

Transformational Leadership and Teachers' Pedagogical Competence: The Mediating Role of Quality of Work Life

Muh. Hambali¹⁾, Khoirun Nisa²⁾, Abd Aziz³⁾, M. Imamul Muttaqin⁴⁾

¹⁾ UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia

²⁾ UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia

³⁾ UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia

⁴⁾ UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia

e-mail Correspondent: hambali@pai.uin-malang.ac.id

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Abstract

Teacher pedagogical competence is a key factor in improving educational quality; however, efforts to enhance it require not only professional development but also supportive leadership and a favourable work environment. This study examines the effect of madrasah principals' transformational leadership on teachers' pedagogical competence, with Quality of Work Life (QWL) serving as a mediating variable. A quantitative approach was employed involving 150 teachers from Madrasah Aliyah Negeri in Malang Regency, Indonesia. Data were analysed using Structural Equation Modelling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS). The findings reveal that transformational leadership positively and significantly affects teachers' pedagogical competence and QWL. Furthermore, QWL positively influences pedagogical competence and mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and pedagogical competence. These findings indicate that transformational leadership contributes both directly and indirectly to improving teachers' pedagogical competence through enhanced work-life quality. The study contributes to the educational leadership literature by providing empirical evidence of the mediating role of QWL in the relationship between transformational leadership and teacher competence within the madrasah context. However, the study is limited by its cross-sectional design and focus on public madrasahs in a single regency, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings. Future research is recommended to employ longitudinal designs, include broader educational settings, and explore additional mediating or moderating variables to gain a more comprehensive understanding of factors influencing teacher competence.

Kata Kunci:

Kepemimpinan Transformasional, Kualitas kehidupan kerja (QWL), Kompetensi Pedagogik, Guru madrasah, SEM-PLS

Abstract.

Kompetensi pedagogik guru merupakan faktor kunci dalam meningkatkan kualitas pendidikan. Namun, upaya peningkatannya tidak hanya memerlukan pengembangan profesional, tetapi juga kepemimpinan yang mendukung serta lingkungan kerja yang kondusif. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis pengaruh kepemimpinan transformasional kepala madrasah terhadap kompetensi pedagogik guru dengan Quality of Work Life (QWL) sebagai variabel mediasi. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan melibatkan 150 guru Madrasah Aliyah Negeri di Kabupaten Malang, Indonesia. Data analisis using Structural Equation Modelling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan transformasional berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap kompetensi pedagogik guru serta QWL. Selain itu, QWL berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap kompetensi pedagogik serta memediasi hubungan antara kepemimpinan transformasional dan kompetensi pedagogik guru. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan transformasional berkontribusi secara langsung maupun tidak langsung dalam meningkatkan kompetensi pedagogik guru melalui peningkatan kualitas kehidupan kerja. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi pada pengembangan kajian kepemimpinan pendidikan dengan

membuktikan peran mediasi QWL dalam hubungan antara kepemimpinan transformasional dan kompetensi pedagogik guru dalam konteks madrasah. Namun, penelitian ini terbatas pada desain potong lintang (cross-sectional) dan cakupan lokasi yang hanya mencakup madrasah negeri di satu kabupaten. Oleh karena itu, penelitian selanjutnya disarankan menggunakan desain longitudinal, memperluas cakupan wilayah dan jenis lembaga pendidikan, serta mengkaji variabel mediasi atau moderasi lainnya untuk memperoleh pemahaman yang lebih komprehensif mengenai faktor-faktor yang memengaruhi kompetensi guru.

INTRODUCTION

Teacher pedagogical competence is widely recognised as one of the most fundamental determinants of educational quality because it directly influences teachers' ability to facilitate meaningful learning, develop students' potential, and achieve instructional objectives. (Tharaba, 2016). Pedagogical competence encompasses teachers' ability to understand students' characteristics, identify diverse learning needs, design and implement effective instructional strategies, utilise educational technology, and conduct continuous assessment to improve learning outcomes. (Mulyasa, 2013). Consequently, pedagogical competence has become an essential component of teacher professionalism because it enables teachers to adapt learning activities to students' abilities, educational contexts, and changing societal demands. (Opfer & Pedder, 2011).

Transformational leaders motivate teachers through idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualised consideration, which encourage teachers to reflect on their instructional practices, adopt innovative teaching strategies, and continuously improve their professional competencies. (Avolio & Bass, 2004). From an organisational behaviour perspective, transformational leadership also strengthens organisational commitment, collaboration, and employee engagement by creating a supportive and empowering work environment. (Robbins & Judge, 2017). Empirical evidence has demonstrated that transformational leadership positively influences teacher competence, innovative work behaviour, and institutional performance because leaders can encourage learning, creativity, and professional growth among teachers. (Badar, 2025). Furthermore, recent studies in Islamic educational institutions highlight that transformational leadership has become increasingly important in responding to educational digitalisation, organisational change, and the growing demand for continuous improvement in teaching quality. (Kausar et al., 2025; Bass & Avolio, 1994).

Previous studies have consistently demonstrated that teachers with stronger pedagogical competence are more capable of promoting student engagement, improving instructional quality, and achieving better educational outcomes through innovative and learner-centred teaching approaches. (Darling-Hammond, 2017; Suharsaputra, 2016). Furthermore, educational leadership scholars argue that improving teaching quality requires not only individual teacher development but also supportive organisational environments that encourage continuous professional learning, collaboration, and instructional improvement. (Hallinger, 2018). Recent evidence from Indonesian educational institutions also confirms that instructional leadership, teacher efficacy, and collaborative learning communities contribute significantly to improving learning quality and strengthening teacher professionalism. (Haryono et al., 2025).

In addition to leadership factors, teachers' pedagogical competence may also be influenced by the quality of their working environment, which is conceptualised in this study as Quality of Work Life (QWL). QWL refers to employees' perceptions regarding the extent to which their workplace provides supportive conditions, meaningful work experiences, opportunities for personal and professional development, participation in decision-making, fair treatment, and balance between work and personal responsibilities (Walton, 1973). From a human resource

management perspective, QWL represents an important organisational condition because employees' performance and professional development are strongly influenced by their psychological experiences and perceptions of workplace support. (Martel & Dupuis, 2006). In educational institutions, QWL becomes particularly significant because teachers perform complex professional responsibilities that require not only knowledge and skills but also emotional commitment, motivation, and continuous learning.

This research gap is important because teachers' professional competence is developed not only through individual knowledge and training but also through organisational environments that provide psychological support, professional opportunities, and meaningful work experiences. Previous studies have demonstrated that supportive leadership and organisational conditions contribute to employee development and institutional improvement. (Zarkasi et al., 2025). Teachers who experience supportive working environments are more likely to demonstrate higher professional engagement, innovative behaviour, and commitment to improving instructional practices. (Hasanati et al., 2025; Fatin Amirah Abdul Malik et al., 2023). Furthermore, transformational leadership has been identified as an important antecedent of QWL because leaders influence workplace climate, interpersonal relationships, participation opportunities, and employees' perceptions of organisational support. (Mohiuddin & Mohamed, 2025).

Therefore, this study proposes that transformational leadership influences teachers' pedagogical competence both directly and indirectly through QWL. By integrating transformational leadership theory, Quality of Work Life perspectives, and teacher competence development, this study aims to analyse the effect of transformational leadership on teachers' pedagogical competence with QWL as a mediating variable among teachers of Madrasah Aliyah Negeri in Malang. (Hambali & Idris, 2020; Zahru et al., 2025) Regency. Theoretically, this study contributes to educational leadership literature by explaining the organisational mechanism through which leadership influences teacher competence. Practically, the findings provide insights for madrasah leaders and educational stakeholders in developing leadership strategies and workplace conditions that support sustainable teacher professional development.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design. A quantitative approach is appropriate when researchers aim to measure relationships among variables, test theoretical assumptions, and examine hypothesised relationships through statistical analysis. (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). Quantitative research also enables researchers to collect numerical data systematically and analyse patterns among measurable constructs using statistical procedures. (Sugiyono, 2017). Explanatory research is designed to investigate causal relationships between variables by testing hypotheses developed from theoretical frameworks and previous empirical findings. (Sekaran & Bougie, 2019). The population of this study consisted of all teachers working at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri in Malang Regency, East Java, Indonesia, with a total population of 150 teachers ($N = 150$). (Etikan, 2016).

The collected data were analysed using Structural Equation Modelling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with SmartPLS 3 software. SEM-PLS was selected because this analytical approach is appropriate for examining complex relationships among latent variables, particularly when the research model involves mediation analysis and focuses on prediction-oriented objectives (Hair et al., 2021). The data analysis process consisted of two main stages: evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) and evaluation of the structural model (inner model). The

outer model assessment evaluated construct validity and reliability through factor loadings, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Cronbach's alpha, and composite reliability. (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) Moreover, the Heterotrait–Monotrait ratio (HTMT) was proposed. (Henseler et al., 2015).

The structural model evaluation was conducted to examine hypothesised relationships among transformational leadership, QWL, and pedagogical competence. Hypothesis testing was performed through path coefficient analysis and bootstrapping procedures to determine the significance of direct and indirect effects. (Hair et al., 2021). The research instrument was developed based on established theoretical concepts and previous empirical studies. Each variable was measured using indicators derived from relevant theories to ensure conceptual consistency and alignment with the objectives of this study. The operational definitions, theoretical foundations, and dimensions of each research variable are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Definition of Variables

Variables	Definition	Dimensions
Transformational leadership. (Bass & Avolio, 1994)	A leadership style that inspires, motivates, and encourages positive change.	Idealized Influence
		Inspirational Motivation
		Intellectual Stimulation
		Individualized Consideration
Quality of Work Life (QWL). (Cascio, 2015)	In the context of this research, it is defined as the teacher's perception of the quality of the work environment that supports a balance between personal and professional life.	Physical and Psychological
		Work-Life Balance
		Development and Participation
		Justice and Welfare
Pedagogic Competence. (Ministry of Education Regulations 2007)	Ability to <i>manage the learning process</i> , which includes mastering student characteristics, planning, implementing, and assessing learning effectively.	Understanding the characteristics of students.
		Mastering Learning Theory and Educational Learning Principles.
		Curriculum Development and Learning Plan.
		Implementation of Educational and Dialogical Learning.
		Learning Assessment and Evaluation.
		Innovation and Reflection of Technology-Based Learning.

Source: Processed by Researchers, 2025

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

Variable Description

The variables in the study consisted of one dependent variable, pedagogic competence, and two independent variables: transformational leadership and quality of work life. In addition to being an independent variable, quality of work life (QWL) is also a mediating variable. The descriptive results show that the average transformational leadership score is 4.357, QWL is 4.234, and pedagogic competence of teachers is 4.328 on a scale of 1–5. These findings indicate that, in general, teachers assess the leadership of the madrasah head and the quality of the work environment to be quite high, and pedagogic competence is relatively good (Table 1).

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	N	Indicator	min	Max	Mean
Transformational Leadership	150	KT 1-8	4.187	4.487	4.357
Quality of Working Life	150	KKK 1-6	3.947	4.433	4.234
Pedagogic Competence	150	KP 1 -20	4.000	4.540	4.328

Source: Primary data processed, 2025

PLS Data Analysis

All constructs show adequate validity and reliability, with outer loadings >0.7 , Cronbach's Alpha >0.7 , composite reliability >0.7 , and AVE >0.5 , indicating that the measurement model is valid and reliable (Table 2 and Table 3).

Table 2: Convergent Validity

Variable	Indicator	Outer Loading	Information
Transformational Leadership	X1.1	0.815	Valid
	X1.2	0.891	Valid
	X1.3	0.848	Valid
	X1.4	0.865	Valid
	X1.5	0.858	Valid
	X1.6	0.835	Valid
	X1.7	0.823	Valid
	X1.8	0.832	Valid
Quality of Work Life (QWL)	X3.1	0.840	Valid
	X3.2	0.835	Valid
	X3.3	0.810	Valid
	X3.4	0.831	Valid
	X3.7	0.778	Valid
	X3.8	0.809	Valid
Pedagogic Competence	Y1	0.772	Valid
	Y10	0.825	Valid
	Y11	0.815	Valid
	Y12	0.809	Valid
	Y13	0.860	Valid
	Y14	0.876	Valid
	Y15	0.848	Valid
	Y17	0.756	Valid
	Y18	0.830	Valid
	Y19	0.833	Valid

Y2	0.769	Valid
Y20	0.861	Valid
Y22	0.768	Valid
Y3	0.737	Valid
Y4	0.794	Valid
Y5	0.763	Valid
Y6	0.835	Valid
Y7	0.791	Valid
Y8	0.811	Valid
Y9	0.761	Valid

Source: Smart PLS Output, 2026

Based on the data listed in Table 2, the calculation results show that each variable studied has an outer loading value greater than 0.7. Thus, it can be concluded that all instrument items are considered valid. Furthermore, construct validity and reliability are tested to ensure that the indicators measure the construct consistently and accurately. Convergent validity is assessed through the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), with a minimum required value of 0.50, indicating that more than 50% of each indicator's variance is explained by the construct (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). In addition, construct reliability was assessed using Composite Reliability (CR) and Cronbach's alpha, both of which require a minimum of 0.70 to indicate good internal reliability. The following table presents the AVE, CR, and Cronbach's Alpha values for all study variables.

Table 3: Construct Validity and Reliability

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Transformational Leadership	0.943	0.943	0.953	0.716
Pedagogical Competence	0.972	0.973	0.974	0.651
Quality of Working Life	0.901	0.901	0.924	0.668

Source: Smart PLS Output

The test results showed that all constructs achieved AVE values greater than 0.50, indicating adequate convergent validity. In addition, Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha values for all variables exceeded 0.70, confirming that the measurement model is reliable and consistent. Subsequently, the structural model (inner model) was evaluated to assess its explanatory power in predicting the endogenous constructs. The coefficient of determination (R^2), obtained from the SmartPLS 3 output (Table 4), shows that the endogenous variable, Pedagogic Competence, has an R^2 value of 0.660. This indicates that 66% of the variance in Pedagogic Competence is explained by transformational leadership and quality of work life (QWL). In comparison, the remaining 34% is explained by other factors outside the model. According to Hair et al. 2019, this represents a substantial level of explanatory power.

In addition, the effect size (f^2) results (Table 5) indicate that transformational leadership has a strong effect on QWL ($f^2 = 1.191$), while its effect on Pedagogic Competence is small ($f^2 = 0.055$). Meanwhile, QWL shows a small to moderate effect on Pedagogic Competence ($f^2 = 0.119$),

indicating its role as a mediating variable in the structural model. This value is in the strong category, indicating excellent explanatory power. The results of the effect size (f-square) analysis showed that the quality of work life had the most dominant contribution, $f^2 = 1.191$, followed by transformational leadership, $f^2 = 0.055$ (Table 5)

Table 4 R-Square Values

Variable	R-Square	R-Square Adjusted
Pedagogical Competence	0.660	0.653
Quality of Work Life (QWL)	0.544	0.540

Source: Smart PLS Output

Table 5 F-Squer Values

Variable	Pedagogic Competence	Quality of Work Life (QWL)
Transformational Leadership	0.055	1.191
Quality of Work Life (QWL)	0.119	

Source: Smart PLS Output

Overall, the results of the f^2 test show that the variable with the greatest contribution to the model is Transformational Leadership, particularly in influencing mediative variables such as quality of work life and work motivation. Meanwhile, the contribution of Pedagogic Competence was more evenly distributed between the two predictor variables, although it was in a small category. These findings suggest that improving pedagogic competence is not determined by a single aspect but results from a combination of leadership factors and work environment conditions.

Hypothesis Test

The hypothesis test in this study was carried out by looking at the P-value. The research hypothesis can be declared acceptable if the P-value < 0.05 . The following are the results of the hypothesis test of both direct and indirect relationships:

Table 6: Direct effect and Indirect effect

Hypothesis	Variable relationships	P Values	Remarks
1	Transformational Leadership) -> Pedagogic Competencies	0.015	Significant
2	Transformational Leadership) -> Quality of Work Life	0.000	Significant
3	Quality of Work Life - > Pedagogic Competencies	0.000	Significant
4	Transformational Leadership) -> Quality of Work Life -> Pedagogic Competencies	0.000	Significant

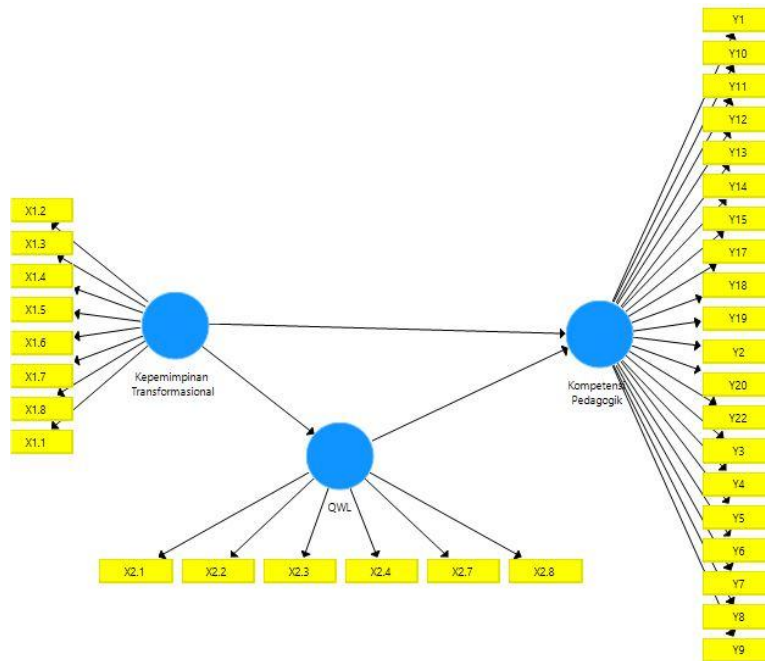
Source: Smart PLS Output Data Processing

Based on Table 4, Hypothesis 1 shows a P-Value of 0.015 (< 0.05). This value indicates that the transformational leadership dimension has a direct impact on teachers' pedagogic competence. Hypothesis 2 shows that the P-Value is 0.000 (< 0.05). This value indicates that the transformational leadership dimension has a direct impact on the quality of teachers' work life in

madrasah institutions. Madrasah heads who provide inspirational direction, empower teachers, and become moral role models tend to improve teachers' pedagogic competence.

Madrasah heads who create a safe, fair, and supportive work environment increase teacher welfare, motivation, and satisfaction, which ultimately have a positive impact on pedagogic competence. To provide a clearer picture of the model of the relationship between latent variables in each pathway in this study, it can be seen in the following visualisation of Figure 2:

Figure 2. Model PLS



Hypothesis Result

Hypothesis 1: Transformational Leadership Affects Pedagogic Competence

Based on Table 4, Hypothesis 1 shows a P-Value of 0.015 (< 0.05). This value indicates that the transformational leadership dimension has a direct impact on teachers' pedagogic competence. Thus, it can be concluded that transformational leadership supports the improvement of teachers' pedagogic competence in madrasahs.

Hypothesis 2: Transformational Leadership Affects QWL

Based on Table 4, Hypothesis 2 shows a P-Value of less than 0.05 ($p < 0.001$). This value indicates that the transformational leadership variable has a direct impact on the quality of teachers' work life in madrasah institutions. Thus, it can be concluded that transformational leadership encourages the quality of teachers' work life, which can improve their approach to learning, management, and program development in madrasah institutions.

Hypothesis 3: QWL Affects Pedagogic Competence

From Table 4, it can be seen that hypothesis 3 shows a P-Value of less than 0.05 ($p < 0.001$). This value indicates that the dimension of quality of work life has a direct impact on teachers' pedagogic competence. Thus, it can be concluded that a comfortable quality of teachers' work life supports teachers in developing their pedagogic competence.

Hypothesis 4: Transformational Leadership Affects Pedagogic Competence with QWL as a Mediator

Based on table 4 obtained from the *indirect effect* test, it can be seen that hypothesis 3 shows a P-Value of less than 0.05, which is $p < 0.001$. This figure shows that the transformational

leadership variable has an indirect influence on pedagogic competence through the quality of work life, meaning that the variable of the quality of work life acts as an intermediary in the relationship between the transformational leadership dimension and pedagogic competence. In addition to the indirect impact through the quality of work life, the transformational leadership dimension also has a direct impact on pedagogic competence, as evidenced by the data in Table 4. The table shows a P-Value of 0.015 (< 0.05). Based on this explanation, it can be concluded that the third hypothesis is accepted. The quality of work life plays a role as a partial mediator, because both the direct and indirect effects have significance values of less than 0.05 and have a positive effect on pedagogic competence.

DISCUSSION

Transformational Leadership Towards Pedagogic Competence

The findings of this study indicate that transformational leadership of madrasah heads has a positive and significant influence on teachers' pedagogical competence among Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) teachers in Malang Regency. This finding demonstrates that leadership practices characterised by inspirational motivation, idealised influence, intellectual stimulation, and individualised consideration contribute significantly to teachers' ability to plan, implement, and evaluate learning processes effectively. According to Bass and Avolio (1994) 'Transformational leadership is a leadership approach that enables leaders to influence followers by developing a shared vision, encouraging commitment, stimulating innovation, and providing individual support. In educational organisations, these leadership dimensions are important because teachers require continuous encouragement and professional support to improve their instructional practices and adapt to changing educational demands.

The positive relationship between transformational leadership and pedagogical competence can be explained through the mechanism of professional empowerment. Transformational leaders do not merely perform administrative functions but also create conditions that encourage teachers to engage in continuous learning, reflection, and instructional improvement. Leadership is fundamentally an influencing process that occurs through interaction between leaders and followers within a specific organisational context to achieve shared goals. (Walid, 2019). In educational institutions, effective leadership also involves empowering school communities, encouraging collaboration among teachers, and creating organisational conditions that support continuous improvement in educational quality. (Arif et al., 2025). In this study, the success of madrasah heads in strengthening teachers' pedagogical competence is reflected in their ability to create a learning-oriented organisational culture. (Bass and Riggio, 2006).

The findings also support previous research indicating that transformational leadership contributes to teacher professional development. Leithwood and Jantzi (2000) explained that transformational leadership influences school organisational conditions by strengthening collaboration, commitment, and teacher engagement. Similarly, Aziz et al found that transformational leadership plays an important role in improving institutional performance because leaders who provide direction, motivation, and support can encourage professional improvement among organisational members (Aziz et al, 2024). Furthermore, transformational leadership also encourages teachers' motivation to learn and their willingness to adopt innovative instructional practices. (Afsar et al., 2014). demonstrated that transformational leadership enhances innovative work behaviour through learning motivation and supportive organisational climates. These findings confirm that leadership effectiveness in educational institutions is closely related to

leaders' capacity to develop human resources, particularly teachers as the primary actors in the learning process. Contextually responsive leadership is required to address educational challenges. (Arismin et al., 2026).

In the context of Islamic educational institutions, transformational leadership must also be understood within specific organisational and cultural characteristics. This role becomes increasingly important in the era of educational digitalisation, where teachers are required to develop technological competence alongside pedagogical abilities. Kausar et al. (2025) explained that transformational leadership supports educational digital transformation by encouraging innovation, organisational adaptability, and teachers' readiness to respond to technological changes. Therefore, transformational leadership in madrasah institutions can facilitate teachers' pedagogical competence development, particularly in implementing technology-supported learning practices. Madrasah heads are expected not only to manage institutional resources but also to build an educational culture based on shared values, trust, and professional responsibility. (Hallinger, 2018).

Therefore, the findings reinforce the argument that transformational leadership is not only associated with improving organisational performance but also serves as a strategic approach for developing teachers' pedagogical competence in Islamic secondary education, thereby extending previous evidence reported. (Badar, 2025; Danasasmita, 2024). Furthermore, the findings extend previous studies by demonstrating that transformational leadership contributes specifically to pedagogical competence rather than only general teacher performance. While previous research has frequently examined leadership effects on motivation, commitment, or performance outcomes, this study highlights how leadership practices influence teachers' ability to manage learning processes. This contribution is important because pedagogical competence represents a fundamental dimension of teacher professionalism and directly influences educational quality. Consequently, strengthening transformational leadership practices among madrasah heads should become an important strategy for improving teacher competence and supporting sustainable educational development.

Transformational Leadership Towards QWL

The findings of this study indicate that transformational leadership of madrasah heads has a positive and significant influence on teachers' Quality of Work Life (QWL) among Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) teachers in Malang Regency. This result demonstrates that leadership practices based on inspirational motivation, individualised consideration, intellectual stimulation, and idealised influence contribute to the creation of a supportive workplace environment. Transformational leaders influence not only organisational performance but also teachers' psychological experiences, professional relationships, and perceptions of workplace quality. (Bass and Riggio, 2006). The relationship between transformational leadership and QWL can be explained through the role of leaders in shaping organisational climate and employee experiences. (Cascio, 2015).

The findings of this study support previous empirical research demonstrating that transformational leadership contributes to improved Quality of Work Life. (Nifasri, 2025) found that transformational leadership significantly influenced QWL among academic staff in higher education institutions. Effective communication and conflict management practices contribute to establishing inclusive educational environments where teachers feel respected and supported. (Anwar et al., 2025). Similarly, collaborative professional practices that encourage reflection and

continuous improvement can strengthen teachers' involvement and sense of belonging within the organisation. (Sriyanto et al., 2025). These organisational conditions represent important elements of QWL because they influence teachers' psychological comfort, professional motivation, and commitment.

The findings also reinforce the perspective that QWL is a multidimensional concept involving psychological, social, and organisational aspects of work. (Sirgy et al, 2001). In educational settings, teachers who experience supportive leadership, professional recognition, and development opportunities are more likely to demonstrate stronger commitment and engagement. In addition, the relationship between transformational leadership and QWL can be understood from a human resource management perspective. (Cascio and Aguinis, 2019) emphasise that effective organisational management requires attention not only to productivity but also to employee development and well-being. In the context of education, improving teachers' quality of work life represents a strategic investment because teachers' professional performance is closely related to their psychological and organisational experiences. (Cascio, 2015).

Therefore, leadership practices that prioritise support, participation, and professional development are essential for maintaining teacher effectiveness. Overall, the results of this study demonstrate that transformational leadership functions as an important organisational mechanism for improving teachers' Quality of Work Life. In the context of MAN Malang Regency, transformational leadership contributes to creating a workplace environment characterised by trust, collaboration, professional support, and psychological well-being. These findings suggest that madrasah heads should not only focus on administrative achievement but also develop leadership practices that enhance teachers' workplace experiences. By strengthening QWL through transformational leadership, madrasah institutions can create sustainable conditions that support teacher professionalism and improve educational quality.

Quality of Work Life (QWL) on Pedagogic Competence

This finding demonstrates that teachers' professional competence is not only determined by individual knowledge, skills, and training experiences but is also influenced by the organisational conditions in which teachers perform their professional responsibilities. (Cascio, 2015). In educational institutions, these aspects become essential because teachers require a supportive environment to continuously improve lesson planning, instructional implementation, assessment practices, and learning innovation. (Walton, 1973). When teachers perceive that their institution provides fair treatment, professional recognition, and development opportunities, they are more likely to demonstrate commitment toward improving their teaching practices. This argument is supported. (Fatin Amirah Abdul Malik et al., 2023).

Furthermore, the influence of QWL on teachers' pedagogical competence can also be understood from the perspective of work motivation theory. Herzberg's two-factor theory explains that workplace conditions, organisational policies, supervision, and interpersonal relationships influence employees' motivation and satisfaction. (Herzberg, 1966). The findings also reinforce this perspective. (Cascio, 2015) perspective that Quality of Work Life is closely associated with productivity, organisational effectiveness, and sustainable performance. Teachers with high levels of QWL tend to demonstrate stronger professional engagement because they experience psychological comfort, social support, and opportunities to develop their capabilities. Previous studies have shown that supportive workplace conditions encourage teachers to

demonstrate innovative work behaviour, which contributes to the development of creative learning practices and adaptation to educational change. (Hasanati et al., 2025).

The relationship between QWL and pedagogical competence is also supported by research regarding the influence of workload, psychological conditions, and workplace support on professional effectiveness. (Mukhlis et al, 2024) highlighted that work stress, workload, work-life balance, and coworker support are important factors affecting individuals' quality of life. In the context of madrasah education, teachers often face multiple responsibilities, including classroom instruction, administrative duties, student guidance, and institutional activities. (Cascio, 2015). Conversely, a balanced and supportive work environment enables teachers to maintain professional commitment and focus on improving learning quality. These findings are also consistent with previous empirical research showing that QWL contributes significantly to individual performance. (Puspitasari et al, 2024) demonstrated that quality of work life, organisational culture, and workload influence teacher performance because favourable working conditions enable employees to achieve organisational objectives more effectively.

The findings further indicate that improving teachers' pedagogical competence requires a systemic approach that combines professional development initiatives with improvements in workplace conditions. Teacher competency development should not be limited to training programs or technical instructional workshops but should also consider organisational factors that influence teachers' motivation and professional sustainability. In the context of Islamic educational institutions, such as Madrasah Aliyah, creating a supportive quality of work life is particularly important because teachers are expected to integrate academic achievement with religious and character education objectives. Consequently, madrasah leaders and educational policymakers should strengthen QWL dimensions, including psychological support, professional development opportunities, participation in institutional decisions, fairness, and work-life balance, as strategic foundations for sustainable teacher professional development.

Quality of Work Life (QWL) as a Mediator of Transformational Leadership and Pedagogic Competence

The mediation analysis confirms that transformational leadership influences pedagogical competence not only through direct mechanisms but also indirectly by creating supportive workplace conditions. Transformational leaders who provide inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individual consideration, and a shared vision can improve teachers' perceptions of their workplace quality, which subsequently encourages teachers to strengthen their pedagogical practices. (Avolio & Bass, 2004). The mediating role of QWL provides a deeper explanation regarding the mechanism through which transformational leadership contributes to teacher competence development. (Fatin Amirah Abdul Malik et al, 2023). Transformational leadership theory emphasises that leaders influence followers by developing commitment, encouraging innovation, and stimulating personal development beyond basic job requirements. (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

The findings also strengthen previous studies regarding the relationship between transformational leadership and positive employee experiences. Transformational leaders contribute to the development of supportive organisational climates by encouraging collaboration, building trust, and recognising individual contributions. (Bass & Riggio, 2006). In educational settings, these leadership characteristics are reflected in madrasah heads' ability to create an environment where teachers feel valued, supported, and motivated to improve their professional

competencies. (Wiranata, 2024). Previous research has shown that transformational leadership contributes to organisational effectiveness because leaders who promote shared vision and professional learning can encourage employees to engage in continuous improvement. (Aziz et al., 2024). Therefore, the present finding extends previous research by demonstrating that QWL represents an important pathway through which transformational leadership influences teachers' pedagogical competence.

The mediating effect of QWL can also be explained from the perspective of human resource management. (Cascio, 2015) QWL represents employees' perceptions of workplace conditions that support satisfaction, involvement, welfare, and sustainable productivity. In contrast, the indirect relationship demonstrates the importance of organisational conditions that support teachers' professional activities. The use of SEM-PLS analysis strengthens this interpretation because mediation effects can be evaluated through indirect effect testing and bootstrapping procedures. (Hair et al., 2021). Effective madrasah leadership requires trustworthiness, collaboration, and commitment to institutional improvement. Previous research has highlighted that strategic leadership practices in Islamic educational institutions contribute to strengthening organisational management, improving communication, and supporting sustainable institutional development. (Atho'illah et al., 2025).

Similarly, conflict management and collaborative leadership practices contribute to creating harmonious educational environments that support teacher development. (Anwar et al., 2025). These organisational conditions represent important components of QWL that enable teachers to improve their professional capabilities. Previous studies have frequently examined the relationship between leadership style and teacher performance; however, limited studies have investigated QWL as a mediating mechanism linking transformational leadership with pedagogical competence, particularly in the context of Islamic secondary education. (Hair et al., 2021). This study contributes by demonstrating that leadership influence occurs through both psychological and organisational processes. Teachers who experience supportive leadership, positive workplace relationships, professional development opportunities, and balanced working conditions are more prepared to improve their pedagogical abilities. (Cascio, 2015).

Theoretically, this study contributes to the integration of transformational leadership theory, Quality of Work Life theory, and teacher competency development perspectives into a comprehensive explanatory model. The findings demonstrate that improving teacher pedagogical competence requires more than individual competency improvement programs; it also requires organisational strategies that create supportive and meaningful work experiences. (Wiranata, 2024). Practically, the results suggest that madrasah leaders should strengthen transformational leadership practices while simultaneously improving QWL dimensions, including participation, professional development, psychological support, and work-life balance. Through this integrated approach, madrasah institutions can establish sustainable teacher professionalism and improve the overall quality of education.

CONCLUSION

The findings indicate that madrasah heads who implement transformational leadership practices through idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualised consideration can encourage teachers to improve their professional abilities in managing learning processes. Transformational leadership contributes to creating a supportive organisational climate that motivates teachers to develop instructional skills, reflect on teaching

practices, and improve the quality of classroom management. Furthermore, this study confirms that teachers' pedagogical competence is not only determined by individual knowledge and teaching experience but is also shaped by leadership practices and organisational support. The role of madrasah heads as educational leaders is therefore essential in building a culture of continuous professional development. In addition, this study demonstrates that Quality of Work Life (QWL) has a significant role in strengthening teachers' pedagogical competence and functions as a mediating variable in the relationship between transformational leadership and pedagogical competence. These findings show that leadership effectiveness becomes stronger when accompanied by a positive work environment that supports teachers' psychological well-being, professional growth, participation, and work-life balance.

Theoretically, this study contributes to educational leadership and teacher professional development literature by explaining the mechanism through which transformational leadership influences pedagogical competence through Quality of Work Life. Practically, the results suggest that madrasah institutions should not only focus on improving teachers' pedagogical skills through training and professional development programs but also strengthen leadership practices and workplace conditions that support sustainable teacher performance. Madrasah heads are encouraged to develop inspirational leadership, provide opportunities for teacher participation, establish supportive communication, and create a fair and conducive working environment. However, this study is limited by its focus on teachers in MAN institutions within Malang Regency and the use of a quantitative cross-sectional approach. Therefore, future studies are recommended to involve broader educational contexts, apply longitudinal research designs, and examine other organisational and psychological factors that may contribute to the improvement of teachers' pedagogical competence.

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