

## IMPLEMENTATION OF SMART SCHOOL IN IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION MANAGEMENT IN MADRASAH IBTIDAIYAH IN PRINGSEWU LAMPUNG REGENCY

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**ABSTRACT:** This study explores the implementation of the smart school concept as a strategic effort to enhance the quality of Islamic education management in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) across Pringsewu Regency. The advancement of information and communication technology (ICT) presents significant opportunities to strengthen educational governance; however, its adoption in MI remains constrained by infrastructure limitations, insufficient digital literacy among educators, and inconsistent internet connectivity. Employing a qualitative research design, data were collected through observations, in-depth interviews, and document analysis across five MI institutions with varying levels of smart school implementation. The findings indicate that madrasahs with adequate technological infrastructure and regular digital training have successfully integrated smart school practices, resulting in improved administrative efficiency, enhanced internal communication, higher-quality digital-based learning, and the integration of Islamic values into educational activities. In contrast, madrasahs with limited facilities face significant challenges in adopting and sustaining digital systems. These disparities highlight the need for sustained, system-wide support. The study concludes that an inclusive and sustainable implementation of smart schools in Pringsewu's MI sector requires comprehensive policies focused on infrastructure development, digital capacity-building for educators, and the development of culturally relevant digital learning materials rooted in Islamic principles.

**Keywords:** Digitalisation; Infrastructure; Islamic Education Management; Madrasah Ibtidaiyah; Smart School.

### INTRODUCTION

Education serves as the foundation for national development and the cultivation of high-quality human resources (Sarno & Endriyanto, 2024). In today's globalized world, which is characterized by rapid change and dynamic challenges, education must go beyond the mere transfer of knowledge; it should also equip students with the skills necessary to navigate and adapt to modern challenges. High-quality education is therefore essential for any nation striving to progress and remain competitive (Dhuha, 2023).

Quality management, in general, refers to a set of processes, policies, and practices designed to help an organization consistently and sustainably achieve its goals. In the education sector, quality management encompasses integrated processes of planning, organizing, implementing, and monitoring aimed at improving educational outcomes (Tanjung et al., 2022). With effective quality management, educational institutions can optimize resources, enhance the learning process, and ultimately raise student achievement. This concept is increasingly relevant in the modern era, which demands continuous improvement and adaptation to

technological advances and evolving societal needs (Sofiana et al., 2025).

In the context of Islamic education, quality management holds a vital and specific role. Islamic education not only focuses on academic success but also emphasizes spiritual, moral, and character development in accordance with Islamic teachings (Sizka & Arifin, 2023). Consequently, quality management in Islamic education must balance academic and religious dimensions to produce graduates who are intellectually capable and possess strong Islamic character. It includes systems that assess and evaluate educational performance in areas such as curriculum, teaching methods, educator competencies, and the learning environment. Through sound quality management, Islamic educational institutions can contribute positively to shaping a faithful, pious, and open-minded generation (Anggraini et al., 2023).

The rapid development of information and communication technology (ICT) has created new opportunities for improving educational quality management. One such development is the concept of the smart school—a school that utilizes digital technology to optimize both teaching and educational administration (Riyyan et al., 2021). A smart school is not merely defined by the use of devices in classrooms, but by its integrated system that enhances the efficiency, effectiveness, and quality of educational services through technology (Widadi et al., 2025). In smart schools, digital tools support various functions, from administration and evaluation to teacher-student-parent interaction. This digital approach fosters greater transparency, faster decision-making, and higher levels of

stakeholder engagement (Hasanah & Supriyanto, 2023).

Implementing smart schools is increasingly essential in today's digital era, as they help address the diverse and evolving needs of learners (Noviyanti, 2023). Schools that adopt this model offer engaging and interactive learning environments through platforms such as e-learning systems and educational applications that can be accessed anytime and anywhere. Furthermore, smart schools prioritize 21st-century competencies—including critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and digital literacy—which are vital for success in the modern workforce. As such, smart schools not only enhance academic outcomes but also prepare students to become adaptive and innovative individuals (Tanjung et al., 2022).

There is a significant opportunity to modernize Islamic education management through smart school implementation while preserving core Islamic values (Annisa et al., 2021). Integrating digital technology with Islamic education principles can lead to the development of high-quality, transparent, and accountable institutions (Wahyudin et al., 2023). This approach aligns with the growing societal demand for education that nurtures both cognitive development and moral character. Therefore, advancing the smart school model in Islamic educational settings is both relevant and strategic for improving overall educational quality (Minanda, 2023b).

Enhancing education quality through strong management and technological integration, as exemplified by smart schools, is a concrete step toward realizing the vision of a superior and globally competitive educational system (Karamy, 2021). Well-managed and technology-supported

education will produce a generation capable of meeting modern challenges with knowledge, character, and relevant skills. Consequently, education stakeholders must continue to innovate and improve quality management systems, including the development of smart schools, to effectively achieve national education goals (Minanda, 2023).

This study aims to analyze the implementation of smart schools in improving the quality of Islamic education management in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah across Pringsewu Regency. It highlights the strategies, approaches, achievements, and ongoing challenges associated with this process. The primary focus is on how information technology can enhance managerial aspects such as planning, organizing, executing, and evaluating educational activities. Additionally, the study seeks to provide practical recommendations for policymakers at the madrasah, local government, and Ministry of Religious Affairs levels to support sustainable and comprehensive digital transformation in madrasahs.

A review of existing literature reveals a significant research gap. Most prior studies have concentrated on smart school implementation in general education settings, particularly junior and senior high schools. In contrast, there is limited research on how smart schools are applied in basic Islamic education institutions like Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, especially in infrastructure-constrained areas such as Pringsewu Regency. Furthermore, some literature focuses solely on technological aspects, neglecting the management dimensions of Islamic education. This gap opens the door for research that is not only technical but also philosophical and strategic in

addressing digitalization's role in enhancing Islamic education quality.

For instance, the study by Merri Parida and Ahmad Basori Ali (2020) titled "Application of the Extreme Programming Smartschool Method at SMK Nusantara 1 Kotabumi" primarily explores technological innovations—specifically the development of an online learning system to facilitate continuous interaction between teachers and students and to expedite information delivery. In contrast, this current study specifically examines smart school implementation in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, providing a more focused analysis of the intersection between technology and Islamic education management.

The urgency of this study lies in the reality that digital transformation is no longer optional but essential for educational institutions, including madrasahs. Without adapting to digital trends, madrasahs risk being left behind and losing their relevance in shaping a competent Islamic generation in the global era. Therefore, a systematic effort is required to transform madrasahs into adaptive, resilient, and technologically literate institutions. This urgency is also underscored by Indonesia's national education vision, which identifies education digitalization as a central pillar in reforming the education system under Society 5.0—where technology becomes the foundation, not just a complement, in educational processes.

The novelty of this study lies in its holistic and contextual approach. It views digitalization not merely as a technological upgrade but as an integral part of improving Islamic education management, encompassing organizational culture, leadership, data-driven governance, and the reinforcement of Islamic values in digital

ecosystems. Additionally, this study focuses on the specific context of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah in Pringsewu—a semi-urban area with diverse levels of digital readiness. Through a descriptive-analytical case study approach, this research aims to present a comprehensive smart school implementation model tailored to improving the quality of Islamic education management in this unique setting.

## METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach using an exploratory descriptive method to gain an in-depth understanding of smart school implementation in improving the quality of Islamic education management in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah across Pringsewu Regency. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and documentation of managerial activities and learning processes that integrate technology. A total of 15 respondents participated in the study, comprising 5 madrasah heads, 5 subject teachers, and 5 administrative staff from five different MI institutions, selected purposively based on their level of digital readiness and involvement in the smart school program. Data analysis was conducted interactively through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. To

ensure the credibility of the findings, data validity was reinforced using source triangulation and member check techniques, thereby enhancing the accuracy of the information and the reliability of the interpretations.

## RESULTS

This research generally aims to explore the extent to which *smart school* implementation contributes to improving the quality of Islamic education management in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah in Pringsewu. The main focus of this study lies in understanding the digitalisation strategy implemented, the readiness of human resources, and its impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of madrasah governance. The research involved five madrasahs with varying levels of technology adoption, in order to obtain data that is representative of the reality of the field. Using qualitative methods, this research seeks to explore in depth the experiences, perceptions and practices of educational actors in the MI environment in responding to *smart school-based* digital transformation. Through this approach, it is expected to formulate an Islamic education management model that is not only technology-based, but also contextual and Islamic.

Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents

No	Respondent's initials	Position	Institution	Age (Year)	Length of Service (Years)	Education Level
1	R1	Head of Madrasah	MI Nurul Iman Wargamulya	48	20	S2
2	R2	Teacher	MI Nurul Iman Wargamulya	35	10	S1
3	R3	Administrative Staff	MI Nurul Iman Wargamulya	40	12	D3
4	R4	Head of Madrasah	MI Mathlaul Anwar	50	22	S2
5	R5	Teacher	MI Mathlaul Anwar	32	8	S1
6	R6	Administrative	MI Mathlaul	38	9	D3

7	R7	Staff Head of Madrasah	Anwar MI Raden Intan Gadingrejo	45	18	S2
8	R8	Teacher	MI Raden Intan Gadingrejo	30	6	S1
9	R9	Administrative Staff	MI Raden Intan Gadingrejo	36	7	D3
10	R10	Head of Madrasah	MI Nurul Falah Al- Amien	47	19	S2
11	R11	Teacher	MI Nurul Falah Al- Amien	34	9	S1
12	R12	Administrative Staff	MI Nurul Falah Al- Amien	42	11	D3
13	R13	Head of Madrasah	MI YASMIDA	49	21	S2
14	R14	Teacher	MI YASMIDA	33	7	S1
15	R15	Administrative Staff	MI YASMIDA	39	10	D3

The characteristics of the respondents show that the five selected madrasahs MI Nurul Iman Wargamulya, MI Mathlul Anwar, MI Raden Intan Gadingrejo, MI Nurul Falah Al-Amien, and MI YASMIDA have relatively experienced and well-educated human resource profiles. The madrasah heads all have master's degrees and have more than 18 years of service, which shows competence in leadership and management of the institution. The teachers have a bachelor's degree with a length of service of between 6 and 10 years,

indicating an adequate level of professional maturity in carrying out the learning process, including adaptation to technology-based learning. The administrative staff involved in this study are mostly D3 educated and have worked between 7 and 12 years, indicating sufficient administrative experience in managing school information systems. This profile shows a relatively good readiness in implementing the *smart school* concept, both in terms of structure, qualifications and work experience of the education actors in madrasah.

Table 2: Observation results of smart school implementation

No	Madrasah Name	ICT Infrastructure Availability	Use of E-Learning	Administration Digitalisation	Teacher ICT Training	Implementation Category
1	MI Nurul Iman Wargamulya	Enough	Limited	Partial	Ever	Low
2	MI Mathlul Anwar	Good	Medium	Mostly	Routine	Medium
3	MI Raden Intan Gadingrejo	Good	Good	Complete	Routine	High
4	MI Nurul Falah Al-Amien	Enough	Limited	Partial	Never	Low
5	MI YASMIDA	Very good	Good	Complete	Routine	High

The observation results show that the implementation of *smart school* in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah throughout Pringsewu still varies, depending on the readiness of

infrastructure and human resource capacity. Two madrasahs, MI Raden Intan Gadingrejo and MI YASMIDA, are in the *high* implementation category because they have



good to excellent ICT infrastructure support, active use of *e-learning*, comprehensive digitalisation of administration, and regular ICT training for teachers. In contrast, MI Nurul Iman Wargamulya and MI Nurul Falah Al-Amien are still in the *low* category, due to the limited use of *e-learning*, lack of training, and infrastructure that is only partially adequate. Meanwhile, MI Mathlaul

Anwar occupies an intermediate position with quite good achievements in all aspects although not yet optimal. This shows that the success of *smart school* implementation does not only depend on the availability of technology, but also on the commitment of madrasah managers in building a sustainable digital culture.

Table 3. Interview Results of Smart School Implementation

No	Respondent	Key Findings	Key Challenges	Respondents' Expectations
1	Head of MI Nurul Iman Wargamulya	Implementation is still early, only digitising attendance and schedules	Lack of training and facilities	Budget support and regular training
2	MI Mathlaul Anwar teacher	Already used to using <i>e-learning</i> for student assignments	Internet network is often unstable	Smooth internet access and Islamic digital content
3	Admin of MI Raden Intan Gadingrejo	Student and teacher data is fully digitalised	Limited device <i>maintenance</i>	Addition of devices and IT specialised human resources
4	Head of MI Nurul Falah Al-Amien	Not yet optimal, only internal socialisation stage	Low digital literacy of teachers	Intensive assistance from outside parties
5	MI YASMIDA teachers	Actively use digital classroom applications and <i>online assessments</i>	Lack of training for senior teachers	Regular coaching and digital curriculum integration

Interviews with various parties show that *smart school* implementation has complex dynamics, influenced by technological readiness, digital literacy, as well as internal madrasah policy support. Madrasah heads generally recognise the importance of digital transformation, but some are still constrained by budget and resource capacity. Younger teachers tend to be enthusiastic about using *e-learning* and digital learning applications, while senior teachers need additional training. In terms of administration, madrasahs that have digitalised their data show efficiency, but also face technical challenges such as device maintenance and shortage of IT personnel. In general, all respondents have the same expectations: the need for continuous

training, improved facilities, and integration of Islamic values in digital content so that *smart schools* are not only technologically modern, but also spiritually and pedagogically strong.

## DISCUSSION

### Implementation of Smart School in Improving the Efficiency of Islamic Education Management in Madrasahs in Pringsewu

The implementation of the smart school concept in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) across Pringsewu demonstrates varying dynamics depending on each institution's infrastructure readiness, the competence of human resources, and internal policy support. Based on observations, two madrasahs MI YASMIDA and MI Raden

Intan Gadingrejo—have achieved a high level of implementation, supported by sufficient ICT infrastructure, active use of e-learning platforms, and comprehensive administrative digitalization. Their integration of systems such as digital attendance, online grading, and cloud-based archiving exemplifies tangible improvements in madrasah governance. An administrative staff member at MI Raden Intan Gadingrejo stated, “We now manage all teacher and student data digitally. We also archive incoming and outgoing correspondence through a system directly connected to the madrasah server” (27 May 2025, 10:15 WIB). This is in line with Hasanah and Supriyaanto's opinion that in *smart schools*, education management is carried out digitally, from administration, evaluation, supervision, to interaction between teachers, students and parents. This allows for greater transparency, faster decision-making and increased participation of all parties involved in the education process. (Hasanah & Supriyanto, 2023)

Meanwhile, MI Mathlul Anwar demonstrates moderate progress, with substantial administrative digitization and routine use of e-learning by teachers. However, this institution still faces challenges such as unstable internet connections and insufficient equipment. One teacher remarked, “We are accustomed to using e-learning for daily assignments, but sometimes the internet prevents students from accessing the platform on time” (27 May 2025, 13:40 WIB). This highlights that even when a digital culture begins to form, technical limitations can hinder the full optimization of smart school implementation.

In contrast, MI Nurul Iman Wargamulya and MI Nurul Falah Al-Amien

remain at the early stages of implementation. Observations indicate that their use of digital systems is limited to basic applications such as Excel for grade processing and attendance records. The head of MI Nurul Iman Wargamulya explained, “We have just begun recording attendance and grades using a simple application. We still need substantial training and equipment support from the government” (28 May 2025, 08:00 WIB). The absence of regular training and limited infrastructure remains a primary obstacle to comprehensive smart school-based management.

In Islamic education, digital-based management not only increases administrative efficiency but also supports learning processes that integrate Islamic values with technology. At MI YASMIDA, for instance, digital PAI curriculum tools, online tahfidz applications, and digital religious activity management have been successfully implemented. A teacher shared, “We use web-based applications for PAI learning, including video lectures and interactive quizzes. The students are very engaged because the visuals are appealing and the content is Islamic” (28 May 2025, 10:30 WIB). According to Tanjung et al. (2022), quality educational management includes integrated planning, organizing, implementation, and monitoring to improve educational outcomes.

The implementation of *smart school* also has a direct impact on communication between madrasah stakeholders. The existence of homeroom teacher WA groups, online information platforms for student guardians, and grade notification systems via SMS/WA make information management more effective. The head of MI Raden Intan Gadingrejo stated, “We inform grades, absences, and school agendas

*directly to student guardians through the system. This speeds up the communication process and school transparency"* (27 May 2025, 11.20 WIB).

However, a common challenge that arises in almost all madrasahs is the limited number of human resources with digital technical skills and the need for continuous training. The head of MI Nurul Falah Al-Amien revealed, *"Our teachers do not all understand how to use educational technology. We need assistance from outside parties so that this transition can run smoothly"* (28 May 2025, 09.45 WIB). This confirms that the *smart school* implementation strategy must include training and capacity building aspects as a whole, not just the provision of devices.

Research by Anggraini, Saâ, and Hakim (2023) shows that the successful implementation of differentiated learning in *smart school-based* schools is strongly influenced by infrastructure readiness and teacher competence. This is in line with the findings in MI se-Pringsewu, where the readiness of human resources and ICT facilities are key factors in the success rate of smart school implementation. Their study confirms that continuous training and technical support are key needs for teachers to be able to integrate technology optimally in learning and administrative management. Dhuha (2023) revealed that technical constraints such as internet network stability and device availability are significant challenges in the implementation of smart school in SMP Brawijaya Smart School Malang. These findings parallel the conditions at MI Mathlaul Anwar and several other MIs in Pringsewu, which still face infrastructure and technology access barriers, thus affecting the smooth digitalisation of education management.

This research confirms the importance of continuous investment in infrastructure to support the development of digital schools.

In addition, Farwati and Arifin (2023) highlighted the importance of effective digital school management, particularly in the smart classroom programme. They emphasise that technology implementation is not enough with the provision of devices, but must be accompanied by mature management policies and strategies so that smart schools can function as a sustainable educational ecosystem. This is relevant to the findings in Pringsewu madrasahs, which require support policies and HR training to ensure the success of digital transformation. The implementation of *smart schools* is a must in today's digital era, especially to answer the increasingly dynamic and diverse needs of learners." (Noviyanti, 2023)

### **The Role of Digitalisation in Improving the Quality of Learning and Islamic Education Services**

Digitalisation, as the core element of the smart school concept, plays a significant role in transforming both the quality of learning and the services provided in Islamic educational institutions. Based on field findings, MI YASMIDA illustrates how digital implementation can enhance learning interactions. Teachers are accustomed to using platforms such as Google Classroom, Quizizz, and other interactive media to deliver materials and assess students. One teacher noted, "Students are more active and less bored. PAI materials that were previously only delivered orally can now be visualized through videos and animations, making them easier to understand and more engaging" (28 May 2025, 11:15 WIB).



In addition to improving the learning experience, digitalisation also enhances educational services such as online tuition payments, digital library management, and monitoring student progress via a parent portal. An administrative staff member at MI Mathlul Anwar stated, "We have started using digital applications for the library and guest log. This makes it easier to track data and reduces manual workload" (27 May 2025, 14:20 WIB). These improvements in efficiency contribute to greater accuracy and responsiveness in services provided to both students and parents.

However, the digital transformation process in Islamic education also presents ethical and pedagogical challenges. A teacher from MI Nurul Iman Wargamulya shared concerns, stating, "We worry that unsupervised use of technology may affect students' manners. That's why we always supervise mobile phone usage and ensure that digital materials align with Islamic values" (28 May 2025, 08:30 WIB). This highlights the importance of aligning technological advancement with moral and spiritual guidance so that madrasahs continue to serve not only as centers of learning but also as moral strongholds.

One of the solutions implemented at MI Raden Intan Gadingrejo is the use of Islamic filter-based *software* and the creation of local digital content by teachers. Teachers are involved in designing short dakwah videos, interactive PAI quiz content, and digital learning modules developed according to the local needs of the madrasah. The madrasah head said, "*We not only consume technology, but also produce content. This makes us more independent and in accordance with the*

*character of the madrasah*" (27 May 2025, 12.10 pm).

From a psychological perspective, the use of *smart school* also increases students' enthusiasm for learning, especially because learning media become more varied and interesting. A teacher from MI YASMIDA stated, "*Children are more enthusiastic about learning, especially when the exam is online-based with a direct score system. They feel like playing a game, but while learning*" (28 May 2025, at 10.45 WIB). This phenomenon supports constructivism theory, where students learn through active engagement and meaningful experiences. However, not all students have equal access to devices and the internet. In some madrasahs such as MI Nurul Falah Al-Amien, economic limitations become an obstacle. The teacher said, "*Not all students have mobile phones or internet access at home. So we still provide printed worksheets for students who have difficulties*" (28 May 2025, 09.00 WIB). This shows that the implementation of technology must be accompanied by inclusive policies so as not to create new gaps in education.

Hanipudin and Endriyanto in their research revealed that quality management in madrasahs, especially those with tahfidz programmes, is greatly helped by the implementation of digital technology. They emphasise that digitalisation of learning can improve the quality of interaction between teachers and students while maintaining Islamic values in the learning process. This finding is in line with the practice at MI YASMIDA, which uses Islamic digital content to enrich interactive PAI learning. (Sarno & Endriyanto, 2024) Hasanah and Supriyanto (2023) examined the innovation strategy of madrasah principals in building a *smart learning* ecosystem that unites

technology with Islamic values. They found that visionary and innovative leadership determines the success of smart school implementation, especially in maintaining a balance between technological advances and students' Islamic character. (Hasanah & Supriyanto, 2023) This is in accordance with the interviews at MI Nurul Iman Wargamulya, which highlighted the need for assistance and supervision so that technology does not reduce students' manners and moral values. Riyan explained that *smart school* is effective as an information tool that strengthens communication between schools, students, and guardians. Their study also highlighted the importance of local and Islamic content in developing digital learning media. This approach is seen in MI Raden Intan Gadingrejo, which not only consumes technology, but also produces da'wah content and digital learning modules that fit the character of the madrasah. This research reinforces the importance of teacher involvement in developing relevant and meaningful digital content. (Riyyan et al., 2021)

Digitalisation through *smart schools* has a significant positive impact on improving the quality of learning and management of Islamic education in madrasah, as long as it is supported by infrastructure readiness, qualified human resources, and a commitment to maintaining Islamic values in every aspect of its implementation. Therefore, the local government, Ministry of Religious Affairs and related parties need to provide systemic support that includes financing, training and technical assistance so that all madrasahs in Pringsewu are able to move towards digital transformation that is equitable and highly competitive.

## CONCLUSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that the implementation of smart schools in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah across Pringsewu has significantly contributed to improving the quality of Islamic education management, particularly in institutions with adequate ICT infrastructure and regular teacher training. However, disparities in facilities, digital literacy, and internet accessibility remain considerable challenges. These gaps underscore the urgent need for continuous and equitable support to ensure sustainable digital transformation across all MI institutions. Therefore, collaboration among government agencies, educational institutions, and the community is essential to provide equal access to infrastructure, expand technology-based training programs, and develop digital learning content rooted in Islamic values. Such comprehensive efforts will help ensure that smart school implementation in madrasahs is not only technologically effective but also inclusive and aligned with the spiritual and educational goals of Islamic education.

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