

Integrative Islamic Leadership for Strengthening Teacher Character and School Resilience in the Globalization Era

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Abstract

Abstract Globalization has created challenges for Islamic educational institutions in maintaining their identity while adapting to changing educational demands. In this context, principals play an important role in strengthening teachers' Islamic character and enhancing school resilience through leadership practices that integrate professional, cultural, and spiritual dimensions. This study aims to examine the principal's integrative Islamic leadership practices at SD IT Al-Busyiro in strengthening teacher character and school resilience. This research employed a qualitative approach with a case study design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation involving the principal, classroom teachers, and *Ummi* teachers selected through purposive sampling. Data were analyzed through thematic analysis, including data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, with credibility ensured through triangulation. The findings reveal that the principal's leadership is implemented through five interconnected practices: systematic teacher professional development, integration of academic and spiritual roles through collaboration between classroom and *Ummi* teachers, cultivation of a religious school culture, strengthening teachers' spiritual growth, and developing participatory communication. These practices demonstrate that teacher character and school resilience are not achieved through administrative management alone but through an integrative leadership approach that combines professional competence, Islamic values, and collective responsibility. This study contributes to Islamic educational leadership studies by highlighting how institutional resilience can be developed through the synergy between organizational support and internalized religious values while maintaining Islamic identity amid globalization.

Keywords: Islamic Character, Principal Leadership, Teacher Professional Development, School Resilience.

1. Introduction

Globalization has significantly transformed the educational landscape by accelerating technological development, increasing demands for professional competence, and changing students' social and learning characteristics (Kumar,

2025; Rahimi & Oh, 2024; Rehman, 2025). These changes provide opportunities for educational innovation; however, they also create challenges for Islamic educational institutions in maintaining their identity, moral values, and educational missions. Schools are required not only to improve academic quality but also to ensure that educational processes continue to develop students' character amid rapid social and cultural transformation (Darwanto et al., 2024; Iksal et al., 2024).

In Islamic education, teachers occupy a central position because they are not only responsible for transferring knowledge but also for becoming role models in shaping students' attitudes and moral values (Jusubaidi et al., 2024; Lutfi et al., 2026). The role of teachers extends beyond instructional activities, as their personal character, integrity, responsibility, sincerity, and ethical behavior influence the formation of students' character (Jelovac, 2025). Therefore, strengthening teachers' Islamic character becomes an essential component in developing sustainable Islamic educational institutions (Mu'alimin et al., 2026; Succarie, 2024). Teachers with strong Islamic character are expected to integrate professional competence with moral responsibility so that education does not merely produce academically capable students but also individuals with ethical awareness and religious values (Orgianus et al., 2024; Umami & Yasin, 2024).

However, maintaining teacher quality and character development has become increasingly complex in the era of globalization. Teachers face various challenges, including increasing professional demands, technological changes, diverse student characteristics, and changes in social values. Without adequate institutional support, these challenges may affect teacher motivation, professional commitment, and the ability of schools to adapt to external changes. Therefore, schools require leadership that is able to develop teacher capacity while simultaneously maintaining the religious identity of Islamic educational institutions.

Principals play a strategic role in shaping school development and organizational resilience (Fernandes et al., 2023). Contemporary educational leadership is no longer limited to administrative management but involves developing human resources, building organizational culture, facilitating collaboration, and creating adaptive educational environments (Mpuangnan & Roboji, 2024; Nadeem, 2024a). In Islamic schools, principals face a more complex leadership responsibility because they must integrate professional educational demands with Islamic values (Rahman, 2025; Zahirri & Sahal, 2025). Effective leadership requires the ability to strengthen teachers' professional competencies while fostering spiritual commitment and collective responsibility among school members (Ghamrawi et al., 2024a).

The concept of school resilience has become increasingly important as educational institutions encounter continuous changes caused by globalization, technological development, and shifting educational policies (Connolly et al., 2026; Hajar, 2024; Moravec & Martínez-Bravo, 2023). School resilience refers to the

capacity of educational institutions to maintain their core values, adapt to challenges, and continue improving their educational quality. Previous studies indicate that resilient schools are developed through strong leadership, shared goals, teacher collaboration, and supportive organizational cultures (Özen & Yavuz, 2024; Wilson Heenan et al., 2023; Zadok et al., 2024). However, resilience is not merely an organizational response to external pressures; it is also constructed through internal values and collective meanings shared by school members.

Several previous studies have stated that examined principal leadership in relation to school effectiveness, teacher performance, instructional improvement, and organizational development (Galdames-Calderón, 2023; Meyer et al., 2023). Some research on Islamic educational leadership has also highlighted the importance of religious values in shaping school culture. Nevertheless, existing studies have rarely explored how Islamic school principals integrate professional development, religious culture, academic-spiritual collaboration, and participatory leadership practices as interconnected strategies to strengthen teachers' Islamic character and school resilience (Al-Shawarghi, 2024). In particular, limited attention has been given to how these leadership practices operate within Islamic elementary schools that combine academic instruction and spiritual development (Said et al., 2023).

SD IT Al-Busyiro provides an important context for examining this phenomenon. As an Islamic elementary school, the institution develops an educational system that integrates academic and religious dimensions through collaboration between classroom teachers and *Ummi* teachers. Classroom teachers are responsible for general learning and student character development, while *Ummi* teachers focus on Quranic learning and spiritual formation. This unique organizational arrangement reflects an effort to harmonize professional educational practices with Islamic values. Although it is a relatively young institution, SD IT Al-Busyiro has gained recognition within the community due to its strong Islamic environment and educational identity.

This study aims to explore the principal's integrative Islamic leadership practices in strengthening teachers' Islamic character and school resilience at SD IT Al-Busyiro. Besides that, this study examines how leadership practices related to teacher professional development, academic-spiritual role integration, religious school culture, spiritual growth, and collaborative relationships contribute to the development of a resilient Islamic educational institution in the era of globalization.

2. Method

2.1. Research Design

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to explore the principal's integrative Islamic leadership practices in strengthening teachers' Islamic character and school resilience at SD IT Al-Busyiro. A qualitative

case study approach was selected because this study aimed to understand educational leadership practices within their real-life context and to explore how leadership strategies are implemented, experienced, and interpreted by school members (Creswell, 2018; Isik, 2025; Yin, 2018).

The case study was conducted at SD IT Al-Busyro, an Islamic elementary school that integrates academic learning and Islamic character development through classroom teachers and *Ummi* teachers. This school was selected as the research setting because it represents an emerging Islamic educational institution that seeks to maintain its religious identity while responding to contemporary educational challenges caused by globalization. The study specifically examined how the principal develops teacher professionalism, cultivates Islamic school culture, facilitates collaboration among educators, and strengthens institutional resilience.

The research was conducted from January to March 2026. The case was analyzed through multiple sources of evidence, including interviews, observations, and document analysis, to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the leadership practices and their contribution to teacher character development and school resilience.

2.2. Research Participants

The participants in this study were selected using purposive sampling, a technique used to identify individuals who have direct knowledge and experience related to the research phenomenon (Campbell et al., 2020). The selection of participants was based on their active involvement in implementing leadership practices, teacher development programs, Islamic character formation, and school resilience initiatives at SD IT Al-Busyro.

The participants consisted of the principal, classroom teachers, and *Ummi* teachers. The principal was selected as the key informant because of their role in designing and implementing school leadership strategies. Classroom teachers were involved because they directly experience and implement academic and character education practices in daily learning activities. Meanwhile, *Ummi* teachers were included because they represent the spiritual dimension of the school's educational system, particularly in Quranic learning and religious character development.

A total of five participants participated in this study, consisting of one principal, two classroom teachers, and two *Ummi* teachers. The number of participants was determined based on the principle of information adequacy, where data collection continued until the researchers obtained sufficient information to understand the patterns of leadership practices and their implications for teacher character and school resilience.

2.3. Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected through three techniques: in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. The use of multiple data collection

techniques was intended to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the principal's leadership practices and their contribution to strengthening teachers' Islamic character and school resilience (Camburn et al., 2010; Day et al., 2016). In-depth interviews were conducted with the principal, classroom teachers, and *Ummi* teachers to explore their experiences, perceptions, and interpretations regarding leadership practices implemented at SD IT Al-Busyro. The interviews focused on several themes, including teacher professional development programs, the integration of academic and spiritual roles, the cultivation of Islamic school culture, communication patterns between school leaders and teachers, and strategies for dealing with educational challenges in the era of globalization. The interviews were conducted using a semi-structured format to allow participants to provide detailed explanations while maintaining alignment with the research objectives.

Participant observation was conducted to examine the actual implementation of leadership practices and school culture in daily activities. The researchers observed teacher interactions, learning activities, religious programs, collaborative meetings, and the relationship between the principal and teachers. Observation data were used to identify how Islamic values, professional practices, and collaborative behaviors were reflected in the school environment.

Document analysis was conducted to complement interview and observation data. The documents analyzed included school profiles, teacher development programs, meeting records, school activity documentation, and policy guidelines related to Islamic character development and educational management. These documents provided additional evidence regarding the implementation of leadership strategies and institutional practices. The combination of interviews, observations, and document analysis enabled data triangulation and provided a deeper understanding of how principal leadership strategies were implemented within the specific context of SD IT Al-Busyro.

2.4. Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using an interactive qualitative analysis model consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification (Bunkar et al., 2024). The analysis process began by organizing and coding data obtained from interviews, observations, and documents. Relevant information related to principal leadership practices, teacher Islamic character development, and school resilience was identified, categorized, and compared to discover emerging patterns.

The categorized data were then interpreted to develop themes that represented the research findings. Through this process, five major themes emerged: systematic teacher professional development, integration of academic and spiritual roles through classroom and *Ummi* teacher collaboration, cultivation of Islamic school culture, spiritual growth as a source of teacher resilience, and collaborative leadership practices in strengthening school resilience. The findings

were continuously verified by comparing information from different data sources to ensure that interpretations were grounded in the empirical evidence.

3. Findings

3.1. Principal Leadership through Systematic Teacher Professional Development

Systematic teacher professional development is one of the principal's main leadership strategies at SD IT Al-Busyro in strengthening teachers' professional competence and Islamic character. The principal didn't position teacher development merely as a formal training activity but as an ongoing process involving capacity building, reflection, and collaborative learning among educators.

Data showed that teacher professional development was conducted through workshops, training programs, and internal knowledge-sharing activities. When training was conducted offline, selected teacher representatives participated as school delegates. However, the knowledge obtained from these activities was subsequently disseminated through internal teacher meetings to ensure that all teachers received similar information and learning opportunities. Meanwhile, online training programs involved all teachers directly, allowing collective improvement of professional competencies.

Another formal training activity like weekly teacher meetings became an important mechanism for continuous professional learning. During these meetings, classroom teachers discussed various instructional challenges, including students' learning difficulties, behavioral issues, and possible solutions. These discussions functioned not only as coordination activities but also as reflective spaces where teachers exchanged experiences, developed problem-solving strategies, and strengthened collaborative learning practices.

Beside that, professional development was closely related to teachers' ability to respond to educational changes, particularly challenges arising from students' changing behaviors in the digital era. Teachers recognized the need to develop more adaptive, interactive, and student-centered learning approaches. Through regular reflection and peer discussion, teachers gained opportunities to learn from each other's experiences and improve their pedagogical practices.

3.2. Integration of Academic and Spiritual Roles through Classroom and Ummi Teachers Collaboration

The findings reveal that one of the distinctive leadership strategies at SD IT Al-Busyro is the integration of academic and spiritual responsibilities through the collaboration between classroom teachers and Ummi teachers. Based on interview data, the teaching staff is divided into two main groups with complementary responsibilities. Classroom teachers are responsible for general academic instruction, classroom management, students' character development, and monitoring daily learning processes. Meanwhile, Ummi teachers focus on Qur'anic learning, including improving students' recitation skills, developing religious habits, and strengthening spiritual values.

The collaboration between these two groups demonstrates that the school does not separate academic achievement from spiritual development. Instead, both dimensions are organized as interconnected components of the school's educational system. The principal coordinates these roles to ensure that intellectual development and Islamic character formation occur simultaneously within the learning process.

Ummi teachers undergo a more structured competency preparation system due to their specific responsibility in Qur'anic education. Before teaching, prospective *Ummi* teachers are required to participate in Ummi method training to ensure consistency in teaching procedures and the quality of Qur'anic instruction. In addition, regular coordination meetings with the Ummi coordinator and regional coordinator are conducted to monitor teaching quality and improve teachers' competencies.

The implementation of the Ummi method also reflects the school's effort to provide adaptive Islamic learning management. Qur'anic learning is conducted through several daily sessions, with students grouped based on their Qur'anic reading abilities rather than formal classroom levels. This arrangement allows teachers to provide learning experiences that correspond with students' individual abilities.

3.3. Religious School Culture a Foundation for Teachers' Islamic Character

Teachers' Islamic character at SD IT Al-Busyro is strengthened primarily through the development of a religious school culture rather than through formal regulatory mechanisms. Interviews revealed that teachers perceive Islamic values as an essential part of their professional identity because they represent the image and values of the institution in the eyes of students, parents, and the wider community.

Teachers explained that working in an Islamic-based school requires consistency between professional responsibilities and personal behavior. Teachers are expected to demonstrate appropriate attitudes, communication styles, and appearances that reflect Islamic values in their daily interactions. These expectations are not merely imposed through written rules but are developed through continuous exposure to religious practices, organizational habits, and relationships among school members.

This is supported by observation data that Islamic values were embedded in daily school activities and teacher interactions. Religious practices, moral guidance, and mutual respect among educators became part of the school environment that encouraged teachers to internalize Islamic values naturally. Through this cultural approach, the principal strengthened teachers' self-awareness and commitment rather than relying only on external supervision.

Beside that the foundation supporting SD IT Al-Busyro also contributed to strengthening the religious orientation of educators through regular spiritual guidance. Monthly meetings involving foundation members and educators

provided opportunities for reflection on the meaning of the teaching profession, emphasizing that teaching was not only a professional responsibility but also a form of moral and religious commitment.

3.4. Spiritual Growth and Teacher Resilience in Facing Educational Challenges

Beyond professional development and organizational support, teachers' ability to maintain commitment and emotional stability was closely related to their understanding of teaching as a meaningful responsibility rooted in Islamic values. Interview data revealed that regular spiritual guidance provided by the foundation and school leadership contributed to teachers' reflection on the meaning of their profession. Monthly gatherings involving foundation leaders and educators became a space for delivering moral messages and strengthening teachers' commitment to the original purpose of becoming educators. Teachers perceived teaching not merely as an occupational responsibility but also as a form of dedication and religious service.

Teachers also explained that spiritual values such as sincerity, gratitude, and commitment helped them cope with various professional challenges. Difficulties related to workload, changing student characteristics, and educational demands were not perceived solely as obstacles but as part of the learning process and professional growth. These perspectives enabled teachers to maintain emotional stability and continue fulfilling their responsibilities with commitment.

The findings further show that teacher resilience at SD IT Al-Busyiro was developed through the interaction between organizational support and internal spiritual resources. While institutional practices provided professional and social support, teachers' internalization of Islamic values became an important source of strength in managing stress and maintaining dedication amid educational changes.

3.5. Collaborative Leadership and School Resilience

Interview data revealed that the principal developed an open and participatory communication environment in which teachers were encouraged to express ideas, discuss difficulties, and share experiences related to teaching practices. Formal and informal meetings provided spaces for teachers to discuss classroom issues, student behavior, and professional challenges. Teachers perceived these interactions as opportunities to receive support, exchange solutions, and reflect on their teaching experiences. The communication process was not limited to administrative coordination but also functioned as a mechanism for strengthening trust and emotional connections among school members.

Collaboration among teachers developed into a professional learning community. Teachers regularly shared teaching strategies, discussed student characteristics, and assisted each other in addressing learning difficulties. This collaborative relationship reduced individual pressure and created a supportive working environment where teachers felt valued and connected to the institution.

Through these collaborative practices, SD IT Al-Busyiro developed organizational flexibility in responding to changing educational conditions. The

combination of shared responsibility, mutual support, and participatory communication enabled the school community to maintain its educational mission while adapting to challenges associated with globalization and changing student needs. Full details are provided in the following table.

Table 1. Integrative Islamic Leadership for Strengthening Teacher Character and School Resilience

Leadership Practice	Empirical Evidence	Teacher Character	Resilience Dimension
Professional Development	Training, reflective meetings, peer learning	Competence & adaptability	Adaptive capacity
Academic-Spiritual Integration	Classroom-Ummi teacher collaboration	Responsibility & integrity	Collective capacity
Religious School Culture	Daily religious practices	Religious commitment	Cultural continuity
Spiritual Growth	Religious reflection & mentoring	Commitment & emotional stability	Psychological resilience
Participatory Communication	Meetings, consultation, shared decision-making	Collaboration & responsibility	Organizational adaptability

4. Discussion

4.1. Principal Leadership through Systematic Teacher Professional Development

The findings indicate that the principal views teacher professional development as a continuous process rather than a series of formal training activities. Beyond organizing workshops and seminars, the principal creates opportunities for teachers to engage in reflective learning and collaborative knowledge sharing through regular meetings and professional discussions. This approach enables teachers to continuously improve their pedagogical competence while responding to emerging educational challenges. These findings support that effective professional development is characterized by continuous learning, collaboration, and active teacher engagement (Adhikari & Budhathoki, 2025; Ghamrawi et al., 2024b). Likewise, Adhikari argue that collaborative learning strengthens teachers' professional capital by promoting shared knowledge and collective responsibility for school improvement (Adhikari & Budhathoki, 2025).

The study also shows that professional development contributes not only to improving instructional competence but also to strengthening teachers' Islamic character. Regular reflection, collaborative learning, and shared responsibility cultivate values such as sincerity (*ikhlas*), responsibility, mutual support, and continuous self-improvement. In addition, ongoing discussions help teachers respond to the challenges of digitalization and changing student characteristics through more adaptive and student-centered learning practices, consistent with educational leadership. These findings suggest that professional development in Islamic schools serves a dual function: enhancing teachers' professional competence while reinforcing their religious character, thereby strengthening

school resilience and preserving the institution's Islamic identity in the era of globalization.

4.2. Integration of Academic and Spiritual Roles through Classroom and Ummi Teachers Collaboration

The findings demonstrate that the collaboration between classroom teachers and Ummi teachers represents an integrative leadership strategy that combines academic excellence with Islamic character formation. Rather than separating cognitive and spiritual development, the principal coordinates both teaching roles to create a holistic educational process. This finding supports the concept of integrated Islamic education, which emphasizes the inseparable relationship between intellectual, moral, and spiritual development in achieving educational goals (Bahri et al., 2025).

The structured preparation of Ummi teachers and the implementation of the Ummi method further illustrate the principal's commitment to maintaining instructional quality and consistency in Qur'anic education. Regular training, competency standards, and ability-based student grouping reflect adaptive instructional leadership that responds to students' learning needs while preserving Islamic educational values. These findings are consistent with instructional leadership theory, which highlights the importance of aligning teacher competence, curriculum implementation, and learning quality to improve educational outcomes (Gechere et al., 2025; Hadi et al., 2024; Jean & Gading, 2024). Moreover, this collaborative model demonstrates that integrating academic and spiritual responsibilities can strengthen the school's Islamic identity while enhancing its capacity to respond to contemporary educational challenges.

4.3. Religious School Culture a Foundation for Teachers' Islamic Character

The findings indicate that the principal strengthens teachers' Islamic character primarily by cultivating a religious school culture rather than relying on formal regulations. Islamic values are internalized through daily interactions, religious practices, and shared organizational norms, enabling teachers to develop professional identities that align with the school's Islamic mission. This finding supports that organizational culture shapes members' beliefs and behaviors more effectively than formal rules (Gechere et al., 2025; Kilag & Sasan, 2023). Similarly that a positive school culture fosters shared values and strengthens teachers' commitment to institutional goals (Lijun & Te, 2024; Plaku & Leka, 2025).

Another important finding is that the foundation's regular spiritual guidance reinforces teachers' understanding of teaching as both a professional responsibility and an act of worship. This continuous reflection encourages teachers to practice values such as sincerity (*ikhlas*), integrity, and responsibility in their daily work. These findings are consistent that spiritual leadership, which highlights the role of spiritual values in enhancing commitment and intrinsic motivation (Piwowar-Sulej & Iqbal, 2024). Therefore, strengthening teachers' Islamic character through religious culture not only supports individual moral

development but also reinforces the school's Islamic identity and organizational resilience in responding to the challenges of globalization.

4.4. Spiritual Growth and Teacher Resilience in Facing Educational Challenges

The findings suggest that teachers' resilience is strengthened not only through organizational support but also through the internalization of Islamic spiritual values. Regular spiritual guidance encourages teachers to perceive teaching as both a professional responsibility and an act of worship, fostering values such as sincerity (*ikhlas*), gratitude, and commitment. These values help teachers maintain emotional stability and remain dedicated despite increasing educational demands. This finding is consistent with the theory of spiritual leadership, which emphasizes that spiritual values enhance intrinsic motivation, commitment, and psychological well-being in the workplace (Syahir et al., 2025).

Furthermore, the findings indicate that teacher resilience emerges from the interaction between external support and internal spiritual resources. While the school provides opportunities for professional growth and social support, teachers' religious beliefs enable them to interpret work-related challenges as opportunities for personal and professional development rather than as sources of stress. This finding supports the idea that religious beliefs function as positive coping resources in dealing with adversity (Roszak et al., 2025). Likewise, Al-Thani said that resilient teachers sustain their professional commitment when supported by both conducive organizational environments and strong personal values (Al-Thani et al., 2025; Diab & Green, 2024). Therefore, strengthening teachers' spiritual growth represents an important leadership strategy for enhancing school resilience while preserving the Islamic identity of the institution.

4.5. Collaborative Leadership and School Resilience

The findings demonstrate that open communication and teacher collaboration are essential leadership strategies for strengthening school resilience. By creating opportunities for teachers to share ideas, discuss instructional challenges, and reflect on their professional experiences, the principal fosters a supportive work environment built on trust and mutual respect. This finding is consistent with the statement that participatory leadership strengthens teachers' commitment by encouraging shared decision-making and professional dialogue (Ağalday, 2025). Effective school leaders improve educational outcomes by promoting collaborative relationships and maintaining open communication with teachers (Nadeem, 2024b; White et al., 2025).

The study also reveals that collaboration among teachers functions as a professional learning community that facilitates knowledge sharing, collective problem-solving, and mutual support. Such collaboration reduces individual work pressure while enhancing teachers' professional competence and organizational commitment. Professional learning communities promote continuous school improvement through collective learning and shared responsibility (Ghamrawi et al., 2024b). Likewise, Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) argue that collaborative

cultures strengthen organizational capacity and enable schools to respond more effectively to educational change. Therefore, participatory communication and collaborative leadership not only improve teachers' professional practices but also enhance school resilience by enabling the institution to adapt to globalization while maintaining its educational mission and Islamic values.

5. Conclusion

This study concludes that the principal's leadership at SD IT Al-Busyiro reflects an integrative Islamic leadership approach that connects professional development, spiritual value internalization, collaborative relationships, and adaptive organizational practices. Rather than relying on administrative control, this leadership approach strengthens teacher character by integrating professional competence with Islamic values and collective responsibility.

The findings indicate that school resilience emerges through the interaction of organizational support and teachers' internalized religious values. Professional development strengthens teachers' capacity to adapt to changing educational demands, while the integration of classroom and *Ummi* teachers connects academic and spiritual responsibilities. At the same time, a religious school culture, sustained spiritual development, and participatory communication create a shared environment that reinforces teachers' commitment, responsibility, and collective capacity to respond to professional and institutional challenges. These dimensions function not as separate leadership strategies but as interconnected elements of an integrative leadership process.

This study contributes to Islamic educational leadership research by demonstrating that school resilience can be understood not only as an organizational capacity but also as a process shaped by the internalization of Islamic values within institutional practices and relationships. Practically, the findings suggest that Islamic schools seeking to remain resilient in the era of globalization should develop leadership systems that simultaneously strengthen professional competence, spiritual development, collaborative learning, and institutional adaptability. The experience of SD IT Al-Busyiro illustrates that responding to global educational changes does not necessarily require compromising Islamic identity; rather, professional excellence and Islamic identity can be mutually reinforcing when integrated through purposeful leadership.

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