

Educational Policy in Madrasahs: Approaches, Models, Methodologies, and Processes (A Case Study at MA Darul Aitam, Yaqin Pemandah, and Badarul Islam)

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Abstract

This study addresses the limited scholarly attention given to educational policy implementation within Islamic madrasahs, despite its critical influence on institutional quality and responsiveness to modernization. The research aims to analyze the approaches, management models, methodologies, and contextual factors shaping the enactment of educational policies in three institutions: MA Darul Aitam, MA Yaqin Pemandah, and MA Badarul Islam. Employing a qualitative multi-site case study design, data were collected from 21 purposively selected participants—including principals, vice principals, teachers, administrative staff, and students—through semi-structured interviews, observations, and document analysis. Data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2019). The findings reveal four key insights: (1) Policy implementation is influenced by the integration of national education directives with Islamic moral and cultural values, guided by leadership vision and community engagement; (2) The madrasahs adopted distinct policy management models—consultative, participatory, and hierarchical—each fostering accountability and adaptability in different ways; (3) Methodological orientations reflect a synthesis of tradition, innovation, and administrative discipline; and (4) Contextual factors such as leadership style, teacher competence, community participation, and resource adequacy significantly affect policy effectiveness. The study concludes that successful policy implementation in madrasahs depends on the alignment of ethical leadership, inclusive governance, and the embedding of moral values within institutional practices. Theoretically, the study advances Islamic education policy discourse, while practically offering guidance for policymakers seeking to enhance teacher

professionalism, integrate digital literacy, and adapt national policies to local contexts.

Keywords: Educational Policy; Islamic Madrasahs; Policy Implementation; Leadership and Governance; Contextual Education Reform

INTRODUCTION

Education plays a pivotal role in shaping the progress and civilization of a nation. The level of intelligence and human development is often measured by the quality and accessibility of education. As Hafidati, (2021) asserts, education enables individuals not only to enhance their intellectual capacity but also to fulfill their life needs through meaningful work. In the context of Islamic education, particularly in madrasahs, educational policy is essential for determining the direction and effectiveness of teaching and learning systems.

Both international and national issues have explained the broader contexts of educational policy in madrasahs, highlighting the global demand for quality, inclusiveness, and innovation in Islamic education systems. In the post-pandemic era, madrasah reform in Indonesia has emphasized teacher quality improvement through three core competencies: digital literacy, adaptive capacity, and creativity in designing learning experiences. These competencies are viewed as crucial steps to make madrasahs more competitive nationally and globally (Rahman et al., 2024). The integration of madrasahs into the national education system has also driven curriculum reconstruction, balancing religious and general subjects, and developing local strategies to enhance teacher quality and learning time management (Yussuf & Salenda, 2024).

The advancement of Islamic education policy in the digital era has opened global access and interactive learning opportunities, yet it also presents challenges related to content validity, digital literacy among students, and the capacity of educators to implement technology-based instruction effectively (Indrawan et al., 2024). Furthermore, the "*Rahmatan lil 'Alamin*" learning profile policy represents government efforts to strengthen religious moderation through curriculum revision, teacher training, and module development. However, limited teacher understanding, resource constraints, and community-level resistance remain major barriers (Shihbuddin et al., 2024).

At the national level, the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum requires flexible approaches and models for instructional practice. Many madrasahs struggle to adapt due to limited teacher capacity and difficulty aligning instructional materials with both national curriculum demands and Islamic values (Aulia, 2025). The Ministry of Religious Affairs (KMA) Regulations No. 347 of 2022 and No. 450 of 2024 mark a policy transformation emphasizing decentralization, integration of religious and general education, character education, and digital responsiveness (Jauhari et al., 2025). Nevertheless, challenges remain in achieving the expected quality standards due to unequal infrastructure, limited monitoring and evaluation, and insufficient teacher readiness (Kurniawaty et al., 2024).

Modern teaching practices in madrasahs demand curriculum renewal and teacher professionalism through continuous training and active learning approaches—critical measures for bridging Islamic traditions with 21st-century competencies (Amzat, 2022). The development of literacy culture in madrasahs, such as structured reading programs and library-based learning, serves as the foundation for improving both religious and general education quality (Didipu, 2021). In this regard, educational policies become decisive instruments in improving literacy outcomes and achieving broader educational goals.

Educational policy, as part of public policy, functions as a structured decision-making framework established by authorities to achieve national education objectives (Rahmah, et al, 2022; Dwi et al., 2024). Such policies must be effectively targeted to ensure maximum impact (Eka P, 2021). According to Anistianingsih, (2022), educational policy analysis identifies educational problems, evaluates existing policies, formulates new strategies, and supports evidence-based decision-making. Similarly, Maimunah & Rosadi, (2021) argue that public policy analysis assists policymakers in addressing educational challenges and aligning public needs with institutional capacities.

Suriani et al., (2024) highlight that educational policies are dynamic and can be revised according to changing socio-political contexts and resource availability. Effective policy implementation requires synchronization between political design, budget allocation, and administrative efficiency. Al Masquri, (2023) further explains that Islamic education policymakers must understand policy formulation stages—preparatory, play, and game stages—and ensure effective dissemination through structured socialization strategies.

Innovation in madrasah education, according to Fathurrochman (2024), demands adaptive managerial approaches, stakeholder collaboration, technological integration, and

continuous evaluation of teaching methodologies to enhance institutional responsiveness. Consequently, the need for effective educational policy frameworks has become increasingly significant as madrasahs navigate modernization and globalization challenges.

Previous research supports the argument that actors in educational policy—teachers, school leaders, and local decision-makers—play a strategic role in transforming policies into contextualized practices. They interpret, mediate, and innovate policies according to local needs (Sahara et al., 2025). Kurniati et al., (2023) assert that structured monitoring mechanisms are vital for ensuring that Islamic education policies achieve intended outcomes. Sayfullloh et al., (2024) found that Islamic education policy has evolved significantly post-Reformasi, aligning national education goals with religious values but still facing implementation challenges. Similarly, Haq, (2021) observed that policy synergy between Islamic and national education systems enhances character education and institutional support, though contextual adjustment remains necessary for optimal outcomes.

These studies collectively reveal that while madrasahs have made progress in policy formulation and implementation, gaps remain in coordination, monitoring, and local adaptation. The present research addresses this gap by exploring how madrasahs operationalize educational policies through specific approaches, models, methodologies, and processes.

This study is grounded in three theoretical perspectives that frame the analysis of educational policy in madrasahs. The Theory of Educational Policy Implementation explains that schools adopt adaptive strategies to respond to social change by aligning curriculum, pedagogy, and organizational policies to local contexts (Rohmadi et al., 2024). The Systems Theory in Education emphasizes that educational quality depends on coordination among system components (input, process, and output), and weak alignment may hinder policy effectiveness (Garira, 2024). Finally, the Human Capital Theory, as discussed by Manik et al., (2023) cites Schultz, (1961), views education as an investment that enhances individual productivity and competitiveness—an argument supporting the importance of effective madrasah policies in human resource development.

Despite the availability of numerous studies on Islamic education policy, few have explored the micro-level processes of policy enactment within madrasahs, particularly concerning how institutional leadership, teacher participation, and community involvement shape the implementation of educational policies. This research seeks to fill this gap by

offering an in-depth case study across three madrasahs—MA Darul Aitam, MA Yaqin Pemandah, and MA Badarul Islam—each with distinctive approaches to policy management.

The novelty of this study lies in its holistic examination of educational policy enactment at the institutional level, emphasizing the dynamic interaction between policy formulation, implementation, and contextual adaptation within madrasahs. Unlike previous studies that focused mainly on policy formulation or macro-level analysis, this research integrates approaches, models, methodologies, and processes into a single analytical framework. By comparing three madrasahs with diverse leadership patterns and community contexts, it provides a new perspective on how Islamic educational institutions operationalize national policy directives into localized and sustainable educational practices.

The preliminary observation conducted in the three madrasahs revealed both progress and challenges. While institutions strive to improve quality through integrated, participatory, and technology-based approaches, several problems persist: inconsistency in policy implementation, limited human and financial resources, inadequate monitoring systems, leadership variations, and weak alignment with community needs. These findings underscore that educational policy effectiveness depends on leadership, teacher competence, resource management, and contextual responsiveness.

Accordingly, this study is designed to achieve four main objectives. First, to analyze the approaches used by madrasahs in implementing educational policies and how these approaches reflect institutional vision, leadership, and community values. Second, to identify and describe the models of educational policy management that influence decision-making and stakeholder participation within the institutions. Third, to examine the methodologies and processes applied in the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of madrasah educational policies. Fourth, to explore the contextual factors—such as leadership style, teacher capacity, and community engagement—that affect the success and sustainability of policy implementation across MA Darul Aitam, MA Yaqin Pemandah, and MA Badarul Islam. Through a case study approach, the research contributes to a deeper understanding of how madrasahs translate national educational policies into localized and sustainable practices that align with Islamic educational values and 21st-century demands.

METHODS

Research Type

This study applied a qualitative research approach, which emphasizes exploring meaning, process, and interpretation within a natural context. Qualitative research enables the researcher to understand participants' experiences and perceptions in depth. According to Creswell and Guetterman (2023), qualitative inquiry seeks to explore the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem through a comprehensive interpretive process. Similarly, Sugiyono (2022) explains that qualitative methods focus on understanding phenomena holistically and contextually through words and behavior rather than numerical data. Supporting this, Ary et al. (2021) note that qualitative research provides rich insights into how people experience and interpret educational practices, making it suitable for exploring policy implementation in madrasahs.

Research Design

The research employed a multi-site case study design to analyze educational policy processes across three madrasahs—MA Darul Aitam, MA Yaqin Pemandah, and MA Badarul Islam. A case study design is appropriate when the aim is to understand a bounded system in its real-life context because it allows for in-depth exploration of how local contexts, actor interactions, and institutional dynamics shape policy enactment (Marybelle et al., 2023). This design enabled the researcher to compare similarities and differences in policy interpretation and implementation across the three institutions, providing a holistic understanding of how educational policies are contextualized within varying organizational environments. Each site served as an individual unit of analysis, while the cross-case synthesis facilitated broader insights into common challenges and innovative practices in madrasah policy management. The approach also supported the identification of unique contextual factors influencing decision-making processes, leadership roles, and stakeholder participation in policy implementation.

Population and Sample

The study was conducted from September 5 to October 10, 2025, involving three madrasahs as research sites. The three madrasahs were MA Darul Aitam, MA Yaqin Pemandah, and MA Badarul Islam. The research population included principals, vice principals for curriculum, teachers, administrative staff, and students. Using purposive sampling, participants were selected based on their relevance to the research objectives and

their involvement in policy implementation. As noted by Sugiyono (2022), purposive sampling is appropriate for selecting information-rich cases that can provide in-depth understanding of the studied phenomena. The total respondents consisted of 21 participants, including: 3 principals (one from each madrasah), 3 vice principals for curriculum, 6 teachers (two per madrasah, representing religious and general studies), 3 administrative staff, and 6 students (two per madrasah). This sample structure ensured representation across different roles involved in educational policy formulation and execution.

Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, direct observations, and document analysis. The use of multiple data collection techniques—known as triangulation—was intended to enhance trustworthiness, credibility, and dependability of the findings. As Abdurrahman et al., (2025) note, triangulation strengthens qualitative validity by verifying information across multiple sources and perspectives, thereby reducing researcher bias. Similarly, Sarhan et al., (2025) emphasize that integrating interviews, observations, and documents enables a comprehensive understanding of educational phenomena by linking participant narratives to institutional practices. Semi-structured interviews provided flexibility for participants to express their experiences, observations allowed contextual interpretation of behaviors and interactions, and document analysis (e.g., meeting notes, policy reports) added historical and factual evidence supporting the interpretive findings.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data were analyzed using the interactive model developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2019), which includes three concurrent phases: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. This iterative process allowed continuous interaction between data collection and analysis, ensuring emerging insights were grounded in participants' experiences. Thematic analysis was conducted to identify recurring themes and subthemes using NVivo 14 software for coding and data organization. This combination of manual and digital analysis ensured systematic categorization and pattern identification throughout the analytical process.

To enhance the trustworthiness of the findings, member checking was performed by sharing preliminary interpretations with participants for verification, while peer debriefing was conducted with academic colleagues to refine analytical consistency and minimize bias. These strategies ensured the reliability and validity of qualitative results by aligning researcher

interpretations with participant realities. The integration of both human interpretive rigor and software-assisted accuracy yielded a comprehensive portrayal of how educational policies are implemented and experienced across different madrasah contexts.

RESULTS

1. Approaches Used by Madrasahs in Implementing Educational Policies

a. Institutional Vision and Mission Alignment

Across the three observed madrasahs—MA Darul Aitam, MA Yaqin Pemandah, and MA Badarul Islam—the implementation of educational policies was consistently guided by each institution’s vision and mission, emphasizing Islamic values, academic excellence, and community service. The alignment of national curriculum goals with Islamic character education formed the foundation of policy interpretation and execution.

At **MA Darul Aitam**, the principal emphasized that the institution’s vision of forming “morally upright and intellectually capable students” is realized through the integration of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* with Islamic teachings. Teachers adapted national policies to reflect spiritual dimensions such as *akhlakul karimah* and *ibadah practices* (P01, male, 49, MA Darul Aitam, personal communication, Sep 29, 2025). Classroom observations revealed that lessons were often opened with *doa* and short *taẓkirah* to instill moral awareness (Observation, Sep 7, 2025).

An administrative staff member added, “Our documentation always ensures that each policy reference includes a moral or Qur’anic value, so administration supports learning with faith-based order” (P016, male, 36, MA Darul Aitam, personal communication, Oct 3, 2025). A student commented, “We feel proud that our studies always start with reflection and prayer; it helps us remember why we study,” (P019, male, 18, MA Darul Aitam, personal communication, Oct 5, 2025).

At **MA Yaqin Pemandah**, the principal noted that the school vision emphasizes *faith-based discipline and social care*, which is embedded in all school programs including student mentoring and extracurricular religious study circles (P07, male, 45, MA Yaqin Pemandah, personal communication, Sep 25, 2025). The teachers linked policy implementation with *takhsusus diniyah* (religious specialization) to preserve the local *nabdliyyin* tradition.

An administrative staff member mentioned, “Every new policy is discussed in our administrative meeting to ensure that student records and curriculum schedules follow both ministry and religious guidelines,” (P017, male, 25, MA Yaqin Pemandah, personal communication, Oct 4, 2025). A student expressed, “We learn not only for exams but also to practice discipline and respect, just as our teachers remind us daily,” (P020, male, 16, MA Yaqin Pemandah, personal communication, Oct 6, 2025).

Meanwhile, **MA Badarul Islam** integrated its institutional mission with a community-based approach. The principal explained that policies are not only interpreted from government directives but also discussed with *pengurus yayasan* and local religious leaders to maintain harmony between educational reform and cultural values (P013, female, 38, MA Badarul Islam, personal communication, Oct 1, 2025). Observation showed that the policy implementation consistently reflected local community needs and expectations (Observation, Sep 12, 2025).

An administrative staff highlighted, “Our reports must align with community expectations; every regulation we implement must be socialized to parents,” (P018, male, 28, MA Badarul Islam, personal communication, Oct 8, 2025). A student reflected, “We feel our school connects with the community, so learning here feels meaningful and close to our lives,” (P021, female, 17, MA Badarul Islam, personal communication, Oct 9, 2025).

These findings indicate that all three institutions localized policy implementation by aligning it with Islamic philosophy, community identity, and moral objectives, ensuring that national educational directives remained culturally and spiritually grounded.

b. Leadership Approaches

Leadership in the three madrasahs demonstrated varied but complementary approaches in directing policy implementation. At **MA Darul Aitam**, the principal adopted a *transformational* style, prioritizing teacher motivation, shared decision-making, and consistent mentoring. Teachers reported that the principal regularly held reflection meetings to align teaching practices with the school’s strategic goals (P03, male, 45, MA Darul Aitam, personal communication, Sep 15, 2025). Observation confirmed that the principal actively monitored classroom environments and provided feedback directly after lessons (Observation, Sep 18, 2025).

In **MA Yaqin Pemandah**, leadership was characterized by *participative collaboration*. The principal emphasized consensus-based decision-making, ensuring that every teacher

understood and contributed to the implementation of new curriculum standards. “We interpret policies together, not as orders but as shared responsibility,” the principal stated (P07, male, 48, MA Yaqin Pemandah, personal communication, Sep 21, 2025).

Conversely, **MA Badarul Islam** applied a *structured managerial approach* where policies were executed through clear administrative hierarchies. The vice principal for curriculum acted as a bridge between the principal and teachers, ensuring clarity in implementation procedures. Teachers appreciated the well-documented policy guidelines and consistent leadership communication (P014, male, 32, MA Badarul Islam, personal communication, Oct 3, 2025). Observation revealed regular coordination meetings and clear timelines for program execution (Observation, Sep 29, 2025).

Overall, leadership approaches in these madrasahs balanced spiritual guidance and managerial effectiveness. Transformational leadership fostered motivation and creativity, participative leadership encouraged ownership, and structured management ensured stability and continuity.

c. **Community and Stakeholder Involvement**

Community participation emerged as a crucial dimension of policy implementation in all three institutions. At **MA Darul Aitam**, parents and alumni were regularly involved in school activities and policy discussions, particularly in financial and religious program support (P01, male, 49, MA Darul Aitam, personal communication, Sep 20, 2025). Observation showed active participation of parents during student performance reviews and religious events (Observation, Sep 25, 2025).

At **MA Yaqin Pemandah**, the community engagement extended beyond parents to include local religious scholars and village officials. The principal explained that policy dissemination meetings often involved *tokoh masyarakat* to ensure broad acceptance and alignment with community values (P07, male, 48, MA Yaqin Pemandah, personal communication, Sep 28, 2025).

Meanwhile, **MA Badarul Islam** emphasized collaboration with the *yayasan* and the *madrasah committee*, which regularly evaluated policy outcomes. Teachers noted that these interactions strengthened school accountability and resource mobilization (P015, male, 27, MA Badarul Islam, personal communication, Oct 5, 2025).

The findings highlight that effective policy implementation in madrasahs depends heavily on communal trust and shared religious identity. Stakeholder engagement not only reinforces institutional credibility but also enhances sustainability through collective responsibility.

d. Comparative Findings

A cross-case analysis revealed both convergence and divergence in the approaches used across the three madrasahs. All institutions shared a common focus on integrating Islamic values with national education policy, supported by strong leadership and community-based decision-making. However, the degree of formalization and participation varied.

- 1) **MA Darul Aitam** emphasized teacher empowerment and reflective leadership.
- 2) **MA Yaqin Pemandah** prioritized consensus and religious-cultural integration.
- 3) **MA Badarul Islam** demonstrated strong administrative coordination and institutional discipline.

Observation across all sites indicated that policy implementation was most successful when institutional leadership, teacher professionalism, and community involvement operated synergistically (Observation, Oct 8, 2025).

In conclusion, the approaches of the three madrasahs reveal a holistic model of educational policy implementation where national directives are internalized through Islamic identity, moral leadership, and communal partnership, reflecting the essence of *education as service and devotion (khidmah dan ibadah)*.

Table 1. Comparative Approaches in Educational Policy Implementation Across Three Madrasahs

Aspect	MA Darul Aitam	MA Yaqin Pemandah	MA Badarul Islam
Vision–Mission Alignment	Integrates <i>Kurikulum Merdeka</i> with Islamic values emphasizing <i>akhlakul karimah</i> and worship.	Focuses on faith-based discipline and <i>takebassus diniyah</i> rooted in <i>nabdhliyyin</i> tradition.	Aligns national directives with community-based Islamic culture and local traditions.
Leadership Approach	Transformational and reflective; promotes teacher motivation and shared decision-making.	Participative and consensus-driven; involves teachers in interpreting policies.	Bureaucratic and structured; ensures administrative clarity and stability.

Aspect	MA Darul Aitam	MA Yaqin Pemandah	MA Badarul Islam
Community Involvement	Strong alumni and parental participation in policy and funding.	Close engagement with <i>tokoh masyarakat</i> and village officials.	Collaboration with <i>yayasan</i> and madrasah committee in monitoring outcomes.
Implementation Focus	Teacher empowerment and reflective supervision.	Religious-cultural integration and shared responsibility.	Administrative discipline and procedural consistency.

The table 1 shows that all three madrasahs successfully contextualized national education policies within Islamic and local cultural frameworks, but they differed in their managerial and participatory approaches: (1) MA Darul Aitam excelled in transformational leadership and teacher-driven implementation, making it dynamic and adaptive; (2) MA Yaqin Pemandah demonstrated strong community-oriented collaboration rooted in faith and tradition, ensuring cultural continuity; (3) MA Badarul Islam maintained institutional stability through structured management and clear procedural systems. These findings indicate that policy success in Islamic madrasahs depends on harmonizing leadership, cultural identity, and community trust, where each institution balances spiritual guidance with administrative accountability.

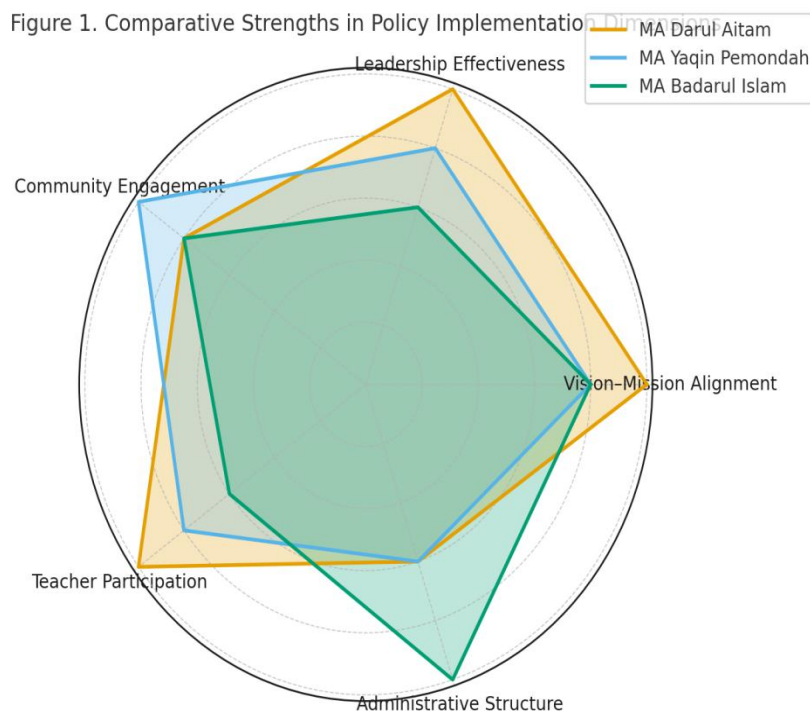


Figure 1. Comparative Strengths in Policy Implementation Dimensions

This figure 1 of radar chart illustrates the relative strengths of the three madrasahs across five dimensions of policy implementation: *Vision–Mission Alignment, Leadership Effectiveness, Community Engagement, Teacher Participation, and Administrative Structure*: (1) MA Darul Aitam shows the highest consistency across most dimensions, particularly in leadership, teacher participation, and alignment with vision–mission; (2) MA Yaqin Pemandah excels in community engagement, reflecting strong collaboration with local religious and social stakeholders; (3) MA Badarul Islam stands out in administrative structure, emphasizing procedural discipline and institutional coordination. Overall, the radar chart demonstrates that while each madrasah has distinctive strengths, their collective model forms a complementary system balancing spiritual, managerial, and communal dimensions.

2. Models of Educational Policy Management

a. Organizational Structures and Decision-Making Models

The organizational structure and decision-making process in each madrasah revealed a balance between administrative hierarchy and collaborative participation. At **MA Darul Aitam**, the management system followed a semi-hierarchical model in which the principal maintained ultimate decision-making authority but encouraged teacher consultation before implementing new policies. The vice principals for curriculum and student affairs played active roles in translating directives into classroom practices (P02, male, 45, MA Darul Aitam, personal communication, Sep 29, 2025). Observation indicated that meetings were routinely held every two weeks to synchronize decisions between departments and ensure alignment with national standards (Observation, Sep 16, 2025).

In **MA Yaqin Pemandah**, decision-making adopted a *participatory management model*. The principal emphasized inclusive discussions where teachers, administrative staff, and community representatives voiced opinions before finalizing policies. One teacher noted, “Every new policy is discussed in coordination meetings, and we are encouraged to suggest revisions that fit our students’ needs” (P010, female, 23, MA Yaqin Pemandah, personal communication, Sep 21, 2025). This approach fostered a culture of transparency and shared ownership in governance.

Meanwhile, **MA Badarul Islam** displayed a more formalized structure, characterized by clear lines of authority and procedural rigor. Policy instructions flowed from the principal through vice principals, subject heads, and finally to individual teachers. The principal

described this as “a system designed for clarity and accountability rather than spontaneous flexibility” (P013, female, 38, MA Badarul Islam, personal communication, Oct 3, 2025). Observation revealed that this structure effectively maintained administrative order but left limited space for spontaneous teacher input during decision-making (Observation, Sep 26, 2025).

These findings suggest that while all three madrasahs employed hierarchical coordination, MA Yaqin Pemandah demonstrated a higher degree of participative governance, contrasting with the more formal, procedural style of MA Badarul Islam. MA Darul Aitam, in turn, served as a hybrid model integrating both consultative and managerial elements.

b. Stakeholder Participation and Collaboration

Stakeholder participation emerged as a fundamental component in policy formulation and curriculum development across all institutions. At **MA Darul Aitam**, teachers were routinely involved in revising lesson plans and extracurricular policies. The vice principal for curriculum explained that “teachers’ ideas are central in shaping implementation strategies, especially when adapting national guidelines to Islamic content” (P02, male, 45, MA Darul Aitam, personal communication, Sep 15, 2025). Observation confirmed that weekly teacher meetings functioned as collaborative workshops for curriculum refinement (Observation, Sep 19, 2025).

At **MA Yaqin Pemandah**, collaboration extended beyond internal stakeholders to include parents and local government education officers. One senior teacher reported that external experts from the *Kantor Kemenag* occasionally provided input on curriculum adjustments to ensure compliance with national standards (P09, male, 46, MA Yaqin Pemandah, personal communication, Sep 28, 2025). Student organizations were also encouraged to provide feedback regarding school programs, creating a participatory school culture that bridged policy with student engagement (Observation, Sep 30, 2025).

In **MA Badarul Islam**, collaboration primarily occurred within structured forums involving teachers, administrative staff, and the *madrasah committee*. The principal explained that “every major decision must go through the committee to ensure it aligns with institutional policies and the foundation’s mission” (P013, female, 38, MA Badarul Islam, personal communication, Oct 5, 2025). Observation revealed that this coordination created

strong accountability but sometimes delayed rapid policy responses (Observation, Sep 27, 2025).

Overall, stakeholder involvement across these madrasahs underscored the importance of participative dialogue, where shared decision-making enhanced legitimacy and strengthened institutional cohesion.

c. **Monitoring, Evaluation, and Feedback Systems**

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) mechanisms were well-established in each madrasah, though differing in structure and intensity. At **MA Darul Aitam**, monitoring was carried out through scheduled lesson observations and documentation reviews. The principal emphasized a “constructive supervision” approach in which feedback focused on improvement rather than sanction (P01, male, 49, MA Darul Aitam, personal communication, Sep 20, 2025). Observation showed that supervision sessions often concluded with reflective discussions between principals and teachers (Observation, Sep 24, 2025).

MA Yaqin Pemandah adopted a performance-based evaluation system linked to policy outcomes. Teachers were assessed not only on instructional delivery but also on their contribution to policy innovation. “We measure success through student achievement and teacher initiative,” said the vice principal for curriculum (P08, male, 42, MA Yaqin Pemandah, personal communication, Sep 25, 2025). Feedback loops were institutionalized through digital forms and regular self-assessment meetings (Observation, Sep 23, 2025).

MA Badarul Islam, in contrast, implemented a strict administrative evaluation model. Reports were collected monthly and reviewed by the foundation board to assess progress on strategic goals. While this ensured accountability, it sometimes limited creative flexibility among teachers (P014, male, 32, MA Badarul Islam, personal communication, Oct 3, 2025). Observation confirmed the presence of a well-documented feedback system, with written memos and scheduled audit reviews (Observation, Oct 4, 2025).

Across all cases, monitoring and evaluation were integral to policy sustainability, ensuring responsiveness to both internal and external feedback while maintaining alignment with educational goals.

d. Cross-Case Comparison

A comparative synthesis revealed that the three madrasahs demonstrated complementary management orientations:

- 1) **MA Darul Aitam** emphasized collaborative governance with a balance between structure and flexibility.
- 2) **MA Yaqin Pemandah** prioritized participative leadership and cross-sectoral collaboration.
- 3) **MA Badarul Islam** maintained procedural consistency through hierarchical management and administrative discipline.

Observation across sites indicated that participatory systems tended to enhance teacher motivation and institutional innovation, while structured administrative systems ensured order and sustainability (Observation, Oct 9, 2025).

In sum, the models of educational policy management among the three madrasahs illustrated a spectrum of organizational strategies—from participatory to hierarchical—each reflecting contextual needs, leadership philosophy, and institutional culture. The integration of monitoring, stakeholder participation, and administrative coordination emerged as the key to effective, sustainable policy implementation.

Table 2. Summary of Educational Policy Management

Models across Three Madrasahs

Madrasah	Decision-Making Model	Stakeholder Involvement	Monitoring & Evaluation	Key Characteristics
MA Darul Aitam	Semi-hierarchical, consultative	Teachers actively involved in planning	Reflective supervision for improvement	Balanced structure with flexibility and collaboration
MA Yaqin Pemandah	Participatory and inclusive	Teachers, parents, and Kemenag officers involved	Digital feedback and performance-based assessment	Highly participative and community-oriented governance
MA Badarul Islam	Hierarchical and procedural	Limited to internal staff and foundation committee	Administrative reporting and document audits	Structured and disciplined system ensuring accountability

The table 2 summarizes the management models found across the three madrasahs: (1) MA Darul Aitam demonstrates a hybrid model, balancing authority with teacher consultation; (2) MA Yaqin Pemandah emphasizes participatory leadership and broad stakeholder collaboration, fostering transparency and innovation; (3) MA Badarul Islam applies a formalized administrative system focused on order and accountability. These differences highlight that participative and reflective systems (like in MA Yaqin Pemandah and MA Darul Aitam) tend to enhance teacher motivation and adaptability, while hierarchical systems (as in MA Badarul Islam) ensure procedural consistency and institutional control.

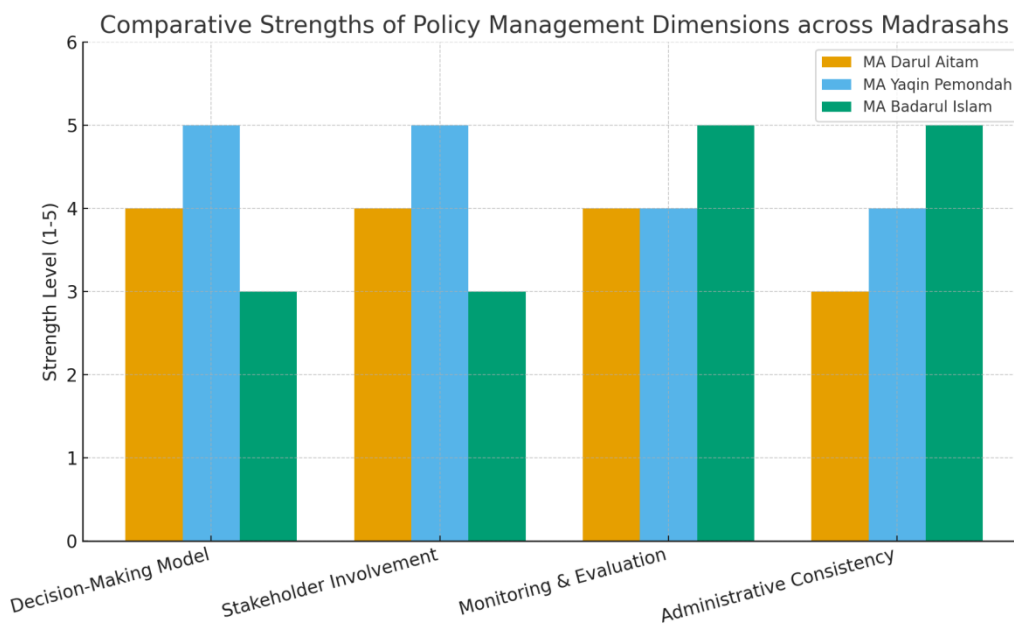


Figure 2: Clustered Bar Chart of Policy Management Dimension Comparative Across Madrasahs

Figure 2 shows the analysis of policy management dimensions across the three madrasahs reveals distinct strengths in each institution. In terms of decision-making models and stakeholder involvement, MA Yaqin Pemandah achieved the highest score of 5, indicating strong participatory practices, while MA Darul Aitam ranked at a moderate level of 4, and MA Badarul Islam was relatively lower at 3. For monitoring and evaluation, MA Badarul Islam demonstrated the greatest strength with a top score of 5, whereas both MA Darul Aitam and MA Yaqin Pemandah were assessed at level 4. Regarding administrative consistency, MA Badarul Islam again led with a score of 5, MA Yaqin Pemandah held a moderate position at 4, and MA Darul Aitam ranked lower at 3. The accompanying chart

visually illustrates how each madrasah excels in different aspects of policy management, providing a clear basis for comparative analysis and informed strategic decision-making.

3. Methodologies and Processes of Policy Formulation, Implementation, and Evaluation

a. Policy Formulation Process

Across the three madrasahs—MA Darul Aitam, MA Yaqin Pemandah, and MA Badarul Islam—the formulation of educational policies followed a multi-step approach involving interpretation, adaptation, and approval of national and local directives.

At **MA Darul Aitam**, policy formulation began with an interpretive meeting among the principal, vice principals, and curriculum coordinators to analyze national educational regulations and align them with the institution's Islamic mission. The principal explained, "Before implementing any new directive, we discuss how it fits our school's context and Islamic values" (P01, male, 49, MA Darul Aitam, personal communication, Sep 29, 2025). The documentation process included written reports, internal circulars, and socialization through workshops. Observation revealed that socialization meetings were regularly conducted in the teacher's room, emphasizing clarity of objectives and expected outcomes (Observation, Sep 17, 2025).

At **MA Yaqin Pemandah**, the formulation process was characterized by a participatory dialogue model. Teachers and curriculum teams jointly reviewed government circulars to ensure that curriculum adjustments reflected local and religious priorities. "Every teacher is given a chance to contribute during the drafting stage. This makes us feel responsible for the results," said one senior teacher (P09, male, 46, MA Yaqin Pemandah, personal communication, Sep 21, 2025). The madrasah also invited local religious figures to provide advice on integrating Islamic principles into modern subjects (Observation, Sep 22, 2025).

Meanwhile, **MA Badarul Islam** adopted a more bureaucratic and systematic process. The principal, vice principals, and the *madrasah committee* collaboratively reviewed directives, which were then documented in official meeting minutes and signed by all parties. "We ensure every regulation is recorded and approved before it is implemented," explained the vice principal (P014, male, 32, MA Badarul Islam, personal communication, Oct 3, 2025).

Observation showed that this approach produced well-documented policies but sometimes delayed decision-making due to multiple approval layers (Observation, Sep 27, 2025).

Overall, policy formulation across the three madrasahs demonstrated varying degrees of participatory involvement and bureaucratic control, reflecting institutional cultures and leadership philosophies.

b. Implementation Strategies

Implementation processes in the studied madrasahs focused on curriculum integration, teacher empowerment, and the use of digital tools to enhance learning outcomes.

At **MA Darul Aitam**, the implementation emphasized integrating religious and general education through project-based learning and thematic instruction. The principal stated, “We try to connect every subject with Islamic ethics, so learning is not just academic but moral” (P01, male, 49, MA Darul Aitam, personal communication, Sep 15, 2025). Teachers were encouraged to design lesson plans that embed Qur’anic verses into scientific or social topics. Observation confirmed the presence of integrated teaching sessions where religious and secular subjects were connected meaningfully (Observation, Sep 20, 2025).

In **MA Yaqin Pemandah**, the implementation strategy focused on digital literacy and interactive learning. Teachers received training in the use of e-learning platforms, such as Google Classroom and Madrasah Digital Learning (MDL), to facilitate student engagement. “After the pandemic, we realized how important it is to use technology to reach students effectively,” noted the vice principal (P08, male, 42, MA Yaqin Pemandah, personal communication, Sep 25, 2025). Observation revealed that digital tools were actively used during lessons, with teachers integrating multimedia materials to enrich instruction (Observation, Sep 30, 2025).

At **MA Badarul Islam**, implementation was guided by traditional classroom instruction reinforced by structured teacher mentoring. The principal emphasized, “Our focus is on discipline and consistency rather than experimentation” (P013, female, 38, MA Badarul Islam, personal communication, Oct 5, 2025). However, limited resources and internet connectivity posed challenges to the full adoption of technology-based methods. Observation showed that while technology use was minimal, teacher supervision was rigorous and well-documented (Observation, Oct 4, 2025).

Across the three madrasahs, successful implementation depended on leadership support, teacher readiness, and available technological resources. The most progressive adaptation occurred at MA Yaqin Pemandah, while MA Darul Aitam maintained a balanced integration of tradition and innovation.

c. Evaluation and Reflection Mechanisms

Evaluation and reflection mechanisms served as integral parts of each madrasah's policy cycle, ensuring accountability and continuous improvement.

At **MA Darul Aitam**, evaluations were conducted through lesson observations, performance appraisals, and periodic curriculum reviews. "After every semester, we evaluate what works and what needs adjustment," explained the vice principal (P02, male, 45, MA Darul Aitam, personal communication, Sep 20, 2025). Observation revealed that feedback sessions between administrators and teachers focused on reflective dialogue rather than punitive measures (Observation, Sep 24, 2025).

At **MA Yaqin Pemandah**, reflection was embedded within the teacher development program. Teachers maintained self-evaluation journals and participated in peer discussions to identify best practices. "Every teacher presents their reflection in a meeting. It helps us learn from each other," said a senior teacher (P09, male, 46, MA Yaqin Pemandah, personal communication, Sep 28, 2025). Observation confirmed that reflection sessions often resulted in practical adjustments to lesson plans and student engagement methods (Observation, Oct 2, 2025).

In **MA Badarul Islam**, evaluation was conducted through formal documentation and administrative reports reviewed monthly by the school committee. "We follow a strict monitoring format to ensure every target is met," the principal explained (P013, male, 38, MA Badarul Islam, personal communication, Oct 3, 2025). Observation indicated that evaluations were more formalized and less dialogic, focusing on compliance and performance metrics (Observation, Sep 27, 2025).

Despite methodological differences, all three institutions demonstrated a shared commitment to reflective practice as a means of ensuring policy effectiveness and sustainability.

d. Inter-Madrasah Comparison

Comparative analysis revealed distinct methodological orientations among the three madrasahs.

- 1) **MA Darul Aitam** displayed a *contextual-integrative* methodology, blending Islamic values with modern pedagogical principles.
- 2) **MA Yaqin Pemandah** employed an *innovation-driven* methodology focused on digital integration and participatory decision-making.
- 3) **MA Badarul Islam** relied on a *structured-administrative* methodology emphasizing order, discipline, and compliance.

Observation across sites (Observation, Oct 9, 2025) confirmed that innovation-oriented methodologies led to higher teacher engagement and student motivation, whereas administratively rigid systems ensured policy consistency but limited creativity.

In sum, the processes of policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation across the three madrasahs demonstrated diverse methodological frameworks shaped by leadership orientation, teacher competence, and resource availability. Together, they reflect the dynamic interaction between tradition and modernization in the evolving landscape of Islamic educational policy implementation.

Table 3. Comparative Overview of Policy Methodologies Across Three Madrasahs

Madrasah	Formulation Process	Implementation Strategy	Evaluation & Reflection	Methodological Orientation
MA Darul Aitam	Interpretive meetings; principal & curriculum team align policies with Islamic values; internal workshops	Integration of religious and general education; project-based learning	Lesson observations, performance appraisals; reflective dialogue	Contextual-integrative
MA Yaqin Pemandah	Participatory dialogue; teacher & curriculum team involvement; consultation with religious figures	Digital interactive use of e-learning platforms	Self-evaluation journals, peer discussions; reflective meetings	Innovation-driven
MA Badarul Islam	Bureaucratic; committee review; formal documentation & approvals	Traditional instruction; structured mentoring	Administrative reports; monthly monitoring	Structured-administrat

The table 3 highlights the differences in policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation across the three madrasahs: (1) MA Darul Aitam emphasizes integrating Islamic values with modern pedagogical practices. Its approach is flexible and reflective, focusing on teacher collaboration and continuous improvement; (2) MA Yaqin Pemandah prioritizes innovation through digital learning, participatory decision-making, and collaborative evaluation, fostering active teacher engagement; (3) MA Badarul Islam follows a formal and bureaucratic approach, emphasizing discipline and compliance, with evaluation based on documentation and regular monitoring. Methodologically, the three madrasahs exhibit distinct orientations: Darul Aitam is contextual-integrative, Yaqin Pemandah is innovation-driven, and Badarul Islam is structured-administrative, reflecting differences in institutional culture and leadership style.

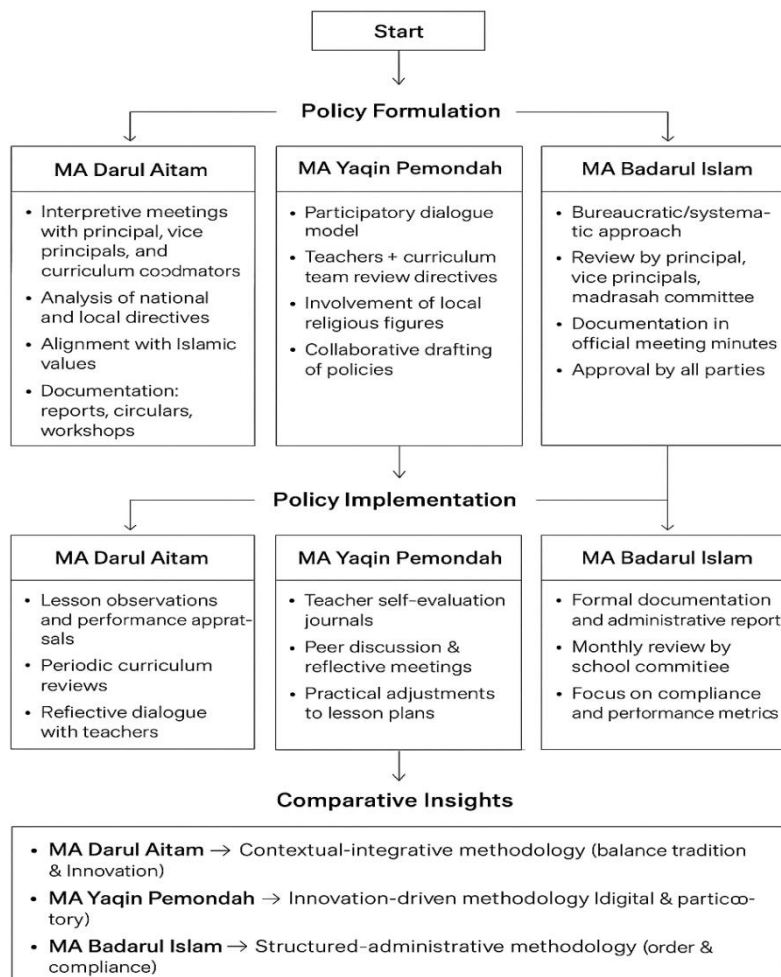


Figure 3. Flowchart of Educational Policy Management

The figure 3 of flowchart shows the three stages of educational policy management: **Formulation** → **Implementation** → **Evaluation & Reflection**. MA Darul Aitam used interpretive meetings and workshops, MA Yaqin Pemandah relied on participatory dialogue, and MA Badarul Islam followed a bureaucratic approval process. In implementation, Darul Aitam integrated religious and general education, Yaqin Pemandah emphasized digital and interactive learning, and Badarul Islam focused on traditional instruction with structured mentoring. Evaluation varied from reflective feedback in Darul Aitam, peer discussions in Yaqin Pemandah, to formal compliance monitoring in Badarul Islam. Overall, the madrasahs differ in methodology, balancing tradition, participation, and administrative rigor, as captured in the flowchart.

4. Contextual Factors Affecting the Success and Sustainability of Policy Implementation

a. Leadership Style and Institutional Culture

Leadership and institutional culture played a decisive role in shaping the consistency and sustainability of educational policy implementation across the three madrasahs. At **MA Darul Aitam**, leadership was characterized as **collaborative and visionary**, emphasizing shared responsibility and professional trust. The principal acted as a facilitator rather than an authoritarian figure. “I believe policies will only be effective when everyone feels involved,” noted the principal (P01, male, 49, MA Darul Aitam, personal communication, Sep 29, 2025). Observation revealed an open climate where teachers frequently consulted the leadership team before making instructional changes (Observation, Sep 24, 2025). This culture of collegiality strengthened the consistency of policy application and motivated teachers to innovate within a supportive framework.

In contrast, **MA Yaqin Pemandah** exhibited a **transformational leadership** model, emphasizing empowerment, motivation, and continuous learning. The vice principal explained, “We try to make teachers feel they are part of the change, not just followers of rules” (P08, male, 42, MA Yaqin Pemandah, personal communication, Sep 25, 2025). Observation indicated that teachers took initiative in developing new teaching strategies, encouraged by a culture of mutual respect and innovation (Observation, Sep 30, 2025).

At **MA Badarul Islam**, leadership tended to be **directive and hierarchical**. The principal maintained strict supervision and emphasized compliance with institutional norms.

“We value discipline because without it, policies will lose their direction,” stated the principal (P013, female, 38, MA Badarul Islam, personal communication, Oct 3, 2025). Observation confirmed that this leadership model fostered order and clarity but sometimes limited open dialogue and creative participation (Observation, Oct 4, 2025).

These findings highlight that leadership style directly affected how teachers internalized and enacted policy. Collaborative and transformational models (as in MA Darul Aitam and MA Yaqin Pemandah) enhanced innovation and sustainability, while directive models (as in MA Badarul Islam) ensured procedural consistency.

b. Teacher Capacity and Professional Competence

Teacher capacity emerged as another critical determinant of policy success.

At **MA Darul Aitam**, most teachers possessed adequate understanding of educational policies and demonstrated moderate technological literacy. Professional development workshops and reflective meetings supported teachers in aligning classroom practices with institutional goals. “We are guided to make lesson plans that match the policy objectives,” a teacher noted (P04, male, 48, MA Darul Aitam, personal communication, Sep 15, 2025). Observation showed teachers skillfully adapting policy frameworks into daily teaching activities (Observation, Sep 20, 2025).

In **MA Yaqin Pemandah**, teacher competence was notably high, particularly in integrating technology into pedagogical practices. The teachers’ strong motivation to learn new digital tools was evident in their frequent peer-to-peer training sessions. “We always help each other learn how to use new applications,” said a senior teacher (P09, male, 46, MA Yaqin Pemandah, personal communication, Sep 21, 2025). Observation revealed that classrooms were equipped with interactive learning materials, and students engaged actively through digital media (Observation, Oct 2, 2025).

Meanwhile, **MA Badarul Islam** faced challenges related to uneven teacher competence and limited exposure to training opportunities. “Some of us are still learning how to apply modern methods,” admitted a younger teacher (P015, female, 27, MA Badarul Islam, personal communication, Oct 5, 2025). Observation indicated that teachers relied heavily on traditional lecturing methods and written exercises (Observation, Oct 4, 2025). Despite these constraints, strong administrative guidance maintained teaching consistency and ensured minimal deviation from policy standards.

Overall, professional competence directly influenced teachers' readiness to implement reforms and adapt to changing educational needs. The most dynamic and policy-aligned teaching practices were found in MA Yaqin Pemandah, where teacher learning was institutionalized as a continuous process.

c. Community Engagement and Cultural Influence

Community participation and local cultural values significantly influenced the sustainability of policy implementation.

At **MA Darul Aitam**, parents and community leaders were regularly involved in school events, curriculum discussions, and student activities. "We always invite parents to school meetings so they understand the direction of our programs," the principal explained (P01, male, 49, MA Darul Aitam, personal communication, Sep 29, 2025). Observation indicated that strong community ties reinforced students' moral development and enhanced local trust in the madrasah (Observation, Sep 17, 2025).

In **MA Yaqin Pemandah**, community engagement was deeply intertwined with *local religious traditions* such as collective recitations and Qur'anic study circles. A junior teacher emphasized, "Our programs reflect the values of our community — discipline, sincerity, and togetherness" (P010, female, 23, MA Yaqin Pemandah, personal communication, Sep 28, 2025). Observation confirmed that cultural rituals and spiritual activities strengthened the implementation of moral education policies (Observation, Oct 2, 2025).

Conversely, **MA Badarul Islam** showed limited parental involvement due to socioeconomic constraints and time availability. "Many parents work outside the village, so they rarely join school programs," said the vice principal (P014, male, 32, MA Badarul Islam, personal communication, Oct 3, 2025). Observation indicated that while community presence was lower, religious leaders played a compensatory role by supporting moral guidance through sermons and school visits (Observation, Sep 27, 2025).

These findings indicate that local traditions and cultural participation serve as stabilizing forces for policy implementation, fostering alignment between institutional objectives and societal values.

d. Resource Availability and Institutional Support

Resource capacity significantly determined the effectiveness of educational policy execution in the three institutions.

At **MA Darul Aitam**, resource allocation was balanced and efficiently managed. The school maintained adequate teaching facilities, modest technological tools, and consistent administrative funding. “We always prioritize teacher support and learning materials in our budget,” noted the vice principal (P02, male, 45, MA Darul Aitam, personal communication, Sep 20, 2025). Observation confirmed sufficient learning resources such as projectors and reference books (Observation, Sep 24, 2025).

MA Yaqin Pemandah benefitted from external support and partnerships, including government grants and NGO-based training initiatives. The vice principal stated, “We collaborate with educational organizations to strengthen our facilities and teacher skills” (P08, male, 42, MA Yaqin Pemandah, personal communication, Sep 25, 2025). Observation showed that digital infrastructure, including internet access and multimedia devices, was better developed compared to other madrasahs (Observation, Sep 30, 2025).

In contrast, **MA Badarul Islam** struggled with limited financial and technological resources. “We depend mainly on community contributions, so our equipment is not always updated,” explained the principal (P013, female, 38, MA Badarul Islam, personal communication, Oct 3, 2025). Observation revealed that classrooms lacked adequate digital tools, affecting the integration of modern pedagogies (Observation, Oct 4, 2025).

Despite these disparities, all three madrasahs demonstrated a strong sense of resilience by maximizing available resources and emphasizing the role of human capital as their main asset.

e. **Cross-Case Synthesis**

A synthesis of findings across the three cases highlights the dynamic interaction between contextual factors and policy sustainability:

- 1) **Leadership** shaped the direction and tone of policy implementation, with transformational and collaborative leadership proving more adaptive to change.
- 2) **Teacher competence** acted as the operational core of policy success, particularly when supported by continuous training and reflective practice.
- 3) **Community engagement** provided cultural legitimacy and reinforced the moral dimension of education.
- 4) **Resource availability** determined the scalability and sustainability of innovations.

Comparatively, **MA Yaqin Pemandah** exhibited the strongest policy integration due to the synergy between leadership innovation, teacher competence, and external support.

MA Darul Aitam showed stability and moral consistency grounded in collaborative culture, while **MA Badarul Islam** maintained discipline and procedural clarity despite structural limitations.

These interrelated contextual factors demonstrate that the sustainability of educational policy implementation in madrasahs is not solely determined by policy design, but by the harmonious balance among leadership, teacher capacity, community support, and resource management.

Table 4. Comparison of Contextual Factors Across Madrasahs

Contextual Factor	MA Darul Aitam	MA Yaqin Pemandah	MA Badarul Islam
Leadership Style	Collaborative & Visionary	Transformational	Directive & Hierarchical
Teacher Competence	Moderate, supported by workshops	High, tech-savvy & continuous learning	Uneven, limited exposure
Community Engagement	Active parental & community participation	Integration with local religious traditions	Limited parental involvement, religious leader support
Resource Availability	Balanced, sufficient teaching facilities	Well-supported, digital infrastructure	Limited financial & technological resources

Table 4 summarizes the contextual factors affecting policy implementation across the three madrasahs, highlighting differences in leadership style, teacher competence, community engagement, and resource availability.

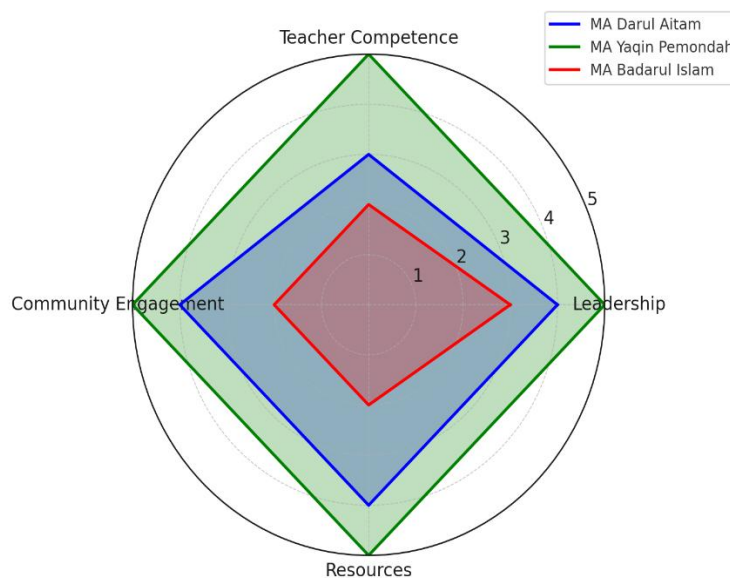


Figure 4. contextual factors affecting policy implementation

Figure 4 visualizes the comparative strength of leadership, teacher competence, community engagement, and resource availability across the three madrasahs. MA Yaqin Pemandah demonstrates the highest overall readiness for sustainable policy implementation. MA Darul Aitam shows moderate strength, while MA Badarul Islam faces limitations, particularly in teacher competence, community involvement, and resources.

DISCUSSION

1. Results Analysis

a. Approaches to Educational Policy Implementation

The comparative analysis revealed that all three madrasahs contextualized national educational directives through localized Islamic values, leadership orientation, and community involvement.

The alignment of institutional vision and mission was central to policy translation, ensuring that curriculum goals were interpreted through moral and spiritual frameworks. At MA Darul Aitam, the integration of *Kurikulum Merdeka* with Islamic ethics exemplified a faith-oriented educational paradigm emphasizing *akhlakul karimah* and *ibadah* practices. Similarly, MA Yaqin Pemandah embedded faith-based discipline and *takbassus diniyah* within its programs, while MA Badarul Islam localized policies through community consultation with the *yayasan* and local religious figures to maintain cultural harmony.

In terms of leadership approaches, distinct patterns emerged: MA Darul Aitam employed a transformational style centered on motivation and reflective supervision; MA Yaqin Pemandah favored participative leadership grounded in consensus and shared accountability; and MA Badarul Islam maintained a structured managerial system prioritizing procedural discipline. These styles, though different, collectively balanced spiritual guidance with organizational efficiency. Community and stakeholder involvement also played a pivotal role in policy sustainability. All three institutions relied on strong social capital—parents, alumni, religious leaders, and committees—to reinforce program legitimacy and provide moral and financial support.

A cross-case synthesis indicated that: (1) MA Darul Aitam emphasized teacher empowerment and reflective governance; (2) MA Yaqin Pemandah prioritized cultural-religious collaboration and communal consensus, and (3) MA Badarul Islam reinforced order

through formal administration and committee oversight. Hence, the approaches adopted across these institutions demonstrate that effective policy implementation in Islamic education requires the harmonization of leadership, moral identity, and community trust—integrating state directives within the spiritual and cultural lifeworlds of the madrasah.

b. Models of Educational Policy Management

The management models of educational policy across the three madrasahs revealed varying degrees of hierarchy, participation, and accountability mechanisms. Organizational structures and decision-making models reflected each institution's leadership philosophy. MA Darul Aitam implemented a semi-hierarchical consultative model combining authority with teacher participation. MA Yaqin Pemandah adopted a participatory management model, involving teachers, administrative staff, and external stakeholders in decision-making, thus enhancing transparency and shared ownership. Conversely, MA Badarul Islam adhered to a formal hierarchical system, characterized by well-documented procedures and top-down communication, ensuring order but limiting spontaneity.

Stakeholder participation and collaboration varied in depth and inclusivity. Darul Aitam encouraged teacher collaboration in curriculum adaptation; Yaqin Pemandah extended cooperation to parents and *Kemenag* officials; whereas Badarul Islam's collaboration was internal, relying mainly on coordination with the *jayasan* and madrasah committee. Despite these differences, all institutions recognized participation as a foundation for legitimacy and institutional coherence.

In monitoring and evaluation systems, Darul Aitam applied reflective supervision; Yaqin Pemandah linked evaluation to performance-based feedback using digital tools; and Badarul Islam institutionalized administrative reporting and document audits. These mechanisms collectively ensured accountability and continuous policy refinement.

A comparative synthesis revealed a continuum of management orientations—from collaborative and participatory (Darul Aitam, Yaqin Pemandah) to hierarchical and procedural (Badarul Islam). While participatory systems promoted innovation and teacher engagement, hierarchical models reinforced consistency and institutional stability. Thus, the sustainability of educational policy management in madrasahs depends on the integration of inclusive governance, systematic monitoring, and coherent administrative coordination.

c. Methodologies and Processes of Policy Formulation, Implementation, and Evaluation

The findings indicated that the three madrasahs followed distinct methodological orientations reflecting their institutional cultures and leadership styles. In policy formulation, MA Darul Aitam employed an interpretive and consultative approach, aligning national directives with Islamic values through internal workshops. MA Yaqin Pemandah adopted a participatory dialogue process, incorporating teacher and community input in aligning policy content with local religious practices. MA Badarul Islam used a bureaucratic and documented system, ensuring that every decision passed through structured approval channels to maintain procedural legitimacy.

In policy implementation, MA Darul Aitam emphasized integration between religious and general education, promoting thematic and project-based learning rooted in Islamic ethics. MA Yaqin Pemandah prioritized digital innovation and interactive learning, enhancing accessibility through online platforms and e-learning systems. MA Badarul Islam maintained a traditional instructional model with strong teacher mentoring and administrative supervision, though constrained by limited technological infrastructure.

Evaluation and reflection mechanisms were equally diverse. Darul Aitam emphasized reflective evaluation through peer dialogue; Yaqin Pemandah institutionalized self-assessment and peer review; and Badarul Islam relied on formal compliance monitoring through reports and documentation. These approaches demonstrate different balances between formative reflection and summative accountability.

The comparative analysis identified three methodological orientations: (1) Contextual-integrative (MA Darul Aitam): blending Islamic ethics with modern pedagogy; (2) Innovation-driven (MA Yaqin Pemandah): promoting digitalization and participatory reflection; and (3) Structured-administrative (MA Badarul Islam): emphasizing discipline and regulatory compliance. Collectively, these methodologies illustrate how Islamic educational institutions mediate between tradition, modernization, and managerial discipline in constructing sustainable policy practices.

d. Contextual Factors Influencing Policy Success and Sustainability

The sustainability of educational policy implementation across the three madrasahs was significantly shaped by four contextual dimensions: leadership style, teacher capacity, community engagement, and resource availability.

First, leadership style and institutional culture determined the internal coherence of policy execution. Darul Aitam's collaborative and visionary leadership fostered trust and reflective engagement; Yaqin Pemandah's transformational leadership encouraged innovation and professional empowerment; while Badarul Islam's directive style ensured procedural order but constrained creativity. Hence, inclusive and transformational leadership correlated positively with long-term sustainability and innovation.

Second, teacher capacity and professional competence directly affected implementation quality. Teachers in Darul Aitam displayed adaptability in policy alignment; Yaqin Pemandah's teachers demonstrated high digital literacy and collaborative learning; whereas Badarul Islam's staff showed limited exposure to contemporary pedagogical training. Continuous professional development emerged as a critical enabler of effective policy internalization.

Third, community engagement and cultural influence reinforced moral legitimacy and policy acceptance. Darul Aitam and Yaqin Pemandah benefited from strong community participation rooted in religious and social traditions, while Badarul Islam relied more on the moral support of religious leaders due to lower parental involvement. This finding underscores that community cohesion strengthens the moral and practical sustainability of educational initiatives.

Finally, resource availability and institutional support shaped the operational capacity of each madrasah. Darul Aitam maintained balanced financial and infrastructural support; Yaqin Pemandah benefited from external partnerships and digital investment; while Badarul Islam faced financial and technological limitations that restricted innovation despite strong administrative discipline.

Overall, the interplay of these contextual factors suggests that policy success in Islamic madrasahs depends on leadership inclusivity, teacher competence, community participation, and adequate resource mobilization. Together, they create a synergistic ecosystem that allows educational policies to evolve from bureaucratic directives into spiritually grounded, contextually responsive, and institutionally sustainable practices.

The results collectively illustrate that educational policy implementation in Islamic madrasahs operates at the intersection of spiritual values, participatory governance, and managerial discipline. While each madrasah exhibits distinct strengths—Darul Aitam in reflective leadership, Yaqin Pemandah in participatory innovation, and Badarul Islam in

administrative consistency—they all contribute to a composite model of policy implementation rooted in the integration of faith, culture, and institutional accountability. This synthesis reflects the adaptive and value-driven nature of Islamic educational policy in contemporary Indonesia.

2. Comparison with Previous Studies

This study corroborates Rohmadi et al., (2024) and Garira, (2024), who emphasized that policy effectiveness depends on systemic coordination among curriculum, pedagogy, and management. The observed alignment between leadership vision, teacher practice, and community engagement across the three madrasahs empirically supports the Systems Theory in Education, showing that institutional coherence enhances implementation quality. Similarly, the emphasis on teacher competence reinforces Hafidati, (2021) and Amzat (2022), who argued that professional development is central to educational improvement. The findings further validate Human Capital Theory (Schultz, (1961; Manik et al., 2023), demonstrating that investment in teacher capacity functions as a bridge between policy design and effective classroom practice.

The results also support Anistianingsih, (2022) and Rahmah, et al, (2022), who viewed educational policy as a structured but interpretable framework. In this study, teachers and leaders acted as policy interpreters and innovators, adapting national directives to local contexts—echoing Sahara et al., (2025), who observed that local actors mediate policy through socio-religious negotiation. Moreover, the identification of distinct leadership models—transformational-reflective (Darul Aitam), participatory-innovative (Yaqin Pemandah), and procedural-administrative (Badarul Islam)—extends Fathurrochman (2024), who emphasized the role of collaborative leadership and adaptive management in policy success.

Despite these alignments, several findings diverge from earlier research. While Shihbuddin et al., (2024) and Indrawan et al., (2024) viewed digital literacy as a post-pandemic challenge, MA Yaqin Pemandah demonstrated how structured digital training transformed this weakness into institutional strength. This underscores the importance of local leadership and contextual adaptability in technology-based policy implementation.

Additionally, unlike Kurniawaty et al., (2024) and Rahman et al., (2024), who reported persistent teacher-policy misalignment, this study found partial convergence—especially through reflective supervision at MA Darul Aitam, which encouraged participatory reform

and reduced resistance. This indicates a gradual shift from top-down to bottom-up policy enactment.

Finally, while Suriani et al., (2024) focused on political and structural constraints, this study introduces cultural and moral dimensions—community trust, religious legitimacy, and moral accountability—as equally critical factors. The results suggest that the sustainability of Islamic educational policies depends not only on bureaucratic efficiency but also on the ethical and communal principles consistent with *maslahah* (public benefit).

The findings deepen the Theory of Educational Policy Implementation by showing that effective enactment in madrasahs involves both structural adaptation and moral interpretation. They refine the Systems Theory in Education by identifying feedback loops—teacher reflection, parental involvement, and leadership consultation—as key mechanisms sustaining systemic equilibrium in religious institutions.

Furthermore, the study extends Human Capital Theory by revealing that teacher development and community participation enhance not only human productivity but also institutional resilience and spiritual capital, providing a broader view of educational investment within Islamic contexts.

Empirically, this study bridges the gap identified by Sayfulloh et al., (2024) and Haq, (2021) between national policy design and localized implementation. By analyzing three madrasahs with distinct governance systems, it demonstrates how participatory governance, contextual leadership, and community synergy transform centralized directives into sustainable practices. The novelty of this research lies in its micro-level comparative analysis that integrates approaches, models, methodologies, and contextual factors into one analytical framework—offering a more holistic understanding of how educational policies evolve within faith-based institutions.

In conclusion, this study confirms and advances existing scholarship by emphasizing that the success of Islamic educational policy depends not only on systemic coordination and professional competence but also on moral coherence, participatory leadership, and balanced integration between technological innovation and religious tradition.

3. Implications of Findings

This study offers significant theoretical and practical contributions to the field of Islamic educational policy by revealing how madrasahs interpret and sustain educational

directives within dynamic socio-religious contexts. Through analysis of MA Darul Aitam, MA Yaqin Pemandah, and MA Badarul Islam, policy implementation emerges not as a bureaucratic task but as an adaptive, value-driven process shaped by leadership, teacher competence, and community participation.

Theoretically, the findings enrich three key frameworks: The Theory of Educational Policy Implementation, Systems Theory in Education, and Human Capital Theory. The first is refined by showing that madrasahs reinterpret policies through institutional culture and moral reasoning, turning formal directives into contextual practices. The second is advanced by demonstrating that educational quality depends on coordination among inputs, processes, and outputs, mediated by moral accountability and participatory governance. The third is expanded by introducing the notion of *spiritual capital*, highlighting that investment in teacher development and leadership not only enhances productivity but also nurtures moral resilience—positioning madrasahs as institutions that integrate human and spiritual growth.

Practically, the study underscores that transformational and participatory leadership is crucial for aligning national policies with local realities, while teacher professional development must emphasize adaptive pedagogy, digital literacy, and reflective supervision to enable teachers as policy mediators. Community engagement strengthens policy legitimacy and sustainability, making moral accountability and social trust key determinants of success. Moreover, policy design should allow contextual flexibility, supporting decentralized decision-making and feedback between madrasahs and government institutions.

Overall, this research bridges the gap between policy formulation and implementation, positioning madrasahs as active agents of educational transformation capable of translating national frameworks into contextually grounded and spiritually guided practices. It advances theoretical discourse on educational policy and opens new pathways for exploring the moral and cultural dimensions of faith-based institutional governance.

4. Research Limitations

While this study offers valuable insights into the dynamics of educational policy implementation in madrasahs, several limitations must be acknowledged to contextualize its findings. The research was conducted in three institutions—MA Darul Aitam, MA Yaqin Pemandah, and MA Badarul Islam—selected for their diversity in leadership and management. However, the limited sample size constrains the generalizability of results, which should therefore be viewed as context-specific rather than universally representative.

Broader studies involving more institutions across regions could enhance comparative validity.

Methodologically, the qualitative approach provided rich descriptive data but also entailed interpretive subjectivity. Researcher bias and participants' social desirability tendencies may have influenced responses despite efforts at triangulation and member checking. Future studies could adopt mixed-method or quantitative designs to strengthen objectivity and statistical generalization. Contextually, the findings reflect a specific socio-temporal setting marked by post-pandemic adaptation and digital transformation. As educational policies evolve, the study captures only a snapshot in time; longitudinal or multi-year studies are recommended to assess policy sustainability and change. Theoretically, while grounded in the Theory of Educational Policy Implementation, Systems Theory, and Human Capital Theory, the study's analytical scope remains selective. Alternative frameworks—such as Institutional or Cultural Reproduction Theory—could reveal additional insights into power dynamics and symbolic structures within madrasahs.

Moreover, access restrictions to certain internal documents and the limited duration of classroom observations narrowed the depth of institutional analysis. Extended ethnographic or participatory research would provide more continuous and holistic data. Lastly, the researcher's positionality as both observer and interpreter may have influenced interpretation despite reflective rigor—an inherent limitation of qualitative inquiry.

CONCLUSION

The study found that: (1) The three madrasahs—MA Darul Aitam, MA Yaqin Pemandah, and MA Badarul Islam—implemented educational policies by integrating national directives with Islamic moral and cultural values. Darul Aitam emphasized reflective learning, Yaqin Pemandah adopted participatory and digital approaches, while Badarul Islam maintained procedural discipline. Effective implementation depended on the balance of leadership, moral vision, and community involvement; (2) Each madrasah applied distinct management models reflecting its leadership style. Darul Aitam used a consultative approach, Yaqin Pemandah emphasized collaboration, and Badarul Islam followed a hierarchical structure. All promoted accountability, participation, and consistent monitoring to ensure policy alignment and sustainability; (3) Policy processes combined tradition with innovation. Darul Aitam employed a contextual-integrative method, Yaqin Pemandah used innovation-

driven strategies, and Badarul Islam applied structured administration. These variations illustrate adaptive management rooted in Islamic and modern educational principles; and (4) Policy success was shaped by leadership quality, teacher competence, community support, and available resources. Transformational leadership and teacher professionalism strengthened implementation, while community engagement and adequate resources ensured policy continuity and moral relevance.

While the study provided significant insights into the dynamics of educational policy implementation in madrasahs, several limitations should be acknowledged to maintain proportional interpretation of the findings. First, the scope of the research was limited to three madrasahs within a specific regional and cultural context, which may restrict the generalizability of the results to other institutions with different socio-religious environments. Second, the qualitative approach, though valuable for depth of understanding, depended heavily on participant perspectives and researcher interpretation, potentially introducing subjective bias despite triangulation efforts. Third, time constraints limited longitudinal observation, thus preventing a deeper analysis of long-term policy impacts. Lastly, contextual variables such as institutional autonomy, funding differences, and community dynamics were beyond full control, which may have influenced the intensity and consistency of policy implementation.

Building on these limitations, future research is encouraged to explore several directions. First, expanding the sample scope across diverse madrasah types and regions would enable broader comparative analysis and strengthen external validity. Second, adopting a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative validation with qualitative exploration could provide a more comprehensive understanding of causal relationships between policy strategies and educational outcomes. Third, longitudinal studies examining policy sustainability and adaptation over time would offer valuable insights into the evolution of management practices in Islamic educational institutions. Fourth, researchers should investigate the role of digital transformation and community partnership as mediating factors in policy implementation, particularly in the context of modernization within Islamic education. Finally, it is recommended that future inquiries integrate leadership ethics and spiritual values as analytical dimensions to enrich theoretical frameworks linking educational management with moral development.

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