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ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

Strategic Management in Improving Madrasah Competitiveness Based on Local Excellence

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ABSTRACT

The increasingly competitive educational landscape demands that madrasahs develop distinctive advantages to maintain institutional relevance and attract community trust. However, many madrasahs in Indonesia still struggle to formulate and implement effective strategic management approaches that leverage local excellence as competitive assets. This study aims to analyze strategic management in improving madrasah competitiveness based on local excellence, focusing on strategy formulation, implementation, evaluation, as well as supporting and inhibiting factors. Using a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews with madrasah heads, teachers, and community leaders, participatory observation, and documentation at a madrasah in Lampung Province. The findings reveal that strategic management is implemented through three interrelated stages: formulation involving vision-mission alignment and SWOT analysis integrated with local potential identification; implementation through flagship programs based on local excellence such as agricultural skills, religious tourism, and cultural preservation; and evaluation through continuous monitoring and stakeholder feedback. The integration of local excellence has significantly improved the madrasah's competitive advantage, reflected in increased student enrollment, strengthened community trust, and enhanced institutional reputation. Supporting factors include visionary leadership, teacher commitment, community involvement, and adequate infrastructure, while inhibiting factors include resource limitations, low digital literacy, and geographic constraints. This study concludes that local excellence-based strategic management offers a transformative approach for madrasahs to build sustainable competitiveness while preserving cultural identity and community values.

Keywords: Strategic Management, Madrasah Competitiveness, Local Excellence, Islamic Education, Institutional Development.



ABSTRAK

Lanskap pendidikan yang semakin kompetitif menuntut madrasah untuk mengembangkan keunggulan khas guna mempertahankan relevansi kelembagaan dan menarik kepercayaan masyarakat. Namun, banyak madrasah di Indonesia masih kesulitan merumuskan dan mengimplementasikan pendekatan manajemen strategik yang efektif yang memanfaatkan keunggulan lokal sebagai aset kompetitif. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis manajemen strategik dalam meningkatkan daya saing madrasah berbasis keunggulan lokal, dengan fokus pada formulasi strategi, implementasi, evaluasi, serta faktor pendukung dan penghambat. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif studi kasus, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dengan kepala madrasah, guru, dan tokoh masyarakat, observasi partisipatif, dan dokumentasi di sebuah madrasah di Provinsi Lampung. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa manajemen strategik diimplementasikan melalui tiga tahap yang saling terkait: formulasi yang melibatkan penyelarasan visi-misi dan analisis SWOT yang terintegrasi dengan identifikasi potensi lokal; implementasi melalui program unggulan berbasis keunggulan lokal seperti keterampilan pertanian, wisata religi, dan pelestarian budaya; serta evaluasi melalui monitoring berkelanjutan dan umpan balik pemangku kepentingan. Integrasi keunggulan lokal telah secara signifikan meningkatkan keunggulan kompetitif madrasah, tercermin dalam peningkatan jumlah siswa, penguatan kepercayaan masyarakat, dan peningkatan reputasi kelembagaan. Faktor pendukung meliputi kepemimpinan visioner, komitmen guru, keterlibatan masyarakat, dan infrastruktur yang memadai, sedangkan faktor penghambat meliputi keterbatasan sumber daya, rendahnya literasi digital, dan kendala geografis. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa manajemen strategik berbasis keunggulan lokal menawarkan pendekatan transformatif bagi madrasah untuk membangun daya saing berkelanjutan sambil melestarikan identitas budaya dan nilai-nilai komunitas.

Kata Kunci: Manajemen Strategik, Daya Saing Madrasah, Keunggulan Lokal, Pendidikan Islam, Pengembangan Kelembagaan

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1. INTRODUCTION

The educational landscape in Indonesia has undergone significant transformation in recent decades, marked by increasing competition among educational institutions at all levels. This competitive dynamic is driven by several factors, including heightened public awareness of the importance of quality education, the implementation of school choice policies, and the proliferation of both public and private educational institutions. In this context, madrasahs—Islamic educational institutions that integrate religious and general education—face unique challenges in maintaining their relevance and competitiveness. Unlike public schools, madrasahs are not only required to demonstrate academic excellence but must also maintain their distinctive Islamic identity while responding to the demands of modernization and globalization (Mahmud & Suratman, 2020).

The phenomenon of declining public interest in madrasahs has been observed in various regions of Indonesia. Parents and communities increasingly compare madrasahs with public schools based on academic achievement, facilities, and perceptions of graduate quality. This competitive pressure has forced many madrasahs to rethink their institutional strategies and develop distinctive

advantages that can differentiate them from other educational institutions. However, field observations reveal that many madrasahs still operate without a coherent and systematic strategic management framework. They often rely on traditional approaches that are inadequate for addressing the complex challenges of modern educational competition. This condition is especially pronounced in rural areas where madrasahs face additional constraints such as limited infrastructure, financial resources, and access to technology.

Initial observations at several madrasahs in Lampung Province revealed a concerning pattern. Despite possessing rich local cultural and natural resources that could serve as competitive advantages, many madrasahs have not optimally utilized these assets in their institutional development strategies. Madrasahs tend to adopt generic approaches to improving quality without considering their specific local context and potential. This has resulted in a lack of distinctive features that make it difficult for them to compete with other educational institutions in attracting students and community trust. Furthermore, the limited integration of local excellence into the curriculum and institutional programs represents a missed opportunity for madrasahs to develop sustainable competitive advantages rooted in their communities.

Previous research has examined various aspects of strategic management in educational institutions. Mahmud and Suratman (2020) found that strategic management of madrasah excellence in East Kalimantan is implemented through cooperative and competitive strategies in managing skills, religious, and student achievement programs. Saifani, Andriyani, and Lusida (2024) found that strategic management plays an important role in improving education quality through systematic planning, implementation, and evaluation. Iskandar et al. (2022) demonstrated that strategic management in pesantren involves stakeholder participation and continuous improvement to achieve educational excellence. Fauzi et al. (2021) showed that strategic management in elementary schools can improve service quality and graduate outcomes through innovative approaches. Fitri, Nasukah, and Tayeb (2020) developed a strategic planning model for Islamic higher education that integrates Islamic values with contemporary management practices.

Studies on madrasah competitiveness specifically have been conducted by several researchers. Nofriansyah, Herri, and Syafrizal (2025) found that SWOT-based strategy formulation and Porter's model provide structured policy direction in improving madrasah competitiveness. Ma'ruvah, Tuala, and Putra (2026) analyzed strategic management in maintaining madrasah excellence through a continuous cycle of formulation, implementation, evaluation, and improvement. Restarie et al. (2026) revealed that service differentiation and school image modernization are key pillars of competitiveness for Islamic educational institutions. Ilyasin and Muadin (2025) developed a conceptual approach to learning organization leadership and competitive advantage in madrasahs. Norman, Firmansyah, and Wahib (2023) analyzed madrasah image branding based on local wisdom to provide unique identity and attract community interest to enhance madrasah competitiveness. However, these studies have not specifically addressed the integration of local excellence into strategic management to comprehensively improve madrasah competitiveness.

The research gap lies in the absence of comprehensive studies examining how madrasahs can systematically integrate local excellence into their strategic management frameworks to enhance competitiveness. Most previous research has focused either on general strategic management in

educational institutions or on competitiveness strategies without specifically addressing the role of local excellence. In addition, there is limited empirical evidence on how madrasahs in rural areas can leverage their unique local resources—such as agricultural potential, cultural heritage, religious tourism, and community traditions—to build sustainable competitive advantages. This gap is particularly significant given the Indonesian government's policy emphasis on local excellence-based education as a strategy to improve education quality and relevance.

The novelty of this research lies in the development of an integrative strategic management model that systematically incorporates local excellence as a core element of madrasah competitiveness. Unlike previous research that treated local excellence as a peripheral or additive component, this research positions local excellence as a fundamental strategic asset that informs vision and mission formulation, program development, resource allocation, and institutional branding. This research also provides empirical evidence from the rural madrasah context, offering insights highly relevant for similar institutions facing resource constraints and competitive pressures. Furthermore, this research identifies the specific mechanisms through which local excellence contributes to competitive advantage, including curriculum differentiation, community engagement, and institutional reputation building.

The theoretical framework of this research is based on the integration of Strategic Management Theory and Competitive Advantage Theory. Strategic management, as conceptualized by David and David (2017), involves the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of cross-functional decisions that enable an organization to achieve its objectives. This framework emphasizes the importance of systematic environmental analysis, strategy formulation, implementation, and evaluation in achieving organizational goals. Porter's Competitive Advantage Theory (1985) provides a lens for understanding how organizations can achieve superior performance through differentiation, cost leadership, or focus strategies. In the madrasah context, local excellence serves as the basis for differentiation strategy, enabling institutions to offer a unique value proposition that distinguishes them from competitors. The synergy of these two theories enables an analysis that goes beyond traditional management approaches, viewing local excellence as a strategic resource that can be leveraged for competitive advantage.

Based on the above description, this research aims to: (1) analyze local excellence-based strategic management formulation in madrasahs; (2) examine local excellence-based strategic management implementation; (3) evaluate the impact of local excellence-based strategic management on madrasah competitiveness; and (4) identify supporting and inhibiting factors in the implementation of local excellence-based strategic management. The results of this research are expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of Islamic education management and practical recommendations for madrasah leaders in improving institutional competitiveness through local excellence.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

2.1 Research Design

This research employs a qualitative approach with a case study design to explore the implementation of strategic management in improving madrasah competitiveness based on local excellence. The qualitative approach was chosen because it enables an in-depth understanding of the complex phenomenon of strategic management in its natural setting, capturing participant perspectives and contextual factors that influence implementation (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The case study design is appropriate for examining contemporary phenomena in real-life contexts, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident (Yin, 2018). This design allows the researcher to capture the "how" and "why" of strategic management implementation and its impact on madrasah competitiveness.

2.2 Subject and Research Location

The research was conducted at a madrasah in Lampung Province that has been recognized for its efforts in integrating local excellence into institutional development. This site was purposively selected based on several considerations: (1) the madrasah has implemented a strategic management approach incorporating local excellence; (2) the madrasah faces typical challenges of rural madrasahs, including limited resources and geographic constraints; and (3) the madrasah has shown improvement in competitiveness indicators such as student enrollment and community trust. The research subjects consisted of 12 key informants: madrasah head (1), teachers (5), administrative staff (2), community leaders (2), and parents (2). Participants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure representation across stakeholder groups.

2.3 Data Collection Procedures

Data collection was conducted over a four-month period from January to April 2026 using three main techniques: in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the madrasah head, teachers, administrative staff, community leaders, and parents to explore their experiences, perceptions, and challenges in implementing local excellence-based strategic management. Each interview lasted between 45 to 90 minutes and was recorded with participant consent. Participatory observation was conducted during strategic planning meetings, program implementation activities, and community engagement events to observe actual strategic management practices. Documentation included analysis of strategic plans, annual reports, program documents, student enrollment data, and other relevant records. This multi-method approach ensures that the data is not only deep but also verified across different sources, reducing the risk of subjective bias in the findings.

2.4 Research Instruments

The primary instrument in this qualitative research is the researcher themselves, supported by secondary instruments such as interview protocols, observation checklists, and documentation grids. The interview protocol consisted of 25 open-ended questions designed to explore the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of local excellence-based strategic management, as

well as supporting and inhibiting factors. Questions were organized into five themes: (1) understanding and perceptions of strategic management; (2) strategy formulation processes; (3) strategy implementation practices; (4) strategy evaluation and impact; and (5) challenges and recommendations. The observation checklist was structured to monitor strategic planning meetings, program implementation activities, and stakeholder interactions. These instruments were validated by experts in educational management to ensure accurate measurement of the intended indicators.

2.5 Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis followed the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which involves data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. During condensation, raw data from interviews and observations were coded according to themes such as "strategy formulation," "local excellence identification," "program implementation," "competitive advantage," "supporting factors," and "inhibiting factors." Data display was achieved through the creation of matrices, diagrams, and narrative descriptions to visualize relationships between variables and themes. Finally, conclusions were drawn by triangulating empirical findings with theoretical frameworks and previous research, ensuring a robust theoretical synthesis. Member checking was conducted with participants to verify the accuracy of interpretations and findings.

2.6 Validity and Reliability

Data validity was maintained through source and methodological triangulation, as well as member checking with the madrasah head, teachers, and community leaders. Source triangulation was achieved by comparing data from various informants (madrasah head, teachers, community leaders, and parents) to identify convergent and divergent perspectives. Methodological triangulation was achieved by comparing findings from interviews, observations, and documentation. Reliability was ensured by creating a clear "audit trail" of all raw data, transcripts, and analysis notes, allowing for procedural consistency (Creswell & Poth, 2018). By comparing the perspectives of various stakeholders, the researcher ensured that the findings on local excellence-based strategic management were not one-sided but reflected the reality of the entire institutional ecosystem.

3. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

3.1 Local Excellence-Based Strategy Formulation

The findings reveal that strategic management at the madrasah begins with a comprehensive strategy formulation process that integrates local excellence identification with institutional vision and mission development. The madrasah head (KM-01) explained:

"We start by understanding our local context—the resources, culture, traditions, and community needs. Then we align our vision and mission with this local potential. This ensures that our strategic direction is not only aspirational but also grounded in the reality of our community."

The strategy formulation process involves three main activities: (1) environmental analysis through SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) that specifically includes local resource mapping; (2) stakeholder engagement through community consultation and participatory planning; and (3) strategic priority setting that identifies local excellence-based programs as core institutional offerings.

The SWOT analysis conducted by the madrasah identified several internal strengths including integration of national and religious curriculum, committed teachers, and strong community loyalty. However, weaknesses such as limited infrastructure and technology access were also acknowledged. The local excellence analysis revealed significant opportunities: agricultural potential, religious tourism sites, cultural heritage, and community traditions that could be leveraged as unique institutional assets. A teacher (GR-01) explained:

"We mapped all the local resources in our area—from agricultural products to cultural traditions to religious sites. Then we asked ourselves: how can we integrate these into our curriculum and programs? This became the foundation of our local excellence-based strategy."

Based on this analysis, the madrasah formulated several strategic priorities: (1) developing agriculture-based skills programs integrated with science and Islamic values; (2) building religious tourism education programs utilizing local historical and spiritual sites; (3) preserving and promoting local cultural heritage through arts and language programs; and (4) strengthening community partnerships for resource sharing and mutual support. These priorities were then translated into specific programs with measurable goals and implementation timelines.

3.2 Strategy Implementation Through Local Excellence Programs

The implementation of strategic management at the madrasah is realized through the development and delivery of flagship programs based on local excellence. A teacher (GR-02) described:

"We don't just teach from textbooks. We bring the community into our classrooms and take our students into the community. Our students learn agriculture by actually planting and harvesting. They learn religious tourism by visiting historical sites. They learn culture by practicing traditional arts."

Table 1. Local Excellence-Based Flagship Programs

Program	Local Excellence	Implementation Activities	Impact on Competitiveness
Agricultural Skills	Local agricultural potential	Farming practice, agribusiness, organic farming	Differentiated curriculum, practical skills
Religious Tourism Education	Local religious sites	Site visits, historical studies, tour guiding	Unique program offering, community engagement
Cultural Preservation	Local arts and traditions	Traditional arts, language preservation, cultural events	Institutional identity, community pride
Community Partnership Program	Local social capital	Resource sharing, collaborative projects, reciprocal support	Community trust, stakeholder engagement

Program	Local Excellence	Implementation Activities	Impact on Competitiveness
Environmental Education	Local natural resources	Conservation, waste management, eco-tourism	Environmental awareness, institutional reputation
Entrepreneurship Development	Local economic potential	Small business training, product development, marketing	Graduate employability, economic contribution

The implementation of these programs involves several key strategies. First, curriculum integration ensures that local excellence is embedded across subjects rather than treated as an addition. Science subjects incorporate local agricultural practices, social studies include local history and culture, and Islamic education connects with local religious traditions. Second, experiential learning approaches allow students to learn through direct engagement with local resources and community members. Third, community partnerships provide resources, expertise, and authentic learning opportunities that enhance program quality and relevance.

The madrasah also implemented a "learning community" approach where teachers, students, parents, and community members collaborate in the learning process. A community leader (TM-01) stated:

"We feel that this madrasah truly belongs to us. We contribute our knowledge and resources, and we see the results in our children. They learn not only from books but also from their community and their own environment."

Technology integration, although limited, supports program implementation through digital documentation, online sharing of local resources, and access to broader learning networks. The madrasah has developed a simple digital platform to showcase local excellence programs and share best practices with other institutions.

3.3 Strategy Evaluation and Impact on Competitiveness

Strategic management evaluation at the madrasah is conducted through continuous monitoring and periodic assessment. The madrasah head (KM-01) explained:

"We evaluate our programs regularly—not just at the end of the year but throughout implementation. We look at student engagement, learning outcomes, community participation, and institutional reputation. This helps us make adjustments and improvements continuously."

Evaluation mechanisms include: (1) annual strategic plan review assessing progress against goals; (2) semester monitoring of program implementation and outcomes; (3) stakeholder feedback through surveys, meetings, and informal discussions; and (4) performance indicator tracking including student enrollment, academic achievement, graduate outcomes, and community satisfaction.

The impact of local excellence-based strategic management on madrasah competitiveness is significant across multiple dimensions. First, student enrollment has increased substantially as parents recognize the madrasah's unique value proposition. A parent (OT-01) shared:

"I chose this madrasah because my child gets more than just religious education. He learns practical skills, understands his culture, and connects with his community. This is the kind of education I want for my child."

Second, community trust and institutional reputation have strengthened. The madrasah is now viewed as a community asset contributing to local development rather than merely an educational institution serving individual students. A community leader (TM-02) noted:

"This madrasah has become a center for community learning and development. People trust it because they see its contribution to our community's well-being."

Third, student outcomes have improved, with graduates demonstrating not only academic competence but also practical skills, cultural awareness, and community engagement. A teacher (GR-03) observed:

"Our graduates are more confident and capable. They can discuss agriculture, explain local culture, and connect their Islamic values to practical life. This makes them more competitive in further education and employment."

Fourth, institutional differentiation has been achieved through unique programs that distinguish the madrasah from competitors. The madrasah has developed a distinctive institutional identity that combines Islamic values with local excellence, creating a unique value proposition that attracts students and community support.

4. DISCUSSION

The findings of this research demonstrate that local excellence-based strategic management is a transformative approach for madrasahs to build sustainable competitiveness while preserving cultural identity and community values. This discussion examines these findings in relation to existing theoretical frameworks and empirical research, highlighting implications for madrasah leadership and institutional development.

The strategy formulation process identified in this research—integrating local excellence identification with vision-mission development and SWOT analysis—reflects a systematic approach to strategic planning consistent with established strategic management frameworks. The integration of local resource mapping into the environmental analysis stage represents an important extension of traditional SWOT analysis, which typically focuses on generic strengths and weaknesses without specific attention to local context. This finding aligns with research by Mahmud and Suratman (2020) who found that strategic management of madrasah excellence in East Kalimantan involves managing skills, religious, and student achievement programs through

cooperative and competitive strategies. The identification of local agricultural potential, religious tourism sites, cultural heritage, and community traditions as strategic assets demonstrates how madrasahs can leverage their unique local resources for competitive advantage. Norman, Firmansyah, and Wahib (2023) also affirmed that image branding based on local wisdom can provide a unique identity easily recognized by the community and enhance madrasah competitiveness.

The implementation of local excellence-based programs through curriculum integration, experiential learning, and community partnerships reflects a comprehensive approach to strategy execution. This finding is consistent with research by Ma'ruvah, Tuala, and Putra (2026) who found that strategy implementation in madrasahs is realized through flagship programs supported by human resources, infrastructure, and strong institutional culture. The "learning community" approach observed in this research, where teachers, students, parents, and community members collaborate in the learning process, is a distinctive feature of local excellence-based implementation that aligns with participatory management principles. This approach not only enhances program quality but also builds community ownership and trust, which are crucial for institutional sustainability. These findings reinforce Ilyasin and Muadin's (2025) research on the importance of learning organization leadership in creating madrasah competitive advantage.

The flagship programs developed by the madrasah—Agricultural Skills, Religious Tourism Education, Cultural Preservation, Community Partnership, Environmental Education, and Entrepreneurship Development—represent a portfolio of differentiated offerings that respond to various stakeholder needs and expectations. This finding supports research by Restarie et al. (2026) who found that service differentiation and school image modernization are key pillars of competitiveness for Islamic educational institutions. The integration of Islamic values with practical skills and cultural awareness in these programs creates a unique value proposition that distinguishes the madrasah from competitors. Musyafiudin and Ahmadi (2020) also emphasized that management strategies attending to local issues and programs with distinction can produce higher-order thinking skills in facing the 4.0 era.

The impact of local excellence-based strategic management on madrasah competitiveness is significant across multiple dimensions. Increased student enrollment reflects growing parent recognition of the madrasah's unique value proposition. This finding is consistent with research showing that institutional branding and reputation management significantly influence student enrollment decisions. Strengthened community trust and institutional reputation demonstrate how local excellence-based strategies can build social capital that supports institutional sustainability. Improved student outcomes—including academic competence, practical skills, cultural awareness, and community engagement—reflect the holistic impact of local excellence-based education. This finding aligns with research showing that contextual and experiential learning approaches produce more meaningful learning outcomes. The SWOT analysis conducted by Norman et al. (2023) also showed that madrasahs can have a unique identity and become a favorite according to environmental characteristics through local wisdom-based branding.

The theoretical contribution of this research lies in the development of an integrative strategic management model that systematically incorporates local excellence as a core element of

madrasah competitiveness. While previous research has examined strategic management in educational institutions and competitiveness strategies in madrasahs, this research demonstrates how local excellence can be positioned as a fundamental strategic asset that informs vision and mission formulation, program development, resource allocation, and institutional branding. The model's emphasis on integrating local resources with Islamic values and contemporary educational practices offers a distinctive contribution to the field of Islamic education management. These findings support the theoretical proposition that organizational effectiveness is determined not only by generic management practices but also by the strategic utilization of contextual resources and capabilities. As emphasized by Musyafiudin and Ahmadi (2020), strategic management can drive learning organizations to achieve harmony at various levels.

The practical implications of this research extend to educational policy and practice in madrasah environments. For madrasah leaders, the findings highlight the importance of systematically identifying and leveraging local excellence as strategic assets for institutional competitiveness. This involves conducting comprehensive local resource mapping, integrating local content into vision and mission, developing local excellence-based flagship programs, and building community partnerships for resource sharing and support. For teachers, the findings emphasize the need to develop competencies in integrating local content into teaching and using experiential learning approaches that connect students with their community and environment. For policymakers, the findings indicate that support for local excellence-based education—including funding, training, accreditation, and recognition—is essential to enable madrasahs to develop sustainable competitiveness. The findings also highlight the importance of addressing inhibiting factors such as limited resources, low digital literacy, and geographic constraints through targeted interventions and support programs.

The findings of this research also have implications for the broader discourse on Islamic education in Indonesia. In an era of increasing educational competition and globalization, madrasahs face the challenge of maintaining their distinctive Islamic identity while meeting modern educational standards. Local excellence-based strategic management offers a pathway for madrasahs to achieve this balance by grounding their institutional development in the unique resources and values of their communities. This approach enables madrasahs to differentiate themselves from competitors, build community trust and support, and contribute to local development while preserving cultural heritage and Islamic values. As found by Norman et al. (2023), the implementation of local wisdom-based image branding enables madrasahs to have a unique identity easily recognized by the community and become a favorite according to environmental characteristics.

However, this research has several limitations. First, the research was conducted at one madrasah in Lampung Province, which may limit the generalizability of findings to other contexts. Second, the qualitative approach, while providing rich and detailed data, does not allow for statistical generalization. Third, the research relied on self-reported data from participants, which may be subject to social desirability bias. Fourth, the research did not include a comparison group or baseline data, making it difficult to attribute competitiveness improvements solely to local excellence-based strategic management. Future research should expand the scope to multiple madrasahs across different regions, use mixed-methods approaches, and include longitudinal

designs to examine the long-term impact of local excellence-based strategic management on madrasah competitiveness.

5. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that local excellence-based strategic management plays a significant role in enhancing the competitiveness of madrasahs by integrating local resources, cultural values, and community potential into institutional planning and development. The strategic management process encompasses systematic formulation, implementation, and evaluation through local resource mapping, stakeholder participation, and the development of flagship programs that reflect the unique characteristics of the surrounding community. These initiatives have contributed to increased student enrollment, stronger community trust, improved institutional reputation, and better student learning outcomes. The successful implementation of this approach is supported by visionary leadership, committed teachers, active community involvement, and adequate infrastructure, although challenges related to limited resources, digital literacy, and geographic conditions remain. Overall, the local excellence-based strategic management model provides an effective and sustainable framework for strengthening madrasah competitiveness while preserving Islamic values, local culture, and community identity.

Based on these findings, madrasahs should continuously strengthen local excellence-based strategic management by conducting systematic mapping of local potential and integrating it into strategic planning, curriculum development, and flagship educational programs. Teacher capacity should be enhanced through continuous professional development focusing on experiential learning, local content integration, and digital literacy to improve both instructional quality and institutional promotion. Furthermore, stronger partnerships with government agencies, higher education institutions, businesses, and local communities are essential to support program implementation, expand resources, and increase institutional competitiveness. Policymakers are also encouraged to provide sustainable policy support, funding, and capacity-building initiatives that promote local excellence-based education. Future research should involve a larger number of madrasahs, employ mixed-methods or longitudinal designs, and examine additional variables influencing institutional competitiveness to provide more comprehensive evidence for the development of strategic management practices in Islamic educational institutions.

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