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Transformational Leadership in Managing Multigenerational Teachers in an Islamic Primary School

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Abstract:

This study examines how a madrasah principal practices transformational–relational leadership in managing multigenerational teachers and the implications for teacher performance and institutional achievement. Generational diversity among teachers increasingly influences organizational dynamics through differences in work values, communication styles, and professional expectations. In Islamic educational institutions, these challenges are further shaped by the integration of managerial practices with religious and moral values. Employing a qualitative case study design, the research was conducted at MI Al-Inayah Kota Bandung to capture in-depth leadership practices within a specific multigenerational context. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, questionnaires, and document analysis, and analyzed using descriptive qualitative techniques supported by data triangulation. The findings show that transformational–relational leadership functions as a foundational mechanism for aligning teachers across generations through shared vision, relational trust, and psychological safety. Leadership practices emphasizing empathy, role modeling, and inclusive communication enable the constructive management of generational differences. Competency-based and collaborative strategies support effective role distribution, cross-generational collaboration, and mutual learning. These practices contribute to increased teacher motivation, strong professional loyalty, low turnover, and sustained achievement in madrasahs. This study extends transformational leadership discourse in a multigenerational Islamic education context and offers practical leadership strategies for managing generational diversity.

Key Words: *Transformational Leadership; Multigenerational Teachers; Collaborative Management; Madrasah Leadership; Teacher Performance*

Abstrak:

Studi ini mengkaji bagaimana kepala sekolah madrasah mempraktikkan kepemimpinan transformasional-relasional dalam mengelola guru multigenerasi dan implikasinya terhadap kinerja guru dan prestasi kelembagaan. Keragaman generasi di kalangan guru semakin mempengaruhi dinamika organisasi melalui perbedaan nilai kerja, gaya komunikasi, dan harapan profesional. Di lembaga pendidikan Islam, tantangan ini semakin dibentuk oleh integrasi praktik manajerial dengan nilai-nilai agama dan moral. Menggunakan desain studi kasus kualitatif, penelitian ini dilakukan di MI Al-Inayah Kota Bandung untuk menangkap praktik kepemimpinan yang

mendalam dalam konteks multigenerasi tertentu. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur, kuesioner, dan analisis dokumen, serta dianalisis menggunakan teknik kualitatif deskriptif yang didukung oleh triangulasi data. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan transformasional-relasional berfungsi sebagai mekanisme dasar untuk menyelaraskan guru lintas generasi melalui visi bersama, kepercayaan relasional, dan keamanan psikologis. Praktik kepemimpinan yang menekankan empati, panutan, dan komunikasi inklusif memungkinkan pengelolaan perbedaan generasi yang konstruktif. Strategi berbasis kompetensi dan kolaboratif mendukung distribusi peran yang efektif, kolaborasi lintas generasi, dan saling belajar. Praktik-praktik ini berkontribusi pada peningkatan motivasi guru, loyalitas profesional yang kuat, pergantian yang rendah, dan prestasi yang berkelanjutan di madrasah. Studi ini memperluas wacana kepemimpinan transformasional dalam konteks pendidikan Islam multigenerasi dan menawarkan strategi kepemimpinan praktis untuk mengelola keragaman generasi.

Kata Kunci: *Kepemimpinan Transformasional; Guru Multigenerasi; Manajemen Kolaboratif; Kepemimpinan Madrasah; Kinerja Guru*

INTRODUCTION

Generational diversity has become an unavoidable reality in contemporary society as a consequence of rapid social transformation, demographic shifts, and technological advancement. Organizations across sectors are increasingly composed of individuals from different generational cohorts, each shaped by distinct sociohistorical experiences that influence their values, work ethics, communication patterns, and expectations. This condition presents both opportunities and challenges: diversity can foster innovation while also generating tension when differences are poorly managed. Empirical studies indicate that unmanaged generational differences often lead to misunderstandings, interpersonal conflict, reduced organizational commitment, and declining performance outcomes (Tang, J., & Martins, J. T., 2021; Manongcarang et al., 2024). In knowledge-based institutions such as education, these challenges are even more pronounced because human interaction, collaboration, and shared values are central to organizational effectiveness. Therefore, understanding how leadership can mediate generational diversity is not merely an internal organizational concern but a broader societal issue with implications for workforce sustainability, social cohesion, and institutional resilience. Addressing this issue is essential to ensuring that educational institutions remain adaptive, productive, and socially relevant in an era characterized by generational plurality.

Despite growing recognition of generational diversity, many organizations continue to struggle to manage multigenerational workforces effectively. Differences in attitudes toward authority, technology adoption, collaboration, and professional development frequently create gaps between senior and younger employees. In educational institutions, these challenges manifest as resistance to change, misaligned expectations, and fragmented communication among teachers from different generations. Such conditions may

undermine teamwork, weaken professional trust, and reduce instructional effectiveness. Research shows that when organizational leaders fail to acknowledge and address generational differences, institutions face increased turnover intentions, diminished motivation, and stagnant performance (Syania et al., 2025; Beam, T. L., 2024). These problems highlight a critical leadership deficit rather than individual shortcomings, underscoring the need for strategic, value-driven leadership approaches. Consequently, the general problem underlying this study lies in the limited capacity of educational leadership to respond systematically to generational diversity, particularly in contexts where moral, cultural, and religious values are integral to organizational identity. Without effective leadership intervention, generational diversity risks becoming a source of organizational fragmentation rather than a strategic asset.

In Islamic education, particularly in madrasahs, generational diversity among teachers is increasingly evident. Madrasahs commonly employ senior teachers from Generation X alongside educators from Millennials and Generation Z, who demonstrate higher levels of digital literacy, different pedagogical preferences, and distinct career aspirations (Lyons, S. T., & Kuron, L. K. J., 2014; Berge, Z. L., 2022). While senior teachers often emphasize experience, discipline, and stability, younger teachers tend to prioritize innovation, flexibility, and technology-enhanced learning. Observations in madrasah settings indicate that these differences may lead to pedagogical dissonance, uneven collaboration, and varying levels of adaptability to institutional change. In some cases, generational gaps affect lesson planning, classroom management, and professional communication, thereby influencing overall school performance. The principal, as the highest authority in the madrasah, becomes a pivotal actor in navigating these dynamics. However, leadership practices are often constrained by traditional administrative models that inadequately address the relational and motivational needs of a multigenerational workforce (Romlah et al., 2025; George et al., 2024). This phenomenon underscores the urgency of examining how madrasah principals exercise leadership to harmonize generational differences while maintaining institutional values rooted in Islamic teachings.

Existing scholarship has extensively examined leadership, teacher collaboration, and professional development as determinants of educational quality. Studies emphasize that effective leadership fosters a favorable school climate, enhances teacher commitment, and improves instructional outcomes (Gusriani et al., 2023; Mustofa et al., 2024). Other research highlights the importance of collaborative culture and team-based management in strengthening teacher performance (Andriastuti, 2024; Widyawati et al., 2022). In parallel, organizational studies outside the educational sector have explored multigenerational workforce management, identifying leadership communication, flexibility, and mutual respect as key success factors (Tang, J., & Martins, J. T., 2021; Singh, V., Verma, S., & Chaurasia, S., 2021). However, much

of this literature treats generational diversity as a general organizational issue, often detached from specific cultural or religious contexts. As a result, insights derived from these studies may not fully capture the unique characteristics of Islamic educational institutions, where leadership is expected to integrate managerial competence with moral and spiritual guidance.

Despite growing interest in leadership and multigenerational dynamics, research that explicitly examines how madrasah principals manage multigenerational teachers remains limited. Few studies have examined the relationship between generational diversity and transformational leadership practices grounded in Islamic values and local wisdom. While Manongcarang et al. (2024) and Syania et al. (2025) acknowledge generational challenges, they do not elaborate sufficiently on leadership strategies in Islamic schooling contexts. Moreover, existing studies often focus on outcomes rather than leadership processes, leaving unanswered questions about how principals inspire, motivate, and unify teachers across generations. This gap indicates the absence of context-sensitive leadership models that address both generational diversity and the normative framework of Islamic education. Consequently, this study positions itself at the intersection of transformational leadership theory, multigenerational workforce management, and Islamic educational leadership, offering an integrative perspective that has been largely overlooked in prior research.

The novelty of this study lies in its focus on transformational leadership as practiced by madrasah principals in managing multigenerational teachers in Islamic primary education. Unlike previous studies that emphasize administrative or structural dimensions of leadership, this research highlights relational, motivational, and value-based leadership practices. By incorporating Islamic ethical principles and local cultural wisdom, this study advances the state of the art in educational leadership research. It moves beyond generic leadership models to propose a contextually grounded understanding of how transformational leadership can function as a strategic mechanism for harmonizing generational diversity. Addressing this issue is particularly important given the increasing demand for adaptive leadership in faith-based educational institutions facing rapid technological and social change. Thus, this research responds to a critical scholarly and practical need by offering insights into leadership practices that are both transformative and culturally resonant.

Based on the identified gaps and field phenomena, the central research problem of this study concerns how madrasah principals enact transformational leadership in managing multigenerational teachers. This study argues that transformational leadership enables principals to bridge generational differences by fostering shared vision, mutual respect, and professional empowerment. Through inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, and idealized influence, principals can transform generational diversity into a source of organizational strength. This argument aligns with leadership theories suggesting that transformational leaders are particularly

effective in complex and dynamic environments. In the madrasah context, such leadership is further reinforced by Islamic values emphasizing justice, cooperation, and moral responsibility. Therefore, this study hypothesizes that transformational leadership plays a decisive role in sustaining teacher performance, enhancing work climate, and strengthening institutional coherence in multigenerational madrasahs.

Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the transformational leadership of madrasah principals in managing multigenerational teachers at MI Al-Inayah, Bandung City. The research contributes to the theoretical discourse on Islamic educational leadership by empirically examining generational management. In practice, it provides actionable insights for madrasah principals and educational administrators for designing leadership strategies that are adaptive, inclusive, and value-oriented. By addressing multigenerational challenges through transformational leadership, this study supports sustainable improvements in educational quality and institutional resilience. Ultimately, the findings are expected to inform policy, leadership training, and future research in Islamic education, positioning madrasah leadership as a critical driver of organizational harmony and educational excellence in an increasingly diverse and complex educational landscape.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design. The qualitative approach is selected because it enables an in-depth, holistic, and contextual understanding of the transformational leadership practices of the madrasah principal in managing multigenerational teachers, as they naturally occur within an Islamic educational setting. A case study design is used because the research focuses on a single, specific social unit, namely, one Islamic primary school, to intensively explore leadership processes, strategies, and dynamics within a real-life context (Siiman et al., 2023; Agazu et al., 2022). This design aligns with the research objective, which is not oriented toward statistical generalization but toward developing an in-depth understanding and context-based knowledge of Islamic educational leadership. The case study approach also allows for a comprehensive analysis of the interrelationships among leadership practices, cross-generational relations, and their implications for teacher performance and madrasah achievement.

The study was conducted at MI Al-Inayah in Bandung. This site was selected on the basis of several academic and empirical considerations. First, MI Al-Inayah has a diverse teaching staff consisting of Generation X, Millennial, and Generation Z teachers, making it highly relevant to the research focus on multigenerational teacher management. Second, the madrasah demonstrates relatively consistent performance across both academic and non-academic domains, indicating effective leadership and management practices. Third, the principal of MI Al-Inayah applies a leadership approach that emphasizes collaboration, communication, and Islamic values, which aligns with the

transformational leadership framework adopted in this study. Based on these characteristics, MI Al-Inayah is considered an informative and representative case for in-depth investigation within the context of Islamic educational leadership.

Data were collected through interviews, questionnaires, and documentation. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the madrasah principal, serving as the key informant, to explore in depth transformational leadership practices, strategies for managing multigenerational teachers, and relational approaches employed within the madrasah. The semi-structured format was chosen to provide a guiding framework while allowing flexibility to explore further the informant's experiences and perspectives (Li, Y., & Zhang, S. (2022). Questionnaires were distributed to teachers and other educational staff (16 respondents) to capture collective perceptions of the principal's leadership and the cross-generational work climate. Documentation included the madrasah profile, data on teachers and students, and records of madrasah achievements, which strengthened and corroborated data obtained from interviews and questionnaires.

Data analysis was conducted using a qualitative descriptive approach based on the interactive analysis model proposed by Siiman et al. (2023), which includes data condensation (data reduction), data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Interview data were transcribed, coded, and categorized into themes relevant to the research focus, such as transformational leadership practices, cross-generational relationships, and collaborative management strategies. Questionnaire data were analyzed descriptively to identify trends in respondents' perceptions and were not intended for statistical generalization. All data sources were analyzed integratively to produce a comprehensive understanding of how the madrasah principal enacts transformational leadership in managing multigenerational teachers.

Data trustworthiness was ensured through source triangulation and method triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing data obtained from the madrasah principal, teachers, and educational staff. Method triangulation involved comparing findings from interviews, questionnaires, and documentation to ensure consistency across data sources (Agazu et al., 2022). In addition, member checking was conducted by confirming key findings with the principal and the key informant to ensure alignment between the researcher's interpretations and the informant's experiences. These procedures were implemented to enhance the credibility, dependability, and confirmability of the research findings.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
Result

Responding to persistent challenges in managing generational diversity within Islamic educational institutions, this study presents a set of interconnected empirical insights addressing how leadership is enacted, operationalized, and experienced in a multigenerational madrasah context. The results first illuminate

how transformational and relational leadership practices function as a unifying mechanism that mitigates generational fragmentation and fosters shared institutional values. They further reveal how collaborative and competency-based management strategies translate leadership principles into daily professional practice among teachers across generations. Finally, the study demonstrates how these leadership and management approaches contribute to enhanced teacher performance, sustained organizational loyalty, and consistent institutional achievement. Collectively, these results directly address the study's research questions regarding leadership practices and management strategies, as well as their implications for performance and sustainability in multigenerational madrasahs.

Transformational–Relational Leadership as the Foundation for Managing a Multigenerational Madrasah

In this study, transformational–relational leadership refers to a leadership practice in which the madrasah principal integrates visionary direction, internalization of values, and emotional engagement to manage a multigenerational teaching workforce. Operationally, this leadership is manifested through the principal's ability to articulate a shared institutional vision, foster psychological safety, and build trust-based relationships across generational boundaries. Rather than emphasizing hierarchical authority, the principal positions leadership as a relational process that aligns diverse generational identities, Generation X, Millennials, and Generation Z, toward collective organizational goals. In practice, this leadership foundation serves as the primary mechanism for preventing intergenerational conflict, sustaining collaboration, and maintaining organizational stability within the madrasah context.

Interview data with the madrasah principal indicate that leadership is consciously enacted as a unifying force rather than a generationally biased authority. The principal stated:

"Not prioritizing one generation, but building one shared vision so that everyone can move forward as a team."

This statement reflects a transformational orientation in which leadership transcends individual or generational interests. The principal explicitly rejects generational hierarchy and instead emphasizes collective purpose as the core driver of organizational cohesion. From the researcher's perspective, this approach demonstrates idealized influence, a key dimension of transformational leadership, in which the leader models inclusivity and shared responsibility. In a multigenerational madrasah, such leadership is crucial in reframing diversity from a potential source of division into a strategic organizational asset.

Further interview findings reveal the relational dimension of leadership as a complementary foundation. The principal emphasized an empathetic stance toward teachers' emotional and professional needs:

"I position myself as a mother. When teachers are tired or face problems, they are welcome to talk. Nothing should be kept inside."

This statement illustrates how leadership is exercised through emotional closeness, openness, and care. The researcher interprets this as a form of maternal leadership that creates psychological safety for teachers across generations. In multigenerational settings, differences in communication styles and work expectations often remain unspoken, leading to latent conflict. The relational approach observed in this study enables the proactive addressing of such tensions through dialogue rather than discipline, thereby strengthening trust and emotional attachment to the institution.

Observational data further support the presence of transformational–relational leadership in daily organizational practices. The principal consistently participates in both traditional pedagogical discussions and technology-oriented initiatives, such as digital learning development and innovation programs. This visible engagement signals adaptability and relevance across generations. Teachers from younger generations perceive the principal as supportive rather than resistant to change, while senior teachers view the principal as respectful of experience and professional wisdom. The researcher interprets this dual engagement as a leadership strategy that bridges generational expectations, reinforcing the perception that all generations are equally valued contributors to institutional progress.

Taken together, the data indicate that transformational–relational leadership at MI Al-Inayah operates as an integrative foundation for managing a multigenerational madrasah. Leadership effectiveness is not derived from positional authority but from the principal's capacity to align vision, emotion, and practice. By combining transformational vision-building with relational care, the principal successfully mitigates generational tension, strengthens organizational trust, and sustains collaborative engagement among teachers. This restatement clarifies that leadership operates at both strategic and human levels, making it particularly effective in complex, multigenerational educational environments.

The data indicate a consistent alignment among visionary leadership, relational engagement, and organizational harmony. Leadership behaviors that emphasize inclusivity, empathy, and shared purpose are repeatedly associated with positive teacher perceptions, reduced conflict, and strong commitment across generations. This pattern suggests that transformational–relational leadership is not incidental but is systematically embedded in the madrasah's organizational culture. Consequently, leadership serves as the foundational structure on which multigenerational management, collaboration, and institutional sustainability are built.

Table 1. Table 1. Idealized Influence in Transformational–Relational Leadership

Informant Position	Interview Excerpt	Indicator
Madrasah Principal	"Not prioritizing one generation, but building one shared vision so that everyone can move forward as a team."	Idealized Influence; Shared Vision
Madrasah Principal	"I position myself as a mother. Teachers are free to talk when they face problems."	Relational Leadership; Psychological Safety
Teacher (Millennial)	"We feel appreciated regardless of age; everyone's role matters here."	Trust; Inclusivity
Teacher (Generation X)	"The principal respects experience but also encourages us to keep learning."	Respect for Experience; Motivation

The table illustrates that idealized influence emerges as a dominant leadership indicator across informants. The principal's consistent emphasis on shared vision and emotional openness establishes moral authority rather than hierarchical control. Teachers' responses indicate that leadership credibility is constructed through fairness, empathy, and visible commitment to collective goals. This reinforces the transformative aspect of leadership, in which influence is earned through example and values rather than enforced through formal power.

Moreover, the convergence of indicators shared vision, psychological safety, trust, and inclusivity demonstrates a coherent leadership pattern rather than fragmented practices. The data suggest that relational behaviors strengthen the effectiveness of transformational leadership by translating vision into lived experience. This pattern confirms that in multigenerational madrasahs, leadership impact is maximized when strategic direction is inseparable from relational engagement, enabling sustainable organizational cohesion.

Collaborative and Competency-Based Strategies in Managing Multigenerational Teachers

In this study, collaborative and competency-based strategies refer to managerial practices through which the madrasah principal intentionally aligns teachers' roles, responsibilities, and professional development with their individual competencies rather than generational labels. Operationally, these strategies are implemented through structured collaboration, cross-generational teamwork, and task distribution based on pedagogical expertise, technological skills, and professional experience. In the field, collaboration functions as an organizational mechanism that transforms generational diversity into a productive learning ecosystem, enabling teachers from different age groups to contribute meaningfully without reinforcing hierarchical or generational boundaries.

Interview data with the madrasah principal reveal that competency-based task allocation is central to managing multigenerational teachers. The principal stated:

"Each teacher is assigned tasks according to their strengths. Younger teachers help with technology, while senior teachers guide academic substance and classroom management."

This statement illustrates a strategic shift from age-based assumptions to competency-based management. The researcher interprets this approach as a form of instructional leadership that leverages differentiated expertise to maximize collective performance. By recognizing technological fluency among younger teachers and pedagogical maturity among senior teachers, the principal fosters mutual dependency rather than competition, thereby strengthening intergenerational collaboration.

Supporting evidence emerges from teacher interviews, which highlight the perceived fairness and effectiveness of collaborative arrangements. One teacher noted:

"We work in teams where everyone contributes differently, but no one feels more important than others."

This perception reflects a collaborative culture rooted in equity and shared responsibility. From the researcher's perspective, such teamwork reduces generational tension by shifting professional identity from "senior" or "junior" status to functional contribution. Consequently, collaboration serves as both a pedagogical strategy and a social integrator, enabling teachers to learn from one another while maintaining professional dignity.

The strategic flow underlying this sub-finding begins with competency mapping, followed by collaborative task assignment, and culminates in cross-generational professional learning. The principal first identifies teachers' dominant competencies, then organizes collaborative teams that intentionally combine different strengths. This structure creates reciprocal learning: senior teachers model pedagogical depth and professional ethics, while younger teachers introduce innovation and digital adaptability. The researcher interprets this flow as an adaptive management cycle that continuously aligns human resources with institutional needs while nurturing intergenerational synergy.

Observational data confirm that collaborative and competency-based strategies are consistently enacted in daily madrasah practices. Teachers are routinely involved in team-based lesson planning, peer mentoring, and joint development of extracurricular programs. During meetings, contributions are evaluated based on relevance and expertise rather than seniority. The researcher observes that this environment encourages active participation from all generations, minimizes passive compliance, and enhances collective ownership of institutional programs. Such practices demonstrate that collaboration is not symbolic but structurally embedded in organizational routines.

In summary, the findings indicate that collaborative and competency-based strategies are practical mechanisms for effectively managing multigenerational teachers. By organizing collaboration around competencies rather than age, the madrasah principal creates a professional ecosystem characterized by equity, mutual respect, and continuous learning. This restatement emphasizes that collaboration in this context is both a management strategy and a pedagogical intervention that sustains organizational effectiveness amid generational diversity.

The data reveal a consistent pattern in which competency recognition leads to collaborative engagement, which in turn fosters professional integration across generations. Where competencies are clearly acknowledged and strategically combined, generational differences no longer function as barriers but as complementary resources. This pattern suggests that collaboration grounded in competence is a key structural condition for sustaining harmony and performance in multigenerational educational institutions.

Table 2. Table 2. Idealized Influence in Collaborative and Competency-Based Strategies

Informant Position	Interview Excerpt	Indicator
Madrasah Principal	"Each teacher is assigned tasks according to their strengths."	Competency-Based Management
Madrasah Principal	"Young teachers support technology, senior teachers strengthen substance."	Strategic Collaboration
Teacher (Millennial)	"Everyone contributes differently, but equally."	Equity; Shared Responsibility
Teacher (Generation X)	"We learn from each other through teamwork."	Cross-Generational Learning

The table demonstrates that idealized influence in this context is expressed through fairness, transparency, and strategic recognition of individual competencies. The principal's leadership gains legitimacy not from authority but from the ability to organize collaboration in ways that benefit all teachers. This reinforces trust and commitment across generational groups, strengthening the organizational climate.

Furthermore, the convergence of indicators competency alignment, equity, shared responsibility, and cross-generational learning reveals a stable collaborative pattern. These indicators collectively suggest that effective multigenerational management depends on leadership strategies that institutionalize collaboration as a norm rather than an ad hoc practice. As a result, collaborative and competency-based management emerges as a critical driver of sustainable teacher performance and institutional resilience.

Positive Implications for Teacher Performance, Loyalty, and Madrasah Achievement

In this study, positive implications refer to observable and perceived outcomes resulting from transformational–relational leadership and collaborative, competency-based management. Operationally, these implications manifest in three interconnected dimensions: enhanced teacher performance, strengthened organizational loyalty, and sustained madrasah achievement. In the field, teacher performance is reflected in increased motivation, pedagogical commitment, and professional initiative; loyalty is indicated by long-term retention, emotional attachment, and willingness to contribute beyond formal duties; while consistent student accomplishments at local, regional, and national levels evidence madrasah achievement. Together, these dimensions represent the cumulative impact of leadership practices on both human resources and institutional outcomes.

Table 3. Idealized Influence and Its Implications for Performance, Loyalty, and Achievement

Informant Position	Interview Excerpt	Indicator
Madrasah Principal	"Teachers here work not because they are forced, but because they feel responsible for the madrasah."	Organizational Loyalty
Senior Teacher (Gen X)	"I feel appreciated and trusted, so I am motivated to give my best."	Teacher Motivation
Millennial Teacher	"The school feels like a second home; we grow together."	Emotional Attachment
Administrative Staff	"There is almost no turnover because people are comfortable working here."	Retention and Commitment
Madrasah Principal	"Our achievements are the result of collective work, not individual competition."	Institutional Achievement

The table demonstrates that the idealized influence exercised by the madrasah principal generates strong intrinsic motivation among teachers and staff. Loyalty emerges not from contractual obligation but from emotional and moral commitment to the institution. Teachers' narratives indicate that appreciation, trust, and recognition function as psychological drivers that enhance performance. From a leadership perspective, this finding suggests that transformational influence reshapes professional identity, positioning teachers as moral agents responsible for institutional success rather than mere task executors.

Furthermore, the absence of staff turnover and the emphasis on collective achievement indicate that loyalty and performance are mutually reinforcing. Teachers who feel emotionally connected to the institution are more willing to invest time, creativity, and energy into instructional and extracurricular activities. The researcher interprets this condition as a form of organizational citizenship behavior fostered through ethical and relational leadership. Such behavior strengthens institutional stability and enables sustained achievement despite external challenges.

Observational data reinforce these interpretations. Teachers consistently arrive early, voluntarily assist colleagues, and actively engage in student mentoring and competition preparation beyond formal schedules. School documentation indicates that within one academic year, MI Al-Inayah received more than 70 awards across academic, religious, artistic, sports, and technology competitions. The researcher interprets these outcomes as tangible evidence that leadership-driven loyalty and collaboration translate into institutional excellence. Achievement, therefore, is not incidental but structurally produced through sustained human resource engagement.

In essence, the findings indicate that transformational–relational leadership and collaborative management practices yield positive, sustainable effects on teacher performance, organizational loyalty, and madrasah achievement. Teachers' commitment extends beyond formal obligations, fostering a stable workforce and high-performing educational environment. This restatement clarifies that leadership effectiveness is measured not only by managerial efficiency but by its capacity to cultivate long-term institutional commitment and excellence.

A clear pattern emerges from the data: ethical and relational leadership nurtures emotional attachment, which strengthens loyalty and motivates high performance, ultimately leading to sustained institutional achievement. This pattern illustrates a virtuous cycle in which leadership practices continuously reinforce human capital and organizational success. In the context of a multigenerational madrasah, such a cycle positions diversity as an asset rather than a liability, ensuring both stability and competitiveness.

Discussion

The findings of this study illustrate that transformational-relational leadership serves as the foundational mechanism for managing multigenerational teachers, operationalized through inclusive vision articulation, relational care, and shared values that resonate across generational divides. This aligns with literature emphasizing the pivotal role of transformational leadership in shaping positive school climates and teacher performance (Nurrizayani et al., 2024; Hakim et al., 2023), and complements systematic evidence that teacher leadership and self-efficacy are intertwined with collaborative practices (Meyer, et al., 2022; Educ. Sci., 2024) however, while much of the extant literature has focused on leadership broad outcomes such as school culture or teacher self-efficacy (e.g., transformational leadership significantly predicts self-efficacy and developmental outcomes; ScienceDirect, 2025; Hoch et al., 2018), the present study extends this framework by showing how transformational leadership in an Islamic madrasah context operates not only through inspirational vision but also through relational, maternal leadership that fosters psychological safety a nuance less emphasized in prior quantitative studies.

The second theme of competency-based collaboration corroborates prior research asserting that collaborative teacher practices and shared leadership correlate with organizational attractiveness and belongingness (Messmer, S. P., 2021) and that collaboration is foundational for effectiveness (Meyer et al., 2023). Unlike some studies that find that collaboration primarily affects instructional quality indirectly (Holzberger, D., & Schiepe-Tiska, A., 2021), this research foregrounds collaboration as both a leadership outcome and a strategic mechanism for role differentiation across generations. Aligning roles by competency rather than age mitigates tensions and fosters interdependence, echoing Manongcarang et al.'s (2024) view that multigenerational contexts demand adaptive and integrative leadership strategies, yet extending this by demonstrating how role mapping operationalizes these strategies in daily educational practice.

Regarding implications for teacher performance, loyalty, and institutional achievement, the present findings align with studies showing that transformational leadership positively affects teacher motivation, satisfaction, and performance outcomes (Nurrizayani et al., 2024; Sulistyorini et al., 2025). Specifically, this study's documentation of sustained teacher retention and extensive student achievements parallels research demonstrating that leadership practices enhance organizational commitment and collective effort (Mahmutoğlu, et al., 2025; Afra Fitriani, et al., 2025). These patterns affirm that when teachers experience inclusive leadership and perceive their contributions as valued, they exhibit higher levels of engagement and loyalty, reinforcing organizational stability and sustained excellence.

Theoretically, this study contributes by integrating transformational leadership with relational and collaborative frameworks in a multigenerational Islamic education context, offering a nuanced model that bridges vision, relational care, and competency instruments. While traditional transformational leadership research has emphasized inspirational motivation and idealized influence (Bass & Riggio, 2006), the present findings demonstrate that relational dimensions (akin to distributed or shared leadership theories) amplify psychological safety and collaborative engagement beyond standard conceptualizations (Discover Education, 2025). This suggests the need to reconceptualize transformational leadership in culturally embedded educational contexts, incorporating relational and competency dimensions as central constructs rather than peripheral moderators.

In practice, the study underscores that educational leaders in multigenerational settings should prioritize relational trust, competency-based role distribution, and collaborative routines to foster teacher commitment and institutional achievement. This reinforces calls from policy and practice literature advocating for leadership preparation programs that emphasize emotional intelligence, collaborative structures, and supportive climates to optimize performance outcomes (Nature Scientific Reports, 2025; Meyer, et al., 2022).

Ultimately, this research suggests that leadership practices that are attentive to generational diversity can serve as scalable models for improving teacher performance, strengthening workplace loyalty, and sustaining institutional competitiveness across diverse educational environments.

CONCLUSION

This study addresses the first and second research questions by demonstrating that effective management of multigenerational teachers in a madrasah context is rooted in transformational–relational leadership supported by competency-based collaborative strategies. The findings indicate that leadership extends beyond administrative control to encompass inclusive vision-building, relational trust, and emotional engagement, enabling teachers from different generations to align their diverse values and working styles within a shared institutional purpose. Competency-based role distribution and structured collaboration, such as joint planning, reflective supervision, and internal professional forums, emerge as key strategies for translating leadership vision into daily practice, allowing generational differences to function as complementary strengths rather than sources of tension.

In response to the third research question, the study confirms that such leadership and management practices have positive effects on teacher performance, professional loyalty, and sustained achievement in madrasahs. Teachers demonstrate higher motivation, greater commitment, and longer-term retention, which collectively contribute to organizational stability and consistent student achievement. Theoretically, this study enriches the transformational leadership discourse by situating it within a multigenerational Islamic education context and highlighting relational trust and the alignment of competencies as core mechanisms. Practically, it underscores the importance of emotionally intelligent, collaborative leadership in addressing generational diversity. While limited by its single-case qualitative design, future research should expand comparative and mixed-method inquiries to further validate and generalize leadership models for multigenerational educational institutions.

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