

Beyond Leadership and Climate: Rethinking Factors Shaping Indonesian Teachers' Quality of Work Life

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ABSTRAK

This research aims to analyze the influence of Madrasah principal leadership on organizational climate and Quality of Work Life (QWL) at Madrasah Aliyah Almaarif Singosari. Motivated by the low perceptions of educators regarding work well-being, the research adopts a quantitative approach using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with SmartPLS 3.0. The literature review covers transformational leadership theory, organizational climate, and QWL as latent variables measured through standardized indicators. Primary data were collected via questionnaires distributed to teachers and educational staff, then analyzed to test direct and indirect relationships among variables. The findings reveal that principal leadership significantly affects organizational climate, but does not significantly influence QWL, either directly or through organizational climate as a mediating variable. Thus, organizational climate fails to mediate the relationship between leadership and QWL. The research concludes that improving work-life quality requires more than leadership and climate; other factors, such as compensation, social relations, and work appreciation, must be considered. This research offers implications for developing a more holistic and well-being-oriented Islamic educational management model.

INTRODUCTION

Quality of Work Life (QWL) is a multidimensional concept that reflects the degree of happiness or dissatisfaction an individual experiences in their career. Those who enjoy their work are considered to have high QWL, while those who feel unfulfilled or unhappy are said to have low QWL. QWL is viewed as a strategic alternative for managing employees and is regarded as one of the most effective methods for retaining talented personnel and improving organizational performance. It emphasizes the impact of work on individuals, comparing

organizational effectiveness and promoting employee participation in problem-solving and decision-making processes (Taleghani et al., as cited in Nurbiyati, 2014).

The scope of Quality of Work Life (QWL) extends well beyond the boundaries of basic job satisfaction (Sigry, Efraty, Siegel & Lee, 2001). Islam and Siengthai (2009) explain that QWL encompasses a broad range of workplace elements, including wage systems, working conditions, working hours, exposure to health risks, financial and non-financial benefits, and the way management treats employees. Gadon (1984) emphasizes that QWL programs are designed to simultaneously enhance organizational productivity and improve employee satisfaction. Building on this, Sadique (2003) argues that a well-developed QWL framework leads to healthier, more fulfilled, and more productive employees, which ultimately contributes to a more efficient and profitable organization

Improving QWL is not a straightforward process, as it involves numerous challenges and often risks failure without broad institutional support. Leaders must be equipped with diverse strategies to address managerial challenges and create a QWL framework that aligns with employee needs. This enables employees to achieve job satisfaction and maintain discipline and commitment to the organization. QWL includes institutional activities aimed at enhancing working conditions that foster enthusiasm and motivation in achieving organizational goals (Cascio, 2006).

Statistical data from Madrasah Aliyah Almaarif Singosari over the past two academic years reveals that in 2019/2020, three teachers resigned, and in 2021/2022, two more submitted their resignations. During the same period, teacher attendance rates ranged between 70% and 80%. These figures suggest that the managerial quality and human resource capacity within the organization remain suboptimal. While organizational behavior researchers face the challenge of identifying predictors of QWL, this study evaluates the effects of organizational climate, leadership style, and emotional intelligence. One of the most significant characteristics of a great workplace is arguably its organizational climate, which reflects the extent to which an organization emphasizes innovation, flexibility, recognition, employee well-being, learning and development, citizenship and ethics, quality performance, structural practices, leadership, and shared goals (Patterson & Warr, 2004).

Several previous studies on Quality of Work Life (QWL) have yielded mixed findings, indicating that the relationship between leadership, organizational climate, and QWL remains complex and context-dependent. Lambert et al. (2015) found that leadership significantly influences QWL, suggesting that effective managerial practices can enhance employee satisfaction and well-being. In contrast, Hamid (2015) reported no significant effect of leadership on QWL, highlighting the possibility that other mediating factors may play a more dominant role in shaping work-life quality. Similarly, research on organizational climate has produced divergent results. Indrawati and Pasaribu (2016) concluded that organizational climate does not significantly affect QWL, whereas Budiman (2017) found a strong positive relationship between the two variables. These contrasting outcomes underscore the need for further investigation, particularly within Islamic educational institutions, where leadership

styles and organizational dynamics may differ from those in conventional settings (Lambert et al., 2015; Hamid, 2015; Indrawati & Pasaribu, 2016; Budiman, 2017).

Based on these considerations, this study aims to explore the relationship between principal leadership, organizational climate, and QWL at Madrasah Aliyah Almaarif Singosari. The research specifically addresses the following questions:

1. How does the leadership of the Madrasah principal influence the organizational climate?
2. How does the leadership of the Madrasah principal affect the Quality of Work Life (QWL) of teachers?
3. How does the organizational climate influence the Quality of Work Life (QWL)?
4. How does the leadership of the Madrasah principal influence QWL through organizational climate as a mediating variable?

By employing a quantitative approach and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), this study contributes to the academic discourse on educational leadership and organizational behavior. It offers empirical insights into the dynamics of leadership and climate within Islamic educational settings and provides a contextualized understanding of QWL in Indonesian Madrasahs.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted at Madrasah Aliyah Almaarif Singosari, located in Malang Regency, East Java, Indonesia. The research focused on examining the influence of principal leadership and organizational climate on the Quality of Work Life (QWL) of teachers. A total of 72 respondents participated in the study, consisting of teachers and educational staff who were selected using a saturated sampling technique, as the population size was relatively small and manageable. The research employed a quantitative approach with an explanatory design, aiming to test the relationships between variables through statistical analysis. Data collection was carried out using a structured questionnaire distributed directly to the respondents. The questionnaire items were developed based on validated instruments from previous studies and adapted to the context of Islamic educational institutions. Each item was measured using a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), allowing for the assessment of perceptions related to leadership style, organizational climate, and QWL.

The variables in this study were operationalized as follows: principal leadership was measured through indicators such as visionary leadership, motivational support, and decision-making transparency; organizational climate was assessed through dimensions including supportiveness, flexibility, and participatory culture; and QWL was evaluated based on indicators such as job satisfaction, work-life balance, and professional development opportunities. These indicators were derived from established frameworks in organizational behavior and educational management literature (Cascio, 2006; Patterson & Warr, 2004).

Data analysis was performed using Structural Equation Modeling (Jöreskog, 1973) with the assistance of SmartPLS software version 3.0. This method was chosen for its ability to

handle complex relationships between latent variables and to test both direct and indirect effects. The analysis followed a two-step procedure: first, the measurement model was evaluated to ensure reliability and validity of the constructs; second, the structural model was tested to examine the hypothesized relationships among variables. Model fit and significance levels were assessed using standard criteria such as composite reliability, average variance extracted (AVE), and path coefficients.

The research procedure adhered to ethical standards, ensuring informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation. The findings from this study are expected to contribute to the development of leadership strategies and organizational practices that enhance teacher well-being and institutional effectiveness in Madrasah settings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Influence of Madrasah Principal Leadership on Organizational Climate

Based on the output of the T-statistics table, the value for the leadership variable (X) in relation to the organizational climate variable (Z) is 0.3.366, which is greater than the T-table value of 1.994. This indicates that the leadership of the Madrasah principal has a positive relationship with the organizational climate. In other words, the leadership at Madrasah Aliyah Almaarif Singosari has been well-received by both educators and teachers (Zahru et al., 2025). The benefits of this leadership are perceived to foster an organizational climate conducive to the teaching and learning process, helping the institution achieve its predetermined goals through influential indicators (Prasetyo, 2021).

This finding highlights the importance of charisma and idealistic influence in shaping the organizational climate. Leadership characterized by concern and attentiveness is felt by educators and teachers, especially when the principal provides guidance and technical instructions to those who are not yet fully familiar with their duties. Such support is seen as instrumental in forming an organizational climate aligned with the quality standards established by Madrasah Aliyah Almaarif Singosari.

Empirically, leadership is reflected through idealistic influence, as demonstrated by the principal's efforts to encourage teachers and educators to share a common vision in achieving educational goals. Teachers and staff at Madrasah Aliyah Almaarif Singosari perceive that the principal's idealism contributes to the development of an organizational climate rooted in responsibility, with institutional decisions centralized under top leadership. The lowest-rated leadership indicator is charisma, particularly the perception that the principal serves as a role model for the entire school community.

The Influence of Madrasah Principal Leadership on Quality of Work Life (QWL)

Based on the output of the T-statistics table, the T-value for the leadership variable (X) in relation to the Quality of Work Life (Y) variable is 1.232, which is less than the T-table value of 1.994. The original sample estimate shows a positive value of 0.199, indicating that

the direction of the relationship between leadership and QWL is positive. However, the results of this study reveal that the leadership of the principal at Madrasah Aliyah Almaarif Singosari does not have a significant effect on Quality of Work Life (QWL). In other words, the principal's leadership does not have a measurable impact on the QWL of educators and teachers (Irawati et al., 2022).

The findings further show that the leadership indicator with the highest factor loading namely concern, reflected in the statement "The principal provides guidance and technical instructions to educators and teachers who do not yet understand their duties" did not produce a significant effect on the QWL indicator of compensation, represented by the statement "I feel appreciated by the institution for the work I have done."

Empirically, leadership is reflected through idealistic influence, as seen in the statement "The principal encourages teachers and educators to share a common vision in achieving educational goals." Meanwhile, QWL is represented by the social relationship indicator, expressed in the statement "The institution shows concern for the community." Despite these idealistic and social dimensions, the statistical analysis indicates that leadership does not significantly affect the overall Quality of Work Life.

The Influence of Organizational Climate on Quality of Work Life (QWL)

Based on the data processing output in the T-statistics table, the T-value for the organizational climate variable (Z) in relation to the Quality of Work Life (Y) variable is 1.028, which is less than the T-table value of 1.994. This result indicates that organizational climate does not have a significant effect on the Quality of Work Life (QWL) variable. In other words, the direction of the relationship between organizational climate and QWL is not statistically significant.

Organizational climate, as measured by the "standard" indicator reflected in the statement regarding the quality standards achieved by employees and teachers at Madrasah Aliyah Almaarif Singosari, did not provide a meaningful impact on QWL, particularly on the salary and compensation indicator. This is illustrated by the statement: "I feel that my supervisor shows concern in the form of appreciation for the work I have done," which was addressed to both employees and teachers at the institution.

The work standards established by Madrasah Aliyah Almaarif Singosari were found to be insignificant in influencing the Quality of Work Life, especially in relation to the salary and benefits indicator, as reflected in the statement: "I feel that my supervisor shows concern in the form of appreciation for the work I have done."

The Influence of Madrasah Principal Leadership on Quality of Work Life (QWL) through Organizational Climate

The parameter coefficient for the indirect effect of variable X on Y through Z is 0.043, indicating a positive but weak indirect influence of principal leadership on Quality of Work Life (QWL) through organizational climate. The analysis of the principal's leadership and its

influence on QWL through organizational climate at Madrasah Aliyah Almaarif Singosari, based on the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) calculation presented in Table 4.9 of Chapter IV, shows a value of $0.366 > 0.05$. This result suggests that organizational climate does not mediate the effect of leadership on Quality of Work Life (QWL). In other words, while there is an indirect relationship, it is statistically insignificant

Path Analysis	Original Sample	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STD)	T Statistics (IO/STDE VI)	P Value
Leadership>> Organizational Climate	0.327	0.338	0.097	3.366	0.001
Leadership>> Quality Work of Life	0.199	0.205	0.162	1.232	0.218
Organizational>> Climate Quality Work of Life	0.130	0.140	0.127	1.028	0.304

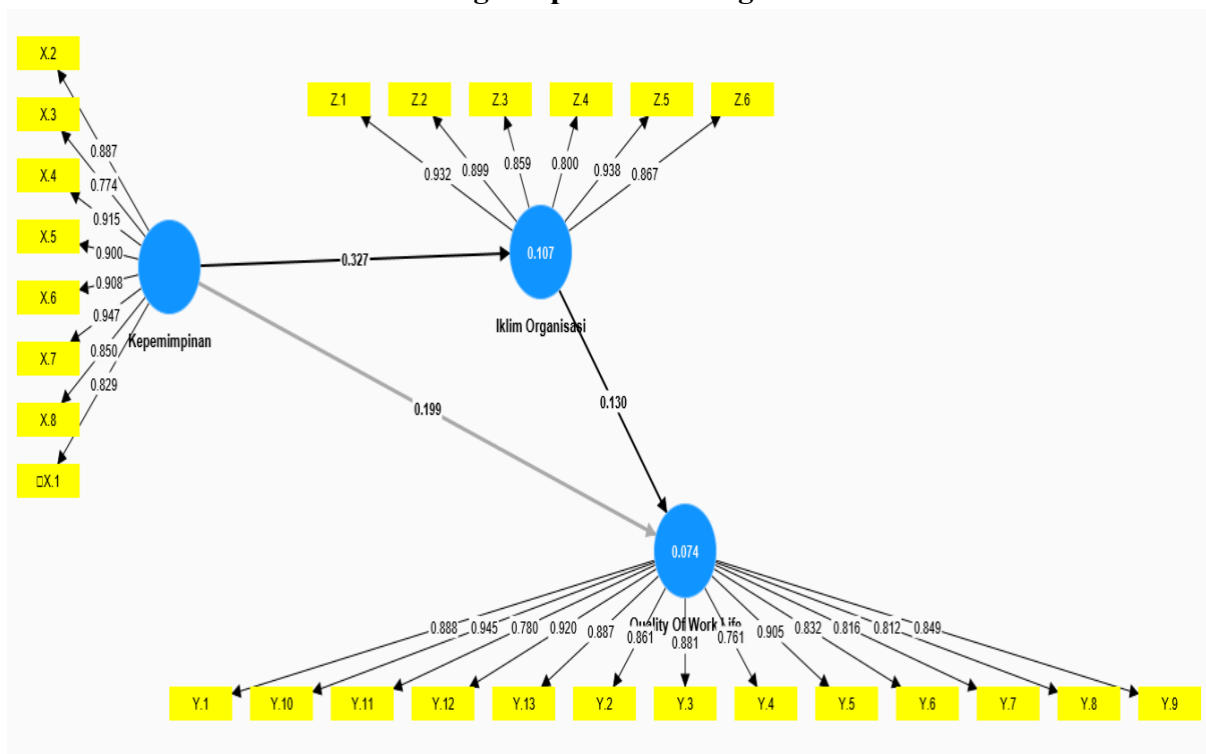
Source: Processed primary data output, 2024

The original sample estimate shows a positive value of 0.327, indicating that the direction of the relationship between the leadership variable (X) and the organizational climate variable (Z) is positive. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 (H1) is rejected. This means that in this study, the latent variable of leadership (X), along with its indicators, has a statistically significant influence on the latent variable of organizational climate (Z) and its indicators.

The original sample estimate shows a positive value of 0.199, indicating that the direction of the relationship between the leadership variable (X) and the Quality of Work Life (Y) variable is positive. Therefore, Hypothesis 2 (H2) is rejected. This implies that in this study, the latent variable of leadership (X1), with its indicators, has an insignificant influence on the latent variable of Quality of Work Life (Y) and its indicators.

The original sample estimate shows a positive value of 0.130, indicating that the direction of the relationship between the organizational climate variable (Z) and the Quality of Work Life (Y) variable is positive. Therefore, Hypothesis 5 (H5) is accepted, meaning that the latent variable of organizational climate (Z), with its indicators, has an insignificant influence on the latent variable of Quality of Work Life (Y) and its indicators

Picture 1.
Modeling Output of Loading Factors



Source: Processed primary data output

KESIMPULAN DAN SARAN

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the leadership of the Madrasah principal has a significant and positive influence on the organizational climate, but does not significantly affect the Quality of Work Life (QWL) either directly or through organizational climate as a mediating variable. These results suggest that while leadership contributes to shaping a conducive organizational atmosphere, it does not translate into measurable improvements in work-life quality for educators. The study is limited by its scope within a single institutional context and may benefit from broader sampling across different educational environments. Future research is recommended to explore additional mediating factors or contextual variables that may strengthen the relationship between leadership and

QWL, potentially contributing to the refinement of leadership models in Islamic educational institutions.

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that Madrasah leaders adopt a more holistic approach to improving the Quality of Work Life (QWL) among educators. While leadership positively influences organizational climate, it does not directly enhance QWL. Therefore, school management should integrate additional strategies such as fair compensation systems, recognition mechanisms, and opportunities for professional growth. Furthermore, fostering stronger social relationships and institutional appreciation may contribute to a more supportive work environment. Future research is encouraged to explore other mediating variables such as emotional intelligence, job autonomy, or institutional culture that may strengthen the link between leadership and QWL in Islamic educational settings

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