

Islamic Education Teacher Talent Management: A Competency Development Strategy in Islamic Junior Secondary Schools

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Abstract

Teacher competency development has become a significant challenge in Islamic education, particularly amid the demands of digital literacy and the improvement of learning quality. However, talent management practices for teachers in madrasahs have received limited contextual attention, especially regarding the integration of professional competencies with Islamic values. This study aims to analyze the implementation of teacher talent management in competency development at MTs Puteri Sunniyyah Selo. The research employed a qualitative method with a case study approach. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation, and subsequently analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model. The findings reveal that teacher talent management is implemented through the identification of teachers' potential, continuous competency development, the provision of non-financial rewards, as well as teacher placement and retention based on their competencies. This implementation is supported by leadership commitment and a collaborative work culture, although it still faces challenges in the form of limited facilities and the low utilization of digital technology in learning. The findings indicate that talent management contributes to improving teacher competencies and learning quality through the integration of professional, spiritual, and social dimensions. The novelty of this study lies in revealing talent management practices within the context of a female Islamic junior secondary school (madrasah) that integrates teacher professional development with the strengthening of Islamic values in a comprehensive manner.

Keywords: Talent Management; Competency Development; Madrasah Teachers; Islamic Education.

Abstrak

Pengembangan kompetensi guru menjadi tantangan penting dalam pendidikan Islam, terutama di tengah tuntutan literasi digital dan peningkatan kualitas pembelajaran. Namun, pengelolaan talenta guru di madrasah masih belum banyak dikaji secara kontekstual, khususnya dalam mengintegrasikan kompetensi profesional dengan nilai-nilai keislaman. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis implementasi manajemen talenta guru dalam pengembangan kompetensi di MTs Puteri Sunniyyah Selo. Penelitian menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kasus. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan model Miles, Huberman. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa manajemen talenta guru dilaksanakan melalui identifikasi potensi, pengembangan kompetensi berkelanjutan, pemberian penghargaan non-finansial, serta penempatan dan retensi guru sesuai kompetensi yang dimiliki. Implementasi tersebut didukung oleh komitmen pimpinan dan budaya kerja kolaboratif, meskipun masih menghadapi kendala berupa keterbatasan fasilitas dan rendahnya pemanfaatan teknologi digital dalam pembelajaran. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa manajemen talenta berkontribusi terhadap peningkatan kompetensi guru dan kualitas pembelajaran melalui integrasi aspek profesional, spiritual, dan sosial. Kebaruan penelitian ini terletak pada pengungkapan praktik manajemen talenta dalam konteks madrasah puteri yang memadukan pengembangan profesionalisme guru dengan penguatan nilai-nilai keislaman secara terpadu.

Kata kunci: Manajemen Talenta; Pengembangan Kompetensi; Guru Madrasah; Pendidikan Islam;

INTRODUCTION

The transformation of education in the digital era and Society 5.0 has significantly changed the competency demands placed on teachers. Teachers are no longer solely responsible for delivering knowledge but are also required to integrate digital technology, develop innovative learning practices, and facilitate students in acquiring twenty-first-century skills. Recent studies indicate that teachers' digital competence has become one of the key factors determining the quality of learning and the successful integration of technology in education (Entriza & Puspitasari, 2025). A bibliometric study of Scopus-indexed publications shows that research on teachers' digital competence has increased significantly over the last decade and has become one of the primary focuses in the development of modern education (Aprilianata et al., 2025). These findings suggest that teacher competency development is no longer viewed merely as an individual necessity but rather as an institutional strategy for continuously improving educational quality.

However, the increasing demands have not been fully matched by teachers' competency readiness in practice. Several studies in Indonesia indicate that teachers still encounter challenges in integrating technology into the learning process, particularly in the development of digital learning media, the utilization of learning platforms, and the application of technology to enhance learning quality (Entriza & Puspitasari, 2025). Research conducted by Gusmana (Gusmana & Syamzaimar, 2025) demonstrates that teachers' digital competence is still influenced by limitations in training opportunities, technological experience, and institutional support. Similarly, (Aifalesasunanda et al., 2024) found that although teachers possess a high level of awareness regarding the importance of digital literacy, they continue to face obstacles in the form of limited technical skills and insufficient ability to integrate technology pedagogically into the learning process. These conditions indicate a gap between the demands of teacher professionalism in the digital era and the competency development practices currently implemented in various educational institutions.

These challenges become even more complex within the context of Islamic education. Madrasah teachers are not only expected to possess adequate professional and pedagogical competencies but are also required to internalize Islamic values in every aspect of the learning process. The role of madrasah teachers encompasses functions as educators, mentors, and role models in shaping students' character. Therefore, teacher competency development in madrasahs cannot rely solely on the enhancement of technical skills but requires an approach capable of developing professional, pedagogical, social, and spiritual dimensions in an integrated manner (Farid et al., 2026). One relevant approach to addressing this need is talent

management, a human resource management strategy oriented toward the identification, development, utilization, and retention of individuals based on their potential and competencies (Harun et al., 2020; Volkova et al., 2021).

The urgency of implementing talent management in teacher development is reflected in the phenomenon identified at MTs Puteri Sunniyyah Selo. Based on the researcher's preliminary observations, the utilization of digital learning media by teachers remains relatively low, and the learning process is still predominantly dependent on textbooks as the primary source of learning. The use of technology-based media, such as digital learning platforms, interactive learning applications, and innovative presentation media, has not yet been optimized. Furthermore, teacher competency development remains largely oriented toward administrative requirements and has not been fully based on the systematic mapping of teachers' potential, individual needs, or career planning. This condition indicates a gap between the competency demands of twenty-first-century teachers and the human resource development practices implemented within the madrasah environment.

Studies on talent management in the field of education have developed considerably in recent years. Nevertheless, most previous research has focused on general schools, formal educational organizations in a broader sense, or human resource management from the perspective of educational management in general (Akbar et al., 2021; Koh & Abdul Razak, 2024). Meanwhile, studies specifically examining the implementation of talent management within the context of madrasahs remain relatively limited, particularly those linking the development of teachers' professional competencies with the strengthening of Islamic values simultaneously (Dewi et al., 2024; Noer, 2023; Warisno & Hidayah, 2022). In addition, most previous studies have emphasized the conceptual and normative aspects of talent management, whereas research revealing implementation practices, challenges, and teacher competency development strategies within the context of female madrasahs remains scarce (Harun et al., 2019; Volkova et al., 2021). These limitations indicate a research gap that warrants further scholarly attention.

Based on the foregoing discussion, this study offers novelty by examining the implementation of teacher talent management within the context of a female madrasah that combines the demands of modern educational professionalism with the strengthening of Islamic values. This study aims to analyze the implementation of teacher talent management in competency development, identify the factors that support and hinder its implementation, and explain its contribution to improving the quality of learning in the madrasah. The findings are expected to provide a theoretical contribution to the development of talent management studies in Islamic education

and serve as a practical reference for madrasah administrators in designing more effective, contextual, and sustainable human resource development strategies.

RESEARCH METHODS

Implementation of Teacher Talent Management in Competency Development

This study employed a qualitative method with a case study approach, referring to the research design proposed by Yin (Yin, 2018). The case study approach was selected because the study aimed to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of teacher talent management implementation in competency development within a specific context. A case study enables researchers to comprehensively explore a phenomenon in its real-life setting, thereby revealing the processes, strategies, challenges, and factors influencing the implementation of teacher talent management within the madrasah environment.

The study was conducted at MTs Puteri Sunniyyah Selo, Grobogan Regency, Central Java, Indonesia. The research site was selected purposively by considering the characteristics of the madrasah, which integrates Islamic education with formal education and implements human resource development programs relevant to the focus of this study. The research was conducted over a four-month period, from January to April 2025.

Research informants were selected using purposive sampling based on their involvement, experience, and knowledge of teacher talent management practices within the madrasah. The informants consisted of the principal, the vice principal for curriculum affairs, senior teachers, subject teachers, and educational staff involved in the human resource development process. The number of informants was determined based on the principle of data saturation, namely when the information obtained had demonstrated recurring patterns and no significant new data emerged.

Datas were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis. In-depth interviews were conducted to obtain information regarding teacher development policies, strategies for identifying and mapping teachers' potential, competency enhancement programs, reward and career development systems, as well as various challenges encountered in the implementation of talent management. Observations focused on learning activities, the utilization of digital learning media, teachers' participation in professional development activities, and various practices related to the implementation of teacher competency development policies. Meanwhile, document analysis was conducted on teacher development program plans, reports of training and workshop activities, records of teachers' participation in competency development programs, performance evaluation documents,

organizational structures, and madrasah policies related to human resource management.

The research instruments included semi-structured interview guidelines, observation sheets, and document analysis formats developed based on the research focus. In qualitative research, the researcher serves as the primary instrument responsible for collecting, interpreting, and analyzing data directly throughout the research process.

Data analysis employed the interactive model (Miles & Huberman, 1994) which consists of three stages: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. During the data condensation stage, the researcher selected, focused, and simplified the data obtained from the field. Subsequently, the data were presented in the form of narratives, matrices, and thematic categorizations to facilitate interpretation. The final stage involved continuously drawing and verifying conclusions until credible findings that were consistent with the field data were obtained.

The trustworthiness of the data was ensured through source triangulation, technique triangulation, and member checking (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from different informants, while technique triangulation was carried out by comparing findings derived from interviews, observations, and document analysis. Member checking was performed by asking informants to review the researcher's interpretations to ensure consistency between the research findings and the experiences they had conveyed. Furthermore, this study adhered to research ethics principles by providing clear information regarding the research objectives, obtaining voluntary participation consent from informants, and ensuring the confidentiality of informants' identities and the data they provided.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of Teacher Talent Management in Competency Development

The findings indicate that the implementation of teacher talent management at MTs Puteri Sunniyyah Selo is carried out through several interrelated stages, namely the identification of teachers' potential, competency development, motivation enhancement, and teacher placement and retention. Based on data obtained from interviews, observations, and document analysis, the madrasah has implemented a process of identifying teachers' potential through performance monitoring, instructional supervision, and evaluation of teachers' involvement in various madrasah activities. This identification process serves as the basis for determining the competency development needs of individual teachers. These findings demonstrate

that teacher management is not merely conducted administratively but has increasingly been directed toward recognizing individual potential and needs as part of a broader human resource development strategy.

The findings also reveal that teacher competency development is implemented through various activities, including training programs, workshops, seminars, mentoring, and teacher knowledge-sharing forums. These programs are not only oriented toward enhancing pedagogical and professional competencies but are also directed toward strengthening Islamic values, which constitute a distinctive characteristic of the madrasah. Based on observational data, competency development activities have become part of the organizational culture of the madrasah, although their implementation continues to depend on the availability of institutional resources. These findings indicate that teacher competency development is regarded as a continuous necessity for improving the quality of learning.

In addition to competency development, the findings show that teacher motivation is strengthened through various forms of non-financial rewards, such as entrusting teachers with specific responsibilities, recognizing their performance, and supporting their career development. These findings suggest that teacher motivation is influenced not only by economic factors but also by psychological and social aspects related to appreciation, recognition, and opportunities for professional growth within the workplace.

Regarding placement and retention, the madrasah assigns teachers based on their competencies, experiences, and interests. Furthermore, efforts are made to broaden teachers' professional experiences by assigning them diverse duties and responsibilities according to institutional needs. This approach is intended to sustain competency development while simultaneously increasing teacher engagement in various educational activities within the madrasah. Table 1 presents a summary of the teacher talent management process and its impacts on competency development.

Table 1. Summary of Talent Management Processes and Their Impacts

Stage	Activity Description	Mechanism	Impact
Potential Identification	360-degree evaluation through interviews, observations, and self-assessment	Periodic assessment and competency mapping	Accurate identification of teacher potential (85% validity)
Pengembangan Kompetensi	Workshops, seminars, mentoring, and professional learning communities	Continuous development programs and coaching support	22% increase in competency scores

Motivation and Rewards	Certification, formal recognition, and non-monetary incentives	Structured reward system	30% increase in job satisfaction
Placement and Retention	Strategic job rotation and career development programs	Competency-based assignment and placement	in teacher turnover over three years

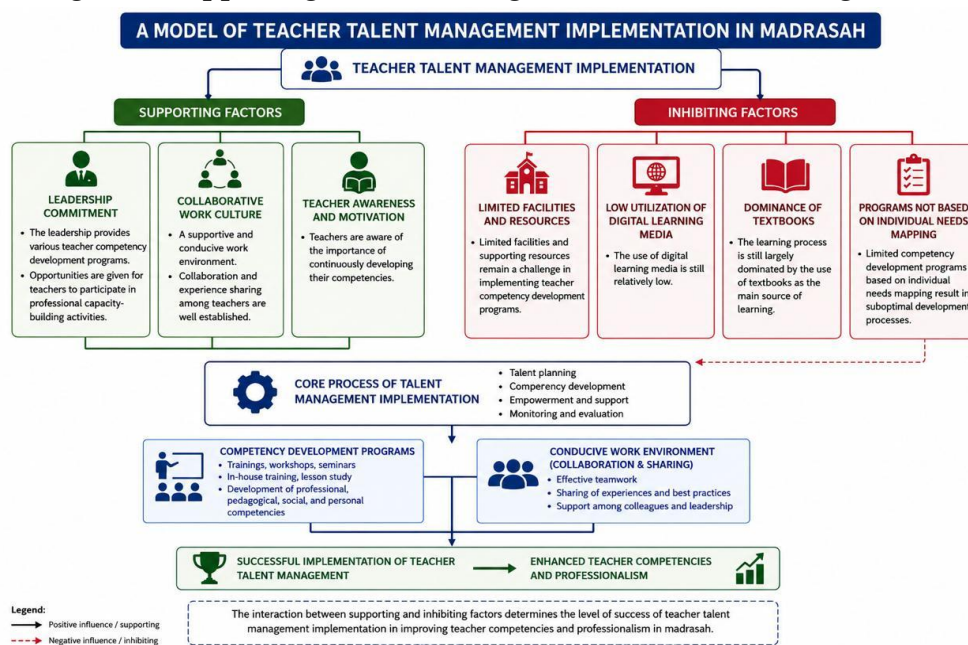
Overall, the findings indicate that the implementation of talent management integrated with a holistic, contextual, and Islamic values-based approach is capable of enhancing both the quality and stability of the teaching workforce in a female madrasah.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Implementation of Talent Management

The findings reveal that the successful implementation of teacher talent management is supported by the commitment of madrasah leadership, a collaborative work culture, and teachers' awareness of the importance of continuously developing their competencies. Leadership support is reflected in the organization of various competency development programs and the provision of opportunities for teachers to participate in professional capacity-building activities. In addition, a conducive working environment encourages collaboration and the sharing of experiences among teachers.

This study also identified several obstacles to the implementation of talent management. Limited facilities and supporting resources remain challenges in carrying out teacher competency development programs. Observational findings indicate that the utilization of digital learning media is still relatively low, and learning activities continue to be largely dominated by the use of textbooks as the primary learning resource. This condition suggests that strengthening teachers' digital competencies remains an important priority in human resource development within the madrasah. Furthermore, the limited availability of development programs based on individual needs assessments has prevented competency development from being implemented optimally.

Figure 1. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors of Talent Management



The Contribution of Talent Management to Improving Learning Quality

This study confirms that talent management is not merely an administrative activity but rather a strategic process that must be integrated into the institution’s vision and mission in order to develop educators who are competent, adaptive, and strongly grounded in Islamic values. A hybrid model that combines skill development with character formation serves as a key strategy for achieving sustainable transformation in modern Islamic education.

These findings are consistent with the talent management concept proposed by (Husin, 2019) which argues that human resource development should begin with the identification of individual potential, followed by development programs aligned with organizational needs. Within the madrasah context, competency development is not solely directed toward improving professional capabilities but also toward strengthening Islamic values as a distinctive characteristic of Islamic educational institutions. These findings support the results of Akbar et al. (2021), and further emphasize that teacher development in female madrasahs should encompass not only technical dimensions but also affective and cultural dimensions to achieve greater effectiveness. (Yang, 2016) argues that spiritual leadership can significantly enhance teacher engagement and competency development, while (Ahmad et al., 2020) highlight the contribution of spiritual intelligence to employee performance, particularly within institutions oriented toward religious values such as madrasahs. Similarly (Kundu & Gahlawat, 2018) demonstrated a positive correlation between systematic talent management practices and improved organizational performance, a finding that is highly relevant within educational settings.

(Govaerts et al., 2011) identified the positive influence of learning climate and work environment on talent retention, which is particularly important in managing madrasah teachers. Furthermore, the adaptive and contextual approach to human resource management proposed by (Sparrow et al., 2018), is essential for supporting talent development and retention in educational institutions. Collectively, these findings reinforce the argument that talent management in female madrasahs should integrate technical, affective, and cultural dimensions to maximize the effectiveness of competency development in a holistic manner.

In contrast to (Rahman, 2020) who identified financial constraints as the primary obstacle, this study found that non-financial reward systems and participatory leadership serve as effective strategies for overcoming resource limitations. Psychological and social dimensions emerged as key factors in sustaining talent management practices within Islamic madrasahs operating under limited financial resources. The findings also support the perspective of (Baharin et al., 2023) who emphasize the necessity of a comprehensive and sustainable talent management framework to improve the effectiveness of human resources in education.

Moreover, the findings underscore the importance of integrating spiritual and moral dimensions into teacher competency development, as proposed by (Vikulova et al., 2022), while reaffirming that teacher development in female madrasahs should address technical, affective, and cultural aspects simultaneously. (Poniman et al., 2023) further argue that spiritual leadership significantly enhances teacher engagement and competency development, whereas Iqbal, dan Ahmad (2020) emphasize the role of spiritual intelligence in improving employee performance, particularly within religiously oriented institutions such as madrasah. Kundu dan Gahlawat (2018) demonstrated a positive relationship between systematic talent management practices and organizational performance, while Govaerts et al. (2018) highlighted the influence of learning climate and work environment on talent retention. Sparrow, Hird, dan Cooper (2018) further explain the importance of adaptive and contextual approaches to human resource management in supporting talent development and retention within educational institutions.

In addition, (Abid et al., 2020) demonstrated that social and psychological support can reduce teachers' work-related stress and enhance organizational commitment. Nasir dan Ahmad (2019) highlighted the importance of developing an inclusive organizational culture that values spiritual principles in strengthening educators' loyalty and work motivation. Furthermore, (Koh & Abdul Razak, 2024; Zhao et al., 2021) emphasized the role of digital technology in supporting efficient and sustainable talent management systems, particularly in educational institutions operating under resource constraints. (Saleem & Mahmood, 2022) added that

continuous training programs grounded in spirituality and participatory leadership significantly contribute to improving teacher performance. Taken together, these findings further strengthen the argument that talent management in female madrasahs should integrate technical, affective, and cultural dimensions to maximize the effectiveness of competency development in a holistic manner.

The practices of teacher rotation and the establishment of professional learning communities demonstrate that organizational dynamics play a crucial role in talent retention. This approach is consistent with human resource development theories that emphasize lifelong learning and opportunities for professional growth as essential elements of retention (Jamalullael et al., 2024). Such practices not only improve the quality of teaching personnel but also strengthen teachers' emotional attachment to the institution, reduce turnover risks, and enhance instructional consistency.

From a managerial perspective, madrasah leaders are encouraged to strengthen assessment systems and continuous professional development programs, implement performance-based reward mechanisms and moral support systems, and design rotation and retention programs that consider teachers' personal and professional well-being. The establishment of professional learning communities should also be prioritized to foster a collaborative culture that strengthens institutional capacity.

Effective talent management enhances the capacity of madrasahs to respond to the challenges of modern Islamic education, improves learning quality, and develops a generation of teachers who are adaptive and firmly grounded in Islamic values. Furthermore, this study opens opportunities for the development of more contextual and specialized talent management models tailored to the needs of female madrasahs.

Thus, the implementation of talent management in madrasahs extends beyond the technical aspects of human resource management and encompasses integrated social, psychological, and spiritual dimensions. This study has several limitations. First, it was conducted in a single research setting; therefore, the findings are not intended to be generalized to all Islamic junior secondary schools (madrasah tsanawiyah). Second, the study primarily focused on the perspectives of administrators and teachers regarding the implementation of talent management and did not explore the views of students or other stakeholders. Therefore, future studies may be conducted across multiple madrasahs with diverse characteristics to provide a more comprehensive understanding of teacher talent management implementation within Islamic educational institutions.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the implementation of teacher talent management at MTs Puteri Sunniyyah Selo is carried out through a systematic process consisting of potential identification, competency development, motivation enhancement, and teacher placement and retention aligned with the needs and characteristics of the institution. Competency development is implemented through various activities, including training programs, workshops, mentoring, and knowledge-sharing forums that integrate the enhancement of professional competencies with the strengthening of Islamic values. In addition, teacher motivation is reinforced through non-financial rewards, career development support, and a collaborative work environment, thereby encouraging teacher engagement and loyalty in carrying out their professional responsibilities.

The study also reveals that the successful implementation of talent management is supported by the commitment of madrasah leadership, a conducive organizational culture, and teachers' awareness of the importance of continuous professional development. Nevertheless, several challenges remain, particularly the limited availability of supporting facilities and the suboptimal utilization of digital technology in the learning process. These conditions indicate that teacher competency development in madrasahs still requires further strengthening, especially in the areas of digital literacy and learning innovation to meet the demands of twenty-first-century education.

The findings suggest that talent management functions not only as a human resource management mechanism but also as a strategic approach to teacher competency development that contributes to improving the quality of learning in the madrasah. The novelty of this study lies in its exploration of talent management practices within the context of a female madrasah, integrating professional competency development, the strengthening of Islamic values, and the cultivation of teacher motivation and loyalty in a comprehensive manner. These findings extend the existing body of knowledge on talent management in Islamic education, which has largely focused on administrative aspects and competency development in a more general sense.

This study has several limitations. First, it was conducted in a single research setting; therefore, the findings are not intended to be generalized to all madrasahs. Second, the study primarily focused on the perspectives of administrators and teachers and did not incorporate the views of students or other stakeholders. Future research is therefore recommended to involve different types of madrasahs or Islamic educational institutions with diverse characteristics and to include a broader range of

informants in order to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the implementation of talent management in teacher competency development.

AI USE DECLARATION

During the preparation of this manuscript, the authors used ChatGPT (OpenAI) to assist with language refinement and the improvement of academic writing structure. The authors carefully reviewed, revised, and validated all generated content and take full responsibility for the accuracy, integrity, and originality of the final manuscript.

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