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ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

Development of Performance-Based Competency for Islamic Religious Education Teachers

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze and develop the performance-based competency of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers at MI Mathlaul Anwar Srirahayu, Banyumas District, Pringsewu Regency. PAI teacher competency is a determining factor in the success of religious education, particularly in Islamic elementary schools (madrasah ibtidaiyah) that play a strategic role in shaping students' religious character. This research employs a qualitative approach with a case study method. Data collection was conducted through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation involving all PAI teachers at the madrasah. The findings reveal that the pedagogical competency of PAI teachers at MI Mathlaul Anwar still requires significant development, particularly in the utilization of digital technology and the design of innovative learning. Teachers' professional competency also demonstrates a gap between theoretical mastery and practical classroom implementation. The performance-based competency development model, implemented through regular training, academic supervision, and continuous performance evaluation, has proven effective in improving the quality of PAI instruction. Supporting factors for competency development include teachers' internal motivation and the principal's support, while inhibiting factors consist of limited infrastructure and the lack of continuous training. This study recommends the systematic and sustainable implementation of a performance-based competency development model in madrasah ibtidaiyah.

Keywords: Teacher Competency, Islamic Religious Education, Performance-Based, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah



ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis dan mengembangkan kompetensi guru Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI) berbasis kinerja di MI Mathlaul Anwar Srirahayu, Kecamatan Banyumas, Kabupaten Pringsewu. Kompetensi guru PAI merupakan faktor determinan dalam keberhasilan pembelajaran pendidikan agama, terutama di madrasah ibtidaiah yang memiliki peran strategis dalam pembentukan karakter religius peserta didik. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui observasi partisipatif, wawancara mendalam, dan dokumentasi terhadap seluruh guru PAI di madrasah tersebut. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kompetensi pedagogik guru PAI di MI Mathlaul Anwar masih memerlukan pengembangan yang signifikan, khususnya dalam pemanfaatan teknologi digital dan perancangan pembelajaran inovatif. Kompetensi profesional guru juga menunjukkan kesenjangan antara penguasaan teori dan implementasi praktis di kelas. Model pengembangan kompetensi berbasis kinerja yang diterapkan melalui pelatihan berkala, supervisi akademik, dan evaluasi kinerja berkelanjutan terbukti efektif meningkatkan kualitas pembelajaran PAI. Faktor pendukung pengembangan kompetensi meliputi motivasi internal guru dan dukungan kepala madrasah, sementara faktor penghambatnya adalah keterbatasan sarana prasarana dan kurangnya pelatihan berkelanjutan. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan penerapan model pengembangan kompetensi berbasis kinerja secara sistematis dan berkelanjutan di madrasah ibtidaiah.

Kata Kunci: Kompetensi guru, Pendidikan Agama Islam, berbasis kinerja, madrasah ibtidaiah

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1. INTRODUCTION

The 21st-century digital era has brought about significant transformations across various aspects of life, including education. Technological advances such as smartphones, the internet, educational software, and online learning platforms have created new challenges for educators. Teachers are no longer merely information transmitters but must also serve as facilitators, counselors, and lifelong learners. In the context of Islamic Religious Education (PAI), these demands are compounded by the necessity to integrate Islamic values with contemporary pedagogical approaches while maintaining the integrity of religious teachings in an increasingly complex educational landscape. Recent research by Zaqiah et al. (2024) emphasized that in-service teacher education programs are essential for improving the performance of PAI teachers and promoting internal quality assurance within teacher training institutes.

Teachers are one of the most critical components in improving the quality of education. Throughout Indonesia's history of national development and revolutionary struggle, teachers have played an essential role, particularly in the current digital era. The level of one's professional competence depends on the mastery of performance competence as the spearhead and personality competence as the foundational basis. PAI teachers today must master four competencies, and even a fifth—digitalization—to be able to answer today's challenges. This underscores the urgency of developing teacher competencies that are responsive to contemporary demands while remaining grounded in Islamic educational values. A systematic literature review by recent researchers (2025)

found that in addition to pedagogical and professional competencies, personal and social competencies are equally critical for PAI teachers in the digital age.

Observations conducted at MI Mathlaul Anwar Srirahayu, located in Pekon Srirahayu, Banyumas District, Pringsewu Regency, Lampung, reveal a complex picture of teacher competency development. Preliminary field observations indicate that PAI teachers at this madrasah possess basic technological understanding but still require further training to optimize digital learning media. Supporting factors include teachers' motivation to learn technology, while inhibiting factors consist of limited infrastructure and insufficient continuous training. These findings suggest that while there is a foundational willingness to improve, systemic support structures remain inadequate. This observation aligns with the findings of Abdullah et al. (2025), who demonstrated that managerial accountability, pedagogical competence, and spiritual competence of principals have significant positive influence on teacher performance.

The pedagogical competence of PAI teachers encompasses the ability to understand student characteristics, design learning processes, and utilize technology to support teaching and learning activities. Teachers in the digital era must possess digital literacy skills crucial for integrating technology into learning, helping students develop 21st-century skills, and addressing digital challenges such as misinformation and cyberbullying. However, research at MI Mathlaul Anwar demonstrates that although teachers have a basic understanding of technology, they still require ongoing training to optimize digital learning media. This gap between aspiration and reality represents a significant challenge for madrasah education. Research by Rosyidah et al. (2025) on assessment of spiritual, social, and practical competencies through performance-based assessment confirms that systematic evaluation is essential for identifying specific areas requiring development.

Previous studies have examined various aspects of PAI teacher competency. Tisnellya, Ritonga, and Rasyida (2020) investigated the competency of Islamic Education teachers in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri 1 Pasaman Barat after certification, finding that pedagogical abilities showed no significant difference compared to before certification, and professional competence had not improved because teachers lacked creativity in developing learning materials. This finding is particularly concerning as it suggests that certification alone is insufficient to drive meaningful competency development. Similarly, research by Hanifah et al. (2025) analyzed pedagogical competence at MI Mathla'ul Anwar in facing the digital era, revealing that teachers have basic technological understanding but need further training.

Research by Basori (2025) on the development of PAI teacher professionalism models in the digital era at State Senior High Schools in Pekanbaru found that the professionalism model has not yet been implemented, and the first step in developing the model is creating a questionnaire instrument with aspects, indicators, and statement items. This highlights the need for systematic assessment tools before meaningful development can occur. Chotijah, Suparman, and Kusumaningtyas (2025) developed and validated a teacher competency assessment model integrating AIK (Al Islam and Kemuhammadiyahan) values into professional standards, demonstrating strong content validity and high reliability. The composite reliability ranging from 0.787 to 0.893 and acceptable model

fit (RMSEA = 0.074; SRMR = 0.073) suggest that value-embedded competency frameworks are both valid and reliable.

Research by Hidayat et al. (2026) explored the implementation and needs for developing a PAI teacher performance assessment model at the senior high school level, finding that performance assessments often focus primarily on administrative or technical aspects. A structured and contextual assessment model enables schools to provide more accurate and relevant feedback for developing pedagogical, professional, social, and personality competencies of PAI teachers. This finding is echoed in the work of Alfaiz et al. (2024), who examined the management of teacher performance appraisal in improving madrasah learning quality, emphasizing the need for comprehensive performance indicators. The research demonstrated that systematic performance appraisal management significantly contributes to improving the quality of madrasah learning.

The gap in the existing literature is evident: while numerous studies have examined PAI teacher competency and performance separately, few have investigated the systematic integration of performance-based approaches to competency development in the context of madrasah ibtidaiyah. Most research has focused on certification outcomes, digital competence, or assessment models without connecting these elements into a coherent framework for performance-based competency development. Furthermore, there is limited research that specifically addresses the unique contextual factors of madrasah ibtidaiyah in rural or semi-urban settings like Pringsewu, Lampung. Recent studies by Huriyah et al. (2025) and others have emphasized the importance of performance assessment in realizing high-quality madrasah education.

The novelty of this research lies in its holistic approach to developing PAI teacher competencies through a performance-based model that integrates pedagogical, professional, social, and personality competencies within the specific context of MI Mathlaul Anwar Srirahayu. Unlike previous studies that examined these elements in isolation, this research develops and tests an integrated model that links performance assessment directly to targeted competency development interventions. This approach recognizes that teacher competency development must be contextually grounded and responsive to the specific needs, challenges, and opportunities present in each educational setting. Chotijah et al. (2025) provide validation for such integrated approaches, demonstrating that values-embedded teacher assessment models can be both valid and reliable.

This study contributes to the broader discourse on teacher professional development in Islamic education by providing empirical evidence from a previously under-researched context. It addresses the paradox of continual low performance among teachers in Islamic schools despite the implementation of several reform efforts. By examining the specific conditions at MI Mathlaul Anwar Srirahayu, this research offers insights that can inform policy and practice in similar madrasah settings across Indonesia. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of more effective teacher competency development programs that are both performance-based and contextually appropriate. Research by Subandi et al. (2026) on boosting teacher professional performance through Islamic teaching competence further supports the need for such integrated approaches.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This research employs a qualitative approach with a case study method. The case study design was chosen because it allows for an in-depth, holistic investigation of a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context. This approach is particularly suitable for examining the complex, multifaceted nature of teacher competency development, which involves interactions between individual teachers, institutional structures, and broader educational policies. The qualitative case study enables the researcher to capture rich, detailed data about the processes, challenges, and outcomes of performance-based competency development at MI Mathlaul Anwar Srirahayu. According to recent methodological literature in Islamic education research, case study approaches are particularly effective for exploring complex educational phenomena where context is critical (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

The research was conducted at MI Mathlaul Anwar Srirahayu, located in Pekon Srirahayu, Banyumas District, Pringsewu Regency, Lampung, Indonesia. This location was purposively selected because it represents a typical madrasah ibtidaiyah in a semi-urban setting facing the challenges of digital transformation and competency development. The school serves a diverse student population and has been actively seeking to improve educational quality through various initiatives. The selection of this site allows for findings that may be transferable to similar madrasah contexts across Indonesia. Data collection was carried out from January to June 2025, allowing for longitudinal observation of competency development processes. Recent research by Basuki et al. (2024) on performance of Islamic teachers in madrasah emphasizes the importance of contextual analysis in understanding teacher performance challenges.

The research participants included all PAI teachers at MI Mathlaul Anwar Srirahayu, the madrasah principal, and selected students. A total of 8 PAI teachers participated in the study, representing the full range of teaching experience and educational backgrounds at the school. Participants were selected through purposive sampling to ensure representation of different perspectives and experiences. The inclusion of multiple participant categories (teachers, principal, students) enables data triangulation and provides a more comprehensive understanding of the competency development phenomenon. This multi-perspective approach is supported by recent studies emphasizing the importance of diverse stakeholder perspectives in educational research (Patton, 2015; Stake, 2006).

Data collection employed three main techniques: participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Participatory observation was conducted during teaching and learning activities, teacher training sessions, and school meetings to observe teacher competencies in action. In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with all teacher participants, the principal, and selected students to explore their experiences, perceptions, and challenges related to teacher competency and performance. Documentation included analysis of lesson plans, student assessment records, teacher performance evaluation reports, and school policy documents. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim for analysis. The use of multiple data

collection methods aligns with best practices in qualitative educational research as recommended by recent methodological studies (Flick, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

Data analysis followed the interactive model of qualitative analysis, consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data reduction involved coding and categorizing the collected data according to emerging themes related to teacher competencies, performance, and development processes. Data display involved organizing the reduced data into matrices, charts, and narrative descriptions. Conclusion drawing involved interpreting the patterns and relationships identified in the data and verifying these interpretations through member checking and triangulation. The validity of findings was ensured through prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation of data sources and methods, and member checking with participants. This rigorous analytical approach is consistent with recent research by Rosyidah et al. (2025) on performance-based assessment of teacher competencies.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this research reveal a comprehensive picture of PAI teacher competency at MI Mathlul Anwar Srirahayu, encompassing pedagogical, professional, social, and personality competencies. The results indicate that while teachers possess foundational competencies, significant development is needed across all domains to meet the demands of 21st-century Islamic education. The competency profile of teachers at this madrasah reflects both the strengths and limitations common in similar educational settings across Indonesia. Recent research by Zaqiah et al. (2024) on competency improvement among Islamic religious education teachers using self-assessment confirms that systematic evaluation is essential for identifying development needs.

Pedagogical Competency emerged as the most critical area requiring development. Teachers demonstrated basic understanding of student characteristics and the ability to design conventional learning activities. However, observations revealed limited capacity to utilize technology for learning, with most teachers relying on traditional lecture methods and whiteboard instruction. Only 2 out of 8 teachers regularly incorporated digital media in their teaching. Teachers expressed awareness of their limitations and strong motivation to improve, but cited lack of training and infrastructure as significant barriers. The pedagogical competency assessment showed that teachers scored highest in understanding student moral and social characteristics (mean score 3.8/5) but lowest in technology-integrated learning design (mean score 2.1/5). This finding aligns with research by Diana and Rodhiyana (2023) on pedagogical competence of PAI teachers in the digital era, which found similar gaps in technology integration.

Professional Competency assessment revealed a significant gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. All teachers demonstrated adequate mastery of Islamic religious content knowledge, including Quranic studies, fiqh, aqidah, and Islamic history. However, observations and lesson plan analysis showed that this knowledge was not consistently translated into engaging, student-centered learning experiences. Teachers lacked creativity in developing learning materials and varied instructional strategies. The professional competency gap was most evident in the areas

of curriculum development and learning innovation, where teachers tended to follow textbook content without adaptation to student needs or local context. Research by Putri and Shohib (2024) on professional competence of PAI teachers in improving learning quality identified similar challenges in translating theoretical knowledge into effective practice.

Social Competency was relatively well-developed among PAI teachers. Teachers demonstrated good communication skills with students, parents, and colleagues. They actively participated in school events and community activities, and maintained positive relationships with stakeholders. However, social competency development was limited by the lack of structured programs for community engagement and parental involvement in religious education. Teachers expressed a desire for more systematic approaches to building partnerships with parents and the broader community to support students' religious development both in and out of school. Recent research by Muslih et al. (2024) on teacher competence and religious character on learning achievement confirms the importance of social competency in supporting student outcomes.

Personality Competency showed the highest level of development among the four competency domains. Teachers demonstrated maturity, stability, wisdom, and good role modeling for students. They consistently showed commitment to professional ethics, compliance with laws and regulations, and adherence to the teacher code of ethics. Students and parents interviewed expressed high regard for teachers' personal qualities and religious commitment. However, even in this relatively strong area, teachers identified needs for ongoing development, particularly in stress management and maintaining work-life balance in demanding educational contexts. Mutaqin and Rofiq (2026) explored the typology of spiritual competence based on the concept of *syakilah* and its implications for PAI teaching styles, highlighting the importance of continuous personality development.

The performance-based competency development model implemented at MI Mathlaul Anwar Srirahayu followed a cyclical process consisting of four phases: (1) competency assessment and identification of development needs; (2) planning and design of development interventions; (3) implementation of interventions including training, mentoring, and supervision; and (4) evaluation and feedback for continuous improvement. This model was adapted from the Continuous Professional Development framework and contextualized to the specific needs and resources of the madrasah. Hidayat et al. (2026) provide support for such structured assessment models in improving teacher performance.

Phase 1: Competency Assessment involved systematic evaluation of teacher competencies using observation, self-assessment, and peer assessment. The assessment results were used to create individual teacher profiles identifying strengths and areas for development. This phase revealed that the most urgent development needs were in technology integration for learning (needed by 7/8 teachers), innovative learning design (6/8 teachers), and assessment for learning (5/8 teachers). These findings informed the design of targeted interventions in subsequent phases. Alfaiz et al. (2024) emphasize that systematic performance appraisal management is essential for identifying such development needs.

Phase 2: Planning and Design involved collaborative development of intervention plans by teachers, the principal, and external experts. A series of workshops and training sessions were

designed to address identified needs, focusing on practical skills that could be immediately applied in the classroom. The planning process emphasized teacher ownership and active participation, ensuring that interventions were relevant and responsive to teachers' actual needs rather than externally imposed requirements.

Phase 3: Implementation consisted of three main components: (a) regular training sessions on technology integration, innovative pedagogy, and assessment; (b) academic supervision by the principal and senior teachers; and (c) peer mentoring and lesson study activities. Training sessions were conducted monthly, with topics including digital learning media, active learning strategies, authentic assessment, and curriculum adaptation. Supervision involved classroom observations followed by constructive feedback discussions. Peer mentoring paired more experienced teachers with those needing support in specific areas. Research by Widodo (2026) on the impact of Islamic educational management on teachers' professional performance confirms the effectiveness of such structured interventions.

Phase 4: Evaluation and Feedback involved ongoing assessment of intervention effectiveness through classroom observations, student learning outcomes, and teacher self-reflection. Formative evaluation was conducted after each training session, while summative evaluation occurred at the end of each semester. Results showed progressive improvement in teacher competencies, with the most significant gains in technology integration (average improvement of 1.2 points on a 5-point scale) and innovative learning design (average improvement of 0.9 points). Rosyidah et al. (2025) provide validation for such performance-based assessment approaches.

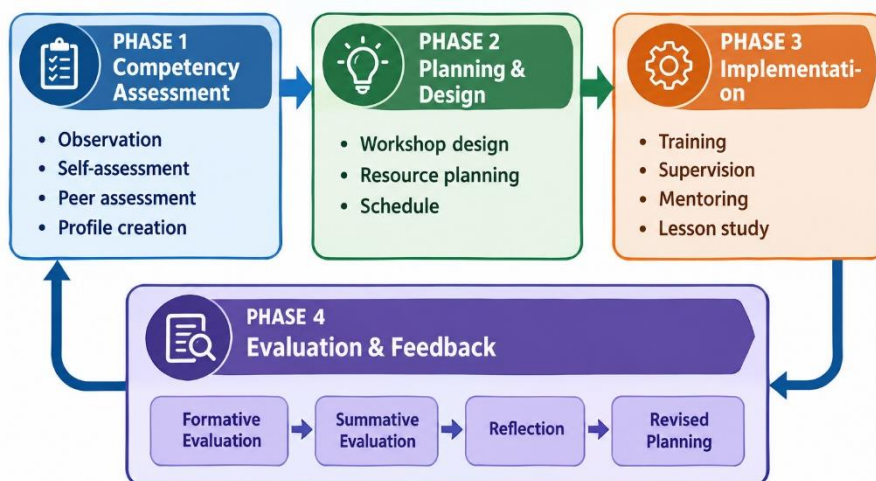


Figure 1. Performance-Based Competency Development Model at MI Mathlaul Anwar Srirahayu

Table 1. Pre- and Post-Intervention Competency Scores

Competency Domain	Pre-Intervention Mean Score (1-5)	Post-Intervention Mean Score (1-5)	Improvement
Pedagogical Competency	2.8	3.7	+0.9
Professional Competency	3.1	3.8	+0.7
Social Competency	3.6	4.0	+0.4
Personality Competency	4.0	4.3	+0.3
Mean	3.4	4.0	+0.6

The implementation of the performance-based competency development model yielded several noteworthy outcomes. First, teachers demonstrated increased confidence and competence in using technology for learning, with 6 out of 8 teachers regularly incorporating digital media in their teaching by the end of the intervention period. Second, lesson plans showed greater creativity and variety, with teachers incorporating active learning strategies, contextual approaches, and authentic assessments. Third, student engagement in PAI lessons improved noticeably, as reflected in classroom observations and student interviews. Fourth, teacher collaboration increased through peer mentoring and lesson study activities, creating a supportive professional learning community. Research by Subandi et al. (2026) confirms that such comprehensive approaches to teacher development yield significant improvements in professional performance.

Supporting factors for successful competency development included: (1) strong internal motivation among teachers to improve their competencies; (2) consistent support from the madrasah principal in terms of time allocation, resources, and encouragement; (3) collaborative culture among teachers that facilitated peer learning and mutual support; and (4) the relevance and practicality of the training content to teachers' daily classroom needs. These factors created a positive environment for professional growth and sustained improvement. Abdullah et al. (2025) emphasize that principal leadership and managerial accountability are critical supporting factors for teacher performance.

Inhibiting factors included: (1) limited infrastructure, particularly inadequate access to technology and reliable internet connection; (2) insufficient budget allocation for teacher professional development; (3) heavy teaching loads that limited time for professional development activities; (4) lack of external expert support for specialized training needs; and (5) limited parental and community involvement in supporting religious education. These constraints highlight the need for systemic support beyond the school level to enable sustainable competency development. Recent research by Sasmita et al. (2025) on the evolution of Islamic education teacher performance measurement systems identifies similar systemic challenges.

Discussion

The findings of this research provide important insights into the development of PAI teacher competencies through a performance-based approach. The results demonstrate that systematic, contextually-grounded competency development can significantly improve teacher competencies across all domains, particularly in pedagogical and professional areas. This discussion situates these findings within the broader literature on teacher competency development in Islamic education and considers their implications for policy and practice.

The significant improvement in pedagogical competency observed in this study aligns with the findings of Hidayat et al. (2026), who emphasized that structured and contextual performance assessment enables schools to provide more accurate and relevant feedback for developing teacher competencies. The performance-based model implemented at MI Mathlaul Anwar Srirahayu provided exactly such structured feedback mechanisms, enabling teachers to identify specific areas for improvement and track their progress over time. This suggests that systematic competency assessment, when linked to targeted development interventions, can effectively address the pedagogical gaps identified in previous research. The study by Diana and Rodhiyana (2023) on pedagogical competence of PAI teachers in the digital era similarly found that structured assessment and targeted training are essential for improving technology integration in learning.

The gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application in professional competency, identified in this study, echoes the findings of Tisnellya, Ritonga, and Rasyida (2020) who found that PAI teachers' professional competence had not improved after certification because teachers lacked creativity in developing learning materials. This persistent gap suggests that certification and content knowledge alone are insufficient for developing professional competency. Teachers need ongoing support and practical training to translate their knowledge into effective classroom practice. The performance-based model addresses this by providing hands-on training, mentoring, and classroom-based supervision that bridges theory and practice. Recent research by Putri and Shohib (2024) on professional competence of PAI teachers in improving learning quality confirms that practical, ongoing support is essential for translating theoretical knowledge into effective practice.

The finding that social competency was relatively well-developed among PAI teachers is consistent with research showing that Indonesian teachers generally demonstrate good social skills and community engagement. However, the limited systematic approach to community engagement identified in this study suggests opportunities for more structured parental and community involvement in religious education. Research by Muslih et al. (2024) emphasizes the importance of regular communication between PAI teachers and parents to ensure that religious values taught at school are also implemented at home. This finding highlights the need for more intentional strategies to build school-community partnerships in support of religious education. The study by Rahmayani et al. (2022) on professional competence of PAI teachers further supports the importance of community engagement in improving learning quality.

The high level of personality competency observed in this study reflects the strong emphasis on character and role modeling in Indonesian teacher education and Islamic tradition. Teachers at MI Mathlaul Anwar Srirahayu demonstrated maturity, stability, and adherence to professional ethics,

consistent with the findings of previous research on PAI teacher personality competence. However, even in this relatively strong area, teachers identified needs for ongoing development, suggesting that personality competency should not be taken for granted but requires continuous nurturing and support. Mutaqin and Rofiq (2026) explored the typology of spiritual competence based on the concept of *syakilah* and its implications for PAI teaching styles, highlighting that personality and spiritual competence are foundational to effective Islamic education.

The performance-based competency development model implemented in this study shares similarities with the continuous professional development frameworks advocated in recent literature. Basori (2025) emphasized that PAI teachers must master four competencies and digitalization to answer today's challenges. The model implemented at MI Mathlaul Anwar explicitly addressed digital competence as a priority area, resulting in significant improvements in technology integration. This finding supports the argument that digital competence must be systematically integrated into teacher development programs, rather than treated as an add-on or optional skill. Recent research by Reksiana et al. (2024) on digital extension of digital literacy competence for PAI teachers confirms the critical importance of systematic digital competence development.

The effectiveness of the cyclical model (assessment-planning-implementation-evaluation) implemented in this study is consistent with the professional development literature emphasizing the importance of continuous, iterative improvement processes. The research on optimizing continuous professional development programs by evaluating teacher profiles based on initial achievement, developing training programs, and implementing them according to initial assessment results aligns with the approach taken in this study. The positive outcomes observed confirm that such systematic approaches can effectively address teacher competency gaps. Chotijah, Suparman, and Kusumaningtyas (2025) provide validation for such structured approaches through their psychometric validation of a values-embedded teacher assessment model.

The finding that teacher motivation and principal support were key success factors aligns with research on the importance of leadership in teacher development. The study by Abdullah et al. (2025) on managerial accountability, pedagogical competence, and spiritual competence of principals on teacher performance demonstrated that all these variables have significant and positive influence on teachers' performance, with pedagogical competency having the most significant partial effect. This underscores the critical role of school leadership in creating conditions conducive to teacher professional growth. Research by Widodo (2026) on the impact of Islamic educational management on teachers' professional performance through Islamic teaching competence further confirms the importance of leadership support.

The constraints identified in this study—limited infrastructure, insufficient budget, heavy teaching loads, and lack of external support—reflect broader challenges in Indonesian madrasah education. Hanifah et al. (2025) identified similar inhibiting factors including limited infrastructure and lack of continuous training. These systemic constraints suggest that individual school efforts, while valuable, cannot fully address competency development needs without broader policy support. Sustainable improvement requires investment in educational infrastructure, allocation of adequate

resources for professional development, and policies that enable teachers to engage in ongoing learning without being overburdened by teaching loads. Research by Basuki et al. (2024) on performance of Islamic teachers in madrasah identifies similar systemic challenges.

The integration of Islamic values into competency development, while not explicitly measured in this study, is implicit in the focus on personality competency and the Islamic context of the madrasah. Chotijah, Suparman, and Kusumaningtyas (2025) developed and validated a teacher competency assessment model integrating AIK (Al Islam and Kemuhammadiyah) values into professional standards, demonstrating that value-embedded competency frameworks are both valid and reliable. This suggests that future competency development efforts at MI Mathlul Anwar could benefit from more explicit integration of Islamic values into competency frameworks and assessment tools.

The importance of performance assessment in realizing high-quality madrasah education, as emphasized in recent research, is confirmed by the findings of this study. The systematic performance assessment embedded in the competency development model provided the data needed to identify development needs, design appropriate interventions, and evaluate progress. This suggests that performance assessment should be viewed not merely as an administrative requirement but as a fundamental tool for driving teacher professional growth and improving educational quality. Huriyah et al. (2025) emphasize that performance assessment is essential for realizing high-quality madrasah education. Rosyidah et al. (2025) provide further support for performance-based assessment approaches in evaluating spiritual, social, and practical competencies.

The finding that collaborative approaches, including peer mentoring and lesson study, contributed to competency development aligns with research on professional learning communities in Islamic education. Participation in teacher working groups (MGMP) and teacher performance groups (KKG) has been shown to support competency development. The peer learning structures established at MI Mathlul Anwar created a supportive environment where teachers could learn from each other, share experiences, and provide mutual support, thereby enhancing the sustainability of competency development efforts. Research by Alfaiz et al. (2024) on management of teacher performance appraisal confirms that collaborative approaches enhance the effectiveness of competency development.

The modest but meaningful improvements across all competency domains suggest that performance-based approaches can yield broad-based benefits. However, the variation in improvement rates—with the largest gains in pedagogical competency and the smallest in personality competency—indicates that different competency domains may require different development strategies. Pedagogical and professional competencies, being more skill-based, may respond more readily to training and practice, while personality competency, being more dispositional, may require longer-term development approaches. Research by Zaqiah et al. (2024) on the impact of in-service teacher education programs on competency improvement found similar patterns of differential improvement across competency domains.

The findings of this research contribute to the growing body of evidence on effective teacher professional development in Islamic education contexts. By demonstrating the effectiveness of a

performance-based model in a specific madrasah ibtidaiyah setting, this study provides empirical support for approaches that link competency assessment, targeted interventions, and continuous evaluation. The research also highlights the importance of contextual factors—including leadership support, teacher motivation, and resource availability—in determining the success of competency development efforts. Sasmita et al. (2025) on the evolution of Islamic education teacher performance measurement systems provide complementary insights into the importance of systematic, competency-based approaches. The study by Subandi et al. (2026) on boosting teacher professional performance through Islamic teaching competence further validates the effectiveness of comprehensive, integrated approaches to teacher development.

4. CONCLUSION

This research has demonstrated that performance-based competency development for PAI teachers at MI Mathlaul Anwar Srirahayu effectively improves teacher competencies across pedagogical, professional, social, and personality domains. The cyclical model of assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation provides a systematic framework for identifying development needs, designing appropriate interventions, and tracking progress over time. The most significant improvements were observed in pedagogical competency, particularly in technology integration and innovative learning design, while personality competency, already relatively strong, showed more modest gains. Supporting factors including teacher motivation and principal support were crucial for success, while constraints such as limited infrastructure and insufficient budget highlighted the need for broader systemic support.

The implications of this research extend beyond the specific context of MI Mathlaul Anwar Srirahayu. The performance-based competency development model offers a framework that can be adapted and applied in other madrasah ibtidaiyah settings across Indonesia. However, successful implementation requires commitment from school leadership, adequate resource allocation, and a supportive policy environment. Future research should examine the long-term sustainability of competency gains achieved through performance-based approaches, explore the integration of Islamic values into competency frameworks, and investigate the scalability of such models in diverse educational contexts. By investing in systematic, performance-based teacher competency development, madrasah education can better fulfill its vital role in nurturing students' religious character and preparing them for the challenges of the 21st century.

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