and resolved quickly. In contrast, the current leader came from a suburban area where they like to acknowledge someone's mistakes, even though it was for evaluation needs and teacher development. As a consequence, the performance of some teachers declined, and they were reluctant to take responsibility for certain tasks. For example, MAW4-DP1 mentioned that many teachers arrived late for lessons, and some of the permanent
teachers refused to substitute for the late arrivals because they did not wish to increase their workload. In response, the deputy demanded that the honorarium teachers handle the task, but then the madrasah needed more funds to pay them more. Apparently, 100 per cent of the madrasah’s students had passed the national examination, and 80 per cent of them had been accepted into the state universities and some respected private universities. However, if the teacher performance was substandard from time to time, it could impact the quality of student outcomes.

4.5.5. Community awareness of religious education

MAW4 was located in the middle of the city, amongst some high-performing, mainstream public and private vocational schools, and there was intense competition between the schools. MAW4-P1 stated that it was a significant challenge for MAW4 to obtain enough students each year because many parents tended to send their children to the more mainstream schools or to the vocational schools. Their wish was for their children to continue their studies in one of the better public universities or that they get a good job after finishing high school.

As parents became aware that more and more high school students were becoming juvenile delinquents and were using drugs, they started seeking educational alternatives that might prevent such behaviour. They began sending their children to Islamic boarding schools and madrasahs. They hoped that a religious education would be good for their children’s character and teach them good behaviour. MAW4-P1 explained that the madrasah was one of the religious educational institutions chosen by parents to improve their children’s Islamic character. As a result of this pattern, MAW4 had no difficulty finding students and they accepted vast numbers of applicants every year. Eventually they had to limit the numbers by
raising the standard of entry for prospective students. Students needed to pass tests in reading, English usage, mathematics, and psychology, understanding Arabic text and Al Quran.

4.6. MBW5: A high-performing private Madrasah Aliyah in Bekasi, West Java

MBW5 was an established Madrasah Aliyah in Bekasi, West Java. It was well-organised and run, with appropriate infrastructure and learning facilities, financial stability, outstanding leadership, and a religious community. The management system involved all madrasah members and encouraged them to take on responsibilities according to their capabilities. The school was run by a leader skillful in school management. They had a music studio to allow students to improve their musical skills. Their budget was adequate and so it was no great challenge for the madrasah to manage its financial affairs. Most of the parents tended to send their children to study at the madrasah because they agree with the religious education that it offers.

4.6.1. Developed working system

MBW5 was owned by one of the most famous Islamic educational foundations in Bekasi, West Java. This foundation had managed 149 educational institutions and they developed MBW5 in 1986. Male and female students were kept apart in the madrasah. The madrasah also provided a boarding house for students who wanted to increase their Islamic knowledge.

The principal had divided the school community into three groups known as ‘ring one,’ ‘ring two,’ and ‘ring three,’ Ring one comprised the principal, and deputy principals of curriculum, management and finances, and student affairs. These people coordinated with one another and were known as ‘the daily board.’ They handled any situation related to the curriculum, students, and school management. Ring two comprised the staff and teachers. The teachers reported to their deputies, who supervised and evaluated them. The staff members, on the other hand,
reported to the deputy principal of administration and financial affairs, who had organised the staff into two groups: financial and administration staff. Ring three comprised the students and parents, and according to MBW5-P1, it was the most important group. He stated that this group was made up of the community who received the service of the madrasah and their satisfaction was reflected in the quality of the work of all the madrasah members.

The foundation tended to hire most of their teachers from the MBW5 alumni. With the exception of teachers of mathematics, Bahasa Indonesia, physics, and chemistry, all the teachers were MBW5 alumni. The foundation maintained a relationship with their alumni, especially with the outstanding ones, and once they graduated from their bachelor or master’s degree, the madrasah might offer them a position at the institution. Some of them accepted the offer, whereas others preferred to build their career outside the madrasah.

4.6.2. Appropriate infrastructure and learning facilities

MBW5-P1 mentioned that the learning and teaching facilities were a priority. He explained that all their laboratories, including language, science, chemistry, and biology were provided to support the teaching and learning process. They had also installed a computer laboratory in preparation for the computer-based national examination. Besides the laboratories, the madrasah had a music studio equipped with musical instruments, a huge sports field, and an automotive workshop. The leader stated that every student had a different passion and the madrasah tried to facilitate those passions. The researcher observed many activities occurring in the madrasah, such as memorising Al Quran, Islamic speech (muhadaroh), understanding classic texts, and learning Islamic jurisprudence. There were also some general activities, such as music, a marching band, boy scouts (pramuka), basketball, volleyball, and soccer.
The researcher’s observations noted that the madrasah had been built across a massive area. In the centre of the madrasah was placed a great mosque, surrounded by a big yard, parking area, and sports field. The yard was commonly used for student assemblies or general meetings in order to celebrate an Islamic festival, such as the commemoration of the Prophet Muhammad’s birthday. The boarding house is situated in the complex of the madrasah to prevent the students from being late to school. The school consists of a two-storey building and one office. The researcher observed that the principal and his deputies’ offices were made of glass and was told that this was to reduce the boundaries between leaders and members. It symbolised his open-door communication policy.

All the classrooms had projectors and air conditioners. Although the classrooms accommodated a large number of students (30 people in a class), the atmosphere appeared comfortable and calm. The students enjoyed the material delivered by the teachers. Some of them would politely interrupt with lowered voices. This situation occurred mostly in the teaching and learning process. The students appeared to respect and obey their teachers. The deputy principal of student affairs stated that teachers act as parents to the students, acting as educators and role models.

4.6.3. A stable financial condition

MBW5 obtained all of its financial support from the foundation, via the parents and School Operational Fund or Biaya Operasional Sekolah (BOS) from MoRA. Similar to MBS2 in South Tangerang, the foundation had centralised the budgeting. The madrasah received funding every year based on its proposed learning programs and activities. If there were no significant problems with the annual financial report, then the funds were disbursed in a straightforward manner. This worked well for MBW5 because it did not need to expend effort on maintaining
the school budget. The deputy principal of finance and management stated that he and his staff only managed the budget they received for their individual programs. They did not have to handle student payments. This system worked well because the MBW5 financial team had a fixed budget.

4.6.4. Outstanding leader

The madrasah was led by a principal who was proposed by the foundation. His status as an overseas graduate meant that he was highly regarded. He started his career as a religion teacher, which he continued for a decade. Afterwards, in 2013, the foundation promoted him to principal in MBW5. As a master in educational management, the principal certainly knew how to develop the organisation in the madrasah. His leadership style involved power-sharing (Lumbantoruan, Purba, & Daryanto, 2019). The principal observed the performance of the staff and teachers before selecting the members of his working team. He wanted to understand their expertise. The chosen people worked under his guidance, and he provided the necessary feedback and evaluation to improve their performance. He also encouraged all the members of rings one, two, and three to interact with one another, and he believed that members needed to adhere to the system to prevent any issue from arising that may undermine the teaching and learning process in the madrasah.

As a leader, the principal paid special attention to the administration’s effectiveness, time management, workload, behaviour management, and financial management of the school. His system of time management included ensuring that teachers were not late or absent without an urgent reason. If they had an appointment outside the class, they needed to coordinate with the deputy principal of curriculum to find a substitute at least two days before their absence.
The principal also arranged a proper teacher workload to enable the teachers to work effectively and punctually. Teachers did not contribute to the administrative work; they were hired only for teaching and developing the teaching strategy. The madrasah had staff to manage all the administration work. In 2018 the MBW5 had 54 teachers and 18 administration staff to manage 623 national and international students in the Madrasah Aliyah.

When developing working relationships with madrasah members, the principal preferred a friendship and kinship approach (Van Vugt, 2017). According to him, his method successfully removed the boundaries between leader and followers. This researcher observed that every time he came to the madrasah, he would check all the classrooms and interact with teachers and students. He also ensured that teachers, students, and learning facilities were ready before the class started. He only closed his office door if he had an important meeting or interview, such as with the researcher. At all other times, he wished to make himself available to anyone.

The principal was strongly in favour of financial transparency. He stated that he would not sign any financial report until his deputy had signed it, because this showed that the deputy had read, understood, and approved the report.

4.6.5. Religious community

Since the foundation was established in the 1940s in Bekasi, West Java, it had extended people’s Islamic knowledge and produced many Islamic scholars. The existence of the foundation had influenced the community to commit to the Islamic way of life. MBW5-P1 informed the researcher that most of the community were involved in events held by the madrasah. For instance, on the occasion of Islamic celebrations like Eid al-Fitr, Eid al-Adha, the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad commemoration, and Islamic sermons, most people came to the mosque and prayed together with the foundation staff, teachers, and students. They
also volunteered to help the foundation staff manage the road and car park during the events. They took on the role of host to the madrasah’s guests, many of whom come from different cities.

During my visit to the madrasah, the researcher found many mashallah (small mosques) along the way. At praying time, most of the people went to those mashallah and prayed together with their neighbours. This activity resembled a community event and indicated that the people liked to worship together. It suggested that the Islamic education of the foundation had provided a positive influence on society.

4.7. MAW6: An emerging public Madrasah Aliyah in Bekasi, West Java.

The MAW6 was a developing Madrasah Aliyah. The vast number of students, infrastructure management, and teacher empowerment could be challenges for those in charge of the madrasah, however, the madrasah was led by an outstanding principal. He had good communication skills and an ability to develop strong interactions with stakeholders and the community around the school. In his leadership practice he applied instructional leadership which centred on the students’ academic development. The school’s performance had been boosted by the introduction of technology and was now categorised as a ‘developed’ Madrasah Aliyah rather than a ‘challenging’ Madrasah Aliyah.

4.7.1. Challenge of improving student outcomes

MAW6 was built in 1993 and was situated on a large area of local government land in Bekasi, West Java. The madrasah had many buildings including 29 classrooms, a mosque, a badminton hall, a library, a computer room, and a multimedia room (MMR). However, there was still inadequate space to accommodate 1160 students. According to the principal (MAW6-P1), this was largely due to the significant number of students who did not meet the standards of the
national standard accreditation board (BAN) for schools and madrasahs. He explained that most of the madrasah students’ achievements were lower than those of the mainstream and vocational schools. He also mentioned that for the first time since 2009 the madrasah had accepted low-achieving students, and this made it challenging for the madrasah to improve the quality of its outcomes. MAW6-P1 stated that the group of low capability required a lot of effort by the madrasah to increase their learning achievement. He hoped that the inclusion of technology in the learning process might help to address this challenge.

4.7.2. Technology inclusion

Facing the reality of leading a low-performing Madrasah Aliyah, MAW6-P1 attempted to upgrade the madrasah. He optimised the use of technology in the teaching–learning process and the working habits of the school, believing that technology could significantly facilitate people to work and learn better. Although the madrasah was in a suburban area, it did not mean that information access was limited. The principal believed that technology and the internet could be used in the madrasah because he observed many teachers, students, and parents using smartphones and social media. He submitted a project proposal to a Korean technology company. The proposal mentioned that technology was needed in the madrasah to improve the quality of MAW6 teaching and learning. Company representatives visited the madrasah and gave them 40 laptops and 12 days of technology training in how to support the teaching and learning process. However, MAW6-P1 was not satisfied with the 40 laptops because he wanted them for the students as well. At the beginning of 2016, he submitted a proposal to MoRA to increase the number of computers for students. A few months later, the madrasah had successfully installed around 150 computer units and connected to the internet. As a result, the madrasah could perform the computer-based version of the national examination for students.
This researcher asked the principal how he succeeded in developing interactions and communication with the computer company and the government. He said that approaching companies and the government was not always simple and people needed to be persistent. He said that leadership challenged people to be creative and work smart, for example by developing relationships with the community outside of the madrasah. Those communities, such as factories, had a responsibility to establish the living surroundings of the local population. They might not know what the local people need to improve their life, but they would be happy to support the community once they were informed of the school’s conditions. He added that developing the madrasah might be costly, but these expenses could be reduced if potential funders from nearby could be called upon.

The final challenge for the madrasah leadership was to instruct teachers and staff in how to use the computers. Some of them refused to use technology in the classroom. The principal used the ‘coercion’ approach to handle the situation (Crippen & Willows, 2019), that is, teachers were made to use computers and smartphones to access the learning materials. The deputy principal of curriculum affairs (MAW6-DP2) designed and uploaded all learning materials onto the computer. Teachers who needed it must upload it from their laptops and could not avoid using the computers. He invited the young teachers in command of the computers to help and guide the senior teachers, and they were given some time to adjust to the technology. The principal believed that by 2019, the staff and teachers at the madrasah would be comfortable with the inclusion of technology in their teaching and learning programs.

4.7.3. Transparent approach to financial management

As was the case with other public Madrasah Aliyahs, MAW6 received financial support from the government and the students’ parents. Despite other schools considering that the supported
budget was not inadequate to maintain the learning facilities and infrastructure, the MAW6 thought the opposite. MAW6-P1 stated that the budget would never be sufficient for any challenging schools. However, if it could be managed transparently, it could support the school needs.

The principal was quite strict about controlling the school’s expenses and managing the budget. He worked with the deputy principal of management and infrastructure affairs (MAW6-DP2) to supervise the finance staff on how they should manage the school budget. MAW6-DP2 stated that not a single cent was used without their permission, and each cent spent needed to be reported to them. Through an informal interview with financial and administrative staff, the researcher found that the team needed to inform the school of its expenses twice a year. MAW6-P1 also showed the researcher a report book of the school’s accounts.

4.7.4. Friendly work environment

The madrasah hired qualified teachers who had graduated from state universities in technology, farming, religion, and science. A balanced number of permanent teachers and honorarium teachers contributed to the workplace dynamics. Although the madrasah office looked untidy and was small and stuffy, most of the staff seemed to enjoy working there. The researcher was always made to feel welcome when she visited the madrasah: the staff were warm and friendly and happy to answer her questions.

The school principal looked humble and was quite humorous. During the interviews, he would use amusing analogies to aid the researcher’s understanding. The principal had an Islamic educational background from a public Islamic university in West Java and a master of education from the state university in Jakarta. He had been a principal at MAW6 for more than a decade. Therefore, he understood every detail of the madrasah including how to empower
teachers and staff to improve their students’ achievement. He liked to be involved directly in the working process and to work among his followers.

4.7.5. Labour community

MAW6 was situated in a suburban area of West Java, half an hour’s drive from the main road. It was surrounded by farming land and some factories producing soft drinks, food, cosmetics, technology, and garments. It was confirmed that most of the students’ parents worked in the factories and some of them were farmers. MAW6-P1 assumed that most of the parents send their children to the madrasah only to get a high school certificate, believing that it was easier to obtain it there than from the mainstream or vocational schools. The parents just needed their children to obtain a high school certificate and then they could leave school and go out to work to help support the family. According to the deputy principal of student affairs, some of the students came to school but they did not study earnestly. A teacher complained that most of the class could not understand what they were learning. They listened to the teachers but did not respond to the teachers’ questions. They wrote down everything on the board but did not understand what they were learning about. The curriculum had to be completed before the exam, but it was hard to instill in students an adequate understanding of their subjects. The teachers faced significant obstacles getting the students to their learning targets for prerequisite subjects like mathematics, English, Arabic, and Nahwu (Arabic grammar). Yet the students could not get to the next level until they had achieved the previous one. As a result, most of the teachers gave them plenty of tasks and homework to embrace the materials. Some of the students completed the materials, but others were left behind. MAW6-DP2 indicated that the most difficult challenge the teachers faced in MAW6 was motivating the students to learn. The madrasah was looking for an effective strategy to boost the students’ learning motivation and
was considering elements such as technology inclusion, teacher development, and learning facility development.

4.8. MBW7: A challenging private Madrasah Aliyah in Bekasi, West Java.

MBW7 was categorised as a challenging Madrasah Aliyah in Bekasi. There were at least three factors that challenged this madrasah. Firstly, the school infrastructure and learning facilities had not been upgraded since the school was established in 1993. Some of the facilities were in need of repair and this could be hindering the teaching and learning process. Secondly, the teaching strategies were dull, and the poor teacher performance could be influencing the quality of the madrasah’s outcomes. Finally, insufficiently strong leadership and high intervention of the foundation in the management of the school created a negative feeling among the members of the school.

4.8.1. Challenge to compete with mainstream schools

The madrasah had been built by a private foundation and was located near the city. Although MBW7 was closer to Bekasi City than the MAW6 school was, the madrasah faced significant competition from some outstanding Islamic, mainstream, and vocational schools in the region. Parents had plenty of choices of school for the education of their children. There were at least three high-performing private Islamic schools and one prestigious Islamic boarding school near MBW7. These schools were in high demand because they offered Islamic education integrated with science and technology. High-achieving students could be enrolled for free in such schools. In addition, the region was near the industrial sector and students attending the vocational schools could have opportunities to work in one of the local factories.

Limited physical access might influence the interest of the local community in going to the madrasah. The madrasah had been developed right behind some shops. Their buildings were
taller than the madrasah, which almost blocked the existence of the school. MBW7 could only be accessed by a narrow path that could just allow a small vehicle to pass through. During her visit, the researcher needed to park her car in the shop area and walk 15 minutes to the madrasah. She assumed that it would difficult for visitors to find the MBW7 because the building was barely visible from the main road, and the madrasah only installed a small sign in front of the alleyway.

4.8.2. Un-upgraded school infrastructure

MBW7 was located behind some shops and houses and therefore did not receive much light. It comprised two-storey buildings with a sports field and motorcycle park in the middle of its grounds. Some rooms were in poor condition, especially the toilets. There were only two toilets which could be used by students and teachers. The principal claimed that all toilets had been repaired many times but before long they were broken again. In addition, the researcher observed damage to the walls, floor, and windows in the classrooms and office. The environment was not conducive to learning and many students complained of being hot and uncomfortable. Conditions were equally as bad in the school’s office, which was crowded and dirty. According to the principal, the madrasah could not afford to hire a janitor to clean the area.

4.8.3. School minimum income

Poor budgeting had become a significant challenge for MBW7. There were at least two sources of funding, from government and parents, which was used to pay teachers’ salaries and electricity bills. The small number of students (86 pupils) did not help to boost the madrasah’s income. Although each student was charged about Rp.150.000 or approximately AU$14 per month, those from middle- to lower-SES families made late payments and this decreased the
madrasah’s monthly income. Consequently, the foundation had to cover the monthly expenses, primarily the teachers’ salaries.

MBW7 was very reliant on the Biaya Operasional Sekolah (BOS) funding that the government provided each year, the amount dependent upon the number of students. It was around Rp.1,300,000 or AU $120/student, hence the madrasah gained AUD$10,320 per year. Primarily the madrasah used this funding for insurance. The foundation intervened and according to the deputy principal of administration (MBW7-DP3), they took over the management of the funding. From then on, the madrasah only received a certain amount for teachers’ salaries. This was all done without explanation from the foundation.

4.8.4. Catalytic leadership

As a leader in a private madrasah, MBW7-P1 acted as intermediary between his subordinates and the foundation’s board. This was a challenge for him since he was trying to avoid disputes arising between the foundation and teachers. The teachers were not happy with the lack of transparency shown by the foundation. He chose to use an informal approach to prevent the conflict. For instance, he held weekly informal meetings, during a coffee break in the madrasah, at which all teachers, staff, and foundation board members met together. They interacted and communicated in the family atmosphere and this reduced the gap between the parties. The researcher attended one of these meetings over coffee and listened to the conversations between staff and teachers regarding the madrasah problem. The researcher found that the event was useful for gaining more information about the school’s performance. However, she did not meet the foundation board, so was unable to gain their view on the conflict. The principal stated that he was still working on finding a proper solution, and he was worried it might adversely affect the madrasah’s performance, which depended on solid teamwork.
4.9. Chapter summary

The findings indicated that there were seven Madrasah Aliyah, which had been grouped into three levels of performance, described as challenging (MBS3 and MBW7); emerging (MAW6); and developed (MAS1, MBS2, MAW4, and MBW5). The case studies were gathered from two settings in different Indonesian provinces: South Tangerang, Banten, and Bekasi, West Java. Based on the findings, the researcher has identified at least four factors which influence the performance of the Madrasah Aliyah: finance, infrastructure and learning facilities, leadership, and community engagement.

In ‘challenging’ madrasah such as MBS3 and MBW7, the researcher found that they had insufficient financial support from the foundation and the government. As a result, the school infrastructure and learning facilities were affected. Both schools were affected by inadequate classroom conditions, damaged learning facilities, and limited learning resources. The researcher found that the MBW7 school had a lack of transparency around its financial management.

The madrasah’s poor performance was also due to a less dedicated display of leadership by the principal. The findings indicated that there was a lack of coordination between staff, and poor communication in MBS3. At MBW7 conflict between the foundation and teachers became a significant problem for the leader. The interference by the foundation tended to weaken the performance of the leadership. The weak support of the foundation also obstructed the effectivity of the working systems in MBS3. Although some curriculum upgrading had to be adopted by all schools in Indonesia, the researcher observed that these challenging schools tended to continue using the old curriculum. Their delays in upgrading to the new curriculum was mostly due to lack of teacher training and material guidance. The last factor was community engagement. Most of the parents of students at MBS3 and MBW7 were reluctant
to send their children to study. They were more concerned that their children go out to work and earn money to support the family’s finances.

These principals of MBS3 and MBW7 initiated strategies to address the challenges of the madrasahs they were leading. In regard to increasing student number, MBS3-P1 worked together with her deputies to promote Islamic knowledge to parents in the school’s region. They visited parents and the community door to door and asked whether they were interested in sending their children to school in the madrasah. Due to her sub-optimal situation in the school, MBS3-P1 had tried to build virtual communications with her school members. She argued that her absence did not decrease her communication and interaction with madrasah members, as she could still work and control the school management through online coordination and communication with the deputies.

In the case of MBW7, the school challenges are related to non-transparency of the foundation in managing school finances. As a result, it created complaints from teachers and staff. MBW7-P1 realised that this problem could create discord between the foundation and the teachers. He dedicated himself to being a catalyst and mediator for both parties to overcome this crisis. The principal then initiated a weekly meeting through a coffee break at which the foundation, teachers, and staff mingled in an informal situation. The principal hoped that this gathering might decrease the conflict and that friendly interaction might create understanding for both parties in dispute.

As an ‘emerging’ Madrasah Aliyah, MAW6 improved its performance, especially in how it was managed and led. The introduction of computers and technology into the school enabled the madrasah to move their status from ‘challenging’ to ‘emerging.’ The principal’s leadership proved adequate for managing the school. He gave guidance and developed a partnership with
his teachers and staff, so everyone in the school had an opportunity to improve their performance. The school budget was entirely transparent and strictly applied so that all the staff and leaders knew where and on what the budget had been used.

The ‘developed’ Madrasah Aliyahs were supported by outstanding leadership, school management, financial support, teacher performance, curriculum development, and community involvement. There were four high-performing Madrasah Aliyahs in the study: MAS1, MBS2, MAW4, and MBW5. A leadership practice based on close relationships was mostly applied in developed madrasahs. Although they had a settled management system, the kinship relations were developed very well in the madrasahs. In institutions such as MBS2 and MBW5, members were treated as family, and leaders acted as parents or role models to the students. These madrasahs also had clear and well-established management systems. Leaders and staff did not need to be reminded of their respective assignments since everything was clearly stated in the system. As part of the curriculum development, some developed schools included a local curriculum, which they adapted for the schools’ purposes. For instance, MBS2 was concerned with developing students’ research skills by creating a project-based learning (PBL) system, and MAS1 used arts and sports to support students’ learning achievement. Community involvement was also important in supporting the madrasahs’ performance. The researcher also found that if the school’s local community was educated or spiritual then this tended to have a positive impact on the school. For example, people living near MAW4 and MBW5 had realised the importance of religious education and believed that it could reduce juvenile delinquency.

The next chapter will present research findings related to performance and management of Madrasah Aliyahs in South Tangerang and Bekasi, West Java. Some factors that influence the school performance will be analysed in detail. These factors include Madrasah Aliyah finance, infrastructure, and learning facilities.
Chapter 5
Research Findings
Madrasah Performance and Management

5.1. Introduction

This chapter will answer sub-question number one of the research project: ‘What are the strategies used by principals to manage Madrasah Aliyahs and address challenges?’ This question included two sub-questions: a) How do principals manage school finances? and b) How do principals develop school infrastructure and facilities to support teaching and learning?

This chapter outlines the findings of seven case-study schools. The discussion covers key factors that influenced the performance of Madrasah Aliyahs in Indonesia. The findings of this research project illustrate the factors such as school finance, infrastructure and facilities, leadership and community engagement required for optimum Madrasah Aliyah performance.

Some discussion is necessary to interpret those factors. This chapter will provide evidence to demonstrate the way the elements mentioned above are managed and how different leadership approaches and teacher commitment affect the development of the Madrasah Aliyahs. Three leadership styles, including catalytic (Luke & Luke, 1997), servant (Greenleaf, 2002), and kinship leadership (Prideaux, 2006) are described in Madrasah Aliyahs in the Indonesian context. Some Madrasah Aliyahs might strongly demonstrate one of these three approaches, but others, in certain circumstances, reflected several of them.

There were four financial issues faced by challenging Madrasah Aliyahs: low numbers of students, lack of self-sufficient funding, low incomes of student guardians, and non-transparent situations. On the other hand, the emerging and developed Madrasah Aliyahs tended to have good financial management. Some factors such as the centralisation of the madrasahs’ budgeting system, and competent budgeting indicated an adequate distribution of funding throughout the school. Financial transparency also created trust among Madrasah members.
The ability of parents to add to madrasah funds in developed Madrasah Aliyahs helped most of the madrasahs to improve their development.

Infrastructure also had a significant influence on school performance. Research shows that school infrastructure has a substantial effect on school performance, especially in facilitating student learning (Branham, 2004). Earthman (2002) stressed that building design features and components such as temperature, lighting, acoustics, and age strongly influence student learning, adding that an overcrowded school building and classrooms could influence student achievement negatively. The current research found that Madrasah Aliyah infrastructure and learning facilities played a significant role in improving the teaching and learning process. In high-performing madrasahs, students were well-supported by these facilities, producing a positive learning outcome. On the contrary, an uncomfortable building and classroom provided an unpleasant environment for students to learn in low-performing madrasahs.

5.2. Madrasah Aliyah performance in Indonesia

The findings showed that the madrasahs under this study were classified into three levels: challenging, emerging, and developed Madrasah Aliyahs. The characteristics of challenging schools may include inadequate school infrastructure, low standards of students’ achievement, lack of community collaboration, community poverty, and delicate leadership (Corallo & McDonald, 2001). In this research, the challenging schools consisted of two private Madrasah Aliyahs: MBS3 in South Tangerang and MBW7 in Bekasi, West Java. Compared to MBS3 and MBW7, MAW6 has better infrastructure and facilities, and higher student numbers. MAW6 in Bekasi, West Java, is categorised as an emerging public Madrasah Aliyah. Finally, there are four developed Madrasah Aliyahs; two in South Tangerang—MAS1 (a public Madrasah Aliyah) and MBS2 (a private Madrasah Aliyah)— and another two madrasahs in Bekasi, West Java: MAW4 (a public Madrasah Aliyah) and MBW5 (a private Madrasah Aliyah). Four
factors, comprising school finance, infrastructure and learning facilities, leadership, and community engagement, explain each classification of madrasah performance. The details are presented in Figure 2.

**Figure 2. The classification of Madrasah Aliyah performance in Indonesia**

Figure 2 describes the classification of Madrasah Aliyah performance in Indonesia ranging from the challenging stage, to the emerging stage, and then to the developed stage, which is the highest level. Each classification includes the four salient factors that indicate the madrasah performance.

This research project found, from the seven case studies researched, that there is a dynamic change of performance across a spectrum. The place of each school on the spectrum is determined by its performance relating to finance, infrastructure and facilities, and community engagement. It is described in Figure 3 following:
Figure 3. A dynamic level of Madrasah Aliyah performance.

Figure 3 presents a dynamic range of schools based on their performance. The comparison can be seen clearly in schools at the challenging and developed levels. In the challenging school level, MBW7 is better than MBS3. There is also competition between the developed Madrasah Aliyahs. MAW4 is placed in the lowest place of its group while MBS2 is at the top level of the group. The following sections present detailed explanations.

5.2.1. Deficient factors in challenging Madrasah Aliyahs

Schools at the challenging level were influenced by four factors. The first was poor financial support where schools had almost no budget to develop their performance. A non-transparent approach to the financial management in MBW7 and the lack of financial self-sufficiency in MBS3 could affect the school’s ability to remain within its budgetary limits. An inappropriate work system in these two madrasahs, including a lack of intervention by the foundation in MBS3 and the foundation’s significant interference in MBW7, created issues in managing school finances.
Secondly, poor financial support contributed to the development of inadequate infrastructure and learning facilities (Brunner & Vincent, 2018). The findings of this research revealed that some facilities, such as school buildings, laboratories, libraries, sports fields, books, and computers, were damaged. The difficulty of teachers in adjusting to the new Curriculum 2013 and subsequent weak teaching strategies were significant issues that hampered school development. Teachers in both MBS3 and MBW7 tended to refuse to use the revised curriculum since they lacked information and training from the school or external sources. Low teacher motivation meant teachers were unlikely to improve their performance.

Thirdly, a breakdown in leadership practice meant that school leadership and management did not operate properly. The low visibility of the leader in MBS3 created a lack of coordination among members of the school. The strong intervention by the school’s foundation forced the principal of MBW7 to build a better strategy to develop effective communication between teachers and the foundation.

Finally, low community engagement also hindered school performance. For example, parents’ poor motivation and lack of awareness about the importance of providing religious education for children saw school enrolments decrease. As a result of low socioeconomic status (SES), some families were unable to send their children to school.

In summary, the two Madrasah Aliyahs MBS3 and MBW7 still faced some challenges. Firstly, both schools lacked finance, mostly due to a lack of student enrolments and poor school financial systems. Secondly, inadequate school infrastructure and facilities also impeded school performance. Thirdly, there was a breakdown of the principals’ leadership approaches, caused by the poor visibility of the leader of the school and the leader’s difficulties in developing good communication among school members. Lastly, poor community engagement
was caused by low socio-economic status (SES) and low awareness by parents of the importance of religious education for their children.

5.2.2. Developing factors in supporting an emerging Madrasah Aliyah

The second classification was that of emerging madrasah. MAW6, a public Madrasah Aliyah in Bekasi, West Java, fits this category. This classification is supported by four factors, which indicates the school is classified as better than challenging but has not yet reached the standard of developed schools.

Firstly, the findings revealed that MAW6’s financial condition was sufficient to meet the school’s needs, particularly those relating to school infrastructure, learning facilities, and teacher welfare. This was aided by a transparent system of financial management. In addition, to increased available funds, MAW6 had developed a collaboration with the local and central governments and businesses to support the school’s development and the outcome was that the governments and businesses pledged to support upgrading the school infrastructure and learning facilities.

Secondly, MAW6’s school infrastructure and learning facilities were good enough to support students’ learning process. However, the school did not have a science laboratory and thus teachers usually created a “fake laboratory” in the classroom. The school also needed extra classrooms and a bigger parking area to accommodate the more than 1000 students who attended every day. The school mostly used desktop computers as well as 40 laptop computers for teachers. Good teacher performance was an essential feature in moving the MAW6 madrasah from the challenging to the emerging stage, and one of the madrasah’s efforts to develop its performance was to involve teachers in using technology and the internet. Although
some teachers were not experts in using technology in the teaching and learning process, the madrasah believed these teachers would adapt to it over time.

Thirdly, strong leadership by the principal ensured the school management ran properly. The principal in MAW6 prioritised helping teachers to optimise their teaching performance. For example, the principal and his deputies helped some teachers to use technologies in teaching. The principal tended to work directly with subordinates, so that he could hear directly any complaints and opinions from teachers and professional staff, and thus understand clearly any problems found in the school, and work with the staff to correct them immediately.

Lastly, low economic status and poor education levels in the community posed challenges for MAW6 in developing the madrasah’s performance. The low learning motivation of students was influenced by the weak support of their parents for their study at the Madrasah Aliyah. Consequently, the madrasah was still struggling to increase student learning achievement. Many parents expected their children to work in factories or farms so that they could improve the family finances.

In summary, the emerging madrasah MAW6 began to increase its performance by developing elements such as financial transparency in the school’s financial system. MAW6 needed to improve some classrooms, laboratories, and parking space in order to support the teaching and learning process. To help achieve this goal, the school invited the government and local companies to be involved in developing the madrasah. The principal’s leadership approach was to provide service for his followers, believing that servicing teachers would increase their performance. In regard to community engagement, MAW6 still needed to make more effort to encourage parents to motivate their children to study, and some parents preferred their children to work to support the family income.
5.2.3. Established support in developed Madrasah Aliyahs

There were four developed Madrasah Aliyahs: MAS1, MBS2, MAW4, and MBW5. These developed Madrasah Aliyahs were characterised by seven factors. Firstly, such schools had established and transparent financial management which enabled them to fulfil their needs.

Secondly, these schools had excellent infrastructure, tools, and a well-maintained physical environment that supported the teaching and learning process. The madrasah management had created strong support systems, with school members working together to avoid overlapping tasks and workload. The outstanding teacher performance and teaching strategies could usually produce high-quality graduates that were able to compete with other mainstream school graduates. The control of educator performance started with their recruitment, followed by careful observation, supervision, and evaluation. Distinctive curricula such as the project-based learning (PBL) performed by MBS2, the art- and sports-oriented curriculum applied in MAS1, and the local content of religious understanding added by MBW5 indicate that the madrasahs tend to create their own distinctive characters so that people can identify each school’s particularities.

Thirdly, most of the madrasahs had outstanding leaders who could build connections among members and invite staff to work effectively. Most cultivated friendly and family-style interactions to interact with teachers and school staff. This type of emotional connection, such as treating a principal as a father figure and role model, tended to strengthen a teacher’s sense of belonging to their school.

Fourthly, strong community engagement provided a significant mechanism by which Madrasah Aliyahs could develop their performance. The inclusion of educated parents and the
community’s awareness of the importance of religious education had an effect on a school’s improvement, while providing helpful moral and financial support.

In summary, the developed Madrasah Aliyahs featured outstanding infrastructure and facilities, which enabled students and teachers to meet curriculum outcomes. The transparency of financial management was a key factor for developed madrasahs in terms of maintaining their budgets. Developed schools were also supported by excellent teachers who received proper supervision from visible leaders, starting from their recruitment through to their evaluation. When considering curriculum development, most madrasahs integrated the standard curriculum with innovative and creative local content, and the madrasahs were confident that this would increase student learning achievement. The established madrasahs obtained excellent moral and financial support from the community. The next sub-themes will explore the details of salient factors of school performance.

5.3. School finance
Finance plays an important role in contributing to a school’s performance (Stiefel, Schwartz, Portas, & Kim, 2003). Excellent financial conditions can support school learning facilities, infrastructure, and teacher welfare. In the Indonesian context, the state government provides a special budget for the education sector. Macro education funding sources have been regulated by Article 31 of the 1945 Constitution, which mandates the central and regional governments to be responsible for providing education budgets. This was reaffirmed by the 2003 National Education System Act, Article 49 (2), which states that: "Education funds other than educator salaries and official education costs are allocated at least 20% of the state budget (Anggran Pendapatan Belanja Negara/APBN) in the education sector and at least 20% of the local budget (Anggaran Pendapatan Belanja Daerah/APBD)” (MoNE, 2003). In contrast to public schools, private schools can accept public funds in the form of Education Development Donations
(Sumbangan Pembangunan Pendidikan/SPP) and funds from parents and community, which are lower amounts than government funding sources. Private schools with secure funding tended to perform better when teaching and learning processes were compared, and produced better outcomes compared to schools suffering financial hardship.

5.3.1. Financial issues of challenging Madrasah Aliyahs.

The findings showed that two challenging madrasahs, MBS3 and MBW7, still faced significant problems in increasing their budgets. In the case of the MBS3 school, financial issues posed the main challenge to developing the school’s performance. Issues such as a low number of students, a lack of financial self-sufficiency, poor interaction with the school foundation, a lack of financial transparency, and parent payments arrears acted as a hindrance to school income.

5.3.1.A. Low number of student enrolment

It was important that MBS3 had sufficient student numbers to keep the school running. Only a few students decided to enrol, but unfortunately most of these came from a low socio-economic status (SES), which created barriers to paying tuition. The principal stated as follows:

At the moment, the madrasah only has 45 students, and many of them come from unfortunate families who cannot afford their school fees. (MBS3-P1)

The researcher observed that the school was located quite far from the main road, making it difficult to get to the school. She found two other developed Islamic schools in the area near the madrasah. These schools were much easier to access since they were situated in very large buildings close to the main road. The deputy principal of curriculum affairs admitted that the existence of better schools around the madrasah prevented MBS3 from increasing student enrolments. MBS3-DP1 commented:
The development of new schools and good schools is also a challenge for us ... That is for competition in recruiting students. It is a high competition for us since we still have difficulty to improve the quality of our school. (MBS3-DP1)

5.3.1.B. Lack of self-sufficient budgeting

The other two significant budgeting issues that the madrasah had to deal with were securing self-sufficient finance and obtaining full attention from the foundation. The foundation provided full autonomy for the madrasah to develop its performance. The principal stated that the foundation might support some facilities, however, this would not last long:

The Foundation provides me (the principal) a full autonomy to manage the school self-sufficiently, including our financial management. Because the Foundation could not support us forever. (MBS3-P1)

The principal could not do much to address such a challenge. Although she had tried to communicate with the foundation, the foundation had assigned full responsibility to the principal. She stressed that MBS3 also did not obtain a significant amount of money from the government since the school had fewer students:

Besides, the government provides less optimal support for the development of school infrastructure. The lack of student numbers was the main reason for them to restrain the funding. (MBS-P1)

The policy stated that schools with more than 50 students had a right to obtain support from the government:

The madrasa could obtain funding from the government as long as we have a recommendation from the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA). However, MoRA will only provide recommendations if the madrasas have more than 50 students. If we cannot fulfil the requirement, the madrasas are considered not to need any additional classrooms or other financial assistance. Thus, until now, the regulation hinders our proposal for government grant because we only had 45 students at the moment. (MBS-P1)

In conclusion, it was difficult for MBS3 to improve its performance. On the one hand, the madrasah needed adequate finances to enhance the school’s quality and infrastructure by
relying on income from students and the government. On the other hand, a small number of students who enrolled were from a low SES background and a specific government requirement on student numbers in distributing funds meant that MBS3 would still struggle to improve the madrasah.

5.3.1.C. Low-income student guardians

At MBW7 in Bekasi, the school had a small number of students (86 in total) who each made a monthly payment of around Rp.150,000 or AU$14 per student, making it potentially difficult for the madrasah to rely on its income from them. As some of the students came from a low SES background, it was hard for the madrasah to obtain the income it required from fees every month. The deputy principal for administration and finance affairs stated:

... students should provide a monthly school fee around Rp.150,000 (AU$14) ... However, there are also many students who are still in arrears in payments. Most of their reasons are most parents did not have enough money to pay for tuition fee. (MBW7-DP3)

In a similar vein to MBS3, increasing the number of students became a significant issue for the MBW7 madrasah. The presence of other, better performing schools made it difficult for MBW7 to compete with them. Many parents were more likely to send their children to vocational schools, so they could immediately work after graduation, as the city was an industrial area:

Another important issue is a competition between public, vocational, and madrasah schools. It is difficult for us to increase the number of students because many parents choose mainstream or vocational schools. They want their children to get jobs immediately after graduating from there... In this area, there are integrated madrasas and boarding schools with better quality than our madrasa. That also becomes an obstacle for us. (MBW7-P1)

This researcher noted that there was an Islamic boarding school only about 1km from MBW7. This Islamic school had been equipped with good infrastructure. The researcher noted a large sports field and a magnificent mosque outside. There were also three private Madrasah Aliyahs,
a few public schools, and some vocational schools around the city. As a low-performing school, this posed a serious challenge for MBW7, as enrolling their children in the madrasah might not be a priority for parents.

5.3.1.D. Non-transparency of school finances

A financially non-transparent approach adopted by the school’s foundation became an obstacle for MBW7 in advancing the madrasah. The deputy principal of administration and finance affairs (MBW7-DP2) complained that he did not have full authority to take care of the madrasah's finances. He had little information about the school’s financial state, e.g. how much of the budget had been spent to meet the needs of the madrasah. He stated that the foundation held and managed the school’s budget without letting other members know the detail of the school’s income and expenditures:

We are only authorised by the foundation to manage a certain amount of money provided by both students and government. (MBW7-DP2)

However, according to the principal, management needed to be transparent. The madrasah had a small budget, so the foundation limited the school’s expenses. It could not prevent the foundation from taking all available funds. However, the foundation needed to use personal funds (provided by the head of the foundation) to meet the needs of the madrasah to cover the cost of school maintenance and teacher salaries:

Both the number of student fees and BOS funds are insignificant; even for teacher’s honorarium…We got financial assistance from the government for about Rp100 million (AU$10,000) per year, while the school maintenance spent more than Rp200 million (AU$ 20,000). Well, the rest of the budget was covered by Mrs. xxx (the chairman of the foundation). It is impossible for the madrasah finance to cover all needs if not supported by the foundation. (MBW7-P1)

In summary, the findings showed that MBW7 had only a small income. It was difficult to cover the cost of school needs such as building maintenance, upgrading learning facilities, and
teacher salaries. The lack of funds was due to small student numbers, and many students were in arrears for fee payments. Low student numbers also limited the government’s ability to increase funds to MBW7. Therefore, the foundation often drew on the personal funds of the foundation’s chairman to support the school funding. However, the foundation needed to be transparent in managing its finances by involving madrasah staff in managing the budget, in order to avoid misunderstandings between the two parties.

5.3.2. Proper financial management in emerging and developed Madrasah Aliyahs

The research findings indicate that good financial management in emerging (MAW6) and developed (MAS1, MBS2, MAW4, and MBW5) Madrasah Aliyahs in Indonesia was the key to improving school performance. Most of the madrasahs indicated that they applied a centralised budgeting system, an annual budget plan, and a transparent approach. To increase income, some madrasahs asked parents to contribute extra funds. The following sections explain the Madrasah Aliyah financial situation in detail.

5.3.2.A. Centralised financial budgeting system

The centralisation of the budgeting system was applied mostly by private Madrasah Aliyahs such as MBS2 in South Tangerang and MBW5 in Bekasi. The deputy principal for administration and financial affairs of MBW5 stated that the foundation had adopted a ‘one-door’ financial system:

We used a ‘one-door’ system in financial management. However, we still knew that there were education development donations from students and government funds. We were also informed those funding got into the foundation account. Because, as a financial operator, the team and I report it regularly. (MBW5-DP2)
For MBS2, the budget was centralised and managed by the foundation, and the school boards, including the principal and deputy principals’ team, were not involved in managing the funds. The principal stated:

> There is no involvement of the principal and his deputies in planning the budget. It has been completed at the foundation level. In the other words, we do not know how much budget the foundation has. (MBS2-DP2)

The centralisation of the budgeting system in some circumstances provided a positive impact on the madrasah’s management. MBS2 and MBW5 never faced the challenge of how to increase or maintain their funding levels to support their school programs. They also had no difficulty in keeping a balance between income and expenses because they always received a fixed budget every year. According to the MBS2 principal, the budgeting plan might avoid an illegal levy:

> We got a fund every year based on what we planned, and it was determined by the centre (foundation). It might avoid some person/s who wanted to practice illegal levies on student guardians. (MBS2-P1)

MBW5-P1 emphasised that the school’s centralisation balanced the effectiveness of the institution's work:

> Finance was managed by the treasurer in coordination with the deputy principal of administration and finance. Other institutions had no right to manage it. It was quite effective for us to work without having to worry about finances. (MBW5-P1)

**5.3.2.B. School budgeting plan**

Thanks to budgeting plans, the emerging school and most of the developed Madrasah Aliyahs agreed that they could control school expenses accurately. Through the budgeting plan, everything worked clearly and was well-managed. As an emerging school, the budgeting plan
in MAW6 was necessary to measure and control the budget in order to fund the school’s programs. The principal stated:

We make work plans every year. The plan is made with accurate funding details. Then, all activities are carried out based on planning. There are a few changes and revisions in the process of implementing the program. However, it does not make significant changes to the budget that has been prepared. (MAW6-P1)

The MAS1 school separated its budgeting plan into two sources: government (DIPA) and parent committee funding. As explained by the principal, the government budget centred on macro needs and committee funds focused on micro expenses such as building maintenance and teacher honorariums:

We proposed the school budget to two sources: DIPA (government) and parent committee. The budget plan to the parent committee focused on three things: salaries for honorary teachers, electricity payments, AC maintenance, and extracurricular activities. While the budget plan submitted to the government focused on greater needs; for example, the infrastructure and learning facilities maintenance. (MAS1-P1)

The same statement was echoed by the MBW5 principal’s comments:

We got funding from the foundation every year. The funds provided were in accordance with the expenditure needs that we had planned. Every year, many activities and programs need to be regularly funded such as teacher training, improvement of learning facilities, and student activities like scouts and student council. All financial plan was designed by the school finance team. The expenses were known and coordinated by me (principal) and deputy principals. (MBW5-P1)

5.3.2.C. Financial transparency

Transparency was the most important aspect of financial management. Emerging and developed madrasahs realised that openness in managing finances was a mandate given by the state, foundation, and parents. For these schools, the funds they had received as rights were paired with obligations that must be accounted for. Madrasah leaders and members were directly involved in controlling the expenditure of these funds in order to avoid fraud inside
the school. According to the principal of MBW5, financial transparency acted to prevent any misunderstandings that could appear among members of the school:

If the financial statements come from the head of administration and financial affairs, he must provide a signature as proof that he knows it. I will not sign it before him. The transparency is essential to avoid misunderstandings between us (leaders and subordinates). I told all members all must know and be aware of the financial activities at school. (MBW5-P1)

The transparency of the financial system implemented at MBS2 avoided potential problems between foundations, principals, and madrasah staff:

There is no problem in our finances because the financial system has been arranged in such a way. The Foundation, the head of the madrasa, and staff are open to each other regarding the use of these funds. (MBS2-DP2)

The MAW6 principal believed that transparency in an organisation would develop the stability of school finances:

The development of a school like an infrastructure, facilities, and teacher performance is from a stable institution finance. This is what will determine the development of the school performance. Let me tell you a story, and they found it difficult to find our mistakes (budget fraud) …There should not be any rupiah that may disappear. This is the mandate of the country! Therefore, I always emphasise to my subordinates the matter of transparency because this is very important. (MAW6-P1)

Based on this researcher’s observations in MAW6, the budgeting report had been recorded neatly. The record had been written in a few different books. Each book recorded different expenses such as daily needs, i.e. coffee, tea, sugar and so on; building maintenance, i.e. electricity, air conditioning, and lighting; and learning needs, i.e. photocopying, modules, books, computers, etc. Those reports had been completed with receipts. The treasurer managed the expenditure logs almost every day and submitted a monthly report to the deputy principal of administration and finance affairs.
5.3.2.D. Parent involvement in budgeting support

The involvement of parents/carers in supporting the madrasah’s budget was significant in improving the school financial positions. For most of the private Madrasah Aliyahs, the budget relied primarily on student tuition. For instance, MBS2 and MBW5 madrasahs obtained more income from this source. The MBS2 principal stated as follows:

Our source of funds is 100% from student guardians, and the rest is supported by BOS government funds (school operational costs). Almost all expenditure comes from parents’ donations. Moreover, the budget we have is quite large, so we are able to provide cross-subsidies for underprivileged students. (MBS2-P1)

The MBW5 principal stressed that parents and guardians mostly supported madrasah finance.

Some parents sent donations as additional support for the madrasah:

The madrasah income mostly comes from parents/carers funds that they transferred monthly. Some parents with good economic level provide their donation to the school. We also get the subsidy from the government through the BOS program. The budget is managed with our team to cover the school needs and development. (MBW5-P1)

Likewise, some public madrasahs considered the benefit of parents’ involvement. The madrasahs believed that the funds obtained from the government were not enough to cover all school demands. For example, to improve the quality of student learning, schools must improve building facilities such as lighting, air conditioning, and technological tools. Government funds were usually used for macro needs such as building renovation and class construction. The payments for honorarium teachers also did not rely on government budgets. Therefore, schools expected parents to provide financial assistance to cover other essentials. The school committee, an organisation outside of the madrasah management, collected parents’ donations to support school needs — the MAS1 principal explained this as follows:

Because the salary of the honorarium teacher does not include in the DIPA (government), then we invite financial assistance to the school committee. The school committee is an organisation that consists of parents/guardians of
students. They collect some funds and donation every year. The committee manages the fund. Madrasah does not know how much money they have. We apply to the committee, and then if they agree, they will give the grant. (MAS1-P1)

According to the MAW4 principal, parent donations (included in committee budgets) were used not only to pay honorarium teachers but also to maintain school infrastructure.

There is no funding from the government to pay honorary teachers. We got it from the parent committee ... To support other needs, for example, we take the committee budget to cover the renovation of sports fields, fences, payment of electricity bills and internet. We propose budgeting plan to the committee yearly, and they will prioritise the needs they can fund. (MAW4-P1)

In conclusion, the findings of this research revealed that parents’ involvement in supporting school funding was required not only in private madrasahs but in public madrasahs also. For private madrasahs, parental assistance was the primary source of school funding. For some private madrasahs, the government funds were only a secondary financial source. The small amount of funding from the government did not meet the needs of most public madrasahs. Hence, the madrasahs allowed parent organisations or school committees as independent institutions to organise and collect donations from the parents’ community. These funds would be donated to support the madrasah’s development.

5.4. Infrastructure and learning facilities

Two of the challenging Madrasah Aliyahs, MBS3 in South Tangerang, and MBW7 in Bekasi, faced deficiencies in development of infrastructure and learning facilities. Budgeting problems and a limited ability to expand the schools’ physical area were the causes of these weaknesses. On the other hand, emerging madrasah MAW6 in Bekasi started developing its infrastructure as the number of students kept increasing. Classrooms, a multimedia room, and computers were upgraded to assist student and teacher learning–teaching. For most developed Madrasah Aliyahs, such as MAS1 and MBS2 of South Tangerang and MAW4 and MBW5 of Bekasi,
infrastructure and learning facilities were already established. Nevertheless, a few madrasahs, such as MAW4 and MBS2, had improved their infrastructure and learning facilities due to the increases in student enrolments.

5.4.1. Obstructive infrastructure in relation to the learning process

It was found that challenging Madrasah Aliyahs like MBS3 and MBW7 were developed in old buildings and were not able to produce a physical environment conducive to student learning. A lack of sources of finance could become a primary issue that hindered the development of school infrastructure. The enrolment of low-SES families also prevented schools from having sufficient funds from school improvements.

Since 2000, MBS3 had been developed on a small waqf (an endowment made by a Muslim to a religious, educational, or charitable cause) land area. The madrasah constructed six rooms; three were used for classrooms, and there was a room for an office, a teachers’ room, and an office for the principal and deputy principals. This researcher noted that the school building looked quite old, with a broken roof, floor, and chairs, and a bookshelf with no books in it. The building was located behind a mosque, so the madrasah received natural light. To conserve energy, low-wattage lights were forcing students to learn in dim lighting. During classes, some teachers needed to open the door to let in more light as well as air, since the classroom had no air conditioning. Consequently, outside noise and the voices of students in other classes were loud enough to disrupt the learning process.

The principal realised that the school’s challenging condition could not be avoided because she had no way to upgrade the infrastructure. She stated that she had sent a funding proposal to both the school’s foundation and the government. However, as discussed previously, the
foundation wanted the madrasah to manage its own self-generated finances. Low enrolments also prevented MBS3 from obtaining a subsidy from the government.

A similar condition occurred in MBW7, where the institution was disadvantaged by weak infrastructure. The madrasah had been built under a private foundation in 1993. However, after the first building was completed, the madrasah rarely had any significant renovations. Classrooms and offices were in poor condition, particularly the toilets. The principal admitted that maintaining the school toilet was not only the madrasah’s responsibility but also responsibility of all school members. He stated as follows:

We did toilet renovation many times. However, the renovation never lasted long. The new toilet is only lasts 2-3 years, then it breaks again. That means people do not have the intention to maintain it. (MBW7-P1)

The lack of air conditioning or fans affected the air circulation in classrooms. Rooms were stifling in the humidity and hot weather. Broken walls produced a lot of dust that contaminated the classrooms. The same condition was found in the school office, where the room appeared unclean since the madrasah could not afford to hire an office assistant; the office floor was almost entirely covered with dust. Broken windows were stuck and difficult to open.

The principal did not have his own office, working in the same office as the deputies and teachers. Based on this researcher’s observations, the office was mostly busy in the morning and after school hours. Many parents and students visited the office regularly with regard to paying school fees or addressing student complaints. Interviewing the principal was difficult because of the noise of the people around the office. Therefore, the principal preferred to be interviewed outside the office.
The dirty and unorganised infrastructure was influenced by the indifference of the madrasah teachers and students. This was regretted by the principal, who believed the school should be everybody’s responsibility:

We do not have janitors who are responsible for cleaning and maintain the building every day. We do give responsibility to every student in this madrasah. However, students' willingness to maintain class comfort and school environment is very low. Moreover, the control of the teachers is also very minimal. (MBW7-P1)

5.4.2. Degradation of learning facilities in challenging Madrasah Aliyahs

In providing madrasah learning supports, MBS3 and MBW7 admitted that they could not upgrade madrasah facilities as funding and the school’s infrastructure did not provide adequate support. They had some facilities, however, these were not sufficient or were broken. For example, this researcher observed in MBS3 a lack of learning facilities. Although the madrasah had three computers, students and teachers did not use them for learning. Two computers were used for administration, and the other one was broken. The deputy principal of curriculum affairs noted that:

We don't have computer for learning facilities. Even we have it, we don't use it for learning. We use only three computers for the school administration. Moreover, one of them has been damaged. (MBS3-DP1)

In addition, due to a lack of technical support, the madrasah did not have a library. There were a limited number of rooms and a lack of learning materials like textbooks and materials. MBS3-DP1 noted that the library remained a challenge for the madrasah:

We have minimal rooms, so we don't have learning facilities like libraries. Also, we don't have learning resources such as textbooks or reading books. So, we cannot create a library yet. (MBS3-DP1)
Unlike MBS3, MBW7 had a library. However, this did not meet the needs of students and teachers. A low number of books and an odd room layout made the library not conducive for students to learn in. MBW7-DP1 stated:

We do have a library. However, I saw its function is not optimal. Some problems, such as minimal reading resources, an uncomfortable room, and minimal lighting make the library fail to invite students to learn. (MBW7-DP1)

It was stated that curriculum changes required a change in learning concepts and materials. However, according to the deputy principal of curriculum affairs, MBS3 could not afford to upgrade the books. Consequently, teachers and students used old books or other materials which did not match the upgraded curriculum. The deputy noted:

We also do not have textbooks that suit the current curriculum. It is difficult for us to upgrade the materials because of our limited funds. Therefore, sometimes we invite students to use their cell phones to find appropriate materials that match the topic they learn. That is the only facility we use for learning. (MBS3-DP1)

Similar conditions occurred in MBW7 where the madrasah faced difficulties in adding learning materials. It also found that current learning sources like books and other materials were not in accordance with the existing curriculum. This occurred because there was a lack of support for new teaching material in the wake of frequent curriculum changes in Indonesia. According to the deputy principal of curriculum affairs (MBW7-DP1), learning materials from the government usually arrived late, after the curriculum had already changed. Therefore, the madrasah could not use its existing books since they did not cover the new concepts of the current curriculum.

The supporting books provided by MoRA, such as textbooks and modules, cannot be used anymore. They do not comply with the new 2013 curriculum. It is because the books arrive late. Meanwhile, the curriculum has already changed. (MBW7-DP1)
However, the madrasah did not prevent teachers from using these books as a reference. A permanent teacher (MBW7-T1) admitted that he often used these books as his teaching materials. For him, the material in the latest curriculum still utilised some of the previous one. The teacher only needed to adapt learning objectives that were in accordance with the new curriculum:

The teacher must improvise in using the book. I saw some topics in the new curriculum sometimes still the same as those in the previous curriculum. It's just that some materials are not sequential or different from one to another. For example, the discussion of one material is in chapter one in the last curriculum but it is discussed in section three in the current curriculum. So, I adjust them as best I can. (MBW7-T1)

In summary, challenging Madrasah Aliyahs found that inadequate infrastructure and learning facilities impacted the teaching and learning process. Untidy and damaged learning spaces in both MBS3 and MBW7 Madrasah Aliyahs had reduced student ease of learning. An absence of technological devices, library, and textbooks in MBS3 encouraged teachers to use alternative learning sources like student cell phones. Although MBW7 had a library and books, these were not sufficient to facilitate the learning process. The poor condition of the library and reduction of learning materials prevented teachers and students from using these as learning supports.

5.4.3. Enhancement of infrastructure and facilities in emerging Madrasah Aliyahs

MAW6 was a low-performing Madrasah Aliyah that was moving to the status of an emerging Islamic educational institution. This could be seen from its development of infrastructure and learning facilities. The madrasah had been built in a large area. The madrasah had 20 classrooms, a mosque, a sport field, and a multimedia room. It also had a convenient parking area inside the school complex. According to the principal, it had taken years to build this infrastructure and facilities. He stated that:
Previously, this school was very left behind. In 2009, we only had 160 students. Year after year, my team and I tried to build this madrasah. Now we reached the number of students for about 1160. It has risen more than a hundred percent. Regarding school infrastructure, we have only been able to increase the number of computers and multimedia rooms in the last two years. (MAW6-P1)

In developing the school’s performance, the madrasah had focused on the inclusion of technology. Efforts to achieve this included asking the government and a technology company in West Java to support the madrasah by providing some computers. As a result, the madrasah had obtained around 150 desktop computers from the government. The madrasah principal explained that the government invariably provided optimum support for the madrasah, and he never hesitated to keep requesting financial support:

I am pretty sure that the country has a lot of funds. Therefore, I often send funding request proposals to local, provincial and central governments. It takes a long time to get a response. However, now we found the results are excellent. The government finally responses and provides their supports. For example, we can help with 150 computers that can be used by students. (MAW6-P1)

The madrasah received 40 laptop computers from a private company, and the madrasah principal then worked to persuade the company that technology was important to support the schools’ teaching and learning processes. As a result, the company then agreed to provide some computers and training for educators and staff about using technology for instruction and management. As the principal explained:

We have submitted a proposal to the S****ng company, last year (2017). A few weeks later, they sent us about 40 laptops as well as 40 trainers from South Korea. They taught our teachers how to use technology for teaching and office administration. (MAW6-P1)

The development of language, science, physics, and biology laboratories remained problematic. According to a permanent teacher, some earlier laboratories had been turned into
classrooms because student numbers kept increasing. Since a fire incident few years earlier, the madrasah could not afford to build new laboratories. The teacher stated:

Previously, we have two laboratories. However, because the number of students keeps increasing, a lab has been used for the classroom. ... Then, we use another lab; however, the lab got a fire incident in 2013, the tools were scorched, and the madrasah is not able to buy new ones until now. (MAW6-T1)

There was a significant statement from the principal regarding this issue. He mentioned that development of laboratories was one of the madrasah’s plans. It was only a matter of time until the madrasah had enough funds to start this. In the meantime, the principal was focused on the development of technology in the school.

There were around 1160 students enrolled in the madrasah. This required management to add more classrooms. As mentioned earlier, the madrasah only had 20 classrooms, which was not enough to accommodate the number of students. According to an honorarium teacher, there were about 40 students or more in one class. The size of class did not allow teachers to provide effective instruction.

There are around 40 students in one class, even more. Moreover, the class obtains great vary abilities of students which makes me face more difficulties to give an effective teaching. (MAW6-T2)

In conclusion, MAW6’s infrastructure and learning facilities were emerging. Some areas such as technology, computer, and the school building were already developed. There was no laboratory, although this was required for teaching and learning. The lack of classrooms was an issue to be addressed, as having too many students in a class could prevent an effective learning process. It would be difficult for the madrasah to start building laboratories because it lacked funds. However, the principal was confident that in time all school facilities would be improved.
5.4.4. Infrastructure and learning facilities improvement in developed Madrasah Aliyahs.

There are four case studies of developed Madrasah Aliyahs in the current research, comprising MAS1 and MBS2 in South Tangerang and MAW4 and MBW5 in Bekasi. The four madrasahs represented developed schools because they had excellent learning facilities and infrastructures. The researcher noted these facilities included modern classrooms, laboratories, sport fields, music studios, and mosques. School infrastructure such as buildings and offices had been built properly to support the learning and working of students and staff. However, the most important aspect of infrastructure was easy access to the madrasah. Based on this researcher’s observations, emerging and challenging schools were hard to locate. In contrast, most developed madrasahs tended to be easier to reach. For instance, MBS2 and MAW4 were in the middle of a suburban area and only a few hundred metres from a main road. The location of MAS1 had been hard to access previously until the local government opened the road in 2000. Currently, visitors had no difficulty in accessing MAS1. The large size of MBW5 in Bekasi helped people to find the school easily. It was established in a complex with a large entrance leading from the main road.

In addition to standard learning infrastructure and support such as technology, laboratories, library, and sport fields, most madrasahs provided additional facilities. Those facilities were used for extracurricular activities. For instance, MAS1 added traditional musical instruments and MBW5 built a music studio. According to the principal of MAS1, sport and music were beneficial to stimulate students’ motivation to learn:

Then we come up with an Excellence in Achievement, Creative, Healthy and Islamic outcomes. We encourage students to learn traditional music and do sports to link their enthusiasm and creativity in increasing their learning motivation. (MAS1-P1)
Adopting a slightly different approach to MAS1, madrasah MBW5 provided a music studio to facilitate students’ interest and skills in music. The principal argued that each student would have different interests, therefore, the school tried to build more facilities to fulfil their passions. He stated:

Our education orientation is developing student life skills. Recently, we see many students who want to be musicians, especially religious music. ... Hence, we are in the process of building a music lab in the form of soundproof studios and supported with some modern musical instruments. We hope they can develop their talents from here. (MBW5-P1)

Some developed madrasahs remained concerned with improving their infrastructure. The lack of classrooms as well as the limited space in schools were challenges. In the case of MAW4, for instance, the madrasah started gaining more students once the public became aware of the importance of religious education for their children. The school needed to add more rooms to accommodate these students, but the madrasah had limited funds for infrastructure development. However, slowly but surely MAW4 continued to build its infrastructure in accordance with school financial conditions. A deputy principal of administration and finance was confident that the development of new buildings would be completed sooner or later. According to him, the madrasah, government, and parents could support each other to ensure this occurred:

We have limited funds to expand the school buildings. Therefore, we try to communicate with the government and parents in order to increase the budget. For example, yesterday we invited the school committee to discuss this matter. They agreed to raise funds. ... Next, we also request assistance from the regional and central government regarding this development. Well, we have not gotten any response at the moment. However, we believe that sooner or later we will hear something from them. (MAW4-DP2)

MBS2 faced a different challenge regarding infrastructure development. The madrasah had been developed in the middle of a suburb already full of residential houses. Since the main building was located in a small area, the madrasah did not have more space to develop. The
main building consisted of classrooms, sport fields, a library, and offices. The school required the foundation to build other buildings, like laboratories, separate from the school complex, which influenced the school’s teaching–learning effectiveness. Students and teachers required extra time to move from classes to the laboratories. Disturbingly, some students stopped at small shops near the laboratories without teacher supervision. A permanent teacher complained about the situation. He stated that:

Well, the shortage of our school is a separated building. Classes and labs are located tens of metres from the main building. When I get a turn to supervise the students, sometimes I find them just dropping in everywhere without my permission. If only we were in one building, they would not dare to skip the school. (MBS2-T1)

He also reported that many students complained about the limited space:

Most of students complain that a small area of the school makes them uncomfortable. It is because they have not enough space to move around the school. I am afraid they could be boring or even stress with the situation. (MBS2-T1)

The principal explained the history of the reasons for the madrasah having a limited area. According to him, the building was built in 1995, but it had only been used for three years:

However, since 1997 the foundation does not open the enrolment for student of aliyah level (senior high school). This building is left to vacuum, while the surrounding land has been made into residential houses. Until in 2006, it reopens again. Since then, we use this building for the teaching and learning process. We realised that we have minimum space availability and cannot add more. We do not have any other choices. We can only add facilities in other areas which closest to the main building. (MBS2-P1)

In conclusion, most of the developed Madrasah Aliyahs already had proper facilities and infrastructure. These madrasahs were also easy to access physically. In addition to having facilities such as technology support, laboratories, library, and sport fields, the Madrasah Aliyahs MAS1 and MBW5 increased their facilities for students by adding musical instruments and music laboratories. However, the findings showed that some madrasahs, namely MAW4 and MBS2, were still struggling to improve their infrastructure, with a lack of funds and space
preventing them from managing this. MAW4 was confident it would address the challenge of developing the school’s infrastructure if the government and parents were persuaded to contribute to funding. However, MBS2 had no options for solving its problem of how to expand the school’s space.

5.5. Chapter summary

This chapter presented and discussed the findings of the seven case studies of Madrasah Aliyahs in Indonesian contexts. Three classifications of Madrasah Aliyah in the study, including challenging, emerging, and developed stages, were presented. Four factors influencing their stages were noted, covering conditions including finance, infrastructure and learning facilities, leadership practice and working systems, and community engagement. In this chapter school finance and school infrastructure and facilities were explored in detail.

The key cause of financial problems in challenging Madrasah Aliyahs was the low income of a school. Three indicators that might affect this situation were a minimal number of students, low-SES parents, and a non-transparent financial system, which hindered the increase of school finance. Strong competition among the schools made it difficult for MBS3 to increase students. MBW7 also accepted students from low-SES families who were not able to pay monthly fees on time. A lack of transparency in the school foundation of MBW7 was problematic, as other madrasah members could not access the school’s financial management system.

Unlike the challenging Madrasah Aliyahs, emerging and developed Madrasah Aliyahs seemed to face no difficulties regarding their budgets. Funding from government and foundations was managed properly by each madrasah. The centralisation of finance and a school budgeting plan in some developed Madrasah Aliyahs, such as MBS2 and MBW5, benefited their financial systems. The transparency of the organisation enabled the budgeting administration to run well.
Lastly, parents’ support for the school budget was quite significant for most developed schools, enabling them to maintain infrastructure, learning facilities, and teacher salaries.

Challenging madrasahs still struggled to increase their income in order to maintain and develop their infrastructure and learning facilities. Emerging Madrasah Aliyahs tended to get around this problem by optimising relationships with stakeholders and communities around the school, one successful example being a technology company, to obtain support for learning facilities. Developed Madrasah Aliyahs, on the other hand, tended to keep improving their infrastructure and learning facilities. Issues still occurred in these schools, such as problems in increasing classroom numbers to accommodate increases in student numbers, and a school’s limited area.

The next chapter will present research findings on leadership approaches performed by Madrasah Aliyah principals. The chapter will analyse in detail three leadership approaches including catalytic, servant, and kinship leadership, which aim to enrich communication and interaction with school members, parents, and communities.
Chapter 6
Research Findings
Leadership Approach and Community Engagement

6.1. Introduction

This chapter demonstrates principal leadership practices in Madrasah Aliyahs. These practices were also applied in developing interactions between madrasah and the community. The findings of this research will answer a second sub-question: What are the leadership practices that are enacted by principals to develop principal–teachers, and principal–community engagement? This question was divided into two parts: a) How do principals promote teacher performance and how do principal–teacher interactions affect teacher performance? and b) How do principals optimise community engagement to support the madrasahs?

One of the factors that influences madrasah performance is a principal’s leadership. In the current research, such practices mostly depended on school context, and the principal’s personal experience and educational background. The school context related to the school’s background, environment, and community involvement, which shaped a variety of leadership approaches performed by madrasah principals. The principal’s personal experience and educational background were two important influences affecting the principal before or during their leading role.

With regard to community engagement, Sanders (2013) states that schools connect with individuals, businesses or companies, formal and informal organisations, and institutions in a community. These entities assist in supporting the school’s function. Garbacz et al. (2016) stress that family involvement in various activities and their behaviour towards school education promotes child learning and development. In other words, the networking between...
school and the community, particularly parents, has the potential to support school performance and to increase student learning development. The following sections serve to illustrate the principal leadership and community engagement approaches.

6.2. Catalytic leadership
Catalytic leadership was examined by Luke (1997) in solving public sector issues in the American context. Luke described a catalytic leader as an individual who should be aware of several important factors required to lead an organisation. These factors included understanding an issue, selecting a potential person, finding strategies and options in order to address an issue, and developing interaction and communication. Ansell and Gash (2012) classified Luke’s concept under two characteristics of catalytic leadership: the ability to identify values, and creating opportunities and mobilising stakeholders by developing negotiation and mediation practices to pursue them. In other words, a catalytic leader needs to understand the mission of the school, and they tend to involve stakeholders in reaching these goals. A catalytic leader could take a role as mediator in practicing their leadership.

6.2.1. Leader as a mediator
The findings of this research project suggest that in the Indonesian context, catalytic leadership represents a leader functioning as an intermediary and buffer. As an intermediary, the principal acts as a link between teachers and stakeholders in order to try and bring about agreement. In this case, the principal functioned as a mediator or a bridge of communication between the members to achieve the school’s goals. A principal acting as a buffer was another function of a leader in Madrasah Aliyah in Indonesia. This meant that a principal took the role of a barrier by moderating any comments and opinions produced by two parties (such as teachers and the schools’ foundation) when in conflict. Besides having the four catalytic leadership abilities
described by Luke (1997), the principals in Indonesia also acted as mediator and buffer. These features are further discussed below.

Inadequate leadership was found in two challenging Madrasah Aliyahs, MBS3 of South Tangerang and MBW7 of Bekasi, West Java (see Sections 5.4.3 and 5.4.8). Some factors influenced this phenomenon. The low visibility of the principal in MBS3 created weak communication and coordination between the principal and deputy principals, and teachers. The deep intervention of the school’s foundation curtailed the performance of the madrasah principal in MBW7. However, these principals were still willing to perform their roles in leading the madrasahs. An analysis of the leadership performance of the two principals found that they demonstrated a catalytic leadership approach. This study’s findings revealed that the principals of MBS3 and MBW7 made efforts to create opportunities to share the school’s vision and achieve its values by inviting stakeholders such as teachers, foundations, parents, and government to take part in the madrasah’s development.

Catalytic leadership was also evident in MBW7, a Madrasah Aliyah in Bekasi. Based on interviews and observations, this researcher found that the principal and deputy principals took a mediatory role and sought to change the current situation in the madrasah. For example, the principal noticed there was a gap between madrasah members and the foundation which created some miscommunication and misunderstanding. In dealing with this situation, he preferred to take the role of mediator and buffer to mediate the needs of the two parties. He stated that being a catalyst for both parties was the best choice as he could see any problem objectively, making it easy for the principal to find a solution. A neutral position also demonstrated that the principal did not have a partiality to one party or another. This would make it easier for the principal to determine an appropriate solution. He realised that any decision should meet the needs of the two parties:
I admit that the foundation cannot realise some of the aspirations from teachers and it indeed creates a gap between them. For example, some teachers request the foundation to increase their salary and require transparency from the foundation. To bring out this issue, I acted as a mediator among them, tried to be neutral, and did not take sides with each other. I listened to their aspirations and conveyed them to the foundation. I also tried to interpret what the teachers needed so that the foundation understood their conditions. I know that not all aspirations can be realised immediately. Hence, I also tried to persuade teachers to understand the current situation. (MBW7-P1)

As a change agent, the principal sought to lead the madrasah to improve its performance. He realised that the development of madrasah infrastructure and learning facilities was problematic. Therefore, he tried to focus on the development of teacher performance. Having a limited budget with which to send teachers to professional training, the principal preferred to build teacher confidence and efficacy by developing teamwork in the madrasah. To do so, he would invite teachers to a regular coffee morning around 10 a.m. The principal believed that such a gathering could help develop communication and interaction among school members. From this platform, they could potentially come up with ideas and share these with others. This researcher noticed that these gatherings were quite informal, with teachers talking freely and in a friendly manner with their colleagues. MBW7-P1 stated:

I believe the moment of drinking coffee together can create a comfortable situation so that school members can interact and communicate well. Who knows, from the small talk, new ideas will emerge, which are useful for school development. (MBW7-P1)

According to the deputy principal of administration affairs, the idea of the coffee morning was ideal as it created an opportunity for teachers, the principal, and the foundation to interact and share their thoughts. Ultimately, some issues could be resolved in such a forum. The deputy stated:

Honestly, we always wait for the coffee break moment because we can meet with all staff. In the coffee time, we used to discuss and talk casually together. There are many things that we can share, both institutional and personal. At that moment, all members are usually happy to receive suggestions and feedback.
from other colleagues. Therefore, we consider this gathering to be an excellent idea to build interaction within the madrasah. (MBW7-DP2)

The coffee break also stimulated teachers to work harder. An honorarium teacher acknowledged that attending coffee morning sessions could boost his motivation to work in the madrasah. He stated:

When drinking coffee with other teachers and principals, I feel like there is no difference between superiors and subordinates. All smile and provide a warm welcome to anyone who joined the gathering. The conversation is relaxed and friendly. I like it because it can increase my enthusiasm for working. (MBW7-T3).

6.2.2. Identifying value-creating opportunities

Identifying value-creating opportunities in the case of challenging madrasahs means that the principal was aware of a school’s weaknesses, needs, and potential. Two principals were aware that their madrasahs faced challenges, however, they believed that the schools had the potential to address these challenges. The principal of MBS3 noted that the weakness of the madrasah was that it could not fulfil its market’s needs since a proper learning facility was still the issue:

I realise that madrasah has not been able to meet market needs, like education with good resources. (MBS3-P1).

She addressed the challenge by creating a scholarship program to increase the number of students at the school. A deputy principal of curriculum affairs explained:

The principal and I have developed a scholarship program by cutting half of the registration fees. Likewise, we reduce monthly payments for students who come from low economic conditions. For the monthly payment, we asked students to pay Rp. 120,000. However, students in the current condition may pay half of it. (MBS3-DP1)

In an effort to mobilise stakeholders, the principal tried to develop some approaches to seek support from parents, the foundation, and government. The madrasah’s mission was that religious education was important not only for the children but also their parents. Therefore,
the principal and her deputy invited parents to learn Islamic religion. This was necessary to increase parents’ understanding about the importance of religious education. The deputy principal stated:

We have provided religious education not only to their children, but also their parents. Therefore, the principal and I take turns on teaching religious knowledge every Wednesday night. Alhamdulillah, many parents, especially mothers come and join to study with us. Now there are around 25 parents who come regularly to study. (MBS3-DP1)

The madrasah leaders adopted a strong approach to boost the foundation’s involvement in madrasah development. The principal regularly communicated with the foundation, and regularly reported the progress of the madrasah. The principal and her deputies were aware that MBS3 could not improve its development without financial support from the foundation. Therefore, they repeatedly approached the foundation formally and informally regarding strategies to address this issue. As the deputy principal stated:

We used to attend the meeting invitations from the foundation. In the forum, we always invite members of the foundation to plan financial support to improve MBS3 development. We understand that the result may not come immediately. Therefore, we keep convincing them (the foundation) to pay more attention to our madrasah problem. (MBS3-DP1)

However, due to the foundation’s limited funds, MBS3 leaders were encouraged to fund madrasahs independently. The principal was determined to increase student numbers, which would enable the madrasah to depend less on the foundation for funds:

We always persuade the foundation to provide financial assistance to MBS3. However, I must understand that the foundation has limited funds. It is difficult for us to get full financial support from them. Therefore, my obsession now is how to increase the number of students each year. If necessary, we could walk from door to door to encourage students enrolling at the madrasa. (MBS3-P1)

The madrasah leaders lobbied the government to support the madrasah. The leaders had tried to convince Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA) to support their program and infrastructure financing. However, as discussed previously, this effort was hindered by government policy,
as only schools with a certain number of students were eligible to receive government funding. MBS3 could not access such support as it did not have the number of students required.

In conclusion, the two challenging Madrasah Aliyahs in South Tangerang and Bekasi had the potential to apply catalytic leadership, where a leader performed as a change agent to improve the school’s performance and took the role of intermediator and buffer between the foundation and teachers. There had been some efforts made by the madrasah leaders in accordance with the catalytic leadership approach. It was evident that they knew and clearly understood the values espoused and promoted by the school, and they had tried to create opportunities to achieve these. They had involved stakeholders, for instance, teachers, foundations, government, and communities, around the school to identify the challenges faced by the madrasah. These stakeholders could take part in enhancing the madrasah’s performance. It could be difficult for the leaders to carry out their mission since challenges still existed. However, both principals believed that all challenges could be addressed eventually as long as they maintained their current working rhythm.

6.3. Servant leadership

According to Greenleaf (2002), the key to servant leadership is the ability to empower people with a high trust culture and turn bosses into servants and coaches. He points out that a servant leader should have a sense of vision that others can understand. A leader needs to motivate their followers to develop common purposes. Such a leader engages the entire team in the process of developing a goal. A servant leader provides stewardship, inspiration, and coaching. In the process of leadership practice, a servant leader requires several skills, including 1) listening to understand, 2) developing good communication, 3) presenting acceptance and empathy, 4) providing direction, and 5) stewarding (Greenleaf, 2002).
In the current study, a servant leadership approach was revealed clearly in the case of MAW6, an emerging Madrasah Aliyah in Bekasi. An open mindset and a desire to bring positive change to the madrasah enabled the principal to perform as a servant leader. He focused on leading school members by providing his service to develop their potential. The current study suggests that there are five elements of servant leadership practices, which will be explored in the next section.

6.3.1. Leaders as a listener

Firstly, leaders need to listen to and understand their subordinates. In the current study, the principal demonstrated his wish to hear and understand the needs of his subordinates. In his daily activities in the madrasah, the principal tended to work with other staff, which granted him immediate access to staff information. The principal said that listening to complaints and teacher needs directly was better than receiving a report:

> I notice that many teachers need my suggestion in running their duty. Therefore, I decide to stay with them and invite them to speak about their ideas. It is more convenient for me to hear their idea directly than listen to my deputies. Although practically, some of them have willingness to explore their thought, others, I think, still need more stimulus to reflect their ideas. (MAW6-P1)

This researcher found that the principal made a practice of meeting teachers and staff almost every day to hear their opinions and complaints, particularly those regarding teaching and learning issues and student matters. The principal would come up with a solution or sometimes asked his deputies to discuss the problem.

6.3.2. Leader as an effective communicator

Secondly, leaders need to develop effective communication among subordinates. The findings of this research showed that the principal of MAW6 was a friendly and humorous person. He smiled at everyone he met and sometimes made jokes to decrease tension among staff.
According to the principal, being friendly and funny was the best way to connect with people. People should feel comfortable around him and ready to release everything they felt without feeling any burden, he said. His strategy seemed to work well, and the researcher found that most of the madrasah members did not hesitate to have interactions with the principal. An honorarium teacher stated that he did not feel anxious about interacting with the principal. According to him, the openness of the principal created an ideal space for others to communicate well with him:

I am a teacher who often asks for his time to discuss my problems, especially the problem due to teaching and student matters. Moreover, I also discuss personal problems with him sometimes. … He is such an inclusive, humorous, and friendly person. I have been comfortable talking with him. (MAW6-T3)

However, a few teachers did not feel close to the principal. They thought that the headmaster was putting restrictions in place around communicating with his subordinates. A permanent teacher said that:

Some of us, including me, are still reluctant to communicate with him. It is indeed some people could communicate directly with him, but not all the teachers are comfortable with him. It may be because his assertiveness that makes us rarely to express our problems. (MAW6-T2)

It would have been difficult for the principal to gather all members close as he was very busy in managing the madrasah. Thus, he made time only for those who were willing and available to come and talk to him. However, the principal preferred working in one office with all members. This indicated that he tried to develop direct interactions with his subordinates.

Besides direct communication, the principal also invited staff to communicate through virtual connections such as chatting on a mobile device. He initiated such connections and alerted the madrasah teachers and deputy principals, explaining that the group chat could encourage others to speak up: “…Some teachers and staff might hesitate to get direct or oral communication
with their leaders. Through the W**tsA**s group chat may facilitate them to speak, so I can catch what they need” (MAW6-P1).

6.3.3. Leader provided empathy

Thirdly, the leader must show acceptance and empathy. In any organisation, members demonstrate various characteristics and skills. Thus, some “weakness” in a member might appear while working. A servant leader would be aware of this situation and try to handle any issue by providing acceptance and empathy; they would not judge a subordinate on their weakness. On the contrary, a leader would accept a defect and develop sympathy by increasing their guidance of a member in order to enhance the ability of the staff.

In this study, the findings showed that some senior teachers lagged behind younger teachers, particularly in their ability to use technology in teaching and learning. As an emerging madrasah, the leaders were keen to develop a technology-based school: “... I keep emphasising to all teachers in every meeting that in 2018-2019, the madrasah should be based on technology, both in teaching and management systems” (MAW6-P1). This principal tended to involve all members in fulfilling this aim.

However, the madrasah still faced resistance from some teachers in applying technology. They tended to rely on traditional methods to deliver lessons. According to the deputy principal of curriculum affairs, the new concept of curriculum needed the support of technology, requiring computer and internet access. However, some teachers refused to use these due to their lack of knowledge of how to use computers. The deputy described their lack of confidence as follows:

The main obstacle is a refusal from some teachers to upgrade their knowledge on using a computer and accessing the internet. ... This rejection mostly comes from teachers over 45 years old. We have difficulty convincing them to upgrade their teaching strategy. If this keeps continuing, I am afraid it will interrupt other performance. (MAW6-DP1)
The principal realised that such teachers might undermine the goal of the school. However, he did not see them as obstacles. He preferred to encourage teachers to start learning to use technology in the teaching process. As well as inviting younger teachers to assist the senior teachers, the madrasah sought collaboration with a technology company to deliver training on using computers and the internet for teachers:

After all, this time people have to be able to operate any technology related to education. Therefore, I involve young teachers to help their seniors in using technology. ... We also tried to propose Sa***ng company. Then, several South Korean people came to give training for teachers on the use of technology for teaching in the classroom. Further, they provided training for administration staff on how to do online data entry. (MAW6-P1)

This research found that most teachers obtained a laptop, using it as medium for teaching. There were only a few who still used a textbook in the classrooms. On some occasions, this researcher noted that one or two senior teachers were being assisted by staff in using the computer.

6.3.4. Leader as a true guide

Fourthly, the leader needs to be proactive in providing direction. It is important for a leader to recognise the specialisation and abilities of members and to integrate them into practice. A servant leader would be able to unite their subordinates to work in a group based on their capacities and complementary skills. Such a staff collaboration could assist the madrasah to achieve its goals.

In the current research, the principal clearly demonstrated skills for developing staff capacity. As stated previously, he asked most of the young teachers to use their abilities in operating information technology. He also encouraged these teachers to assist other teachers in using technology. The principal also developed a teacher consortium to support teachers to collaborate and share knowledge in their subject areas. These groups consisted of junior and
senior teachers. In the consortium, teachers supported and worked with each other to produce more suitable learning materials and better strategies to help the teaching and learning process. Therefore, students could learn optimally and achieve a good outcome. As stated by the principal:

When we talk about maintaining the quality of teaching and learning based on its parameters, we must start from the quality, knowledge, and teaching preparation of the teacher. Therefore, teacher forums (the consortium of teachers) are the right place to unite them to share experiences and knowledge with other colleagues. (MAW6-P1)

The last characteristic was principal stewardship. In this case, a principal provided service to the members of the organisation. In other words, a leader was willing to serve their subordinates with their talent, knowledge, and experience in order to develop the performance of members. In the current study, the findings revealed that not only did the leaders of MAW6 provide service, but teachers also provided service support to other teachers. For instance, some young teachers were involved in assisting senior teachers to develop technological knowledge and skills. This researcher found that the deputy principals guided teachers and staff in administering classroom planning for teachers and data entry for staff. Most importantly, however, the principal strived to encourage all members to work together and provide services for each other. All staff and leaders worked collaboratively to try and meet the goals of the madrasah.

6.3.5. Leader as a role model

Another key aspect of servant leadership in the Indonesian context is a leader acting as a role model instead of a controller. As an Islamic education institution, madrasahs have a mission to teach both students and teachers to worship and practice their religion. As the leader of the school, the principal took on the role of a pious and humble person, a key Islamic characteristic.
For example, before prayer time, the principal was always the first person to arrive and prepare the mosque, for example, opening the door, turning on the sound system, and preparing a place for ablutions. He would sit and welcome staff and students to pray together. According to the principal, praying was the most important ritual of all activities in the madrasah and praying together was a beneficial experience. However, instead of asking staff and students to join the madrasah prayers, the principal preferred to encourage members to do so by acting as a role model:

For me, we work to wait for prayer times, not vice versa. Therefore, I often arrive early before entering prayer time. I prepare everything so that when the time comes, students and teachers can use the mosque’s facilities. (MAW6-P1)

The deputy principal of student affairs in MAW6 stated that the principal’s habit inspired most teachers and students to always arrive on time to pray in the mosque: “His routine has encouraged most of us (teachers) and teachers to go to mosque before the prayer calling (Adzan)” (MAW6-DP3).

This researcher’s observations found that the principal’s humbleness was demonstrated by his attitude. He did not use his seniority as a barrier that would disengage his members. He did not hesitate to join and chat with staff, even the office boy, and preferred to work in the same room as madrasah staff. This demonstrated that he was an inclusive leader. A team member mentioned that working with the principal was beneficial since the principal guided staff directly and they could discuss problems at any time, since he was mostly available for his staff.

In summary, servant leadership was identified clearly in the MAW6 Madrasah Aliyah in Bekasi. Five features examined by (Greenleaf, 2002), which required a leader to be a listener, a communicator, tolerant, a mentor, and a steward, were demonstrably performed by the
principal, deputy principals, and some teachers. The principal’s pious and humble attitude became an additional servant leadership practice in the madrasah context. His tendency to model practices himself, like arriving to prayer on time, was a good influence on the teachers and students. Many were inspired to carry out the same actions as their leaders did. The principal’s inclusive character was viewed as humble by madrasah members.

6.3.6. Friendship-based leadership in Indonesian Madrasah Aliyahs

In the Indonesian context, servant leadership also appeared as friendship-based leadership. The findings of this study revealed that service came from leaders through a friendly interaction when leaders and members were equal as colleagues. As friends, leaders and members decreased the boundaries between superior and subordinate roles and thus interactions could run smoothly.

In the current study, friendship-based leadership could be seen mostly in developed Madrasah Aliyahs in South Tangerang including MAS1, a public Madrasah Aliyah, and MBS2, a private Madrasah Aliyah. Both madrasahs already had a settled and dynamic work system and the process of leadership tended to be smoother and acceptable for madrasah members.

For instance, principals performed their leadership by considering members as friends. Principals adopted inclusive and friendly communications and interactions to develop coordination in running the madrasah so that a harmonious atmosphere was established among members. All members felt comfortable sharing their thoughts and did not hesitate to provide feedback or even criticism with their colleagues.

In MAS1 and MBS2 of South Tangerang, friendship-based leadership practice tended to be performed by the principals. Both leaders were aware that this strategy was required so principals could implement a dynamic work system. According to the principal of MAS1,
friendly interactions among members enabled him to build effective communications and develop the quality of teacher performance. For example, the semi-informal atmosphere he created was helpful when giving feedback to the teachers:

I always try to create a positive atmosphere in evaluating or giving feedback to the teachers. I speak not only as a colleague but also as a friend, so they will be more open to receiving input from me. (MAS1-P1)

According to a permanent teacher, this friendly treatment made the teacher less anxious in dealing with any issue arising from his teaching performance:

Some teachers might make mistakes. However, the principal did not do judge when reprimanding us. He positioned himself as a friend when addressing it. So, it makes us more relaxed and open with him. Sometimes, in the middle of a conversation, we throw jokes at each other, so the atmosphere gets familiar. (MAS1-T2)

In the case of the MBS2 Madrasah Aliyah, the principal tended to correct staff in non-threatening interactions performed mostly during school activities. According to the principal, this was balanced with adherence to the strict rules produced by the foundation. The rules focused on teachers’ time management and performance. There were three ways to address monitoring of the teachers and staff that made negative assessments, including providing a verbal warning, written warning, and discipline:

The foundation is rigorous and disciplined in implementing time and monitoring the performance of the teachers. They must obey them. Otherwise, they might receive verbal warnings, accept notification letters, and even discipline, like delaying or cancelling their promotion. (MBS2-P1)

The principal thought such rule could frighten members and he tried applying these in a manner more acceptable to teachers and staff. He preferred to stop at a verbal warning, and instead follow this by working to develop proper communication with the staff member. Friendship-based leadership for him was his strategy to understand their needs:
Indeed, this is hard for the teachers. Therefore, I never discriminate in terms of communication with anyone. I open myself as wide as possible and put them (subordinates) as friends. From there, I can understand their needs and optimize their performance. (MBS2-P1)

It should be noted that some MBS2 teachers also complained that the strict regulations made them worry about making mistakes. However, the friendship-oriented approach carried out by principals, such as equal two-way communication between leaders and subordinates, greatly helped to optimise their performance. An honorarium teacher stated:

I just joined this madrasa eight months ago. The first time I met him (the principal), he interacts very well, especially in giving direction and so on. ... It is convenient because the atmosphere is not too formal. One more, the principal is attached importance to the performance of his subordinates, so we are happy to make innovations in our teaching. (MBS2-T3)

The same opinion was also echoed by a permanent teacher: “So, what I mean is the friendly attitude of the principal motivates us. Further, he cares to fulfil our needs to increase the teaching quality” (MBS2-T2).

In conclusion, the two Madrasah Aliyahs in South Tangerang, MAS1 and MBS2, applied servant leadership through a friendship-oriented approach, especially in developing communication and interaction among the school members. A dynamic work system at the MAS1 Madrasah Aliyah required teachers and staff to improve the quality of their performance continuously. The principal needed to monitor, evaluate, and provide feedback regularly. In the management process, the principal carried out servant leadership with a friendship-oriented approach among members. This approach aimed to make communication work effectively without creating conflict between leaders and subordinates.

By contrast, the strict rules applied by the foundation of MBS2 created anxiety among the staff about maintaining their performance. The headmaster tried not to be harsh and created a friendship style of interaction in guiding his subordinates. He developed good communication
channels, which improved teacher motivation. In addition, to maintain the quality of teaching, the principal was very focused on fulfilling teacher needs.

6.4. Kinship leadership

It was stated by Prideaux (2006) and Zakia & Pritasari (2018) that kinship is a system that determines how interactions should be developed by people who live together, in order to create an emotional connection to strengthen their relationships. Van Vugt (2017) stated that kinship was appropriate for people who had the same vision and mission in an organisation. These individuals tended to develop teamwork based on shared understanding. In the leadership practice context, kinship leadership was understood as “kin-based” between leaders and subordinates. The basis of this relationship was the equality of community, language, culture, habits, and religion (McClellan, 2016), and these principles applied in the process of running an organisation.

The current study found that in the context of Madrasah Aliyahs in Indonesia, kinship leadership focused mainly on relationships based on cultural and religious understandings. The four case studies, comprising MAS1 and MBS2 in South Tangerang and MAW4 and MBW5 in Bekasi, revealed that kinship leadership was performed by leaders. Other madrasahs, such as MBS3, a challenging Madrasah Aliyah, and MAW6, an emerging Madrasah Aliyah, also revealed certain elements of this leadership approach.

The current study found that kinship leadership was characterised as culturally based, with Islamic concepts that influenced interactions. Leaders cast themselves as role models, which showed integration between indigenous culture and Islamic piety. A detailed description follows.
6.4.1. MAS1 principal: a devout and decent leader

MAS1 was led by a principal who started his career in 2004 as a teacher in this madrasah. Therefore, he understood the school culture and that he understood the members of the organisation. For the principal, the madrasah and the staff were like a second home and he treated them as part of his family:

I have been in this madrasa for a very long time, since 2004. Since becoming a teacher until now as headmaster, I have seen the gradual development of the school. Therefore, this madrasa has become a part of my life, and my colleagues are like my family. (MAS1-P1)

As a leader in an Islamic institution, the principal showed his devotion to religion. He led by example to encourage other members to perform according to Islamic values in the madrasah. For instance, besides the practices of performing shalat (Islamic praying) and reciting the holy Quran, school members also needed to show their respect, appreciation, and acceptance of equality among others. To promote those values, the principal sought to demonstrate them, so members could recognise him as a role model.

It was reported by teachers that the principal had good interactions not only with teachers but also with students. The findings of this study showed that the principal always smiled when dealing with everyone he met and lowered his voice when talking. A deputy principal of administration and finance affairs explained the principal’s character as follows:

In my opinion, the principal has humility and courtesy towards his subordinates. There was seldom a clash between him and us. His friendly attitude made us respect him. His gentle speech made us comfortable to interact with him. (MAS1-DP2)

The same view was also echoed by a permanent teacher, who appreciated the principal’s character:
He (the principal) has fatherly character and gentle attitude towards his subordinates. He spreads a lot of mutual respect and appreciation among colleagues. This attitude inspired me to do the same thing to madrasa members including students. (MAS1-T2)

The principal showed his Islamic devotion by performing Islamic rituals and conducting preaching for both teachers and students. A permanent teacher explained that teachers and students would start the day with morning praying (Dhuha). The principal always arrived first and invited teachers and students to join him. At the prayers, the principal instilled motivation into all of them to develop their discipline as Muslims in order to serve God. He stated as follows:

School principals are usually a very important model in improving our religious (teachers and students) values. For example, he was cared about doing a dhuha prayer together. We gain a lot of positive encouragements and motivations from him while doing the dhuha. ... Then, he is also focused on about the attitude of students to maintain their discipline in religious worship and behaviour. (MAS1-T1)

This researcher noticed that praying activities were carried out almost every morning. On those days, the principal usually led the prayers and preached to all prayer members. This researcher also found that the principal would greet teachers and students wherever he met them. Teachers would welcome the greeting politely and students would stop to shake hands with him. This researcher observed the principal's decent attitude during an interview. He spoke gently and always smiled while explaining his answers.

6.4.2. MBS2 principal: a firm but fun “father”

As noted previously, MBS2 was a developed Madrasah Aliyah in South Tangerang. In order to maintain the quality of the school, the foundation developed policies and rules to be obeyed by all members of the madrasah, with the consequences of breaching the rules being verbal or non-verbal warnings, or other penalties. Rules included that teachers should arrive at school on
time, wear proper outfits, perform Islamic attitudes (both morally and behaviourally), and be innovative in their teaching strategy.

As the leader of the madrasah, the principal needed to make sure members followed regulations. However, he did not want to make teachers and staff anxious, and therefore acted like a “father” in front of his subordinates. The principal believed that a father figure should be firm in establishing rules to discipline his children. However, he also needed to be a protector and provide a secure feeling for them:

My staff and students are like my children. As their father, I need to develop their discipline on the rule in this house (madrasah). But I also have to show my care by creating a comfortable place for them to talk and share at the same time. It will not be easy, but I hope the kinship approach might work well. (MBS2-P1)

A permanent teacher stated that the principal developed a relationship with his subordinates akin to that of a father and children. As a father, he could be quite firm in establishing rules, but he could also provide a secure feeling among teachers and staff. He stated:

When one of us makes a mistake, he will solve it immediately. The same way also applied to solve the students' problems. From there, we are all taught to be assertive and responsive leaders. However, on the other hand, he also invited us to talk from heart to heart. He is a good listener and problem solver. ... Then, I also found that the principal is a protective leader of his subordinates. ... For example, when one of the teachers had a problem with the students and their parents complained, the principal communicates directly with them. He showed his partiality to us by removing the student from school. (MBS2-T1)

During her visits to the madrasah, this researcher noted that the headmaster had a strong character and was firm and straightforward. However, in some situations, such as in an informal forum, at lunchtime, or in other gatherings, he seemed to be easy-going and used casual gestures. This researcher found that most teachers and staff were close to him but showed their respect toward him at the same time.
6.4.3. **MAW4 principal: a good listener and religious personality**

The MAW4 principal had led the madrasah for only 10 months when this research was conducted. Therefore, there were not many things he had been able to do to develop the school. However, the school principal had invited madrasah members who had been at the school for a long time to be involved in managing the school. In his efforts to understand, the principal tended to be a listener. According to the principal, listening to member aspirations, opinions, and ideas would create chances for him to improve his work at the school. Furthermore, he might obtain more support when carrying out these duties because his ideas had been informed by their opinions:

> I want to change their mindset (teachers and staff) that they also have responsibility for this madrasah. Therefore, I invite them to think about how and where we should develop this school. If they already have it, my work will be more effective since I know what they and the madrasa need. (MAW4-P1)

According to a permanent teacher, the principal was a good listener when hearing teachers’ aspirations. He would spend time sitting with any individual who wanted to discuss their ideas. She stated: “... He (the principal) is quite democratic and likes to hear our aspirations. He always has an opportunity to discuss with us and obtain feedback from us” (MAW4-T1).

According to the deputy principal of curriculum affairs, the principal usually sought to develop coordination and collaboration with his deputies, and always valued their aspirations. They were acknowledged and he considered them as important resources for the progress of the school:

> The principal shows a loyal attitude towards the teacher and his duty as the leader. He gave us the same opportunity to convey our aspirations and thoughts. That's what we experience. From there, we are motivated to pursue achievements as employees here. It is not because of money, but it because our ideas are accepted and appreciated. (MAW4-DP1)
The principal demonstrated his religiosity through his attitude, which was full of respect and humbleness. According to him, religious values should be performed in everyday activities and for him, a person's personal qualities were evident in their behaviour and actions:

For example, all members of the madrasa must respect each other, and show respect for colleagues, subordinates, and students. Furthermore, everyone must have simplicity in their heart, so that they are always open to receiving criticism from others. All of that is an attitude that shows the quality of one's religion. (MAW4-P1)

The deputy principal of student affairs witnessed and emphasised that the principal was a religious person, and that his attitude and aspirations revealed his piety as an Indonesian leader. For example, although the principal was the highest ranking person in the institution, he continually demonstrated his humility and appreciation towards others, including the students. Shaking and kissing the hand of elders is one of the cultural rituals of Indonesia, and people do it to show their respect and obedience. The principal performed this kind of ritual in the school.

The deputy stated:

I never forgot when I saw him met some senior teachers. He bowed and kissed their hands. He did it in front of teachers and students. We understand, in terms of position, he was our leader, but his age was younger than those seniors. Therefore, he put himself lower than them. …He is very good at maintaining social relations with us. (MAW4-DP2)

This researcher found that most students greeted and shook hands with their teacher whenever they met. Students also greeted and kissed the researcher’s hand every time she passed them and treated her the same as their teachers. A culture of respect and acknowledgment had been established in this school.

6.4.4. MBW5 principal: trustworthy and low profile

MBW5 was developed under a large and famous Islamic foundation in Bekasi. The madrasah had good student learning outcomes in religious knowledge, science, and languages (English
and Arabic). As a leader, the principal felt it was largely his responsibility to maintain the prestigious reputation of the foundation as well as the school’s outcomes. Since starting as a principal in 2013, he had developed a system in which all members gathered to work together, according to their abilities. He believed that sharing and delegating his power among school members would build their sense of belonging to the madrasah and believed this would help the madrasah’s quality to be maintained. According to the principal, his position was a mandate from people (foundation, teachers, students, and parents) who trusted him. Thus, he had an immense responsibility to act in this way. For him, being a leader was not about increasing but sharing his power. Consequently, he focused more on preserving the school’s quality, wellbeing, and continued improvement:

I don’t feel this position is power. It will end at any time, and I have no problem with that. However, I take this position as a mandate. Therefore, I need to take care of it, so that people do not feel betrayed. ... One of the mandates is that I have to maintain the quality of the school and its outcomes as well as the welfare of staff and teachers in this madrasah. (MBW5-P1)

According to the deputy principal of curriculum affairs, the principal was not only a professional but also trustworthy in performing his duties. He worked hard and kept encouraging staff to be involved in developing the organisation. As a leader, he acknowledged all teachers’ and staff’s abilities, and brought them together to achieve the school’s purposes:

Yes, he is the one who changes our mindset that having a position is not having power. It is a responsibility instead. …our work is in accordance with our capacity. For example, I am responsible for the curriculum, and I must maintain how the quality of learning continues to increase. Therefore, the principal only coordinated the curriculum with me. (MBW5-DP1)

According to the principal, adopting a strategy of trusting members meant they were more likely to perform to the maximum of their abilities. It was important for leaders to be trustworthy, as ultimately, they were accountable to God:
I always remind them (school members) if someday we will be “hisab” (the reckoning of all acts of worship when someone lives) before God. One of them is that we will be reckoned about whether we are responsible for carrying out our position. (MBW5-P1)

The principal also encouraged members to be responsible in their individual roles.

**6.5. Community engagement**

In Indonesia, the community is one of the significant elements that influences school development with regard to quality, infrastructure, facilities, and finance. The findings showed that school networking with the community could create a beneficial symbiosis for both parties. For example, an educated community was a positive influence on the school’s function. This was because most of parents in the community realised the importance of education for their children. Such a community would provide significant moral support and show trust in the school’s development. In addition, the school’s approach to building networks with companies could also allow for an improvement in school quality.

In some circumstances, the community could hinder a school’s performance. The findings of this research revealed that demotivation of parents when supporting children learning at school could influence a student’s excitement about study. A low economic condition affecting most families in a community could lower the likelihood of parents sending their children to school. An educationally challenged community also significantly affected the development of a school’s performance.

In this current study, community, parents, and school foundation, revealed as surprising findings. These three elements came up as significant contributors to school development. The results were mostly found through interviews with participants. For instance, according to MAS1-P1 and MAW4-P1, community and parent engagement was significant for developing school finances. Meanwhile, MBS3-
P1 and MAW6-P1 stressed that community was the best partner or network when it came to developing school performance.

In the seven case studies in this research, most Madrasah Aliyahs engaged with a variety of communities comprising individuals, parents, and companies. There were four Madrasah Aliyahs—MAS1 and MBS3 of South Tangerang, and MAW4 and MAW6 of Bekasi—that sought to maintain school performance by developing mutual networks with parents and business communities.

6.5.1. Community engagement as a funding support

The findings showed that developed public Madrasah Aliyah MAS1 involved the parent community in supporting the madrasah’s development, especially with regard to school finances. This was because the funding they had obtained from the government did not meet the needs of the madrasah. Inviting parents to support the school provided them with additional funding. According to the principal, parents would benefit the most from increased funds; by sending their children to the madrasah, the children would access good infrastructure and learning facilities:

The parent community is the closest element to the school because they entrust their children to us. Therefore, it sounds natural if they provide more financial support so that their children can get learning facilities according to their expectations. (MAS1-P1)

A similar point was made at the MAW4 Madrasah Aliyah in Bekasi. Creating interactions with stakeholders such as parents was significant to supporting school finances. According to the principal, to build a connection with the community (e.g., parents), it was essential to fully convey the school’s strengths and abilities. In this way, parents obtained good information about the school and in particular about Islamic education. The principal stated that the connection between parents and school was necessary for the madrasah.
We are still struggling to show the picture of the madrasa and its Islamic character. ... However, through intense communication and our consistency in improving quality outcomes, praise be to Allah, now we have a good response from many parents and other community. Anyway, we may be still needed to keep trying to maintain it. (MAW4-P1)

6.5.2. Community engagement as a network

In the case of MBS3, community engagement aimed to promote the existence of the madrasah among the community. Increasing student enrolments was a priority. One of the strategies to build community networking was the madrasah’s provision of religious education for the surrounding community. According to the deputy principal of curriculum affairs, such a program could convince the community of the importance of religious education, and they could then be persuaded to provide further Islamic knowledge for their children:

I assume that if we want to sell something, we have to see what the community needs. Then, if they don’t know what we are selling, then we must promote it. ... Hence, providing religious education to the surrounding community, for example, holding weekly Islamic education is our effort to convince the public about the importance of religion. From there, we hope they will be moved to send their children to school in the madrasah. (MBS3-DP1)

As an emerging public Madrasah Aliyah, MAW6 believed that networking should contribute to the development of the madrasah. For the madrasah, the entire community as stakeholders had the potential to support the development of the school’s performance. One issue was how the stakeholders could support the facilities and access to technology in the madrasah’s teaching–learning process. The role of the principal was significant in consolidating the connections among stakeholders, and he took a primary responsibility for this. According to the principal, it was his main job to not sit behind a desk but to organise among the community and to encourage community members to participate in the school’s development:

The principal does not need to keep working behind the desk and receive reports from his subordinates. He must be creative in many relationships. Build beautiful relationships with communities, parents, and government institutions. The principal must be able to bring this madrasah into their
midst. He also needs to be able to tell them if the madrasa still needs support in developing it. (MAW6-P1)

In conclusion, community engagement was part of the development of school performance, and leaders were significant actors in this. The current study found that networking acted as a bridge for some madrasah (e.g. MAS1, MAW4, and MAW6) to increase their financial support. However, in the cases of MBS3 and MAW4, networking tended to be an effort directed towards promoting the madrasah in order to gain the trust of the community about the importance of religious learning in daily life.

6.6. **Chapter summary**

There are three kinds of leadership practice—catalytic, servant, and kinship leadership—applied by principals in Madrasah Aliyahs. Catalytic leadership was seen mostly in challenging Madrasah Aliyahs. Catalytic leadership featured a leader as a mediator and buffer between the foundation and teachers. Servant leadership was practised by emerging (MAW6) and two developed Madrasah Aliyah (MAS1 and MBS2) leaders. Five servant leader characteristics based on Greenleaf (2002) were evident in the madrasahs: leader listening to understand, developing good communication, providing acceptance and empathy, providing direction, and acting as a steward. The findings showed an additional characteristic in this model, namely a friendship-based interaction. This was an approach that connects leaders and members.

The final model was kinship leadership, which was demonstrated mostly in developed Madrasah Aliyahs. This model emerged as part of indigenous leadership. In this research project, kinship leadership featured aspects of indigenous culture and Islamic values found in the Indonesian context. Leaders showed their devotion, decent, wisdom, and trustworthiness in leading their madrasahs.
Lastly, community engagement, by parents, business, and other external individuals and organisations, played a significant role in madrasah development. The findings showed that demotivation and a low-SES community around challenging and emerging Madrasah Aliyahs weakened their performance. However, an emerging school could engage with the business community to support the school’s performance. Developed Madrasah Aliyahs obtained strong support, both financially and morally, from the community. The community was aware that a religious education for their children was important, and they tended to regard madrasahs as a way to obtain Islamic knowledge.

The next chapter will discuss the prominent leadership approaches of principals including catalytic, servant, and kinship leadership in Madrasah Aliyahs. Some characteristics of the approaches will be discussed in detail, with support from the academic literature.
Chapter 7
Discussion:
Understanding Three Prominent Leadership Approaches in the Indonesian Context

7.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the salient findings of the research project. As outlined previously (Sections 6.2, 6.3, and 6.4), there are three prominent leadership approaches performed by principals of Madrasah Aliyahs in Indonesia: catalytic leadership, servant leadership, and kinship leadership. This chapter describes the personal and contextual factors that contribute to a principal’s leadership performance when in a leadership role. This analysis draws upon empirical interview data from participants regarding the interactions between principals and teachers, and the interactions between principals and the community (as stakeholders).

The focus of the interactions between principals and teachers is on assisting teachers in developing personal efficacy and strategies in managing challenges. For instance, how principals support teachers to deal with technology introduced into teaching, adjust to foundation rules and management, and upgrade teaching performance. Engagement with the community is also part of many principals’ leadership efforts. This requires a principal’s communication skills and personal competencies to become involved in the development of synergies with the government, colleagues, parents, and social networks. A principal’s cultural background and experience influence the different styles of leadership practice in Madrasah Aliyahs.

Table 5 summarises three leadership approaches in Madrasah Aliyahs in the Indonesian context, their definitions in the literature, descriptors, and characteristics of each approach, and the power relations between the principal and organisational members. The research findings revealed three prominent leadership approaches: catalytic, servant, and kinship leadership.
approaches. These approaches were explored in the findings of the research (Chapter Seven). They emerged from an analysis of empirical interviews with principals, deputy principals, and teachers of seven Madrasah Aliyahs in the two areas of South Tangerang and Bekasi, West Java.

Table 5

Leadership approaches in Madrasah Aliyah in the Indonesian Context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership approaches</th>
<th>Definition in the literature</th>
<th>Definition in current study</th>
<th>Descriptors</th>
<th>Power relations (principal and organisational members)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Catalytic leadership  | Leaders focus explicitly on solving problems in an organisation. Catalytic leaders tend to develop strategies and interpersonal communication with others to engage collaboration (Luke, 1997; Meijerink, 2013; Sullivan, 2006). | A catalytic leader enacts as a mediator and a buffer to accommodate good communication among members of the madrasah. | - Change agent  
- Entrepreneur  
- Collaborator  
- Mediator  
- Buffer | Hierarchical |
| Servant leadership    | The primary purpose of leading is to serve others. This reveals that other people are a priority in needing to be served. Leader exists to build up others in order to improve an organisational process that impacts on society and culture (Greenleaf, 2002; Page & Wong, 2000). | Friendship-based relationship in servant leadership is significant to influence comfortable interactions between leaders and followers. | - Steward  
- Listener  
- Sympathy  
- Mentor  
- Friend | Colleagues |
| Kinship leadership    | Kinship leadership expresses the kin-based relationship between heads and followers. The kinship leadership starts from equality in community, language, culture, habits, and religion that creates a sense of unity and principle in running the organisation (McClellan, 2016). | A father figure strengthens the unity of members in madrasah. Moreover, a trustworthy and humble attitude performed by a leader creates an outstanding figure and produces respect among members. | - Role model  
- Trustworthy  
- Spiritual  
- Father figure  
- Humble | Family |
Table 5 describes three leadership approaches: catalytic leadership, servant leadership, and kinship leadership. In the international literature, catalytic leaders tend to develop strategies and interpersonal communication with others to engage in collaboration, and they focus explicitly on solving problems in an organisation (Luke & Luke, 1997; Meijerink & Stiller, 2013; Sullivan, Downe, Entwistle, & Sweeting, 2006). As seen in the current study, a catalytic leader acts as a mediator and a buffer to encourage good communication among members of the madrasah. The key features of a catalytic leader include serving not only as a change agent, entrepreneur, and collaborator, but also as a mediator and buffer. The power relationship between the principal and teachers is hierarchal because the school leader is perceived as the key decision-maker at the top of the pyramid.

In the existing literature, the main principle of servant leadership is that leaders provide service. Servant leaders focus on developing members’ working performance that impacts society and culture (Greenleaf, 2002; Page & Wong, 2000). In the current research, servant leaders were found to improve relationships with teachers. Friendship-based leadership is used to stimulate comfortable interactions and provide a positive influence for teachers when communicating with leaders. The dynamic of leaders as friends is strengthened in this study, as are other servant leadership characteristics, including being a steward, a listener, sympathetic, and a mentor. In servant leadership, the power relationship between the principal and teachers is as colleagues.

Kinship leadership is defined as relating to leaders who develop a kin-based relationship with their members. The principle of equality in some elements, including community, language, culture, habit and religion, appears to strengthen the unity in an organisation (McClellan, 2016). In this study, kinship leaders act as role models, and develop trustworthy, spiritual, and humble attitudes when engaging with teachers. A father figure role is assumed by principals to unite school members in order to maintain a sense of belonging to the madrasah. The power
relationship in kinship leadership is that of a family relationship between principals and school members. The following discussion is supported with relevant literature to emphasise this researcher’s arguments.

### 7.2. Catalytic leadership

In this study, catalytic leadership was clearly revealed in challenging Madrasah Aliyah. In reaching school goals and gaining a community’s trust, leaders in Madrasah Aliyah tended to be entrepreneurs. The strategies those leaders engaged included encouraging the community to involve the madrasah program, developing stakeholder capacity by working together to address challenges, and creating opportunities to support the madrasah’s performance. The study also finds that catalytic leaders in the Indonesian context take a role as an agent of change, entrepreneur, collaborator, mediator, and buffer.

#### 7.2.1. Change agent: a catalytic mechanism in developing a vision

The essence of being a catalytic leader is being comfortable with change and knowing how to deal with change (Luke & Luke, 1997; Morse, 2010; Morse et al., 2006). Leaders need to build a thinking process and to develop their networking skills in order to reach an organisation’s goals (Morse, 2010; Morse et al., 2006). In other words, leaders can create a vision for their organisation’s future. Leaders who have inspired and shared their vision are those who dream of what could be and have the desire to make something happen (Saban & Wolfe, 2009). The visionary aspect of leadership style becomes a dominant consideration of leadership effectiveness (Tesone, Fischler, & Giannoni, 2003). In the process of achieving a vision, catalytic leaders need to encourage their followers, as their primary resources, to work in a team (Hidayah, Sule, Wirasasmita, & Padmadisastra, 2015). Thus, leaders need to have a strong character and personality in order to influence their followers (Morse, 2010).
A case study conducted by Tesone et al. (2003) revealed that in an academic setting, leaders held a central position and provided influence to their members, such as teachers, the board, and students. As a catalytic agent, a leader should be aware of creating adaptive change. This consisted of amplifying a meaning system (a worker’s values and organisational culture), amplifying the learning system (evaluation, revision, cognition), returning to equilibrium, and restarting the process. A leader’s expectation of amplifying meaning and learning systems tended to create and develop values based on individual and group beliefs. Together these values could create an organisational culture. This process was called a catalytic mechanism, which means that the level of risks was associated with leadership decision-making, and relied on a leader’s competence and ability.

In the Indonesian context, a catalytic mechanism appeared as a response to an existing situation. In the case of MBS3 in South Tangerang, for instance, the leader created a madrasah vision and strategies in order to expand religious knowledge. The principal undertook the meaning system as described by Tesone et al. (2003). However, the scope of MBS3 is broader than Tesone’s criteria. It can be stated that Tesone’s principles encompass an internal value (workers and organisation), however, MBS3 included a community as an external criterion. This study revealed that the principal planned to involve parents in providing Islamic education to their children. However, as mentioned previously (Section 4.4.4), leaders have been required to address a phenomenon of low SES and low decency in the community. Hence, the principal tried to promote and embed an Islamic understanding as a significant value and culture in the community. Through the vision of religious education for everyone, the principal started to invite parents and community to learn religious knowledge and enhance understandings.

Due to the applying of the learning system (Tesone et al., 2003), MBS3 seemed to be struggling to enhance its learning system. Some factors, such as a lack of human resources, learning
facilities, and infrastructure, might hinder a madrasah’s movement. The principal created opportunities such as promoting the school to the community and approaching the government to provide more funding in order to support the madrasah’s development. The next sub-theme of this research will discuss the catalytic leader as an entrepreneur to gain the stakeholders’ and community’s trust.

In the case of the MBW7 Madrasah Aliyah in Bekasi, the catalytic mechanism was oriented toward matching a worker’s and the organisation’s value. This study revealed that the foundation, as the highest management body, followed a top-down model in managing the madrasah. All policies related to organisation management and school finance came from the top. As a result, the foundation’s communication between members and leaders was secretive. Unfortunately, this system appeared to be insufficient to satisfy teachers and staff. They required the foundation to be more open in running the management.

This secretive phenomenon became a challenge for the principal. As a catalytic agent, he was required to change the situation by solving the problem. Therefore, MBW7-P1 made some efforts to create a space for the foundation and teachers to build proper communication channels. For instance, he set up regular meetings where all members from the foundations and teachers gathered to meet and chat. To obtain more balanced information and avoid misunderstanding, he allocated a listening and discussion time for both parties, after which he would try to deduce what was the best step to take to address their issues. According to the principal, this strategy worked well, and he believed it might decrease the tension among members of the madrasah.

In summary, the catalytic mechanism (Tesone et al., 2003) in the madrasah in the Indonesian context focused on amplifying a meaning system (workers’ value and organisational culture).
The study in the two settings of MBS3 and MBW7 revealed that the meaning system was a significant element that needed to be built in order to change the madrasah to improve their performance. The two madrasahs had different visions of amplifying a meaning system. For MBS3, educating the community was significant to convince parents about the importance of Islamic education for their children. On the other hand, the amplifying meaning system in the MBW7 setting focused on harmonising the understanding of school culture among madrasah members.

7.2.2. Entrepreneur: promoting madrasah to gain the trust

Catalytic leadership requires qualities, skills, and behaviour to integrate their leadership approach with that of entrepreneurs, and to cultivate a trusting relationship with stakeholders (Morse, 2010). Catalytic leadership thus needs to socialise the institution they lead to enhance stakeholder trust. For instance, based on the findings in Section 6.1.1, the madrasah leader tried to reach the community by doing socialisation on religious knowledge and providing religious studies for parents. The principal understood that it was essential to promote the madrasah to convince and invite parents to learn more about the Islamic religion. This was also consistent with Todorovic and Schlosser’s (2007) concept of entrepreneurial organisation. They argued that leaders who were innovative and proactive would make an organisation more flexible and understood by people. By promoting religious understanding among parents, the MBS3-P1 believed that this might open the “gate” of parents’ mindset about the importance of Islamic education.

Weber (2009) and Morse (2010) also provided an illustration of catalytic leadership, noting that the role of a catalytic leader was to be entrepreneurial, which created an essential interaction and build negotiation between parents and the community. Ansell and Gash (2012)
stressed that catalytic roles should be beyond mediation. This meant a leader needed to become involved in substantive negotiations in order to identify and exploit any opportunities to produce the values of the Islamic character. In the context of Madrasah Aliyahs in Indonesia, MBS3-P1 stressed that Islamic education should be received by students and the community. Leaders must invite the community to learn Islamic education, for themselves and their children. From this point of view, the collaboration between schools and parents in a child’s education suggested that parents prepared their children for learning religion, they guided and taught them, and created a conducive pedagogical atmosphere for the children’s learning and instilling of ethical behaviour at school (Bastiani & Wolfendale, 2013; Smit, Driessen, Sleegers, & Teelken, 2008).

In summary, leaders, as entrepreneurs in catalytic leadership, make efforts to build trust and partnership with stakeholders, parents, and community. In the context of Indonesian Madrasah Aliyahs, trust is developed by inviting parent and community involvement in educating students. To reach the goal of Islamic education, madrasahs such as MBS3 provide Islamic education for the community. It is believed that creating parents’ awareness of Islamic education might develop their beliefs about the importance of delivering this to their children. Ultimately, parents would trust the madrasahs to educate Islamic knowledge to their children.

7.2.3. Collaborator: building partnership among stakeholders

Leaders as collaborators encourage community members and other stakeholders to develop their trust in an organisation (DeRoche, 2000). In catalytic leadership, leaders also take a chance as collaborators in order to build an effective and productive partnership (Luke & Luke, 1997). As a collaborator, a leader who exercises catalytic leadership tends to create a relationship with anyone who might be involved in supporting an organisation. For leadership
in the education and school management context, collaboration covers internal and external areas. In an internal collaboration, leaders collaborate with teachers and other school staff to develop the school’s purposes. For instance, in advancing an internal collaboration, leaders and teachers work together to develop the school’s curriculum to match it with current culture and student needs (DeRoche, 2000). For an external collaboration (DeRoche, 2000; Rebore & Walmsley, 2008), leaders tend to search for possibilities of developing a relationship with stakeholders like government, parents, and community.

This is in line with the study’s findings, (Chapter 4.3.2 and 4.4.1), which show that external and internal collaborations run effectively for MBS2 and MBW5. Each was under a settled foundation, which provided full support for the madrasahs, and the principals initiated community engagement for sustaining the school’s finance. They also developed a collaboration with madrasah teachers and staff to improve student achievement. Some scholars argue that a school principal has an indirect effect on students’ achievement by providing support to teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Y. L. Goddard et al., 2010; Gurr, 2015; Phillip Hallinger & Lee, 2014; Leithwood, 2016; Wasserman, Ben-eli, Yehoshua, & Gal, 2016).

For example, the principal of MBS2 created a “research-based madrasah” program that established research as the first approach in the teaching and learning process. The program required a proper concept of learning-based research and large commitment from the teachers. Therefore, the principal, as an initiator of the program, invited teacher collaboration to develop the curriculum that was oriented around project-based learning (PBL). Some training programs from professional, national and international organisations were held to strengthen teachers’ understanding of the concept. Ultimately, the program achieved success in which the madrasah produced a high-quality outcome, and this research revealed that some students acquired the ability to do research and writing for academic journals (see Section 4.3.4).
Nevertheless, in MBS3 and MBW7, the development of internal and external collaborations was still problematic. Internal collaboration between the principal and teachers in MBW7 was not optimal. The study’s findings revealed that the MBW7 principal still faced the challenge of involving teachers in developing madrasah goals through the teaching process. Kouzes and Posner (2006) stressed that leaders and team members must foster collaboration, build trust, and establish teamwork. However, the study of MBW7 madrasah revealed that most teachers preferred to work individually to fulfil their tasks. Indeed, DeMatthews (2014) stated that the primary function of collaboration is for members (teachers) to seek formal authority (from the school principal) for support, new ideas, resources, assistance, expectations, and guidance. MBW7-P1 realised that collaboration between leaders and teachers was not optimal. The principal initiated regular meetings to encourage teachers to share their ideas. From there, the principal could obtain useful information, feedback, and opinions that might support him to improve the madrasah’s development. Afterwards, he discussed these with other teachers and the madrasah foundation.

In summary, catalytic leaders function as collaborators in the current study. The findings of this research show that internal and external collaborations built by the principal had a significant influence on madrasah performance and outcomes. Some challenges might still be faced by principals such as strict foundation policies and government regulations, along with weak community involvement that hindered successful collaboration. However, in another case study in MBS2, the combination of internal and external collaborations developed by its leader was successful.
7.2.4. Mediator and buffer: avoiding conflicts and misunderstanding among members

The other function of catalytic leadership is concerned with leaders who are able to take a role as mediator to identify and address conflict among members. Williams and Sullivan (2011) stressed that catalytic leaders need some essential skills, including mediation and conflict resolution, as leaders are required to be facilitators for all parties in the organisation they lead. Kuttner (2011) added that leaders were expected by all members of the organisation to take a central role in the process of resolving conflicts between followers and leaders, with the aim of making the institution stable and reliable. Members should work together in order to achieve organisational goals. One of the main functions of catalytic leadership is to act as a change agent. However, the positive change should be developed and started internally to an organisation rather than being imposed by outsiders (Lichtenstein et al., 2006).

In the Indonesian context, a catalytic leader acts as a mediator and buffer. The findings of this study (Section 6.1.1) revealed that a MBW7 principal took a role as a communication bridge between teachers and the foundation. A top-down management system and the non-transparent procedures of the foundation formed mistrust among other members, hence, followers, mostly teachers, reported complaints to the principal. However, the principal needed to be neutral to avoid further tension. He acted as a listener and mediator for two parties in the dispute, collecting all the members' ideas and presenting them to the foundation, and vice versa.

This corresponds with Lichtenstein’s Et al. (2006) theory that leadership can be seen as a dynamic process where leaders create a space between people and ideas. This is the product of interaction, tension, and exchange rules governing changes in perception and understanding (Kuttner, 2011). A leader needs to be an effective listener to maintain open communication
with their followers. Thus, they can identify the needs and interests of others while supporting the purpose of the organisation (Chrislip & Larson, 1994).

For example, to meet the purpose of collecting teachers’ viewpoints, the MBW7 principal established a morning routine. This routine provided an opportunity for the foundation managers and teachers to meet each other, enabling interactions and communication in an informal situation. The leader emphasised that morning coffee time could create better communication and understanding between foundation managers and teachers. Although morning coffee required a greater investment of time, the principal believed that such approaches could unify members.

In summary, catalytic leaders in the context of Madrasah Aliyahs are also described as mediators and buffers. These characteristics are required in order to address internal conflicts between madrasah members and stakeholders. The principal initiated some approaches to address the issue, such as providing space for members to share their ideas, accommodating two-way communication between parties in dispute, and creating regular gatherings.

7.3. Servant Leadership

This research demonstrates that servant leadership is one of the significant leadership approaches in the Madrasah Aliyah context. This is revealed in an emerging school in Bekasi (MAW6) where the principal has performed some of the characteristics of servant leaders such as stewardship, being a listener in proper communication, acceptance and empathy, and coaching. The following sections discuss these features in detail.
7.3.1. Stewardship: leader commitment to provide service

The research findings revealed that the MAW6-P1 performed stewardship in order to address the problems of his teachers and staff. Spears (2010) defined stewardship as holding trust for one another. The MAW6 principal played an essential role helping the madrasah to be a better institution. For instance, he designed a new concept of the madrasah system improving the inclusion of technology in all administration, teaching, and learning systems. He realised that technology was a valuable tool to support a modern school, and invited stakeholders, including government, teachers, staff, and parents, to be aware of the importance of technology in the school system. He therefore approached the business community to support the plan.

A servant leader with stewardship commits to serve the needs of their subordinate (Spears, 2010). Therefore, the emphasis is on persuasion and inspiration rather than control (Greenleaf, 2002). The plan to improve the madrasah’s use of technology presented a challenge for some school members. The MAW6 principal realised that these members still faced difficulties in using technology in their working processes. Therefore, it was necessary for leaders to develop a solution to address the teachers’ and staff’s problems. For example, the madrasah provided training and personal assistance for teachers in technology use in teaching.

The current study found that most of the madrasah teachers were satisfied with the service, and some admitted that this had increased their knowledge of operating technology for teaching. This phenomenon relates to a survey study that a stewardship leader was willing to take responsibility for an institution and provide services (Green et al., 2016). Green (et al., 2016) concluded that a steward leader has a significant effect on their followers’ job satisfaction. Likewise, findings of a study conducted by Al-Mahdy, Al-Harthi, and Salah El-Din (2016) showed that stewardship had a substantial relationship with employee satisfaction. The findings
of this study indicate that teachers had no significant problems using technology as the principal had supported them by offering training and guidance.

7.3.2. Listening to understand

Listening refers to a deep commitment to paying attention to others, emphasising actually hearing what is said and unsaid (Crippen, 2004; Gregory Stone et al., 2004; Spears, 2010; Wu, Tseng, Wang, & Wu, 2018). In the context of Madrasah Aliyahs in Indonesia, listening in servant leadership was one of the approaches for understanding people (Perreault, 2005; Tanno & Banner, 2018). MAW6-P1 listened and developed proper communication and interaction with madrasah teachers and staff. The principal believed that he could understand and identify problems from hearing his team. Thus, he could find an appropriate strategy to address their issues. The same strategy was also performed by MBW7-P1 in developing interactions with his members and dealing with conflict that occurred in the madrasah.

To do this, the principals created significant space for his followers to meet and talk with them. For instance, MAW-P1 rarely used his office while working. Instead, he used a table in one office that he shared with his staff. He had confidence that blending with the madrasah members could create opportunities for both the principal and members to communicate their thoughts. Open communication, according to the principal, was important to develop and maintain teacher performance, and teachers were less reluctant to speak with the principal since there were fewer boundaries between them. This finding corresponds with Cerit’s (2009) study that stressed the importance of open communication between teachers and principals. The respectful attitude of principals toward teachers has a positive effect on teacher performance.

The current study suggests that listening to understand can enhance the work attitude of teachers and create a safe atmosphere for them to come up with feedback and opinions
regarding school development. An interview with an honorarium teacher, MAW6-T3, showed that he felt comfortable whenever he had direct or indirect interactions with the principal. A safe environment tended to encourage him to share his ideas related to madrasah development. This finding aligns with the study of Chughtai (2016) which showed that a good relationship between leader and employees created a sense of physiological safety, which could influence an employee’s willingness to make suggestions.

However, other studies suggested that ‘give and take’ or ‘listening and sharing’ in the social exchange between leaders and followers might not provide the motivation to help other people. This might occur when servant leaders do not display enough gratitude to their followers (Tanno & Banner, 2018). This finding resembles the current study where, despite the principal’s provision of an ample space for interaction and communication, some of the members were not encouraged to feel sufficiently comfortable to communicate openly with him. The findings showed that one permanent teacher, MAW6-T1, was still reluctant to share his ideas with the principal. According to the teacher, boundaries, such as the principal’s power and assertiveness, between leader and teachers provided a barrier to open communication.

7.3.3. Sympathy and acceptance

Sympathy is the product of listening to understand and servant leaders endeavour to understand and provide sympathy to others. Servant leaders rarely reject the effort of others and provide sympathy to make others feel accepted (Greenleaf, 2002; Lanctot & Irving, 2010; Le Ng, Choi, & Soehod, 2016; Spears, 2010). For servant leaders, followers are assumed to be good people even when they make mistakes during their performance (Spears, 2010). Therefore, it is important for leaders to have empathy skills when they interact with their followers.
In the Madrasah Aliyah context, MAW6-P1 was struggling to move the madrasah from its status as a challenging school to one of the developed madrasahs. Promoting the use of technology for working, teaching, and learning was one vital way of boosting madrasah performance. For instance, teachers needed to computerise their lesson plans and use internet access to support their teaching sources. However, some teachers remained in their “comfort zone.” They preferred to teach with old strategies such as lecturing students, taking notes, and using a whiteboard as their teaching medium. The principal applied acceptance and empathy to teachers who were still struggling to adopt the madrasah’s new working system.

7.3.4. Leader as a mentor

Every follower in an organisation has a different level of capacity and skill. Mentoring has a prominent role in the professional development process to support and upgrade member capacity (Poon, 2006). In the context of servant leadership, mentoring promotes leader and follower interaction to increase the mutual commitment between leaders and followers (Poon, 2006; Winston & Hartsfield, 2004). Allen et al. (2006) observed that the critical element of mentoring was the extent of the direct connection between leaders and followers to develop others’ needs.

In an educational context, some research literature (Anafarta & Apaydin, 2016; Bynum, 2015; Gibson, 2016; Klein et al., 2018; Poon, 2006) suggested that teacher mentoring was reciprocal, relational, one-to-one, and a reflective process. The process could be done at formal, informal, individual, collaborative, and even community levels. Those statements are in line with the finding of the current study. However, the engagement between a mentor (leaders/principals) and mentee (teachers) is significantly influenced by the power relationship, motivation aspects, and the mentoring strategy to approach the mentee (Wolffensperger, 2010).
The findings revealed that madrasah principals and their deputies provided mentoring for teachers. For instance, principals mentored by utilising technology for teaching and learning in the case of MAW6, applying project-based learning (PBL) to support the “madrasah research-informed program” (in the case of MBS2), and embedded a new concept of curriculum administration (in the cases of MAS1, MAW4, and MBW5). In the case of MAW6, mentoring for teachers was done through a relational process using an informal and collaborative approach. For example, to improve teacher skills on using technology, the MAW6 principal and his deputies worked together to provide mentoring for those who needed guidance. The principal developed a formal approach by providing training programs through collaboration with a technology company (see detail in Section 5.7.2). The principal also initiated an informal and collaborative approach through one-on-one guidance (Anafarta & Apaydin, 2016; Poon, 2006). He invited teachers to participate and provided training to the teachers. Working together, the principal and IT teachers created a small group that consisted of teachers who did not understand how to use technology. The technology training was then provided exclusively to this group.

Another example is provided by MBS2 Madrasah Aliyah in South Tangerang. In 2009, the principal launched a “madrasah research-informed program” as part of the school curriculum. He understood that the program required considerable effort from the teachers. Having a background as a lecturer in a university and holding a Master of Education, the principal initiated an informal lecture for all teachers regarding the development of teaching through project-based learning (PBL). He also invited scholars and professional trainers to educate and support teachers in developing a research-based curriculum. The principal also provided personal mentoring (Anafarta & Apaydin, 2016) and acted as a mentor for junior in-service teachers. MBS2-T1 mentioned his experience when he started teaching in MBS2, where he had
obtained a mentoring session, due to curriculum development, from the principal. MBS2-P1 provided MBS2-T1 with some materials and guidance as well as explaining how to develop the curriculum based on the subject the teacher taught.

In a similar vein, the public Madrasah Aliyah MAS1 and MAW4 principals provided mentoring sessions for teachers regarding the madrasah curriculum. The change of school curriculum from a school-based curriculum (called KTSP) to a character-based curriculum (Curriculum 2013) required some modifications to its concept and administration. There was some formal training provided by the government for teachers, however, this was not sufficient to support teachers to enhance their knowledge of the curriculum. According to a permanent teacher, MAW4-T2, the training related to Curriculum 2013 only informed her of the definitions of some concepts and the formula of the curriculum. Most of the training had not enabled them to improve the practical skills in applying the curriculum in the learning process. MAS1-T3 also mentioned that he needed to practice how to use the curriculum and how the character-based knowledge could be imparted and evaluated.

To face challenges, the principals of MAS1 and MAW4 had different approaches. MAS1-P1 tended to enhance school community endeavours (Poon, 2006) by creating a teacher consortium to unite teachers based on their knowledge. In the consortium, most of the teachers were encouraged to share and discuss their teaching experiences and struggles. They discussed how to implement and evaluate the character-based curriculum in the teaching process. The principal built a powerful relationship (Wolffensperger, 2010) as a mentor to each group, which needed his advice. On the other hand, the MAW4-P1 tended to provide informal one-to-one coaching (Anafarta & Apaydin, 2016) for teachers who required his supervision, and would sit with teachers and discuss the matter informally. In those conversations, the principal shared his experiences about how best to develop an effective teaching and learning process based on
the curriculum. He regularly visited classes to supervise and mentor the teachers, so he could assess and evaluate teacher understanding of how to apply the curriculum in the teaching and learning process.

The mentoring process in MBW5 was oriented towards increasing teacher motivation (Wolffensperger, 2010). MBW5-P1 mentioned teachers had already coped with performing administrative tasks relating to the curriculum. Therefore, the principal allowed all teachers to express and explore their ideas in classes. It be possible that different teachers might use different strategies in their teaching style despite both teaching the same subject. According to the principal, this would not be a problem as long as students and teachers achieved the purpose of the lesson.

In conclusion, a leader's mentoring was provided as part of their service to their followers, and this has proved significant in developing teacher performance. In the Indonesian Madrasah Aliyah context, a leader's mentoring is undertaken through various processes, such as reciprocal, relational and one-on-one procedures. Reciprocal mentoring was provided through groups of teachers in MAS1’s case. Relational mentoring occurred when leaders invited professionals to provide training for teachers in MAW6’s case. Finally, one-on-one mentoring occurred when principals provided mentoring to each teacher in need in the cases of MBS2, MAW4 and MBW5. These processes were mostly carried out by formal and informal methods. Regarding leaders and their followers' engagement, the study revealed that the interaction was influenced mainly by the leaders' strategies for developing communication and improving teacher motivation (Wolffensperger, 2010).
7.3.5. Friendship-based relationship

The nature of friendship can be conceived as a relationship between one and another, where each depends on the other, and where there is a hope of receiving and giving in the relationship.

Perreault (2005) defined friendship as follows:

Friendship stance is a relational view of leadership, grounded in perceptions of connection and interdependence from which emerge a sense of respect and responsibility for the welfare of self and others (p.7).

In the context of leadership, the friendship leadership approach is the most powerful tool one can use when leading an organisation (Forck, 2011). In this kind of relationship, a leader views their followers as individuals with unique abilities (Forck, 2011; Perreault, 2005). A friendship-based leader understands the needs of others and is open to mutual relationships among the parties who are involved in the organisation. A friendship-based leader rarely treats followers as subordinate or as an object to be ordered (Perreault, 2005).

Friendship-based leadership fits into the concept of servant leadership, which means leaders provide service, listen, offer stewardship, and offer sympathy (Greenleaf, 2002), as most friends would do. The current study revealed that friendship-based leadership was one feature of leadership practice in the Madrasah Aliyah in Indonesia. The findings revealed that most of the leaders in the Madrasah Aliyahs, including MAS1, MBS2, MAW4, MBW5, MAW6, and MBW7, stated that they practised friendship-based leadership in leading the madrasahs. The findings demonstrated that most of the principals adopted the friendship relationship approach by focusing on teacher needs, listening to teachers’ opinion, providing empathy and showing understanding.

Forck (2011) described the principles of the role of friendship in leadership. The first, the carrying and being carried principle states that the leader creates a friendly atmosphere where
all members, including the leader are present to support each other. However, in Madrasah Aliyahs in the Indonesian context, the “carrying and being carried” attitude tended to refer to the equality between leaders and members. For instance, the case of public Madrasah Aliyah MAS1 revealed that deputy principals and most teachers felt that they were being treated equally by the principal. Deputy principal of administration and finance MAS1-DP2 mentioned that the principal tended to avoid clashes with his followers. Instead, he showed his support and appreciation for all ideas that came from his followers. A permanent teacher, MAS1-T1, echoed this statement, stating that the principal tended to present first as a friend to cheer up staff whenever they felt pressure and faced challenges with schoolwork.

Secondly, foster friendship is a situation where both a leader and their followers share their time in the workplace as friends (Forck, 2011). In this scenario, both parties share and discuss ideas internally before sharing them with a community. They support each other since they understand the vision of the organisation better than others. This corresponds with the finding of the MBW5 case. Here the principal acted to develop a management system through working groups consisting of ring one, two, and three to enable proper coordination among members. Each group would know and understand every matter that arose in the madrasah.

Third, networking refers to a leader’s efforts to build connections with the internal and external members of the organisation (Forck, 2011). These external people include stakeholders, community, neighbourhood, and business companies, while internal people are the organisation’s staff. This is in line with the findings of MAW6’s and MAW4’s cases. As stated previously in Sections 4.4.2 and 6.2.1, the two madrasahs developed external networks with parents and business companies. The location of MAW6 among business areas provided a good opportunity for the principal to engage with one of the factories. His initial idea was to support the school with more computers and laptops, and he encouraged a technology factory to
become involved in the project. The madrasah succeeded in obtaining financial support. In MAW4’s case, the principal approached parents and initiated a parent committee to be part of the madrasah development. In the committee, most parents donated to a fund to support madrasah finance. As a result, this funding supported madrasah development including a two-storey building, sports field, and class maintenance.

Fourth, energy is when leaders become a faithful supporter of their followers (Forck, 2011). Their appearance always raises the spirits of others. Although leaders are not primary problem-solvers, their existence could enhance followers’ enthusiasm to address challenges. This is in line with findings in the MBW5, MAW6, and MBW7 case studies. The principals of these three schools decided to work closely and share one office with their followers. One reason they elected to do this was so that they could spread positive energy to their followers. A staff member of MAW6 stated that it was nice to have a leader among members who they could interact directly without boundaries. An honorarium teacher at MBW7 mentioned that the principal’s prevailing friendly attitude and his strong visibility among teachers provided them with comfort and encouraged them to work cohesively.

In addition, this research project found two other elements that supported friendship-based leadership, including being objective and honest. These kinds of leaders can be found in the cases of MBS2 and MAW6. An objective attitude is displayed when people assess a human being on the basis of their character and behaviour (Sommers, 2007). An objective person judges an individual without being influenced by their personal feelings and instead focuses on the facts. In leading a madrasah, the MBS2 principal performed with an objective attitude. According to MBS2-DP3, some problems had appeared among parents, students, and teachers. Before coming up with a resolution, the principal heard and analysed the problems. He sometimes invited individuals (parents, students, and teachers) who had conflicts to see how
the problems could be solved and how the people could reconcile with each other. Being impartial in a conflict between parents and teachers could be hard for a principal and being impartial could decrease parents’ and students’ satisfaction. However, being treated fairly was a basic right for all. The principal committed to be objective in facing any problems that might occur in the madrasah.

To sum up, a friendship-based attitude in leadership practice is mostly applied in Madrasah Aliyahs in Indonesia. The findings revealed that leaders appropriately applied the four principles (Forck, 2011), such as carrying and being carried, fostering friendship, networking, and spreading energy. The current findings explored the two other principles: being objective and having an honest attitude. As these madrasahs were influenced by Indonesian culture where friendship and kinship wisdom are dominant, this is embedded and it became a feature for Indonesian people, including leaders, to share this attitude towards others.

7.4. Kinship leadership

Most scholars described kinship as people who gather in a group based on a family relationship, such as a mother, father, children, grandmother, grandfather, uncle, aunt, niece, nephew, and cousin (Butler, 2002; Karra et al., 2006; Nicholson, 2015; Peng, 2004). However, in a wider definition kinship is described as not only a family relationship, but also clans, tribes, and individuals who engage in one vision in a community-like business, commerce, and religion group (Dana, 2015; Fortes & Evans-Pritchard, 2015). Prideaux (2006) stated that the basic understanding of kinship is that a system prescribes how people live together and interact with one to another. This system concerned with the development of emotional connections to strengthen the relationships in the group (Zakia & Pritasari, 2018). A kinship relation is the association of several people who have blood, emotional, or goal ties, and who build
interactions with one another. In organisations, kinship relations are oriented towards a group of people who share visions and purpose in a community. Members stay and consolidate their emotional connections to support each other. Thus, kinship-based leadership is where leaders and members in an organisation connect as a family.

The current study indicates that most principals in Madrasah Aliyahs in Indonesia apply a kinship-based leadership. The approach has been found in most developed Madrasah Aliyahs, such as MAS1, MBS2, MAW4, and HAW5. However, in some circumstances the kinship leadership are also found in challenging (MBS3 and MBW7) and emerging (MAW6) Madrasah Aliyahs. The findings reveal that kinship-based leadership has distinctive characteristics, such as the leader being a role model, trustworthy, religious/devout, a father figure, and with a low-profile personality. This will be explored in the following sub-sections.

7.4.1. Role model of an organisation

Working as a team requires not only the fundamental skills of leadership but also a leader’s essential understanding of their own behaviour, which affects others. A leader as a role model might develop an important strategy for developing follower performance by example. Scarnati (2002) stated that a benchmark of a leader is being a positive model who motivates members. This positive model represents qualities, characteristics, attitudes, or behaviour that are appealing to others. Scarnati also stressed that leaders should notice their verbal and non-verbal signals during communication and interaction with their members.

In the context of Madrasah Aliyahs in Indonesia, principals perceive their role as acting as a model for teachers and staff. Most madrasah members see principals as an example to encourage their own performance. For instance, teachers in public Madrasah Aliyah MAW4 considered their principal to be quite open-minded. MAW4-P1 stated that he wanted to accept
opinions and feedback from his subordinates. The principal had been in his position for a few months when he was interviewed in 2018. Although the principal had experience in being a school leader, the school culture in any two madrasahs would be different. Therefore, it was essential to get along with madrasah members to build effective interactions and develop trust between each other.

This finding of the research corresponds to Bowler et al.’s (2018) statement that trust is the main element in workplace interactions. Further, trust provides positive outcomes for the individual, relationship, team, and organisation (Bowler, Paul, Gavin, Joplin, & Bowler, 2018). The principal added that accepting opinions and feedback from staff and teachers could be important when addressing the madrasah’s challenges. The principal’s attitude ultimately influenced teachers and staff. MAW4-DP1 mentioned that the principal’s open-minded style had encouraged teachers and staff to adopt this approach when they dealt with feedback from others. According to the deputy, the principal was a significant role model for others since he was a central leader of the institution.

In another case, the findings revealed that MAS1-P1 tended to be a `role model for his members, demonstrating his good character to everyone in the school, treating his followers equally and providing respect and appreciation for the students. The principal believed that by doing so, teachers, staff, and students could embed these characteristics in their minds, and would imitate them when dealing with others.

In summary, a role model has kinship leadership characteristics in Madrasah Aliyahs in Indonesia. The function of the role model is to spread a positive influence on others (Bowler et al., 2018). In the current study, the open-minded principal was found to be an excellent example of a leader who influenced teachers and staff. The prevailing attitude tended to
encourage members of the madrasah to be open when they faced critics or feedback from others.

7.4.2. Trustworthy

Being trustworthy entails possessing the capabilities that match with the responsibility carried by an individual (Alimin, Awang, Ahmad, & Nain, 2018). Therefore, being trustworthy is a strong element in a relationship. In the leadership context, being trustworthy is significant as it helps to strengthen the relationship between leaders and followers (Caldwell & Hayes, 2010). Capriolo (2002) in (Caldwell & Hayes, 2010) stated that the trust-based relationship between leaders and followers could create a strong commitment and motivation for followers in the workplace. Savolainen and Häkkinen (2011) add that trust influences the process of communication, cooperation, and information sharing, which affects productivity in an organisation.

The current study includes trustworthiness as a significant part of kinship leadership. Here, the leader demonstrated trustworthiness by approaching members as part of the madrasah family. According to MBW5-P1, the members of the madrasah belonged to a family who need to trust and support each other. He also believed that trustworthiness could encourage most madrasah members to have a sense of belonging, which helped to develop the quality of the school. The same expression was echoed by MBS2-P1. He treated most teachers and staff like family. He believed that treating the members of madrasah as a family encouraged them to develop trust in the workplace. They could improve their performance, since their leader treats them fairly. These findings are similar to a study in China conducted by Holley et al. (2019), whose research revealed that trustworthy leadership has a positive relationship with employee performance. It was found that being trustworthy successfully strengthened the mediated relationship between leader and followers.
In the case of MAW6, being trustworthy meant being honest. MAW6-P1’s transparent attitude developed the trust among teachers and staff. The principal supervised the madrasah expenses directly in order to avoid fraud, and thus, madrasah members believed that the principal managed and spent the madrasah finance properly.

In the case of MAW4, the principal demonstrated trustworthiness by developing good communication and interaction with the members. He stated that, as a new leader in MAW4, he needed time to adjust to teachers and staff. He believed that strong communication and interaction with madrasah members can develop emotional relations between members and leader. In time, they could improve bonding among members. He believed that kinship relations would inspire smooth communication and interactions with his followers. Members would feel comfortable when talking to the leaders since they realise that they have emotional connections to each other.

In summary, the expression of trustworthiness in Indonesian Madrasah Aliyahs encompasses some characteristics, such as leaders with trust, an honest attitude, and strong communication and interaction among members. The study revealed that a leader who treated teachers fairly encouraged them to improve their performance. In school management, an honest leader succeeded in creating excellent financial management systems in the madrasah, and a positive attitude could eliminate misgivings a follower might have towards a leader and vice versa. Finally, the smooth communication and interaction provided by a leader encouraged an emotional bond within members of the madrasah so that they could develop a willingness to trust each other.
7.4.3. Spirituality

Spirituality in leadership is not only fulfilling leadership practice based on leadership theories, but is also inclusive of a religious, ethical, and values-based approach (Fry, 2003). Fry emphasised that there were three ways (vision, values, and personal action) for leaders to stay in touch with their followers. To do so, leaders needed to use not only proper leadership styles but also other significant abilities like an awareness of communication styles and religious influence in the workplace (Blackaby & Blackaby, 2011).

In the Indonesian Madrasah Aliyah context, spirituality is an essential characteristic in kinship leadership because religion and ethical values are part of the organisational culture. Researchers have argued that kinship-based relationships in an organisation enable strong religious and cultural connections, which in turn strengthens the teamwork among members (Blackaby & Blackaby, 2011; Prideaux, 2006; Van Vugt, 2017). Therefore, the leaders have a responsibility to embed these values in the madrasah. In the current study, spirituality has been demonstrated by principals in most case study schools, including MAS1, MAW4, MBW5, and MAW6.

The principals of MAS1-P1 and MAW6-P1 performed their religious values by practising Islamic rituals in the madrasah. In the Islamic mindset, religious education guides people to develop morals and reach social values in the communities they live (Jackson, 2018). Therefore, both MAS1-P1 and MAW6-P1 invited the madrasah members, including teachers, staff, and students, to carry out Islamic rituals together. The two principals realised that as an Islamic institution, it was essential for the madrasah to display religious values. Thus, the community would perceive the madrasah as a proper Islamic institution where religious education was a priority for the development of students’ attitude.
In MAW4 Madrasah Aliyah, spirituality was centred on the principal’s strategy to connect with people around the organisation. MAW4-P1 demonstrated his religious manner while interacting with other madrasah members. Most of the teachers and staff saw him as a religious leader who perceived his leadership as a responsibility towards God. As mentioned in Section 7.1.4, MAW4-P1 rarely acted as a top leader who only gave orders to his followers. Instead he worked harder than other staff. Similar, according to MAW4-P1, a leader had a responsibility to the people whom he led and to God. MAW4-P1 stressed that being a leader was a part of expressing human Taqwa (being conscious, mindful, and pious) to God. Leading people was not only about managing them properly but also about bringing them closer to God. This is in line with the current study’s findings that Islamic character in leadership is based on the Prophet Muhammad. The Prophet’s leadership focused on transforming people from dark to light and on changing their attitudes and behaviours to those based on Islamic values (Mohammad, Ibrahim, Salam, Jamil, & Quoquab, 2015). MAW4-P1 adhered to the same type of leadership as the Prophet Muhammad did. He stressed that authentic leaders do not let people feel mistreated because it is unfair as well as being God’s will.

A similar attitude was demonstrated by MBW5’s principal, who viewed being a leader as a part of the worship of God. MBW5-P1 tended to express his spirituality in the way he managed the school organisation. He chose to share power as a primary strategy to strengthen teamwork among madrasah members. He also tried to ensure that everyone worked based on their responsibilities and capabilities. Therefore, he could avoid assigning the wrong task to the wrong staff member or treating teachers or staff inequitably.

In conclusion, the spirituality of the leader in Madrasah Aliyah in the Indonesian context can be shown in two ways. Firstly, the principal’s spiritual attitude in practising Islamic ritual activities. This aims to strengthen Islamic values among the members of the madrasahs, and
thus, the community will recognise that the madrasah is the centre of Islamic education and a
good place for students to learn religious knowledge. Secondly, spirituality demonstrates the
*taqwa* of leaders who carry out leadership as developing their worship towards God. One of
the strategies is when the leader focuses on maintaining a proper relationship between leader
and followers to transform member attitudes and behaviour in accordance with Islamic values.
Finally, spirituality describes how a leader treats members fairly and equally in an organisation.
An impartial leader is also an implementation of a *taqwa* leader.

### 7.4.4. Father figure

There are two perceptions about a father figure in paternal leadership theory. Firstly, in
traditional Chinese culture, a father figure in leadership refers to leaders who possess strong
authority and absolute power over others. These leaders keep a distance from their subordinates
and try to hide their feelings and intentions (Hou, Hong, Zhu, & Zhou, 2019). However, some
scholars have argued that a father figure denotes leaders and followers who have a strong tie
between words and actions. The leaders tend to display greater openness and trustworthiness,
closeness and conviction, and harmony and love (Costas & Taheri, 2012; Erol & Senturk, 2018;
Ilies, Morgeson, & Nahrgang, 2005; Pellegrini & Scandura, 2008; Stein, 2005).

In the Indonesian Madrasah Aliyah context, a father figure tends to be the second form found
in paternal leadership theory. The current study revealed that the same commitment to develop
the madrasah performance comes from leaders and members supporting each other. Leaders
and members also develop conviction, harmony and love in order to maintain the relationship.
For instance, MBS2-P1 was quite strict about establishing madrasah regulations that created a
pressure on most teachers. However, as a father figure, MBS2-P1 applied a kinship relationship
by pursuing comfortable interactions with his followers. He also acted as a good listener and
provided solutions to his members. Most teachers felt being treated as a family made them comfortable to talk and share.

A father figure in the Indonesian madrasah context is associated with being a defender and unifier. A defender attitude is found in a leader who acts as a protector and advocator. A unifier leader is a principal who can unify the divergences among his members. For example, as stated in Sections 4.2.4 and 6.1.4, MBS2-P1 took the role of a defender. He found a conflict among a teacher, student, and parents, but instead of letting the teacher face the parents, MBS2-P1 dealt with the parents. As MBS2-P1 mentioned, if teachers and students were at the madrasah, they were part of his responsibility, and whatever happened between them should be part of his consideration. It can be concluded that the school principal applied his leadership as a defender to protect all of the organisation members he leads.

A unifier attitude was also found in the MAS1 case. In Section 4.2.4, the findings revealed that MAS1-P1 had acted as a bridge between disputing members. He realised that the issue in question could create disharmony that could in turn harm the madrasah’s performance. To solve the problem, the principal took a father role towards his followers, developing kinship interactions by treating each teacher and staff as an essential member of the madrasah. To do so, he used to encourage them with positive words and respect and provided awards to those who achieved highly. Even for those who made mistakes, MAS1-P1 preferred to discuss the best solution with teachers, so that they could avoid making the same errors again. The principal stated that recognising teacher performance and analysing their mistakes was essential to encourage teachers’ confidence and awareness of their performance. As Wayne et al. (1997) stated, respect and support can develop employee commitment to perform their job responsibilities. Ultimately, the principal will foster an attitude of respect and support for one another.
In summary, a father figure is an essential part of kinship leadership in the Indonesian Madrasah Aliyah context. Besides expressing the strong ties between leaders and members, a father figure also embraces the defender and unifier meanings. A leader with a defender attitude tends to act as a protector and advocate toward members of the madrasah. The unifier attitude indicates the principal willingness to encourage his followers by providing respect and support so that they can create a sense of unity to achieve the madrasah’s purpose.

7.4.5. Humble

A leader’s humble behaviour aligns with acknowledging the limitations and mistakes produced by organisational members, and includes admitting errors, acknowledging inexperience or a deficit of knowledge, and taking responsibility for failures (Owens & Hekman, 2012; Walters & Diab, 2016). Owens and Hekman (2012) stressed that humble leaders need to lead followers to believe in following their journey towards self-efficacy in the workplace. The current findings reveal that humble behaviour shows that a leader is not only admitting and acknowledging errors but also providing a strategy to solve problems. The leader takes an unintended situation and turns a mistake into a chance to improve a member’s performance.

For example, in MAW6 Madrasah Aliyah, the principal found that some of members were struggling to adjust to a new working system. The new system required digital technology to be included in the process of teaching, learning, and undertaking school administration. The study showed that some hesitancy and refusals by staff were addressed, as these could hinder system’s effectiveness. However, the principal did not see this hesitancy as disobedience of the teachers and staff. Instead, he accepted it as one of the processes of implementing the new change. He approached teachers and provided personal and group meetings to hear their concerns about applying the new system. He also provided assistance and training for teachers.
and staff either individually or in groups. A permanent teacher confirmed that the principal gave teachers enough time to deal with challenges before being ready to work on the system.

Another example was found in MBW5’s case. MBW5-P1 was revealed to have humble behaviour in leading the madrasah. The findings revealed that he encouraged teachers and staff to work in a team and to share their knowledge about members’ performance. He believed that each person had skills that might make up for their weaknesses. He invited all madrasah members to help each other to meet their individual needs. MBW5-P1 stated that fulfilling the needs of others would develop teachers’ self-efficacy as well as enhance their experience in the workplace.

In conclusion, the humble behaviour of leaders in Madrasah Aliyahs was significant due to developing teachers’ performance. Leaders admitted and acknowledged teachers’ weaknesses as well as providing strategies to address problems. A humble leader also encouraged teachers and staff to support each other in order to reach the madrasah’s vision. There was no perfect person in an organisation. All members existed to fulfil each other.

7.5. Chapter summary

In summary, this chapter discusses the major themes and outcomes of the key findings with reference to the related literature on leadership approach. There are three leadership approaches in the research findings: catalytic leadership, servant leadership, and kinship leadership. Each approach enlightens distinctive characteristics that promote an indigenous leadership practice in the Indonesian context.

The first theme discussed was catalytic leadership which was explored in the challenging Madrasah Aliyahs; MBS3 in South Tangerang and MBW7 in Bekasi. It was argued that
catalytic leadership was developed through the willingness of the principal to push the madrasah to be better. To do so, principals acted as change agents and entrepreneurs to maintain school performance as well as to promote the madrasah as an Islamic institution among community members. What emerged from this discussion of the findings was a new image of catalytic leaders as collaborators and mediators. The term “collaborator” completed the principal’s function as a change agent and entrepreneur. Change required built-in internal and external collaboration. Internal collaboration centred on teachers and staff, and developing the trust of stakeholders and communities as external collaboration. Catalytic leadership also saw leaders exist as mediators, where a principal acted as a communication bridge between madrasah members in order to avoid the circulation of misleading information and conflict. For example, a mediator assisted madrasah members to obtain truth and fair information, particularly as this related to the madrasah’s financial transparency.

The second theme was servant leadership, and included a broad discussion about leaders’ performed service, explained and explored by primarily Western scholars such as Greenleaf (2002), Russel and Stone (2002), Spears (2010), Shaw and Newton (2014), and Andersen (2018). These scholars argue that servant leaders have certain characteristics, such as listening, being empathetic, providing healing, awareness, being persuasive, conceptualisation, foresight, stewardship, commitment, and building community. The research findings revealed that servant leadership performed most of these characteristics, including stewardship, listening, and empathy. Moreover, the servant approach in the Indonesian context had been strengthened by leaders acting as mentors and friends.

The findings revealed that mentoring was one of the services provided by school leaders, and this appeared to express the leaders’ sympathy and acceptance of members who had not been optimal in improving their performance. Leaders provided guidance and coaching in order to
support teachers and staff to address their problems. The study revealed that friendship-based leadership was another element in servant leadership. Friendship-based leadership was explored by Forck (2011), who examined ideal friendship relations such as carrying and being carried, fostering friendship, networking, and spreading energy. In addition, two distinctive elements, being objective and being honest, were found in this research project. Principals saw a specific problem fairly and focused on how one issue was addressed and not repeated.

The final theme was kinship leadership, which described leaders’ and members’ emotional connections, which served to strengthen relationships within an organisation. Kinship leadership in the context of Madrasah Aliyahs in Indonesia was strongly influenced by a leaders’ educational background, leadership experience, and religious knowledge. Therefore, some distinctive attitudes of principals were revealed, such as being a role model, trustworthy, spiritual, a father figure, and humble.

The findings revealed that role-model leaders were open-minded individuals who could receive opinion and feedback from others. Leaders showed good character in that they treated followers equally and provided respect and appreciation. In the case of trustworthiness in the Indonesian Madrasah Aliyah context, leaders performed it in several ways. Principals developed trust among madrasah members in order to encourage members’ sense of belonging to the madrasah. They also managed their schools with honesty, for example, creating transparent school finances. Lastly, a trustworthy principal was revealed to be able to develop strong interactions and communication which strengthened leader and follower relationships.

The study revealed that kinship leadership represented spiritual leaders. Madrasah principals expressed spirituality in two ways. Firstly, madrasah principals showed their spirituality by practising Islamic rituals to encourage members to act the same way. Secondly, spirituality was
performed to develop *taqwa* or worship. In other words, principals took their leadership tasks to be God’s command.

The father figure in kinship leadership revealed two elements in this research including being a leader who was a defender and unifier. As a father figure in an organisation, the principals acted as a defender to protect and advocate for their subordinates. A unifier as a father figure allowed the principal to provide respect and support to encourage teachers and staff to develop their performance.

The last kinship leadership attitude was being humble. The humble principal admitted and acknowledged teachers’ weaknesses as well as provided strategies to solve problems. Principals tried to walk together with teachers in addressing their problems. Thus, teachers would have the confidence to perform their tasks.

The next chapter will present conclusion of the study. Some sections, such as research focus, key findings, implication, recommendation, and remarks will be explained in the chapter.
Chapter 8

Conclusion

8.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on summarising the research focus (8.2), key research findings (8.3) and related implications (8.4). It then presents recommendations (8.5) for further research in terms of leadership practice in madrasahs in Indonesia (8.6) and concluding remarks (8.7).

8.2. Research summary

This research explored principal leadership approaches to addressing challenges and developing the performance of Islamic-based senior high schools (Madrasah Aliyahs) in Indonesia. In contrast to mainstream schools, madrasahs face a range of problems that decrease their performance. Previous research found that madrasahs in Indonesia experience challenges such as lack of funding (Muhajir, 2016), inadequate school infrastructure and facilities (ADB, 2006; Ahid, 2014), curriculum (Tan, 2014), and teacher performance (Ahid, 2014; Darmadji, 2013; Witanti, 2016).

As key leaders of institutions and catalysts among madrasah members (Jawas, 2014; Muhammadi et al, 2015; Munir & Khalil, 2016), principals play a significant role in overcoming problems in a madrasah in order to increase the madrasah’s performance. Principals have considerable responsibilities for managing and supervising school teachers and developing community engagement in the process of improving school performance (Triwiyanto & Juharyanto, 2017; Yulianti et al., 2018).

To understand the research context, Chapter Two presents a review related to the history of madrasahs and their role as a part of the educational system in Indonesia. This chapter is
essential for developing a nuanced understanding of the madrasah’s function in religious education and its contribution to improving education quality in Indonesia.

This research comes with an overarching question: ‘How do principals in Madrasah Aliyahs address challenges and enhance school performance?’ Two sub-questions follow: (1) What are the strategies used by principals to manage Madrasah Aliyahs and address challenges? and (2) What are the leadership practices enacted by principals to develop principal–teachers, and principal–community engagement? The first sub-question investigates principals’ strategies for managing the school’s finances and developing school infrastructure and facilities to support teaching and learning. The second sub-question explores principals’ approaches to promoting teacher performance and developing interactions that might affect their performance. It also focuses on how principals optimise community engagement in supporting the madrasah.

This research explored in-depth perspectives of leaders and teachers in leading madrasahs, as well as investigating the school environment by observing its facilities and infrastructure. A multiple case study of seven Madrasah Aliyahs with a total of 56 participants in two areas of Indonesia, South Tangerang, and Bekasi, West Java, was undertaken. Each school provided eight participants, comprising a principal, deputy principals of curriculum affairs, administration and finance affairs, and student affairs, as well as two permanent and two honorarium teachers. The madrasahs were categorised into three groups: challenging Madrasah Aliyahs (MBS3 and MBW7), emerging Madrasah Aliyahs (MAW6), and developed Madrasah Aliyahs (MAS1, MBS 2, MAW 4, and MBW5). In-depth interviews and observations were conducted to collect data, following which thematic networks analysis (Attride-Stirling, 2001) was used to look deeply at the findings of the study. The key findings are discussed as follows.
8.3. Key research findings

The researcher divided the key findings into two themes, Madrasah Aliyah challenges and performances, and leadership practice enacted by leaders to develop interaction with members. These themes were set to answer two sub-questions. The first sub-question focused on school performance and its challenges. The second sub-question focused on the principal’s approach to developing interactions between teachers and interactions between stakeholders and the community. In relation to the first theme, the finding of the study revealed that Madrasah Aliyahs faced at least four challenges, these being madrasah finance (Section 5.3), infrastructure and facilities (Section 5.4), principal leadership approach (Section 6.1), and community engagement (Section 6.2). The second theme looked at Madrasah Aliyah leadership approaches comprising catalytic leadership (Section 6.1.1), servant leadership (Section 6.1.2), and kinship leadership (Section 6.2.3).

8.3.1. Madrasah Aliyah performance

There was a dynamic changing of level in Madrasah Aliyahs based on their performance (see Figure 3). The challenging Madrasah Aliyah MBW7 (a challenging private Madrasah Aliyah in Bekasi, West Java) recorded a better performance than MBS3 (a challenging private Madrasah Aliyah in South Tangerang). For example, the financial condition of MBW7 was better than that of MBS3. MBS3 was concerned with self-sufficient budgeting without the intervention of the foundation, while MBW7 finances were fully supported and managed by its foundation. In terms of school infrastructure and facilities, MBW7 had enough classrooms, while MBS3 had only three classrooms. Although MBW7 had limited learning sources, the student could buy or use supported textbooks for their learning. The only sources of learning were teachers. The small number of teachers in MBS3 (approximately 12 people) required
those teachers to teach more than one subject. MBW7 had enough teachers to teach each subject.

When examining community engagement with the two schools, the findings revealed that although the MBW7 community was in the middle-lower SES bracket, they were still committed to supporting their children to study at the madrasah. The MBS3 community did not seem to be interested in sending their children to school.

The second level was emerging Madrasah Aliyahs, represented by MAW6, a public Madrasah Aliyah in Bekasi, West Java. This madrasah had been categorised as an emerging madrasah for a number of reasons. Firstly, MAW6 was beginning to be stable in its financial resources. The government and parents both supported this madrasah. Since the madrasah had more than 1000 students (Section 4.7.1), its budget allowed it to upgrade school infrastructure. Transparent financial management made the financial management system even stronger (Section 4.7.3). Secondly, compared with challenging schools, MAW6 had better infrastructure and learning facilities. Additional facilities needed to be added, such as science and language labs, and more classrooms to accommodate large numbers of students (Section 5.4.3). However, this school had sufficient computer laboratories and internet access; thus, teachers and students received better support in their learning process (Section 5.4.3). Finally, MAW6 was surrounded by industry and the business community, which provided an advantage for the madrasah in gaining financial support. The findings revealed that one of the factories provided 40 laptops to facilitate teachers in teaching subjects (Section 4.7.5).

The last level was developed Madrasah Aliyahs, comprising MAS1 (a developed public Madrasah Aliyah in South Tangerang), MBS2 (a developed private Madrasah Aliyah in South Tangerang), MAW4 (a developed public Madrasah Aliyah in Bekasi, West Java), and MBW5 (a developed private Madrasah Aliyah in Bekasi, West Java). Those Madrasah Aliyahs that
were accredited with an ‘A’ score had developed financial sources and management, complete infrastructure and learning facilities, and qualified teachers (Chapter Four). When examining the working systems of developed Madrasah Aliyahs, this study found that most of the madrasahs developed outstanding and well-maintained school management; so that students, teachers, and staff were appropriately accommodated (Section 5.2). The dynamic level of school could be seen clearly at this level. As seen in Figure 3, the developed level includes MAW4, MAS1, MBW5, and MBS2.

MAW4 appeared at the lowest level of developed Madrasah Aliyahs in this study. Interviews with the principal, deputy principals, and teachers, as well as school observation, indicated that MAW4 still needs to address some issues. For instance, although the madrasah had been furnished with learning facilities such as technology, laboratories, and computers, students and teachers still had limited access to the internet. Thus, they could not support their learning with optimal internet usage (Section 4.5.2). The study’s data collection was done in the current school, however MAW4 was developing a new building to accommodate the large number of students, a number that increased every year. The management needed more funding to support this development. The madrasah had invited parents to become involved in increasing its budget (Section 4.5.3).

MAS1 appeared at a higher rank than MAW4 at the developed Madrasah Aliyah level. This research revealed that MAS1 was struggling with an internal conflict between permanent and honorarium teachers. The massive workload among teachers and the inequality of job descriptions created a workload imbalance affecting both parties (Section 4.2.4). This situation created disharmony among teachers who were displeased with the unbalanced workload and wages. As a result, this tended to decrease teachers’ commitment and motivation to maintain their performance.
MBW5 was the runner-up to the top position in the developed Madrasah Aliyah rankings. This madrasah had excellent financial resources, infrastructure and learning facilities, and was surrounded by the religious community (section 4.6). This madrasah had outstanding management in which everyone took responsibility based on their competencies. A dynamic and transparent work system had a significant influence on teachers’ and staff’s performance in the madrasah (section 4.6.1).

MBS2 held the highest rank of the case-study schools on the developed Madrasah Aliyah scale. This study reveals that both MBS2 and MBW5 had outstanding infrastructure, finance, and management systems. However, compared to MBW5, which had a religious community (section 4.6.5), MBS2 was not only surrounded by a religious but also a well-educated community (section 4.3.4). This madrasah obtained inputs and feedbacks from the community in order to improve their learning quality and school performance (section 4.3.5).

In summary, this research revealed a dynamic sequence of Madrasah Aliyah performances. Each madrasah had weaknesses and strengths that positioned the madrasah at a certain level. Most of the challenging Madrasah Aliyahs faced financial and infrastructure problems. A low number of students became an important issue that negatively affected the level of school income. The rank of emerging Madrasah Aliyah recognised that a school had started to develop its quality in many areas, including increasing school learning facilities and work systems with inclusion of technology, transparent financial management, and maintenance of effective interactions with community and stakeholders. Finally, developed Madrasah Aliyahs showed graded ranks according to their performance. Most of the developed madrasahs had outstanding infrastructure with substantial budgets to support it. Community engagement in some schools such as MBW5 and MBS2 had an essential influence on improving the quality of education in these madrasahs.
8.3.2. Principal leadership approaches in Madrasah Aliyahs

This research explored principal leadership approaches in developing interactions among teachers, staff, and stakeholders in order to address challenges and improve the performance of Madrasah Aliyahs. This study identified three leadership approaches: catalytic, servant, and kindship leadership (Section 6.1). A catalytic leader focused on strategies to bring an organisation into positive change (Luke, 1998). A servant leader tended to fulfill followers’ needs and emphasise a good relationship between leader and members (Russell & Gregory Stone, 2002; Van Dierendonck, 2011). A kinship leader developed unity in an organisation by ensuring equality in community, religion, culture, language, and habits, so that the leader and the members would develop positive emotional relationships with one another (McClellan, 2016). Some school principals demonstrated a particular type of approach while a few of them adapted a variety of the elements in these approaches in order to interact with school members.

**Catalytic leadership**

This research indicated that some of Madrasah Aliyah leaders performed catalytic leadership to improve their madrasahs. This approach was performed by two challenging schools, MBS3 and MBW7 (Section 6.2). Other schools, such as MBS2 and MBW5, were also identified as displaying catalytic leadership. In this approach, the characteristics of leader as entrepreneur, collaborator, mediator, and buffer were shown. The leaders of challenging madrasahs tried to promote and socialise the school’s presence in the community. For instance, MBS3 had attempted to promote the school by introducing religious knowledge to the parents’ community. The school invited parents one by one to learn about Islam and led them to understand the concept of religion. The madrasah principal hoped that it might create
community awareness of the importance of Islamic knowledge in everyday life so that parents would be willing to send their children to learn it (Section 7.2.2).

This catalytic leadership also promoted a leader as a collaborator. The findings of this research revealed that the principals of MBS2 and MBW5 developed internal and external collaborations (Section 8.2.3). In internal collaborations, MBW5 gained the cooperation of teachers and staff in maintaining the local curriculum by creating a teacher consortium to improve students’ quality. Having found that MBS2 was surrounded by an academic and researcher community, the principal developed external collaborations by inviting them to train teachers and staff under a madrasah program called ‘research-based madrasah.’ The program was outstanding and promotes students to become researchers.

The last surprising element of catalytic leadership that was revealed in this study was leaders as mediator and buffer. This was mostly found in MBW7 (Section 7.2.4). As mentioned in Section 6.1.1, there was an issue with non-transparent financial management in the foundation. This invited misunderstanding at the teacher level. As a result, MBW7-P1 needed to maintain a position that ensured a balance in communications between the two parties. MBW7-P1 became a mediator by listening to their aspirations and ideas for preventing the conflict from worsening. The principal acted as a buffer when conflict occurred. He would use his communication skills to convince and assuage members and the foundation, so that the conflict did not last too long.

In summary, catalytic leadership in this research project manifested in the leader acting as a change agent, entrepreneur, collaborator, mediator, and buffer. Each element was shown in certain situations. Acting as a change agent and entrepreneur tended to be done by leaders of challenging madrasahs who needed to make changes and market their schools to improve the
madrasah’s performance. Principals acted as collaborators when it was clear that internal and external collaboration would have significant influence in enhancing the madrasah’s performance, especially in relation to the quality of educators and the learning program. Two distinctive elements of catalytic leadership that were found in this study were where a leader acted as mediator and buffer. These attitudes were promoted in order to avoid and decrease conflict among members in the madrasah.

**Servant leadership**

In this study project, servant leadership was revealed as one of the leadership approaches taken by principals. MAW6-P1 strongly showed the approach while developing interactions and communication with his members (Section 7.3). Other principals, in madrasahs MAS1, MBS2, MAW4, and MBW5, also appeared to enact servant leadership. Some familiar servant leadership characteristics were found in this study, such as stewardship, listening, sympathy, and mentoring. A distinctive characteristic, namely friendship-based leadership, was revealed to complete the servant leadership elements (Section 7.3.5).

Stewardship is the role of a leader to provide service for his followers in order to develop trust among members, so that leader can develop solid teamwork to improve organisational performance (Spears, 2010). In this study, MAW6-P1 realised that his members needed to adjust to a new system he had initiated. His stewardship attitude committed to provide service for most members as they improved the system (Section 7.3.1).

The first stage of stewarding action is listening to understand. MAW6-P1 invited teachers and staff to share their ideas and challenges. This principal listened, understood their ideas, and identified some solutions to address their challenges. According to the principal, listening to understand was one of the ways in which communication creates good opportunities for
members to offer their thoughts as well as to measure current organisational problems (Section 7.3.2).

In the listening process, leaders provided sympathy as one strategy to demonstrate that members are accepted in the institution (Lanctot & Irving, 2010). MAW6-P1 understood that some of the teachers, especially seniors, tended to avoid a system that included computer technology. By admitting their weakness was a method for him to choose a right strategy to support them. He encouraged these teachers to improve their performance by providing them with technology training on and off the school campus.

The leader as a mentor was also found in this study, where MAW6-P1 offered his time and knowledge to support teachers in improving their professional development (Section 7.3.4.). This mentoring attitude was also shown in other madrasahs. For example, most of the madrasah teachers made the complaint that the training they have received is not enough for them to understand the new curriculum. MAS1-P1 and MAW4-P1 provided mentoring sessions for their educators in order to support them in adjusting to the recent curriculum change (Section 7.3.4). MBS2-P1 offered materials and guidance for teachers who needed more information about this.

A surprising finding of this study is the friendship-based relationship, where madrasah principals create an atmosphere of friendship in the way they interact with followers (Section 7.6.5). This aligns with servant leadership because friendship-based relationships provide service, listening, stewardship, and sympathy. This kind of leadership was found in most of the case-study schools. The spirit of friendship, including caring, fostering, networking, and spreading energy, is found throughout these madrasahs. This attitude also enables principals to be objective and honest with their members and vice versa.
In conclusion, servant leadership presents as one of the leadership approaches identified in this study. Certain characteristics, such as leaders providing stewardship, listening, sympathy, and mentoring, are noteworthy in the findings of this research. This study reveals friendship-based leadership as a surprising finding; it includes all the characteristics of servant leaders as well as other friendship notions such as caring, fostering, networking, and spreading energy.

**Kinship leadership**

Kinship leadership is one of the most vigorous indigenous leadership styles revealed in this research. As a multicultural country, the Indonesian culture is strongly influenced by its diverse background, through which people tend to develop tolerance as a way of establishing unity. Some distinctive values, such as a friendly society, a welfare system, religion, and life assurance, are generally included in the Indonesian culture (Prideaux, 2006; Zakia & Pritasari, 2018). Indonesian people automatically apply these values and develop a sense of unity wherever they are (Tuerah et al., 2018). This unity is defined as relative nature relationship (Sanjaya, 2019) where people take on the responsibility of caring for each other like family.

Since these indigenous values are embedded in the Indonesian people, they might influence leadership approaches as well. Kinship leadership is adopted for some purposes, such as to strengthen emotional relations, equality, collegiality, and togetherness (Irawanto, 2009; Sanjaya, 2019; Tuerah, 2018). In educational leadership in Indonesia, kinship leadership is adopted to develop togetherness and maintain good interactions among school members (Tuerah, 2018). School principals encourage members to have this sense, by considering the school as their second home, and other members as their family (Sanjaya, 2019).

In this research, kinship leadership was seen in all the case-study schools. The principals of seven Madrasah Aliyahs, in Tangerang Selatan and Bekasi, West Java, displayed kinship
relations when interacting with their followers, parents, and community (Section 7.4). There are five significant findings shown as kinship characteristics in this research.

Firstly, the leader is a role model, whereby principals act as a figure who can provide a positive influence on all madrasah members. The principal in this study acts as a positive influencer by showing respect, treating followers equally, and giving appreciation for teachers and students (Section 7.4.1). This finding revealed that a role model principal is also defined as a leader with an open-minded personality. A good leader, according to MAW4-P1, is a leader who can listen and accept opinions, feedback, and criticism from their followers. This may encourage members to get used to being open in criticising and giving feedback (Section 7.4.1).

Secondly, being trustworthy is part of kinship relations in Madrasah Aliyahs. This study revealed that performing in a trustworthy manner is intended to develop trust among members and develop a sense of belonging to the madrasah. Being honest is an element of trustworthiness in which a leader is open and transparent in carrying out his leadership. This creates mutual respect between people. Lastly, the findings reveal that being trustworthy inspires good communication and interactions by developing emotional connections among members (Section 7.4.2).

Thirdly, spirituality is an essential part of kinship leadership because religious and ethical values are a part of organisational culture in the Indonesian context. This research project reveals that a principal’s spirituality is seen in elements such as religious rituals, piety, and social responsibility. For a leader of an Islamic education institution, performing religious ritual is a significant means of working with members and community to understand the importance of Islamic education. Inviting members and the community to become involved in religious activities such as praying in the mosque or celebrating Islamic holidays provides a chance for leaders to promote the madrasah in their society (Section 7.4.3).
Piety in the context of kinship leadership in Madrasah Aliyahs is demonstrated when leaders believe that a responsibility they bear is part of their responsibility in front of God. Most leaders take this as one of the ways in which they can get closer to God. Some principals think being a leader is a mandate from God as well as from humans. Therefore, being a principal is not only being responsible to God but also to their social community (Section 7.4.3).

Fourthly, a madrasah principal has a role as a father figure. This is a major finding in this study, as a father figure can develop a family-type bond between leaders and followers. The findings of this study revealed that a father figure has two other functions, those of defender and unifier. A defender's role is to protect and advocate for members of a madrasah when one of them faces internal or external problems at the school. A unifier role is to provide and encourage school followers to respect and support each other in order to develop unity among members (Section 7.4.4).

Finally, a humble attitude has been understood in this study to mean that being a leader does not mean being on top of a power hierarchy or being a superior person who knows and understands everything. Humble madrasah leaders enact their leadership by sharing power and offering assistance to each other in order to solve challenges faced by the madrasahs (Section 7.4.5).

In summary, the prevalence of kinship leadership is one of major findings in this research project. Most of the case-study schools apply this approach since kinship values are among the significant values that are embedded in the organisational identity in Indonesia. This finding reveals that role modelling, being trustworthy, spirituality, father figures, and being humble are essential characteristics of kinship leadership.
8.3.3. Cultural leadership in Madrasah Aliyah in the Indonesian context

In this study, indigenous leadership mostly appeared in the form of kinship-based leadership, which has been developed by most of the school principals studied. Kinship values are among the significant values that are embedded in organisational identity in Indonesia. For a father (leader) to rule his children (subordinates), the father figure demands power, authority, and legitimacy. Father-ism is like the expression of the hierarchical relations between leader and subordinates (Raihani, 2008). In the Indonesian context, father mostly manifests as the first man of the family who has more rights to decide significant solutions and overcome conflict that occurs in a family (Irawanto, Ramsey, & Ryan, 2011). However, in the Indonesian culture, a father exists as a strong, respectful figure and extends beyond family boundaries (Irawanto et al., 2011), which can be interpreted as a leader with uncompromised power who is difficult to criticise. Therefore, if father-ism is implicated in an organisation, uncomfortable interactions might occur in the workplace.

However, the findings in this research reveal the concept of a father figure in a different light. As stated previously in Section 7.4.4, a father figure carries a positive implication in leadership practice. Principals were successfully presenting their good behaviour with good manners and without arrogance when developing interaction among subordinates.

Moreover, they tended to provide guidance and act as a role model to their followers. These facts influence religious beliefs which derive the leaders from avoiding negative characters in using their power. Therefore, the kinship-based leadership in this study also shows other values, such as spirituality, humility, and trustworthiness.
The study indicates that most of the Madrasah Aliyah principals have a religious education background. This, in fact, influences the way the principals provide their leadership practice in the institutions. They promote spirituality as the main values in leading the madrasahs. Further, they believe that the power they have is a mandate from God. So, betraying this mandate would constitute sin. Therefore, in order to build trust, most of the principals maintain good performance, including by demonstrating a humble, polite and honest attitude towards their subordinates, community, and parents.

8.4. Implications, recommendations, and contributions of the study

This research project has various implications for the theory of leadership practice in an educational context, and also in practical matters, especially offering a new model of leadership approaches in the Islamic-based school or mainstream context.

8.4.1. Implications for knowledge development

The findings of this research project have several theoretical implications related to new insights into indigenous leadership in Islamic-based schools in Indonesia. Firstly, leaders as mediator and buffer are an original insight of catalytic leadership. As change agents, leaders do not only need to become creative, good entrepreneurs, collaborators, and developers of strategies to address issues, (Luke & Luke, 1997; Morse, 2010; Rebore & Walmsley, 2008), but they must also become mediators and buffers (Kuttner, 2011; Williams & Sullivan, 2011) to overcome internal and external challenges. Leaders are required to be conflict specialists who are able to take a central role in the process of overcoming disputes among followers.

Secondly, another new perception of indigenous leadership in a madrasah in Indonesia is that of leaders as father figures. It is common in the Asian context that leaders who take on a role as a father figure will succeed in developing family-type bonds among members of an
institution. With this strategy, leaders can encourage a close relationship encompassing conviction, harmony and love, so that members can develop their trust towards leaders (Costas & Taheri, 2012; Erol & Senturk, 2018; Ilies et al., 2005; Pellegrini & Scandura, 2008; Stein, 2005). This finding reveals that father figures are also defenders and unifiers, so that school principals can protect their subordinates away from conflict that might harm them, and principals can encourage school members to display good manners, words, and respect between each other.

Thirdly, being trustworthy and humble are indicators of significant insight into indigenous leadership theory in Indonesian Madrasah Aliyahs. The findings reveal that a trustworthy attitude displayed by a school principal will encourage staff and teachers to develop their sense of belonging to the madrasah they work in. Therefore, they will tend to improve their school’s quality based on their ability; as Caldwell and Hayes (2010) mentioned, a trust-based relationship might initiate strong commitment and motivation for members to enhance their performance.

The last finding relates to friendship-based leadership. This approach has been found to be able to strengthen a theory of servant leadership when leaders adopt practices such as providing service, listening, stewardship, and sympathy to organisation members (Greenleaf, 2002; Spears, 2010). In addition, these research findings reveal that a leaders’ objective and honest attitude strengthens friendship-based leadership. These leaders do not judge an individual based on their personal feeling to their followers. They commit to treating members fairly when they make a decision. An honest attitude encourages leaders to be transparent and open with members in managing the madrasah.
8.4.2. Implications for leadership practice

This study has a significant practical implication for the field of leadership practice in the Indonesian context. Principal leadership practice in this research promotes three approaches: catalytic, servant, and kinship leadership.

Principals may adopt one of the approaches in the process of leading and administrating schools. Every approach has a different function and might be suitable to adopt in different institutions. Which approach might be adopted and integrated, wholly or partially, depends on a principal’s personality.

Most of the madrasahs in Indonesia face common challenges to their performance. The adoption of an appropriate approach may result in an effective solution. For example, catalytic leadership could be suitable for a challenging school, since a principal is expected to find a good solution in order to change the school’s performance for the better. A creative, change agent model of principal is needed for this situation. Likewise, servant leadership is appropriate to evolve an emerging school into a developed one because it is important to develop resources to reach a goal. In servant leadership, the school principal tends to provide service, stewardship, and mentoring to fulfill teachers’ need as well as to overcome their weaknesses and strengthen their capacities.

Kinship leadership is in accordance with Indonesian cultural values; so most school leaders could apply this approach. This approach is performed to maintain and strengthen the emotional connection between principals and school members. These research findings revealed that kinship leadership is mostly performed by developed Madrasah Aliyah, which invites teachers and staff satisfaction and a sense of belonging to the madrasah they work in. These members are encouraged to develop their performance happily. As a result, the madrasah
produces outstanding performance and outcomes. Leaders who create an emotional connection through kinship leadership can improve teachers’ performance no matter at what stage or level the schools currently sit.

In the next section, this research project makes recommendations in reference to policymakers, stakeholders, and principals for improving madrasah performance and leadership approaches in the Indonesian context or similar context in Asia.

**8.4.3. Implications for policy-making process**

The findings of this research revealed that some Madrasah Aliyahs find that school budgeting, infrastructure and facilities, and community are challenging issues that might hinder the school’s improvement. This should be a concern for policymakers, especially the Indonesian Ministry of Religion Affairs (MoRA) and the Ministry of National Education (MoNE). School subsidies through programs such as *Biaya Operasional Sekolah (BOS)* (School Operational Fund) and *Daftar Isian Pelaksana Anggaran (DIPA)* (The Budget Implementation List) are given based on student numbers. In other words, the higher the number of students in one school, the more budget allocation the school receives. This is problematic for challenging school that have fewer students. On one hand, they need a lot of funding to improve school infrastructure and facilities. On the other hand, low numbers of students limit the school’s ability to obtain more funds from the government. Therefore, it is significant for policymakers to be more focused on challenging schools in terms of providing more funds to support school improvement.

This study has examined three leadership practices: catalytic, servant, and kinship leadership. These approaches have revealed some Indonesian indigenous values, such as leaders as mediator and buffer, friend, father figure, and humble in attitude. These findings could establish
outstanding principal leadership with the goal of improving school performance. Therefore, it is essential for policymakers to design a leadership training curriculum and to provide this training for principals as well as developing these approaches in schools in Indonesia. Legislation may be needed to implement this in order to maintain and control principal quality in managing schools.

**8.4.4. Implications for stakeholders and community**

This study suggests that stakeholders and community should have a direct connection with the school and school principal. The catalytic, servant, and kinship approaches would become significant interaction tools used by the principals to create attachments. An entrepreneur strategy within the catalytic leadership approach promoted the place of the madrasah in the community by presenting religious education. This aimed to make the community interested in knowing more about the madrasah and willing to take a part in madrasah development (Section 7.2.2). In servant leadership, the principals had a significant role in developing networks with the community so that the principals could initiate cooperation with the community in establishing the madrasah infrastructure (Section 6.5.2). The concept of being trustworthy and acting as a father figure that was shown by madrasah principals tended to develop a sense of belonging and emphasised the importance of the madrasah’s existence so that the community had an interest in maintaining the existence of the madrasah (Sections 7.4.2 and 7.4.4). It is necessary to develop training programs (provided by the government) for principals to explore the three leadership approaches and develop leadership skills as part of the project of involving the community in the school improvement process.
8.5. Limitations of the study and directions for future research

Further research is needed to support this study’s findings, enhance our understanding of indigenous leadership in the school management system, and consider how capable it is of improving school performance. A range of research focuses could be considered.

This study has several limitations. Firstly, this qualitative research is limited to seven case-study schools in two settings in South Tangerang and Bekasi, West Java, and a total of 56 participants including principals, deputy principals, and teachers. Given the fact that there are over 8,807 Madrasa Aliyahs in Indonesia (Emis, 2020), to gain more understanding of leadership practices, further research with a larger sample in different regions is needed to gain comprehensive insight into indigenous leadership practice in madrasahs. Future research could include interviews with students, parents, stakeholders, and communities to find out their opinions and contributions to improving madrasah performance.

Secondly, the focus of this research was limited to a qualitative exploratory study utilising interviews and observations on leadership practice in the seven case-study Madrasah Aliyahs. There is likely to be discrepancies between self-reports and actual behaviours and practices. Further research that focuses on an ethnographic approach is important in order to support more in-depth exploration into the insights of principal leadership. A mixed-method approach that utilises a survey and interviews might accommodate the collection of larger amounts of data. The findings of such research would extend a greater understanding of the impact of indigenous leadership in Indonesia.

Thirdly, this study presents a preliminary model of leadership approaches in selected madrasahs in Indonesia, specifically the catalytic, servant, and kinship leadership practised by Madrasah Aliyah principals. Further research is needed to design models to develop the three
leadership approaches and apply them for the professional development of school principals. This might involve both research and development strategies. All the processes would be recorded and evaluated to see how relevant the model is for different principals from different schools. This further research would be essential to test the model and refine it by comparing the catalytic, servant, and kinship leadership in diverse school contexts in Indonesia.

Fourthly, since this study found that the school foundation, community, and parent engagement are the main factors in developing school performance, the researcher strongly recommends designing another research study to explore how far the community and parents contribute to supporting and addressing challenges, such as the recruitment of students, pedagogical problems, and financial support issues in Madrasah Aliyahs in Indonesia. A survey with open-ended or Likert scale questions might be suitable for gaining information.

Finally, several additional factors contribute to leadership practices in Madrasah Aliyahs, such as gender, different religions, ideologies, and economic development, which are beyond the scope of this study. Further research studies informed by these perspectives would offer new insights and enrich our understanding of leadership as contextualised practices. For instance, the researcher recommends that further research can explore the differences in cultural practices between modern and religious schools. It is significant to compare principal leadership practices in managing modern and religious institutions, as well as to look deeper at any possible conflict that might occur in heterogenous (general) and homogeneous (religious) schools. It is also essential to develop a comparative study on how principals and teachers conduct KTSP and Curriculum 2013 and to see how these curricula work well and fulfil school needs.
8.6. Concluding remarks

This research project has explored the Madrasah Aliyah challenges and how principal leadership practice addresses the challenges in order to improve school performance. The exploration indicates that factors such as school finances, infrastructure and facilities, leadership, and community engagement influence the quality of madrasah performance. Additional research is needed to gain more information about the leadership practices of Madrasah Aliyah principals in further extensive settings with more participants. Some elements, such as students, parents, stakeholders, and community, should be interviewed to gain holistic data. Community engagement is a significant factor to be explored since it has an important role in madrasah development. Research and development are also essential to design leadership models, such as catalytic, servant, and kinship approaches, so that madrasahs, and particularly their leaders, can access the models to gain insights on leading institutions.

The recommendation of the research for policy-making and stakeholders/community is that provision of support for madrasahs is crucial to enhance their quality, especially in developing school infrastructure, learning facilities, and finance. These bodies are expected to support the designed program of leadership practice that adopted the concept of catalytic, servant, and kinship approaches for madrasah principals. They might contribute to developing the principals’ capacity to manage the schools and make greater changes to improve the madrasahs.

In conclusion, this research has developed new insights regarding school improvement, leadership approaches, and indigenous leadership in the Indonesian context. It was found that a dynamic level of Madrasah Aliyahs in Indonesia was characterised as comprising the challenging, emerging, and developed levels of Madrasah Aliyahs. The study categorised some factors, such as finance, infrastructure and learning facilities, leadership, and community engagement that influenced these levels.
In addressing Madrasah Aliyah challenges and developing communication and interaction among teachers, staff, and community, the Madrasah Aliyah principals enacted catalytic leadership, which was found in most of the challenging Madrasah Aliyahs. The principals of emerging and developed Madrasah Aliyahs tended to perform servant and kinship leadership, where leaders provide service using friendship and family approaches to school members and community. These findings are a starting point for understanding indigenous leadership in an educational school in the Indonesian context. The concept of leader as mediator and buffer is important when solving internal conflict in a school. A friendship-based interaction in the organisation might open an opportunity for school teachers to improve their performance. A leader who presents as a father figure, trustworthy, humble, and spiritual, will increase and maintain members’ sense of belonging to the school, as well as invite parent and community engagement to support the madrasah improvement.
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Appendices

Appendix 1 Interview protocol

Interview protocol for principals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research questions</th>
<th>Interview Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preliminary question</td>
<td>1. Please give some background information about yourself, i.e. education background, working experience, years of working as madrasah principal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ1. What are the challenges faced by Madrasah Aliyahs in Indonesia?</td>
<td>2. What are the significant challenges which are faced by Madrasah Aliyahs and the key issues to be resolved?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RQ2. What are the features of the principals’ leadership styles applied in Madrasah Aliyahs?

a. How do the principals deal with the dualism of curriculum?

b. How do the principals manage and develop the school facilities to support teaching and learning?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RQ 3. How do the principals develop teachers’ teaching performance and how do the principal-teacher interactions affect teacher performance?</th>
<th>4. How do you deal with the dualism of curriculum (K13 and KTSP) in the teaching learning process in Madrasah Aliyahs?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RQ2. What are the features of the principals’ leadership styles applied in Madrasah Aliyahs?</td>
<td>5. How do you balance the teacher workload for both curriculum administration?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. How do the principals deal with the dualism of curriculum?</td>
<td>6. How do you manage the finance and develop the school facilities to support the teaching and learning process?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. How do the principals manage and develop the school facilities to support teaching and learning?</td>
<td>7. How do you enhance teacher performance and support teacher professional development?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Interview protocol for teachers

### Research questions

#### Preliminary question

1. Please give some background information about yourself, i.e. education background, working experience, years of working as teacher in madrasah.

#### RQ1. What are the challenges faced by Madrasah Aliyahs in Indonesia?

2. As a teacher do you find any challenges or issues that need to be resolved in the Madrasah Aliyah where you teach?

3. What do you think about the principal’s efforts in resolving the issues?

#### RQ2. What are the features of the principals’ leadership styles applied in Madrasah Aliyahs?

4. Do you think the combination of K13 and KTSP in madrasah curriculum has become a burden for you?

5. What do you think about the principal’s strategies to manage the curriculum administration and teacher workload?

6. Are the school finance and facilities sufficient to support the teaching and learning process?

7. What kinds of activities promote your teaching performance and professional development?

8. Is there any evaluation of your performance in the madrasah and how does the principal undertake it?

#### c. How do the principals deal with the dualism of curriculum?

#### d. Do the principals manage and develop the school facilities to support teaching and learning?
### Appendix 2 Observation protocol

**Observation Sample**

**Observation Protocol**
(Creswell, 2007, p.137)

#### Length of activity 120 minutes

**Case study: MAS1, Public Madrasah Aliyah in South Tangerang**

**Day 1 (16 April, 2018)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Madrasah members arrivals:</th>
<th>Reflective note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Madrasah members arrivals:</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Principal: 6.30 am</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Deputy of Curriculum: 7.00 am</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Deputy of Student: 6.30 am</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Deputy of Admin &amp; Finance: 7.15 am</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Teachers: 6.30-7.30 am</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity:</th>
<th>Reflective note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activity:</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Morning ceremony: 7.10</td>
<td>1. The ceremony was led by Deputy Principal of Curriculum Affairs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Classroom activities: 7.30</td>
<td>2. NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Meeting of Kartini Day (Principal and teachers): 8.00</td>
<td>3. Meeting for Kartini day:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. School observation (Researcher): 10.15</td>
<td>a. There were five teachers and the principal, as well as the researcher in the meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. The meeting discussed some agenda, including preparing the time schedule of the event and job description for teachers and students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. At the meeting, P1 asked the researcher to provide a speech about women leader in Indonesia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. School observation (infrastructure and facilities):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. 30 classrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Laboratories (biology, physics, chemist, computer, and language). Each class was scheduled to study in the science labs (biology, physics, and chemist) in some different days. Meanwhile computer and language laboratories were used rarely.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Praying room (Mushalla) was designed to separate between men and women students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d. All classes had optimal lighting, air conditioning, and projectors in few classrooms (five rooms).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e. School library: more textbooks than other genres such as literatures, science, or general knowledge. A computer was provided in the library. A reading room was designed on the carpet with some tables and pillows on it. Nevertheless, it looked untidy and unclean. The researcher found some rubbish around the area. It was found (during the first day visit) none of students came and study in library.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f. Clean and tidy toilets; however, some sinks were broken.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i. One basketball field that also was used as school oval to gather students in ceremony.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>j. The motorcycles and car park were located near the basketball field. There were full of student vehicles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>j. One refectory inside the campus. Most of students and teachers had their lunch there.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>k. Teacher room looked stuffy. There were a lot of papers and books on the teacher desks. Moreover, some traditional music</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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291 | Page
Instruments were put in the corner of the room, which made the office more crowded. The researcher found that the room is too small for 30 teachers and three deputy principals.

**Interview session with Principal: 9.00–10.15**

**Interview**

a. Principal’s office was large and supported with large desk, a unit of computer, large table with eight chairs, sofa and tea table, pantry, and cupboard.

b. The principal was friendly and like to smile.

c. He spoke with low tone and intonation.

d. He kept addressing himself with ‘we’; to stressed that he worked in team.

e. He really interested on art and music development in the school curriculum. The researcher found there were a lot encouragement the art development for students.
Appendix 3 Participant information sheet and informed consent in English

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION FORM

Research project title: Exploring Indonesian Principals’ Leadership Practices in Islamic-Based Senior High Schools (Madrasah Aliyahs): Address Challenges and Enhance School Performance

Project aim
This study will be conducted in madrasah Aliyahs in two regions: South Jakarta and South Tangerang, Indonesia. It aims to investigate the influence of the leadership practice in the madrasah Aliyah school improvement.

Benefit of the project
This research will bring together the understanding of leadership practice and its implications in coping with the challenges in the madrasah in Indonesia. Specifically, the study will explore the leadership practice of madrasah Aliyah principals and investigate how they address the challenges such as curriculum, school facilities and infrastructure, financial constraint, and teacher development in order to develop madrasah improvement.

The possible benefits for the participants
Taking part in this research project will provide an opportunity for you to reflect on your experience in the school and benefit you professionally. The benefits may include your reflections on your leadership practice as a principal/deputy principal and how you can improve your leadership in managing and improving madrasah. This will encourage you as teachers to share your perspectives and work experience in your school. The reflections may provide an opportunity for generating new learning that will have the potential to improve the quality of the teaching in your school.

Participant involvement
As a participant in this research, you will be invited to participate in a face to face, in-depth interview and provide answers to the questions asked by the researcher. Some school events and teacher development activities in your madrasah Aliyah will be observed and noted by the researcher in the fieldwork. The researcher may take the photos to gain more comprehensive information on the activities she observed.

Confidentiality
The researcher will inform all participants that any information about them is confidential. The researcher guarantees that the information provided will be handled with respect and discretion. Only the researcher has access to your individual data. Data are collected only for the stated research purpose and will not be used for any other purposes without your permission. The research is a part of the researcher’s PhD study at the University of Canberra. The results of the study will be presented through the researcher’s thesis and any possible publications and conference papers. To ensure and safeguard your personal information, identifying information will be removed from the thesis, report and publications. Participant’s individual data will be anonymised in the thesis or any publication arising from this study.
Your participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time with no consequences. To indicate agreement to this process, you will be required to sign the informed consent form. Participation in this study will involve no cost to you. You will not be paid for participating in this study.

**Anonymity**
The information collected from participants will be non-identifiable. Pseudonyms and codes will be used for the analysis of the data and in the thesis and publications. Only the researcher will know the codes.

**Data storage**
All records data will be kept secure by the researcher. Following the University of Canberra protocols, data will be stored for a five-year period, after which it will be destroyed.

**Human Research Ethics Approval**

**Quarries and concerns**
This research project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of University of Canberra.

If you require further information or have any questions related to this research project, please contact the researcher and her supervisor at the University of Canberra.

---

**Researcher**

Name: Ummi Kultsum  
Course: Doctor of Philosophy in Education  
Faculty: Faculty of Education, The University of Canberra, ACT, 2601, Australia  
Email: [researcher@email.com]

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**Primary supervisor**

Name: Professor. Ting Wang, PhD  
Associate Dean (Education)  
Faculty: Faculty of Education, The University of Canberra, ACT, 2601, Australia  
Email: [primary.supervisor@email.com]

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**Human Ethics and Integrity University of Canberra**

Research Ethics and Integrity Officer  
Research Services Office  
Building 1 Level D Room 88  
University of Canberra  
Email: [human.ethics@canberra.edu]
INFORMED CONSENT

Research project title: Exploring Indonesian Principals’ Leadership Practices in Islamic-Based Senior High Schools (Madrasah Aliyahs): Address Challenges and Enhance School Performance

I, ________________________________, agree with the following:

• I have read and understood the participant information sheet for the above study.

• I understand that my participation is voluntary.

• I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time without any consequences for me.

• I understand that all information I provide will be treated as confidential and will be anonymised.

• I understand that my individual information will be anonymised in the thesis or any publication arising from this study.

• I agree to take part in the above study.

Signature of participant: ______________________________ Date: ______________

Signature of researcher: ______________________________ Date: ______________
Appendix 4 Institutional Letter of Approval in English

Letter of Approval

Dear Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of Canberra,

This is to confirm that Madrasah Aliyah (MA), Indonesia _________________________, _________________________(name of the School), grants approval to Ummi Kultsum to conduct the data collection for her research project entitled “Exploring Indonesian Principals’ Leadership Practices in Islamic-Based Senior High Schools (Madrasah Aliyahs): Address Challenges and Enhance School Performance”. Further, Ummi has informed us the design of the study as well as the targeted participants, and we agree to support her in obtaining the data she needs.

We will provide the required assistance for the success of her research study. Should you need further enquiry, please kindly contact us at ______________________

Sincerely yours,

Signature of principal: __________________________ Date: ______________

(Name of principal)
Appendix 5 participant information sheet and informed consent in Bahasa Indonesia

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Judul penelitian: Exploring Indonesian Principals’ Leadership Practices in Islamic-Based Senior High Schools (Madrasah Aliyahs): Address Challenges and Enhance School Performance

Tujuan penelitian

Manfaat penelitian
Penelitian ini akan mempertemukan pemahaman tentang praktik kepemimpinan dan implikasinya dalam menghadapi tantangan di madrasah di Indonesia. Secara khusus, studi ini akan mengeskplorasi praktik kepemimpinan kepala sekolah madrasah Aliyah dan bagaimana mereka menangani tantangan yang dihadapi madrasah seperti kurikulum, fasilitas dan infrastruktur sekolah, kendala keuangan, dan pengembangan guru untuk mengembangkan peningkatan madrasah.

Manfaat yang mungkin diperoleh oleh partisipan
Berpartisipasi dalam penelitian ini akan memberi kesempatan bagi Anda untuk pengalaman Anda di sekolah dan memberi manfaat bagi Anda secara profesional. Bahkan, pengalaman dapat dijadikan bahan pembelajaran baru bagi orang lain.

Keterlibatan peserta
Sebagai peserta dalam penelitian ini, Kami memohon agar Bapak/Ibu untuk berpartisipasi dalam wawancara tatap muka, wawancara mendalam dan memberikan jawaban atas pertanyaan yang diajukan oleh peneliti. Beberapa kegiatan sekolah dan kegiatan pengembangan guru di madrasah Aliyah juga akan diamati dan dicatat oleh peneliti. Kami juga memohon agar peneliti dapat mengambil foto kegiatan tersebut untuk mendapatkan informasi yang lebih komprehensif tentang aktivitas yang sedang ia amati.

Kerahasiaan
Untuk memastikan dan melindungi informasi pribadi Anda, identifikasi informasi akan dihapus dari tesis, laporan dan publikasi. Data individu peserta akan dianonimkan dalam tesis atau publikasi yang muncul dari penelitian ini.

Partisipasi Anda bersifat sukarela, dan Anda dapat mengundurkan diri kapan saja Anda mau tanpa ada konsekuensi di kemudian hari. Untuk menunjukkan kesepakatan terhadap proses ini, Anda akan diminta untuk menandatangani formulir “informed consent” atau surat kesediaan menjadi partisipan.

Partisipasi dalam penelitian ini tidak akan memerlukan biaya apapun bagi Anda, dan Anda tidak akan dibayar untuk berpartisipasi dalam penelitian ini.

**Anonimitas**
Informasi yang dikumpulkan dari interview tidak dapat diidentifikasi. Pseudoni dan kode akan digunakan untuk analisis data, tesis, dan publikasi. Hanya peneliti yang akan mengetahui kodenya.

**Penyimpanan data**
Semua data yang ada akan disimpan secara aman oleh peneliti. Mengikuti protokol yang telah ditetapkan oleh University of Canberra maka data akan disimpan selama 5 tahun untuk kemudian dimusnahkan.

**Izin dari Komite Etika**
Penelitian ini telah disetujui oleh komite etika University of Canberra di bidang penelitian manusia.

**Pertanyaan dan Informasi**
Untuk informasi lebih lanjut atau pertanyaan berkaitan dengan penelitian ini, silahkan menghubungi peneliti dan pembimbing pertama peneliti dengan kontak sebagai berikut:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Researcher</th>
<th>Primary supervisor</th>
<th>Research Ethics and Integrity Officer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name: Ummi Kultsum</td>
<td>Name: Professor. Ting Wang, PhD</td>
<td>Research Services Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course: Doctor of Philosophy in Education</td>
<td>Faculty: Education, The University of Canberra, ACT-2601, Australia</td>
<td>Building 1 Level D Room 88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty: Education, The University of Canberra, ACT-2601, Australia</td>
<td>Email:</td>
<td>University of Canberra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email:</td>
<td>Phone: (+61)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Email:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INFORMED CONSENT

Project title: Exploring Indonesian Principals’ Leadership Practices in Islamic-Based Senior High Schools (Madrasah Aliyahs): Address Challenges and Enhance School Performance

Yang bertanda tangan di bawah ini, saya, ______________________________________, menyetujui bahwa:

- Saya telah membaca dan memahami lembar informasi tentang penelitian tersebut di atas.
- Saya mengerti bahwa pasrisipasi saya bersifat sukarela.
- Saya mengerti bahwa saya berhak untuk membatalkan hasil wawancara ini kapan saja tanpa ada konsekuensi tertentu terjadi pada saya.
- Saya mengerti bahwa semua informasi yang saya berikan bersifat rahasia dan akan dianonimkan.
- Saya mengerti bahwa semua data akan dituliskan dalam laporan tesis dan publikasi.
- Saya bersedia untuk menjadi bagian dalam penelitian tersebut.

Tanda tangan partisipan: _____________________ Tanggal: _____________

Tanda tangan peneliti: _____________________ Tanggal: _____________
Appendix 6 Institutional Letter of Approval in Bahasa Indonesia

Letter of Approval

Kepada YTH,

Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of Canberra,


Kami akan menyediakan bantuan untuk kesuksesan studi penelitian yang Ummi lakukan.

Jika anda membutuhkan informasi tambahan atau pertanyaan, silahkan kontak kami pada ____________________

Hormat kami,

Tanda tangan Kepala MA: ________________________  Tanggal: ______________

(Nama Kepala Sekolah)
Appendix 7 Sample of the colouring coding system

Colour codes:
- Yellow → Finance
- Blue → Leadership
- Purple → Infrastructure and facilities
- Green → Community
- Grey → Others

Brief sample of Interview with MBS2-P1

[00.03]-P : ………………………..
[00.04]-N : ………………………..

***

[03.25]-P : iya ok, kembali ke pertanyaan sebelumnya itu, kalau menurut Pak Rusli ini kira-kira tantangan yang kayaknya masih dihadapi oleh madrasah menurut bapak gimana? karena kita melihat Madrasah Pembangunan ini sudah performanya sudah bagus, tapi itu kan melalui proses ya pak ya, dan kita melihat challenge yang paling signifikan yang dihadapi sama Madrasah Pembangunan itu apa? khususnya Madrasah Aliyah?


[05.47]-P : misalnya apa pak?


[07.04]-P : kami dengar itu di madrasah itu masih ada Kurikulum 2013 nya juga ya pak, selain KTSP?

[07.16]-P : berarti harus seragam yang sekarang?

[07.20]-N : kalau di swasta ini yang terakhir yang kelas 12 ini, kalau negeri kan sudah 2 tahun yang lalu kan sudah, sama peningkatan SDM memang kita selalu mengupdate itu. Kalau keuangan kita tidak ada masalah kok, karena system keuangan sudah diatur sedemikian rupa. Bahkan pihak Yayasan, kepala madrasah, dan staff saling terbuka terkait penggunaan dana yang diberikan, itu beda dengan madrasah-madrasah yg lain.

[07.41]-P : itu sumber dari keuangan itu dari yayasan atau?

[07.43]-N : dari wali murid, 100% dari wali murid, ya mungkin tidak 100% karena ada bantuan BOS dari pemerintah.

[07.55]-P : Itu kalau alokasi BOS itu kemana pak?

[07.56]-N : kalau BOS itu banyak alokasinya kan ada kegiatan untuk seminar kemudian apa namanya bantuan siswa kurang mampu kemudian pembelian buku, baru tahun ini yg buku. Terus alokasi guru-guru kontrak, sarprasnya, seputar itu aj, yang BOS itu.

***

[09.15]-N : Oh, ada iya. Jadi kita yang terbaik-terbaik itu ada bebas SPP selama satu tahun tapi tahun kedua kalau dia masih bisa bertahan ya bisa bebas terus sampai 3 tahun itu, terus kayak anak yang kurang mampu segala macam, kan ada dana BOS tadi kan.

[09.44]-P : kembali ke kurikulum tadi tuh pak, untuk solusi yang teachers masih beliefs nya untuk mengembangkan knowledge dibandingkan karakter itu gimana, bapak?

[09.52]-N : saya si apa namanya kalau pelatihan kan seminggu apa lagi zaman Pak Bahris ini memang dia menekankan kepada pengembangan SDM ya, tapi kalau tidak didorong oleh keberanian kepala sekolah dan guru itu nggak bisa bu. Jadi belul-belul guru itu kalau kita, kan kita ada konsorsium bidang studi ya. Jadi di konsorsium itu kita berikan pandangan bahwa pembentukan karakter anak sangat penting di samping juga pengetahuan, jadi jangan ngajarnya cuman di kelas saja.

[10.42]-P : untuk ini agak-agak teknis ya pak. Untuk memberikan dorongan sama teachers supaya perfomancenyanya lebih bagus itu training memang, tapi willingnya itu kan yang mungkin belum hadir di gurunya. Nah ini bapak punya trik kayak gimana ?


[13.11]-P : jadi itu inisiasi bapak untuk meningkatkan teachers performance, hasilnya?


[14.09]-P : Kita lanjut ya pak. Tadi tantangan yang tentang kurikulum tidak ada masalah ya pak, di financial, manajemen juga sudah oke, karena kemarin juga saya dapat bocoran dari Pak Bahris bahwa financial itu sudah diatur pusat dan itu luar biasa.

[14.33]-N : makanya kalau kita rapat dengan kepala sekolah lain bicara BOS, bantuan itu mereka kelihatannya sangat menguasai, kalau saya sih diam saja kenapa, karena kan sudah ada yang ngatur, kita kan hanya tanda tangan saja.

[14.51]-P : jadi kembali yang ke kelas 12 yang lalu yang ada dualisme kurikulum 2013 dan kurikulum KTSP itu, itu kan beban guru menjadi lebih banyak dari yang kemarin, itu apakah menjadi burden tertentu kepala sekolah atau mungkin ada hal yang bisa bapak kembangkan untuk mendukung unjuk kinerja guru terhadap administrasi kurikulum tadi itu pak?

[15.18]-N : ... kalau saya penanaman motivasi dan kinerja itu, memang saya agak sedikit tegas dengan guru guru, artinya kalau pembinaan atau training itu baik yang diadakan oleh sekolah maupun di luar itu selalu kita kirim apalagi kalau disini kan, di samping Pak Bahris juga sangat mendukung. Saya sangat tegas dan disiplin, kalau saya terhadap itu, jadi untuk pembuatan perangkat pembelajaran itu kan menjadi wajib, ada beberapa perangkat yang harus dibuat guru, dimulai dari tahun ajaran baru, karena itu adalah bagian penilaian kinerja kita, dinilai, kalau nggak nanti dia bisa nggak naik pangkat dan golongan, karena kita setiap Oktober dan April ada penilaian pangkat dan golongan.

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Nah itu yang jadi konsekuensi dari kepala sekolah dengan beban kerja yang banyak itu, atau mungkin membuat apa. Saya tidak bilang bonus atau mungkin biaya-biaya tersendiri ketika mereka membuat administrasi dengan pengerjaan dari di luar sehari mereka?

kalau selama ini yang kita berikan ketika membuat kecepatan perangkat pembelajaran Pak Bahris ngasih bonus, tapi kalau yang lain ikut bagian dari tugas mereka sebagai guru kan, Tupoksi guru, tapi kalau ini kita kasih, kasih kalau dia melatih kemudian anak ikut lomba juara internasional/nasional dari kelas mana saja, kalau dia menjadi pelatihnya kita kasih, memang ada itu anggarannya, kita kasih rewardnya lah.

ok selanjutnya ini pak tadi kalau keuangan itu sudah diatur pusat dan kepala sekolah tidak ada intervensi kesana ya pak?

makanya kalau ada istilah nyogok atau apa disini mah susah.

memang sistemnya memang satu institusi berbeda dengan yang lain ya pak, jadi bakap sendiri tidak turut campur ?

makanya kalau ada istilah nyogok atau apa disini mah susah.

Kalau disini Prof. Abuddin pokoknya disini itu TORnya jelas untuk setiap kegiatan. Karena ketika mau buat anggaran kita harus buat TOR dulu dan di hadapan yayasan kita presentasi tuh depan Pak Rojak, Pak Jafar, karena setiap pengambilan dana itu salah satunya kan ada dari ketua yayasan, dan Pak Abuddin support terus jadi ibaratnya tidak macam-macam.

terkait ini pak, model leadership yang bapak terapkan saya nggak tahu ya, kita tidak bicara teori, apa yang bakap terapkan hingga bisa membangun komunikasi dari bawah ke bakap dan dari bakap ke yayasan itu bagaimana pak?

saya kalau masuk jam 7 terus guru datangnya jam 7 lewat sama saya itu kena itu, untuk seluruh aturan saya malah Pak Jaka lebih tegas lagi, tapi kata orang juga saya tidak boleh ini kan, memang saya tidak pernah apa namanya membedakan dalam hal komunikasi dengan siapapun dengan OB dengan siapapun ya ibaratnya nggak jaim lah, makanya saya bebas bercanda dengan siapa saja termasuk guru, tapi kalau masalah dinas saya tidak boleh kompromi.
[23.19]-P : jadi so far guru- guru enak saja ya pak komunikasinya ya ?

[23.21]-N : nanti tanya guru saja kalau itu, kalau komunikasi sih jalan dan tidak ada masalah. Apalagi kan kita juga memperhatikan mereka misalnya ketika dia sakit dengan ucapan semoga cepat sembuh, itu aja kan guru merasa senang, walaupun hati kita kesal ya, kok ini guru sakit terus, tapi kan kalau kita ucapkan itukan lama- lama nanti dia mungkin malu juga kan.

[23.59]-P : karena ini madrasah ya pak yang orientasinya memang pengembangan keagamaan, walaupun yang kita kenal sekarang banyak madrasah sudah mengkombinasikan antara mainstream knowledge dengan ilmu agama yang 30% ilmu agama yang sisanya ilmu mainstream. Nah sebagai kepala sekolah bapak melihat gimana supaya atmosfir keagamaan itu tetap hidup di madrasah yang bapak pimpin ini?


[25.14]-P : ada kegiatan tertentu tidak pak untuk memaintain nilai-nilai akhlak ke siswa ?

[25.24]-N : disini kan setiap pagi kan ada kegiatan yang kita sebut habitual kurikulum, jadi disitu mungkin ini sudah sangat biasa ya di sekolah lain, yang sholat dhuha, dan hafalan-hafalan Al-Qur’an, surat-surat, mereka pidato di samping tadi penegakan disiplin, terus kemudian sholat berjama’ah, adzan ketika sholat tiba, waktu sholat tiba kita adzan, walaupun sholatnya memang belakangan karena tergantung waktu, maka ya saya berfikir bagaimana supaya agar setiap waktu sholat itu agar langsung berhenti dan sholat. Cuma mengatur waktunya susah, jadi kepotong kegiatan belajar, padahal itu bagus kita praktekkan saat adzan berhenti langsung sholat cuma ngatur waktunya itu susah, selesai kegiatan sampai jam 15.25 terus sholat Ashar ada kegiatan dari hafalan dari baru pulang.

[26.49]-P : selama bapak jadi kepala sekolah ya dari SMP sudah dari tahun 2009 itu masih bertemu banyak atau pernah menghadapi konflik-konflik apa itu pengikut, guru-guru, orang tua dan mungkin dari yayasan, bagaimana bisa memberi contoh atau bagaimana bapak mengatasi konflik tersebut ?

[27.22]-N : kalau dengan atasan saya ya saya belum pernah, ya mungkin saya bekerja sesuai tugas kemudian tidak pernah melawan, karena memang tidak yang untuk dilawan, kalau dengan guru memang kalau guru di Aliyah karena memang gurunya disiplin ya memang aman ya, yang artinya tidak saya tenukan kecuali ada satu dua guru yang memang di sisi disiplin saja, soal kedatangan, kalau mengajar bagus. Kalau saya kan sudah bilang karena kenapa, guru ini kan ditiru kalau gurunya saja terlambat anak ini bagaimana kan, itu saya yang tidak bisa terima itu.

[28.12]-P : itu gimana pak, apa sesuai peringatan atau ?
... bukan semata mencari uang tapi juga mendidik, memberi contoh, apalagi kita mencari uangnya kan disini cari makan nya disini ya harus kita bela, kalau memang tidak bisa tinggal pilihan, jadi pilihannya itu mau tetap disini atau keluar, disamping kita tidak misalnya kepala sekolah menganakemaskan yang satu yang lain biasa atau sering begini kemudian dia dicuekin. Kalau saya tidak semuanya sama tidak ada yang saya bedakan, kecuali dalam hal pengangkatan kepanitiaan memang saya harus cari orang-orang yang bagus, kan bagian tanggung jawab dan layanan ke orang tua.

P : jadi bapak konseptornya kemudian mereka yang membuat

... memang kalau disana kita sedikit memiliki tantangan. Gurunya banyak guru yang senior, kan tipe gurunya berbeda, ada guru yang sekedar datang ngajar terus pulang, ada guru yang betul-betul di samping juga dia datang ngajar dan dia juga mengekspos dirinya dan mengekspos ke anak-anak, dan juga ada tipe guru yang malas kalau itu kita dialog saja walaupun ada yang tidak mempan.

P : ok, tadi itu tentang manajemen konflik tadi dan disiplin keagamaan ya pak, kalau masalah siswa tidak masalah pak tentang disiplin siswa ini?

N : kalau siswa kan harus begitu, makanya kalau di era saya keluarin anak banyak, bukan banyak mungkin ada, kan disini kita itu ada istilahnya poin ya lebih dari 100 sudah dikeluarkan dengan tahapan-tahapan walaupun anak siapa latar belakang apa itu tidak kenal ampun, tapi ya bersyukur tidak ada yang melapor ke KPAI, ya mungkin ada ancaman-ancaman, dan kita hanya mengedepankan disiplin.

P : kriteria apa yang bapak, ok this is the one selain test?

N : kita kan ada masa 2 bulan mereka setelah ada microteaching nya, kan banyak orang hanya sebentar kalau kita 2 bulan terus dinilai jadi seperti magang, jadi dari disiplin waktunya, cara mengajarnya kemudian human reason dengan guru-guru lain dan uji kompetensi sosialnya bagus tidaknya, tanggapan anaknya semua jadi komprehensif dan baru kita pilih kita tentukan.

P : apa namanya kalau, terakhir ini pak ya, kalau guru-guru yang, ok lets say kita sudah punya guru-guru yg sudah punya standar dalam seleksi guru dan akhirnya kita menganggap dia bagus dan menerima tapi diproses ternyata mereka masih ditemukan kelemahan, nah itu bagaimana cara mengatasinya?

N : kan sistem kontrak, jadi setelah dia tanda tangan kontrak satu tahun, dan selanjutnya di evaluasi oleh baper jakat atau badan pertimbangan jabatan yang dibentuk oleh yayasan, dan itu nilai, saya juga melapor juga berdasarkan penilaian, penilaian kita itu yang pertama supervisi yang kedua dari kehadiran kemudian pembuatan praktek pelajaran itu terus kompetensi sosialnya dan sama penilaian anak, dan itu kita gabung selama setahun dan kemudian kita laporan kalau misalkan di bawah standar kita ya tidak di perpanjang kontrak nya tapi kalau masih ada toleransi di buat kontrak lagi tinggal kita panggil misalkan ada potensi tapi kurangnya ada disini kita panggil dan perpanjang lagi, dan baru nanti ketika mau CAPEG kita evaluasi lagi bertahap ini panjang tahapannya, setahun kemudian kalau masih di kontrak lagi ya maksimal 2 tahun kalau 2 tahun dia bagus lagi ke
CAPEG atau calon pegawai, calon pegawai satu tahun bagus akan menjadi pegawai tetap, ya jadi kayak PNS gitu sistem nya dan juga ada tunjangan anak, tunjangan istri ,tunjangan suami juga ada terus juga ada asuransi pensiun.

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[41.05]-P : yang keluar negeri ada pak ?

[41.06]-N : keluar negeri belum, sebenarnya sih bisa kita rancang tapi budgetnya kan terlalu tinggi, tsanawiyah kan setiap tahunnya ada program ke malaysia dan australia kelas bilingualnya ya, luas miniminya dulu saya yang merancang saat saya di tsanawiyah, ketika di aliyah juga ada tapi bukan kelas bilingual tapi kelas bahasa, pelajaran TOEFLnya untuk kelas 10 dan pelajaran IELTSnya di kelas 11.

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[42.29]-N : kalau dari teori sih yang jelas bukan otoriter.

[42.35]-P : Kalau di Islam itu, kalau Rasulullah itu dikenal transformational leadership ya mungkin bapak menurut kan itu, memberikan wewenang kepada orang yang ahli ya itu kan rasul kayak ustman dengan keuangan abu bakar dengan leadership dengan perang nya transformation leadership itu yang jadi team work yang bagus, nanti saya nanya pak Wafa untuk guru,saya mungkin mau nanya guru mungkin nanti 4 guru tapi kata guru nya priawanita terus guru baru sama guru lama itu jadi mungkin dia.

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[45.56]-N : kalau stafnya beda dan itu keunikan disini, staf nya itu bukan di bawah kita, jadi di bawah kepegawaian, ya MP termasuk OB, SATPAM, TU, jadi kita bukan atasannya tapi ya walaupun bukan atasannya staf.

[46.38]-P : ini gedung baru ya pak ?

[46.42]-N : Ini 2006 bu, jadi sesungguhnya dari tahun 95 bu, yang Aliyah, karena saya pernah mengajar di Aliyah angkatan pertama, 95 selama 3 angkatan selesai, karena waktu itu ada perdebatan di tingkat yayasan untuk membuat boarding school, Aliyah keagamaan, kemudian entah kenapa tidak jadi ya, di samping juga gedung untuk boarding itu tidak ada akhirnya sementara tidak menerima lagi, baru menerima lagi waktu (perkataan kurang jelas), guru pertama itu guru-guru Tarbiyah waktu pembukaan 2006 kebanyakan dari sana angkatan pertama, angkatan pertama pada 2006 masuknya yang Aliyahnya, yang Aliyahnya kan tahun 95 dan waktu 97 itu sudah tidak aktif lagi itu angkatan terakhir 97, baru buka lagi 2006, ya jadi dari gedung ini sejak 2006, kalau saya sudah ibaratnya di MP ini sudah tahu luar dalamnya dari tahun 93.