

Persuasive Communication Ability of Madrasah Principals in Improving Teacher Loyalty at MTS Nurul Amaliyah Tanjung Morawa

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Abstract

This study examines the role of persuasive communication by madrasah principals in building teacher loyalty in Islamic educational institutions. Using a qualitative approach and case study design, this research was conducted over three months at MTs Nurul Amaliyah Tanjung Morawa, which was selected for its efforts to strengthen teacher commitment through planned communication strategies. Data were collected from 11 purposively selected informants comprising the school principal, eight teachers, and two educational staff through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis. Analysis was conducted using a thematic approach to identify key patterns related to persuasive communication strategies and their impact on teacher loyalty. Data validity was ensured through triangulation of sources, methods, and theory, referencing McCroskey & Richmond's persuasive communication theory, organisational loyalty, and transformational leadership. Findings indicate that the madrasah principal's empathetic, dialogic, and consistent communication significantly enhances teachers' emotional commitment, mutual respect, and professional trust. These practices also contribute to forming a collaborative and value-oriented school culture. This study enriches the existing literature by presenting a contextual model of persuasive leadership communication, particularly through personal interactions and participatory decision-making. Practically, it is recommended that persuasive communication training be integrated into school leadership development programs, especially in environments that emphasise moral and relational leadership. This study also opens opportunities for further research, including longitudinal and comparative studies across school contexts. Persuasive communication is an additional skill and a key strategy in shaping a cohesive and committed educational community.

Keywords: Persuasive Communication; Teacher Loyalty; Quality of Learning.

Introduction

In the world of education, the quality of the teaching and learning process is primarily determined by the performance and dedication of teachers. Teachers not only act as facilitators of learning but also as the driving force in achieving the vision and mission of educational institutions. According to the *Education Sector Analytical and Capacity Development Partnership* (ACDP) report, improving the quality of education is highly dependent on the quality of school principals who can generate the loyalty of educators.¹ However, in many schools, including madrasahs, teacher loyalty is a serious challenge that can hinder achieving optimal learning quality. Factors such as high workload, lack of rewards, and ineffective organisational communication are the leading causes of declining teacher loyalty.² Therefore, it is important to examine managerial approaches that can build positive relationships between principals and teachers in creating a supportive work climate.

Experts agree that effective communication between leaders and subordinates improves job performance and loyalty.³ According to Robbins and Judge, persuasive communication is a key technique in transformational leadership that can foster trust and emotional attachment of subordinates to the organisation.⁴ Fazli Abdillah emphasises that principals who deliver messages persuasively can motivate teachers to contribute optimally to the institution.⁵ Persuasive communication includes delivering messages with empathy, providing constructive feedback, and using motivating language approaches.⁶

¹ Education Sector Analytical and Capacity Development Partnership (ACDP), *Basic Study on the Competencies of School/Madrasah Principals and School/Madrasah Supervisors*, 2013, <http://repositori.kemdikbud.go.id/8455/>.

² Madrasah Education Quality Reform-MEQR, *Realizing Education's Promise: Support to Indonesia's Ministry of Religious Affairs for Improved Quality of Education or Madrasah Education Quality Reform*, Ministry of Religious Affairs, vol. 11, 2019, http://scioteca.caf.com/bitstream/handle/123456789/1091/RED2017-Eng-8ene.pdf?sequence=12&isAllowed=y%0Ahttp://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.regsciurbeco.2008.06.005%0Ahttps://www.researchgate.net/publication/305320484_SISTEM_PEMBETUNGAN_TERPUSAT_STRATEGI_MELESTARI.

³ Faisol Faisol, Budi Santoso, and Nailah Amaliya, "Implemetasi Full Day School Terhadap Pembentukan Moral Siswa SMP Plus Nurul Hikmah Pamekasan," *Molang: Journal Of Islamic Education* 1, no. 01 (2023): 10–26.

⁴ Stephen P Robbins, Timothy A Judge, and Neharika Vohra, *Organizational Behaviour by Pearson 18e* (Pearson Education India, 2019).

⁵ Fazli Abdillah Abdillah and Nasrul Syakur Chaniago, "Organizational Management Based on Persuasive Communication," *Studia Manageria* 6, no. 1 (2024): 27–40.

⁶ Laily Faridhatun Nikmah, Abd Aziz, and Nur Efendi, "Spiritual Leaders in Islamic Education Development," *Reflection: Islamic Education Journal* 1, no. 4 (2024): 78–86.

Although many studies have examined the leadership style of school principals, studies that specifically discuss persuasive communication as a strategy in increasing teacher loyalty, especially in the madrasah environment, are still limited. As a case study, MTs Nurul Amaliyah Tanjung Morawa shows the challenges in maintaining teacher loyalty amidst increasing workload and professional pressure. This raises the central question: to what extent can the persuasive communication skills of the madrasah principal contribute to increasing teacher loyalty?

A review of research highlighting principal communication shows a variety of interesting approaches, but also reveals methodological gaps that have yet to be bridged. Gladys Styles highlights the importance of persuasive communication in building emotional closeness.⁷ Amelia and Sari focus on teachers' attachment to the school vision without delving into concrete communication strategies.⁸ Nento sees the personal approach as key, but does not link it to tangible forms of loyalty.⁹ Umi Anugerah Izzati shows that several variables, including communication, contribute to loyalty, although without separate analysis.¹⁰ Meanwhile, Syahrul Hasibuan emphasises the role of empathy, but the measurements used are still perceptual.¹¹ This reflects that these studies are still exploratory and do not fully offer a measurable and systematic evaluative model.

This research offers novelty in two aspects. First, it focuses on persuasive communication as the primary variable, not just part of leadership style. Second, it proposes measurable loyalty indicators such as attendance rate, participation in school activities, and compliance with regulations. This research will also explore specific

⁷ Gladys Styles Johnston and Bernice Proctor Venable, "A Study of Teacher Loyalty to the Principal: Rule Administration and Hierarchical Influence of the Principal," *Educational Administration Quarterly* 22, no. 4 (1986): 4-27.

⁸ Fajar Arifin, Ainur Rofiq, and Muhammad Husnur Rofiq, "Transformational Leadership of the School Principle in Building Organizational Culture," *Chalim Journal of Teaching and Learning* 2, no. 2 (2022): 163-73.

⁹ S Nento and A Abdullah, "The Contribution of Madrasah Principal Leadership, Teamwork, and Work Loyalty to the Performance of Islamic Boarding School Teachers in Manado. Premiere Educandum: Journal of Basic Education and Learning, 11 (2), 160-171. Doi. Org/10.25273/Pe. V11i2. 8343 This Work Is Licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License," *Nento, S., & Abdullah, AH* 161, no. 2 (2021).

¹⁰ Umi Anugerah Izzati, Warih Handayaningrum, and Oliavia Prabandini Mulyana, "Beyond the Classroom: Exploring Teacher Loyalty in Vocational Education," *Journal of Educational, Health & Community Psychology (JEHCP)* 13, no. 4 (2024).

¹¹ Syahrul Hasibuan, "The Effect of Organizational Culture, Principal Leadership and Motivation on Teacher Performance in Madrasah," *Al-Tanzim: J. Manag. Islamic Education* 6 (2022): 41-53.

communication techniques such as diction selection, communication styles, and forms of persuasion used by madrasah principals.

This study aims to analyse the persuasive communication skills of madrasah principals in building and maintaining teacher loyalty at MTs Nurul Amaliyah Tanjung Morawa. This research is expected to contribute to developing effective leadership communication strategies in the madrasah environment and provide a persuasive communication model that can be replicated to increase teacher loyalty in other educational institutions.

Research Methodology

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design.¹² This design was chosen because the research focuses on an in-depth understanding of specific phenomena at MTs Nurul Amaliyah Tanjung Morawa, namely how the madrasah head applies persuasive communication in building teacher loyalty. This approach allows researchers to explore the social context and managerial practices naturally and thoroughly.

MTs Nurul Amaliyah was chosen as the research site because the madrasah faces challenges maintaining teacher loyalty and actively developing communication strategies supporting managerial quality. The research was conducted for three months and involved direct interaction of the researcher in the madrasah environment.

The research participants comprised 11 purposively selected informants: 1 madrasah head, eight permanent teachers, and two education personnel. The criteria for selecting informants included a minimum two-year tenure, active involvement in institutional activities, and willingness to provide information openly and reflectively.

Data collection was conducted through three main techniques. First, in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore the madrasah principal, teachers, and staff's understanding, experiences, and communication strategies. Second, participatory observation was conducted by involving researchers directly in the daily activities of the madrasah to observe communication practices in real situations. Third, a documentation

¹² R K Yin, "Case Studies (Design & Methods) (1st ed.)," *Jakarta: Rajawali Press*, 2015.

study complemented the data by analysing institutional documents such as vision and mission, work programs, and records of activities relevant to the research focus.¹³

The collected data were analysed using a thematic analysis approach. The analysis process was carried out in stages, starting from transcription and data compilation, coding based on meaning units,¹⁴ To identify the main themes related to persuasive communication practices and teacher loyalty.

This study used triangulation of sources, methods, and theories to ensure data validity. Source triangulation was done by comparing data from the madrasah head, teachers, and education personnel. Method triangulation combined interviews, observation, and documentation. Meanwhile, theoretical triangulation was used to test the suitability of field findings with McCroskey & Richmond's persuasive communication theoretical framework,¹⁵ Organisational loyalty and transformational leadership.¹⁶ In addition, the researcher also involved colleagues in discussing the analysis results to enrich the interpretation and minimise subjectivity.

The Effectiveness of Persuasive Communication of Madrasah Principals in Increasing Teacher Loyalty

The main findings in this study indicate that persuasive communication skills possessed by the madrasah head at MTs Nurul Amaliyah have a significant role in increasing teacher loyalty. Teachers who feel valued, listened to, and involved in decision-making tend to show higher commitment to the institution. The approach taken by the madrasah head through persuasive communication, both in the form of daily directives and interpersonal interactions, has built a closer relationship between leaders and teachers.

This is in line with Nugraha & Basrawi's research, which states that persuasive communication in the context of education can form strong emotional relationships,

¹³ Sugiyono, *Educational Research Methods (Quantitative, Qualitative, and R&D Approaches)* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2015).

¹⁴ Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, "Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology," *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3, no. 2 (2006): 77-101.

¹⁵ James C McCroskey and Virginia P Richmond, "Willingness to Communicate: A Cognitive View," *Journal of Social Behavior and Personality* 5, no. 2 (1990): 19.

¹⁶ Richard T Mowday, Richard M Steers, and Lyman W Porter, "The Measurement of Organizational Commitment," *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 14, no. 2 (1979): 224-47.

which are the basis of organisational loyalty.¹⁷ Furthermore, Harun Jaka Prayitno stated that communication not only functions as a means of delivering information but also as a medium to build trust, motivation, and a sense of belonging in the school environment. When teachers feel valued as an important part of the system, their loyalty will naturally form.¹⁸

Communication Strategy of Madrasah Principal and Contribution to Organisational Dynamics

The communication strategy implemented by the madrasah head reflects a deep understanding of the importance of emotional aspects in professional relationships. The use of morning briefings, post-lesson evaluations, and personal approaches in dealing with teachers who have experienced a decline in performance shows that good communication is not something spontaneous, but part of a planned managerial strategy.¹⁹

Two-way, open, and empathic communication has proven to be a key tool in overcoming the gap between leaders' expectations and teachers' needs. Nikmah mentioned that leaders who prioritise spiritual and transformative communication are more successful in building teacher loyalty than those who only focus on the structural aspects of leadership.²⁰ This is also reinforced by Laurence Dickie's classic persuasive communication theory which states that effective persuasion must touch the cognitive and affective aspects of the audience simultaneously.²¹

Institutional Context and the Role of Communication in Organisational Culture

This study also found that persuasive communication has broader implications for the organisational culture of a madrasah. The principal's consistent communication patterns form a culture of openness, respect, and cooperation. When the principal can

¹⁷ Roni Nugraha, Joyce Bulan Basrawi, and Adudin Alijaya, "Strengthening Character Through Comparative Rhetoric and Istifham: A Study on E. Abdurrahman's Thoughts on Character Education," *Khazanah of Islamic Education* 6, no. 1 (2024): 41-56.

¹⁸ Harun Jaka Prayitno et al., "Character Strengthening Model of Religious Moderation Praxis Method to Improve and Develop Student Morale," *Revista de Gestão Social e Ambiental* 18, no. 2 (2024): 1-23.

¹⁹ Mohammad Zakki and Hazinah Hazinah, "Pesantren Pespektif Historis: Memahami Ragam Tipologi Dan Perkembangan Di Indonesia," *Molang: Journal Of Islamic Education* 1, no. 01 (2023): 67-78.

²⁰ Nikmah, Aziz, and Efendi, "Spiritual Leaders in Islamic Education Development."

²¹ Laurence Dickie, *Persuasive Communications: A Study of the Theory and Practice of the Role of the Elementary School Principal*. (Western Michigan University, 1978).

frame institutional messages in an emotionally acceptable language to teachers, values are internalised to encourage voluntary loyalty.

This communication model is close to the AIDA principle (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) as described by Schiffman, where the madrasah head successfully attracts teachers' attention, arouses Cohen, their interest in school programs, fosters the desire to contribute, and encourages concrete actions in the form of discipline, active participation, and compliance with regulations.²²

Integration with Previous Literature and Contribution of Findings

This finding enriches the previous literature by presenting a more concrete and contextualised picture of persuasive communication practices in the madrasah environment. Most previous studies, such as Wijaya (2019) and Amelia & Sari (2021), highlighted the influence of transformational leadership on teacher loyalty, but have not described in depth the specific practices of persuasive communication used by leaders.

This research provides a theoretical contribution by developing a framework for the practice of persuasive communication of madrasah principals, which includes:

1. Personalised and empathetic approach,
2. Consistent daily communication patterns,
3. Affirmative and constructive communication language,
4. Teacher involvement in deliberation forums.

Practically, the results of this study can be used as a reference for the development of leadership training in a value-based madrasah or school environment, especially in terms of forming a healthy organisational culture and supporting human resource loyalty.

In general, this research provides a real picture of the urgency of human resource management in educational institutions. Persuasive communication is proven to be an approach that strengthens loyalty and creates a productive and harmonious work atmosphere. Therefore, it is recommended that educational institutions integrate persuasive communication training in madrasah head development programs.

On the other hand, this study opens space for further research, for example, to measure the effectiveness of persuasive communication longitudinally or to compare communication patterns between public and private school principals in different

²² D Cohen, "Consumer Behavior," *New York, Toronto*, 1981.

contexts. By referring to various theories and the results of previous research, it can be concluded that persuasive communication is not just a complement in madrasah leadership, but one of the main foundations in shaping teacher loyalty. When principals can convincingly articulate their vision, are open to feedback, and value teachers' contributions, a synergy is formed that will strengthen the overall quality of education.

Conclusion

This study shows that persuasive communication by the head of the madrasah plays an important role in increasing teacher loyalty, not only as a means of conveying information but also in building emotional attachment, mutual respect, and professional trust. At MTs Nurul Amaliyah, the school principal's use of empathetic, dialogic, and consistent communication has strengthened teachers' commitment, improved interpersonal dynamics, and fostered a collaborative and values-based school culture.

These findings provide significant theoretical contributions by enriching the conceptual framework of persuasive leadership communication in educational settings, particularly in the context of Islamic schools. Unlike previous studies highlighting transformational leadership styles, this study emphasizes practical elements of persuasive communication, such as a personal approach, daily interaction patterns, and participatory decision-making that can be directly integrated into school leadership development programs.

Practically, this study underscores the importance of incorporating persuasive communication training into professional development programs for school principals, especially in environments that emphasise moral and relational leadership. By aligning institutional goals with teachers' emotional and professional needs, madrasah principals can foster a sense of belonging and intrinsic motivation that supports long-term educational sustainability.

This study also opens up opportunities for further research, such as longitudinal studies to measure the long-term impact of persuasive communication on organisational loyalty or comparative studies across different school types and cultural contexts. In conclusion, compelling communication is not merely an additional attribute in madrasah leadership but a strategic and fundamental component in shaping a cohesive, committed, high-performing educational community.

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