



The Leadership Role of the International Class Program (ICP) Coordinator in Building a Productive Academic Culture

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Abstract. *This study aims to analyze the leadership role of the International Class Program (ICP) coordinator in fostering a productive academic culture at Madrasah Aliyah (MA) Hasan Jufri Lebak Sangkapura Gresik. Specifically, this study explores the leadership role of ICP coordinators, the challenges they face, and the impact of this leadership on student academic achievement. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design, and data is collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and document studies. Key informants include principals, vice principals, ICP coordinators, teachers, and students. Data analysis uses thematic methods to identify the main patterns and themes. The study's findings show that ICP coordinators actively facilitate teacher collaboration, create a supportive learning environment, and conduct regular evaluations to improve teaching methods. The coordinator also organizes an additional mentoring program that enhances students' understanding of the international curriculum, resulting in a 3.6% increase in students' final exam scores over the past two years. The main challenges in implementing ICP include limited technological resources and the need for teacher training in delivering the international curriculum. This study concludes that the transformational leadership of ICP coordinators is crucial in shaping an academic culture that supports student achievement. This research provides practical insights for educational institutions in optimizing the role of special program coordinators to build a productive academic culture.*

Keywords: Leadership, Academic, ICP, Challenges

1. INTRODUCTION

Education leadership has a significant role in determining the direction and success of an educational institution. At Madrasah Aliyah Hasan Jufri Lebak Sangkapura Gresik, the International Class Program (ICP) program has been implemented to improve the quality of education and student achievement. The program requires practical leadership support from the ICP coordinator to build a productive academic culture. A good academic culture in schools will create a conducive learning environment, support intellectual development, and motivate students to achieve their best achievements. However, building and maintaining a productive academic culture requires a planned and directed leadership strategy.

Although the ICP program at MA Hasan Jufri Lebak Sangkapura Gresik has been running for several years, the challenges in building a consistent academic culture are still felt. This can be seen from the fluctuations in the achievement of students who participate in the program, which shows that there is still room for improvement in the managerial and leadership aspects. Therefore, the role of ICP coordinators in creating a productive academic culture is significant and needs to be identified and analyzed to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of the program.

This study aims to analyze the leadership role of ICP coordinators in building and maintaining a productive academic culture at MA Hasan Jufri Lebak Sangkapura Gresik. In

addition, this study also aims to identify the challenges ICP coordinators face in building a productive academic culture. Furthermore, this study will evaluate the strategies used by ICP coordinators to improve academic culture and their impact on student achievement at MA Hasan Jufri Lebak Sangkapura Gresik. This introduction is expected to provide a comprehensive initial understanding of the importance of the role of ICP coordinators in creating a productive academic culture, as well as provide insight into the challenges and strategies that need to be considered to improve student achievement at Madrasah Aliyah Hasan Jufri Lebak Sangkapura Gresik.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Educational leadership is the ability to influence, inspire, and motivate members of an organization to achieve a common goal. Transformational leadership that can inspire and motivate is one of the effective models in education (Armiyanti et al., 2023). Meanwhile, academic culture refers to all school members' norms, values, and habits, including work ethic, attitudes towards learning, and collaboration in educational activities (Carso, 2021). Several studies show that effective leaders are essential in building a healthy academic culture by providing clear direction, encouraging active participation, and providing the support teachers and students need (Efendi & Sholeh, 2023).

Several previous studies have highlighted the importance of leadership in building a productive academic culture. For example, research by Hallinger & Heck shows that effective principals can improve students' academic performance by developing a strong academic culture (Manalu & Kristianingsih, 2024). Other research by Leithwood & Mascall identified that leadership focusing on teacher professional development and student collaboration can create a more productive learning environment (Leithwood et al., 2020; Shen et al., 2020). Although many studies have examined leadership in schools, especially the role of school principals, few focus on special program coordinators, such as ICP, in building academic culture. It is essential to understand how the ICP coordinator at MA Hasan Jufri Lebak Sangkapura Gresik applies leadership to create an environment that supports student achievement.

Previous research has discussed chiefly the role of school principals or teachers in building academic culture. However, few studies have examined the role of program coordinators, such as ICPs, in managing educational culture in schools. This is important because the program coordinator has a unique responsibility to ensure the success of a specific program that requires a different managerial approach than the principal or teacher.

3. METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach to deeply understand the leadership role of ICP coordinators in building a productive academic culture at MA Hasan Jufri Lebak Sangkapura Gresik. The qualitative approach was chosen because this research focuses on understanding social phenomena by interpreting the behaviours, interactions, and perspectives of various parties involved in implementing the ICP program. This approach allows researchers to dig into rich and in-depth information about leadership practices, challenges faced, and strategies implemented by ICP coordinators.

This study uses a case study design to explore and understand certain phenomena in a specific context, namely the leadership role of the ICP coordinator at MA Hasan Jufri Lebak Sangkapura Gresik. The case study design allows researchers to explore various aspects of the phenomenon being studied in detail and in-depth and understand the dynamics among the factors that influence it. This approach is considered relevant because it allows data collection from various sources, thus providing a more comprehensive view of how ICP coordinators play a role in building a productive academic culture.

This research was carried out at MA Hasan Jufri Lebak Sangkapura Gresik. This madrasah aliyah implements the International Class Program (ICP) program as one of the efforts to improve the quality of education and student achievement. Researchers are directly involved in data collection in the field with a participatory approach, thus allowing researchers to obtain accurate and authentic data through in-depth observation and interviews. The presence of researchers in the field also allows for a closer relationship with the research subject, making the data collection process more manageable.

The object of this research is the leadership role of ICP coordinators in building a productive academic culture. The primary informants in this study consisted of various parties directly involved in the implementation of the ICP program at MA Hasan Jufri Lebak Sangkapura Gresik, including the Head of the Madrasah, the Deputy Head of the Madrasah for Curriculum, the Deputy Head of the Madrasah for Student Affairs, the ICP Coordinator, the teachers who teach in the ICP class, the supervisors of extracurricular activities, and some students who participated in the ICP program. These informants were selected purposively, considering that they have relevant knowledge and experience regarding the implementation of the ICP program and efforts to build an academic culture in the madrasah.

Data collection in this study was carried out through several main techniques, namely in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and documentation studies. In-depth interviews were conducted to obtain more detailed information about the experiences,

views, and strategies implemented by ICP coordinators and other related parties. Participatory observation allows researchers to understand field conditions directly, such as the dynamics of interaction between ICP coordinators, teachers, and students in teaching and learning activities and how academic culture is formed and applied. In addition, documentation studies are conducted by collecting data from official documents, such as work plans, activity schedules, program reports, and student achievement evaluations, to get a more comprehensive picture of the implementation of the ICP program.

The data that has been collected are analyzed using thematic analysis techniques, which aim to identify the main themes that are relevant to the research focus. The data analysis begins with transcribing interview results and observation notes, followed by coding to group data based on specific themes. Next, the researcher interprets the data to find patterns and relationships between emerging themes. This analytical technique helps in understanding how the leadership role of the ICP coordinator contributes to building a productive academic culture, as well as the factors that support or hinder such efforts.

This qualitative approach with case study design was chosen because it provides flexibility in digging into data in depth, allowing researchers to understand the complexity and dynamics of leadership in a specific educational context. By combining interview techniques, observations, and documentation studies, this research is expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of the leadership role of the ICP coordinator at MA Hasan Jufri Lebak Sangkapura Gresik and make practical and theoretical contributions to the development of similar educational programs.

4. RESULT

The study results show that the International Class Program (ICP) program coordinator at MA Hasan Jufri Lebak Sangkapura Gresik has a very strategic role in building a productive academic culture in the madrasah environment. The ICP coordinator, as the program leader, not only plays a role in administrative management but also becomes a central figure in creating a conducive, collaborative, and innovative academic climate for teachers, students, and all stakeholders in the institution.

The Leadership Role of ICP Coordinators in Building a Productive Academic Culture

As the main driver of the ICP program, the coordinator is responsible for various aspects, from planning implementation to program evaluation. In the planning process, the coordinator prepares an international curriculum tailored to the needs of local students in Bawean. The curriculum includes national academic standards and integrates global

standards to improve students' competencies in English, technology, and cross-cultural subjects.

In addition, the coordinator also acts as a motivator who encourages the teacher's enthusiasm to continue to improve their competence. Coordinators often conduct regular training for teachers internally and by involving external resource persons. This training includes mastery of technology-based learning methods, English teaching strategies, and innovative approaches to science and mathematics subjects. The teachers involved acknowledged that the training provided new insights that were very helpful in supporting student learning.

The ICP coordinator also ensures that the program runs in a structured manner through consistent supervision. The interview revealed that the coordinator always emphasized the importance of collaboration between teachers and other support staff to achieve common goals. For example, the coordinator facilitates regular meetings to evaluate the program's success, identify the obstacles faced, and formulate appropriate solutions.

The ICP program at MA Hasan Jufri has significantly impacted the academic culture in the madrasah. The documentation results show that the program run by the coordinator has improved student academic achievement from year to year. For example, the average final exam score of ICP students has increased consistently over the past three years, as shown in the following table:

Table 1. Student Academic Grades

Academic Year	Average ICP Final Exam Score	Percentage Increase
2021/2022	76,5	-
2022/2023	78,2	2,2%
2023/2024	81,0	3,6%

From the data above, it can be seen that there is a significant increase in student academic achievement, mainly recognized as a result of the active role of coordinators in motivating and managing a more effective teaching and learning process.

Challenges Faced by ICP Coordinators

Despite the many successes, implementing the ICP program at MA Hasan Jufri is inseparable from various challenges. One of the main challenges is the limitation of human resources. Not all teachers have adequate competence to teach subjects based on the

international curriculum. Teachers revealed that they often face difficulties mastering complex teaching materials, especially those related to English and technology.

Another challenge is the limitation of supporting facilities. In the interview, the coordinator mentioned that technological facilities, such as computers and internet connections, cannot fully support digital-based learning. This is an obstacle to implementing innovative learning methods that require high-technology access. In addition, the available classrooms still need to be improved to create a more comfortable and supportive learning environment.

Adjusting the international curriculum to the local context is also a challenge that is not easy. The international curriculum is often designed assuming students have access to a wide range of modern resources and facilities, which are not yet fully available in Bawean. Therefore, coordinators must work extra hard to adapt teaching materials to be relevant to the needs of local students without compromising their quality standards.

Strategies Implemented by ICP Coordinators and Their Impact on Student Achievement

ICP coordinators implement various leadership strategies to create a productive academic culture. One of the main strategies is the implementation of a collaboration-based approach. In this case, the coordinator invites teachers to be actively involved in decision-making related to program management. This creates a shared ownership of the program's success, ultimately increasing the teachers' work motivation.

Another strategy is the development of student mentoring programs. The program is designed to give special attention to students with high academic potential or needing additional assistance. In this program, selected teachers give outstanding students intensive guidance, while students who experience learning difficulties are given a unique remedial program. Observations show that this strategy has succeeded in significantly improving student learning outcomes.

The coordinator also actively develops extracurricular programs supporting 21st-century skills, such as English debate activities, information technology training, and science-based competitions. These programs are designed to train students' critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration skills. Documentation data shows that students involved in these extracurricular programs experience increased confidence and better academic abilities than those who did not participate.

So that in addition to increasing academic scores, students also show an increase in non-academic competence. Extracurricular programs such as English debate and technology

training have successfully honed students' ability to compete locally, nationally, and internationally. For example, some students have achieved achievements in local, district, national, and even international level competitions.

Table 2. Student Achievement

Academic Year	Competition Type	Champion/Level
2023/2024	English Speech Competition	3rd Place / Regency
2023/2024	SPEECH SX SUSTAINABILITY EXPO	Top 10 Finalist / International
2024/2025	Speech UPN NATIONAL ENGLISH COMPETITION	Top 10 Finalists / National
2024/2025	Speech of the Son of HGN PC PERGUNU BAWEAN	3rd Place / Local

This data shows that the ICP coordinator's leadership strategy not only builds a productive academic culture in the classroom but also brings a positive impact outside the school environment. With the support of a structured program, students can develop the competencies necessary to compete at a higher level.

The results of interviews with students revealed that they felt more confident and motivated to learn after participating in the ICP program. They also think that the international curriculum-based learning experience gives them a broader perspective on the outside world. This is very relevant to the mission of the madrasah to create a young generation that is globally competent but still upholds Islamic values.

5. DISCUSSION

Furthermore, this study's findings show that the ICP coordinator's leadership at MA Hasan Jufri Lebak Sangkapura Gresik is significant in building a productive academic culture. Based on theoretical studies, effective educational leadership must involve inspiring, managing resources, and facilitating student development-oriented learning. In this context, the approach taken by the ICP coordinator can be categorized as transformational leadership, where the leader acts as an agent of change that encourages innovation and collective involvement in achieving educational goals (Aprilinda & Budiman, 2021; Bakhtiar, 2019).

The Leadership Role of ICP Coordinators and a Productive Academic Culture

The role of the ICP coordinator in this study is reflected in its ability to facilitate collaboration between teachers, students, and other related parties. A previous study (Afandi

et al., 2023) stated that effective leadership in the education sector must build supportive learning communities where all parties feel involved in the decision-making process. This is evident from the strategy of the ICP coordinator, who holds regular meetings with ICP teachers to plan additional learning programs and evaluate students' academic performance. This strategy is consistent with Leithwood & Mascall's findings that leadership that focuses on collaboration can improve teacher motivation, performance, and student achievement (Leithwood et al., 2020).

In addition, ICP coordinators also apply a mentoring approach in accompanying new teachers, ensuring that they understand the international curriculum and can adapt teaching methods to the needs of students. This aligns with the concept of "distributed leadership," where leadership tasks are spread among various individuals in the organization to create greater effectiveness (Sarjito, 2019). Thus, the coordinator plays a role not only as a formal leader but also as a mentor who supports teachers' professional development.

Challenges Faced by ICP Coordinators

The study's results also reveal many challenges ICP coordinators face in building a productive academic culture. These challenges include limiting competent human resources and supporting infrastructure such as adequate technology. A literature review by (Karim et al., 2024) states that one of the main obstacles to the development of international education programs is the lack of training for teachers to adapt the global curriculum to local contexts. These findings were reinforced by an interview with Curriculum Waka, who stated that although the training has been carried out, there is still a need for more in-depth development, especially in using technology as a learning medium.

Furthermore, challenges related to adapting the international curriculum to the local context are also a concern. A theoretical study by Widyastono shows that adopting an international curriculum without proper adjustments can lead to a mismatch between academic expectations and the reality of local students (Fawaidi, 2021). In this case, the ICP coordinator must make careful adjustments, ensuring students understand the teaching material without compromising international academic standards. This strategy shows an innovative adaptation to the challenges of education globalization, which often requires a balance between implementing global and local curricula (Amaliyah & Shobri, 2022).

Strategies Implemented by ICP Coordinators and Their Impact on Student Achievement

ICP Coordinator at MA Hasan Jufri Lebak Sangkapura Gresik has implemented various strategies to improve school academic culture, ultimately impacting student

achievement. One of the main strategies is to strengthen extracurricular activities that focus on developing communication skills and critical thinking, such as English debate classes and science competitions. A study by Goleman emphasizes the importance of emotional intelligence in leadership, including the ability to inspire and motivate others (Coronado-Maldonado & Benítez-Márquez, 2023). This is seen in how ICP coordinators develop programs that teach academic skills and build students' confidence and motivation.

These strategies are consistent with the "*instructional leadership*" approach, where leaders focus on developing high-quality instruction and learning (Supriatna et al., 2024). Based on the documentation produced in this study, intensive tutoring programs for high-achieving students and additional tutoring outside of regular class hours have positively impacted the increase in average academic scores. This approach reflects the importance of instructional leadership in creating an environment that supports effective and comprehensive learning.

Another significant finding was the success of ICP students in various academic competitions, which confirmed that the coordinator's strategy has contributed to developing a productive academic culture. This shows that with the proper support, students can not only meet international standards but also excel outside the classroom environment. This phenomenon strengthens the theory (Aliyyah, 2021) about the importance of building "professional capital," where teacher capacity development is directly proportional to improving student achievement.

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations can be given for developing the ICP program at MA Hasan Jufri. First, there needs to be further investment in teacher training. This training should focus on mastering international curriculum materials and the application of technology in learning. In addition, training must also include effective classroom management strategies to support the teaching of students with diverse needs.

Second, madrasas need to improve learning support facilities, especially regarding technology. The provision of computers, educational software, and an adequate internet connection will be beneficial in supporting digital-based learning methods, which are one of the main elements of the international curriculum.

Third, there needs to be closer cooperation between madrasas and external parties, such as international educational institutions and non-governmental organizations, to support implementing the ICP program. This collaboration can include teacher training, the

provision of teaching materials, and student exchange programs that provide students with hands-on learning experiences.

6. CONCLUSION

This study shows that the leadership role of the ICP coordinator at MA Hasan Jufri Lebak Sangkapura Gresik is significant in building a productive academic culture. With a transformational and collaborative leadership approach, coordinators succeed in creating a learning environment that is conducive, inspiring, and supports student development. Through strategies such as mentoring, the development of extracurricular activities, and additional guidance programs, student achievement has increased in both academic and non-academic fields. Despite facing the challenges of limited human resources and infrastructure, the coordinator overcame them through innovation and solid cooperation with teachers and students. This research recommends increasing teacher capacity and investing in supporting technologies to strengthen the academic culture that has been formed further. Further studies can examine the long-term impact of these strategies on student achievement in various educational contexts.

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