



Building Sustainable Madrasahs: A Strategic Approach to Vision and Mission Formulation in a Changing Environment

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.61987/jmi.v1i1.32>

Article History:

Received: 11 January 2026

Revised: 17 March 2026

Accepted: 26 April 2026

Keywords:

Madrasah Vision, Strategic Management, Educational Development, Organizational Challenges

Abstract:

This study aims to analyze the concept of a madrasah vision and mission and identify the internal and external challenges that influence their formulation as strategic directions for educational development. The research employed a qualitative library research approach by examining books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and other relevant scholarly publications. Data were collected through documentation techniques and analyzed using qualitative procedures consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that the vision and mission function as fundamental strategic elements that guide institutional goals, policy formulation, and long-term development. Internal challenges include the quality of human resources, financial capacity, infrastructure, leadership, and organizational culture, while external challenges involve government policies, societal expectations, labor market demands, educational trends, technological advancement, and increasing competition among educational institutions. These findings demonstrate that effective vision and mission formulation requires a comprehensive understanding of both internal capacities and external dynamics. The study implies that a contextual, realistic, and adaptive vision and mission can strengthen institutional competitiveness, improve educational quality, and support sustainable organizational development in response to evolving educational environments.

INTRODUCTION

Madrasah has a strategic role in preparing future generations who possess not only academic competence but also strong moral character and Islamic values. As educational systems continue to face rapid technological advancement, globalization, and changing societal expectations, educational institutions are required to develop clear strategic directions that ensure sustainability and competitiveness (Hikmah & Mudarris, 2026; Nadhifah, 2026; Syafiih, 2025). A well-formulated vision and mission provide the foundation for institutional planning, policy development, and decision-making while aligning educational objectives with stakeholder expectations. From the perspective of strategic management, a vision reflects the desired future condition of an institution, whereas the mission defines its fundamental purpose and operational priorities. Consequently, both components become indispensable instruments for maintaining institutional relevance amid dynamic educational environments (Adzimah, 2024; Mohlas,

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Litera Journal of Community Engagement

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2025; Shoha, 2026). Previous studies have consistently demonstrated that educational institutions with clear strategic directions tend to achieve better organizational performance, stronger stakeholder commitment, and continuous quality improvement. Therefore, examining the formulation of madrasah vision and mission is essential because it contributes to strengthening institutional governance, improving educational quality, and ensuring that madrasah remain responsive to contemporary educational challenges while preserving their distinctive Islamic identity.

Although the importance of vision and mission has been widely acknowledged, many studies indicate that their formulation often remains normative and symbolic rather than serving as practical strategic instruments. Ideally, the vision and mission should emerge from a comprehensive assessment of institutional capacities and environmental conditions so that they realistically reflect future aspirations and organizational priorities (Hikmah, 2026; Manshur, 2026; Najiburohman, 2025). However, the literature suggests that many educational institutions formulate vision and mission statements merely to fulfill administrative requirements without systematically considering organizational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Such conditions reduce their effectiveness in guiding strategic planning, resource allocation, and institutional development. Internal factors such as limited human resources, inadequate financial capacity, organizational culture, leadership quality, and infrastructure frequently constrain strategic planning (Rahman, 2025). At the same time, external factors including educational policy reforms, technological transformation, labor market demands, demographic changes, and increasing competition among educational institutions create additional complexities (Khofsah, 2025; Kusumawati, 2026; Rahman, 2026). Consequently, the absence of contextual analysis in formulating vision and mission may weaken institutional adaptability and reduce the effectiveness of educational management in responding to rapidly changing educational environments.

Recent educational literature demonstrates that the effectiveness of institutional vision and mission is strongly associated with the ability of educational organizations to understand both internal conditions and external environmental dynamics (Kholifah, 2024; Sain et al., 2024; Zahro, 2024). Numerous studies emphasize that successful educational institutions continuously revise their strategic orientation in response to policy changes, technological innovation, and evolving community expectations (Albustomi, 2025; Holidi, 2025; Kusumawati, 2025). Reports on educational governance also highlight that strategic planning has become increasingly important as institutions are expected to improve accountability, quality assurance, and organizational performance simultaneously. Furthermore, research on educational leadership indicates that institutional sustainability depends not only on visionary leadership but also on the integration of environmental analysis into strategic decision-making. Despite these developments, many scholarly publications continue to report that educational institutions encounter difficulties in translating broad institutional aspirations into realistic strategic directions because environmental factors are often analyzed separately from vision and mission formulation (Mustafa & Maulana, 2024). This conceptual phenomenon suggests that the relationship between strategic environmental analysis and the formulation of institutional vision and mission remains insufficiently explored, particularly within the context of madrasah development, thereby justifying the need for a more comprehensive literature-based investigation.

Previous studies have consistently recognized the strategic importance of vision and mission in improving educational institutions, although they approach the topic from different perspectives. Wahab (2022) explains that the quality improvement of madrasah is closely related to institutional strategic efforts, particularly through the formulation of a clear vision and mission that guide organizational development. Similarly, Patmawati et al. (2023) argue that the vision represents the institution's desired future condition, whereas the mission translates that aspiration into concrete actions and organizational commitments. Complementing these findings, Hafizin and Herman (2022) emphasize that the formulation of vision and mission should be conducted systematically because both serve as the foundation for institutional policies, strategic planning, and educational management. Collectively, these studies demonstrate that vision and mission are fundamental components of educational governance and institutional sustainability. They also indicate that strategic planning contributes to organizational effectiveness, educational quality, and institutional competitiveness. Nevertheless, the existing literature predominantly discusses vision and mission as normative management instruments, while limited attention has been given to examining the contextual factors that shape their formulation, particularly the interaction between institutional capacity and environmental dynamics.

Although previous studies have provided valuable insights into the strategic function of institutional vision and mission, several important limitations remain. Most existing research focuses on describing the significance of vision and mission in organizational management or evaluating their implementation after they have been established. Consequently, limited attention has been devoted to understanding the formulation process itself, especially how internal organizational conditions and external environmental challenges simultaneously influence strategic decision-making. Furthermore, previous studies generally examine internal organizational resources or external environmental changes independently, resulting in fragmented explanations regarding the development of institutional strategic direction. This study addresses these limitations by integrating both dimensions into a comprehensive conceptual analysis using a library research approach. The novelty of this study lies in positioning internal and external challenges as interconnected strategic foundations for formulating madrasah vision and mission rather than treating vision and mission merely as normative institutional statements. Accordingly, this research contributes to enriching strategic management literature by proposing a more contextual, adaptive, and comprehensive perspective on institutional development within madrasah education.

Based on the foregoing discussion, the primary issue addressed in this study concerns how the concept of madrasah vision and mission should be understood and how internal and external challenges should be considered in their formulation to support sustainable institutional development. Accordingly, this study aims to examine the conceptual foundation of madrasah vision and mission while analyzing the internal and external factors that influence their formulation through a comprehensive review of relevant literature. This study argues that an effective vision and mission cannot be developed solely from normative aspirations but must be grounded in a thorough understanding of organizational capacities, stakeholder expectations, policy environments, and broader educational changes. Such an approach enables educational institutions to formulate strategic directions that are realistic, responsive, and sustainable. The findings are expected to contribute theoretically by enriching discussions

on strategic management in Islamic educational institutions and practically by providing conceptual guidance for educational leaders and policymakers in developing vision and mission statements that strengthen institutional quality, competitiveness, and long-term educational sustainability.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach using the library research method. Library research is a research approach conducted through a comprehensive review and critical analysis of various documentary sources, including books, scientific literature, reports, and other scholarly publications, to establish theoretical foundations and address the research problem (Nazir, 2003). This approach was selected because the present study aims to examine conceptually the formulation of madrasah vision and mission in response to internal and external challenges rather than investigating empirical phenomena in a particular setting. Accordingly, the study emphasizes the analysis, interpretation, comparison, and synthesis of relevant literature to develop a comprehensive understanding of the research topic. Through this approach, the researcher was able to explore strategic management theories, educational leadership concepts, and previous empirical findings concerning institutional vision and mission as well as the environmental factors influencing educational development.

The data used in this study were obtained from relevant documentary sources, including academic books, peer-reviewed journal articles, conference proceedings, policy documents, official reports, and other credible scholarly publications related to educational management, strategic planning, and madrasah development. The selected literature met several criteria, including relevance to the research objectives, credibility of the publication source, theoretical contribution, and publication recency to ensure the inclusion of contemporary perspectives. Data collection was conducted using documentation techniques, which involve the systematic collection and examination of written and digital records as research evidence (Sukmadinata, 2017). The documentation process consisted of identifying relevant references, selecting appropriate literature, classifying information according to research themes, and recording important concepts, arguments, and findings that supported the analysis of madrasah vision and mission formulation.

The collected data were analyzed qualitatively using the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, which consists of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification (Sugiyono, 2022). During the data condensation stage, relevant information was selected, simplified, categorized, and organized according to themes associated with the concept of madrasah vision and mission and the internal and external challenges influencing their formulation. Subsequently, the condensed data were systematically presented through descriptive narratives and conceptual comparisons to facilitate the identification of patterns, relationships, similarities, and differences across previous studies. The final stage involved drawing and verifying conclusions by synthesizing the analyzed literature, evaluating the consistency of findings, and constructing coherent scientific arguments that addressed the research objectives while providing a comprehensive conceptual understanding of the topic.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, this study applied several strategies commonly used in qualitative library research. Source triangulation was conducted by

comparing information from various scholarly sources, including books, journal articles, policy documents, and official publications, to verify the consistency of evidence. In addition, theoretical triangulation was employed by examining the research problem from multiple theoretical perspectives in educational management and strategic planning to strengthen the depth of interpretation. The credibility, relevance, consistency, and authority of each reference were also critically evaluated before inclusion in the analysis. These procedures enhanced the validity of the conceptual interpretation, minimized potential bias arising from reliance on a single source, and increased the reliability of the synthesized findings, thereby ensuring that the conclusions were firmly grounded in comprehensive and credible academic literature.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Concept of Madrasah Vision and Mission

Vision and mission are two important components in the management of educational institutions, including madrasah. Both serve as the basis for determining the direction, goals, and strategic steps to be taken in the educational process. The word vision comes from the English word "vision," which means sight, view, or a future image to be achieved. Wibisono explains that vision is a series of sentences that describe the hopes or major goals an organization or company wants to realize in the future, also known as the organization's "want to be" statement (Wibisono, 2006). According to Said Budairy, vision is a statement that contains an image of ideals and future conditions to be achieved, as a continuation of the present condition and inseparable from past experiences (Fiandi & Ilmi, 2022). Asih and Aris also argue that vision is a long-term view of the direction to be pursued by a company or an image of the ideals that the company wants to realize (Asih Handayani, 2021).

Thus, it can be understood that vision is a statement or sentence that describes the long-term direction and goals of an organization or institution to be achieved in the future and functions as the main guideline in determining the steps of organizational development. In the context of education, particularly madrasah, vision has a strategic role as the direction for educational implementation. For schools, vision is a moral imagination that describes the desired school profile in the future (Kholis, 2014). Therefore, the vision of madrasah describes the ideal condition to be achieved in the future, both in terms of graduate quality, character formation, and contribution to society and the nation. A good vision must be clear, inspirational, realistic, and able to motivate all members of the madrasah community.

In addition to vision, there is also mission, which is a more operational elaboration of the vision. The word mission comes from English and means a task or assignment; this refers to actions that must be taken or steps that someone must carry out to achieve a particular target. Mission is an elaboration of the vision expressed in the form of duties, responsibilities, and action plans that serve as guidelines in achieving the vision (Cepi Pahlevi & Muhammad Ichwan Musa, 2023). Hafidzin also states that mission is a series of activities containing directions or steps that must be taken to realize the vision.

Thus, mission can be understood as a statement containing the strategic and operational steps that must be carried out by an institution to achieve the established vision. Mission functions as a guideline in daily activities and as a reference in decision-making. In the context of madrasah, mission is usually manifested in various educational programs, such as improving the quality of learning, developing students' character and

morals, improving the competence of educators, and strengthening relationships with the community. Mission must also be formulated clearly, measurably, and practically so that it can effectively support the achievement of the vision.

Many people still find it difficult to distinguish between vision and mission. In simple terms, vision can be understood as “what we believe we can be,” namely an image of what an institution wants to become or achieve in the future. Meanwhile, mission is “what we believe we can do,” namely actions or steps believed to be possible in order to realize the vision. Essentially, vision is not based on the current condition, but is oriented toward an ideal future. Therefore, vision is relatively stable and not easily changed. If conditions change and the vision has not yet been achieved, then what needs to be adjusted is the mission as the strategy or way to achieve it, not the vision itself. Thus, vision becomes the long-term direction, while mission is more flexible as a concrete effort to achieve that goal.

Internal Challenges in the Formulation of Madrasah Vision and Mission

Internal challenges are various factors originating from within the madrasah environment that can influence the process of formulating the vision and mission. These factors are related to the conditions, potential, and limitations possessed by the madrasah itself. Therefore, identifying internal challenges is important so that the formulated vision and mission are not only ideal, but also realistic and in accordance with the capacity of the madrasah. According to Nur Gamar, internal educational challenges include human resources, financial resources, school infrastructure, and organizational culture (Gamar, 2024). These four aspects serve as the main foundation in formulating the strategic direction of Islamic educational institutions, particularly madrasah.

Human resources are the main element in the implementation of education in madrasah. This aspect includes the head of the madrasah, teachers, educational staff, and all school members who play a role in the educational process. In formulating the vision and mission, madrasah must consider the quality, competence, and professionalism of its human resources. The quality of teachers and educational staff will influence the effectiveness of learning and institutional management (Febiana et al., 2025). This is because teachers play a direct role in the transfer of knowledge and the formation of students' character, while educational staff support the smooth running of administration and madrasah governance.

If the quality of teachers and educational staff is still limited, then the formulated vision must be adjusted to the actual condition of the institution and directed toward gradual competency development. Conversely, when a madrasah has excellent human resources, the vision can be directed toward achieving a more competitive, innovative quality of education oriented toward improving graduate quality.

Financial resources are one of the most important internal factors in the formulation of madrasah vision and mission. This aspect relates to the institution's ability to provide and manage funds to support all educational programs. The availability of adequate funding sources will affect the smooth operation of the madrasah, the improvement of learning quality, the development of teacher and staff competence, and the provision of educational facilities and infrastructure. In education, financing is a process of optimizing and collecting various funding sources, then using them as supporting tools for the learning process in order to produce effective, conducive, and efficient learning. Thus, financial resource management does not only focus on the

amount of available funds, but also on how these funds are managed appropriately to support the achievement of educational goals.

Stable financial conditions allow madrasah to formulate more progressive visions and missions, such as the development of flagship programs, improvement of academic quality, and innovation in technology-based learning. Conversely, limited funding can become an internal challenge that hinders the achievement of institutional goals, so the formulated vision and mission must be adjusted to the available financial capacity. Therefore, effective, transparent, and sustainable financial management becomes an important basis for supporting the success of the madrasah vision and mission.

In formulating the vision and mission of madrasah, infrastructure conditions are a very important aspect to consider. This aspect includes educational facilities and infrastructure such as classrooms, laboratories, worship facilities, learning media, and information technology that support the teaching and learning process. Madrasah with good facility management are also able to create a positive learning climate in which students feel valued and supported in developing their potential (Ilham & Mubarak, 2025). With adequate facilities and infrastructure, the learning process can take place effectively, efficiently, and conducive, making institutional goals easier to achieve. Well-organized infrastructure not only supports the smooth running of academic activities, but also supports character formation, discipline, and the comfort of all members of the madrasah community.

Conversely, limited facilities and infrastructure can become obstacles to achieving institutional goals. For example, a vision to become a technology-based excellent madrasah will be difficult to realize if computer facilities, laboratories, and internet access are still limited. Therefore, infrastructure conditions must become an important consideration in formulating the vision and mission so that they are aligned with the capacity and needs of the institution.

In formulating the vision and mission of madrasah, organizational culture is an important aspect to consider because it is related to the values, norms, habits, and interaction patterns that develop within the institution. Organizational culture is a set of values and behavioral norms that have been collectively accepted and used as guidelines by all members of the organization in carrying out various activities (Wahyudin, 2022). These values and norms will influence the way madrasah formulates the direction, goals, and ideals of the institution as expressed in its vision and mission.

A positive organizational culture, such as discipline, responsibility, cooperation, and commitment to Islamic values, will help madrasah formulate a clear, realistic, and easily implemented vision and mission. This is because the formulated vision and mission must be in line with the culture that already exists and develops within the madrasah environment so that they can be accepted by all members of the school community. Conversely, if the organizational culture is less conducive, such as weak communication, low commitment, and lack of shared awareness of institutional goals, then the process of formulating the vision and mission will face obstacles. Therefore, organizational culture needs to be used as an important foundation in formulating the madrasah vision and mission so that the direction of institutional development is in accordance with the character and identity of the institution.

Based on the explanation above, it can be understood that the formulation of madrasah vision and mission must be based on an analysis of various internal challenges within the institution. Human resources, financial resources, infrastructure, and

organizational culture are the main factors that greatly influence the strategic direction of the madrasah. These four aspects need to be considered comprehensively so that the formulated vision and mission are not only ideal, but also realistic, measurable, and in accordance with the capacity of the institution. Thus, the established vision and mission can serve as guidelines in improving the quality of education and directing madrasah toward effective, efficient, and sustainable goal achievement.

External Challenges in the Formulation of Madrasah Vision and Mission

External challenges are factors originating from outside the madrasah environment that can influence the process of formulating the vision and mission. Nur Gamar states that these challenges are related to government policy, the needs of society and the industrial world, the development of educational trends, and competition among educational institutions (Gamar, 2024). Therefore, identifying external challenges is important so that the formulated vision and mission remain relevant to the development of the times and the needs of educational stakeholders.

Government policy is one of the external challenges that greatly influences the formulation of madrasah vision and mission. Regulations and government policies in the field of Islamic education have a major influence on the education system implemented because they become the basis that educational institutions must fulfill (Febiana et al., 2025). In formulating the vision and mission, madrasah needs to align the direction and goals of the institution with government policies so that they remain in accordance with national education standards.

In many cases, these policies become a challenge for madrasah. Regulations such as national education standards, accreditation systems, and administrative demands often limit the institution's flexibility in exercising managerial autonomy (Gamar & Maliki, 2025). This occurs because madrasah must adjust their vision and mission to various formal provisions that sometimes restrict the institution's flexibility in developing its distinctive characteristics and strengths. Therefore, government policy is an important factor that must be considered in formulating the vision and mission of madrasah so that they remain relevant to applicable regulations while still maintaining the identity and goals of Islamic education upheld by the institution.

In the context of madrasah education, societal needs are one of the external factors that need to be considered in formulating the vision and mission. The society referred to here is not limited to the surrounding community, but also includes parents, community leaders, and graduate users such as the workplace and industry. Parents, as key stakeholders, have expectations regarding the quality of education, both in terms of academics, character formation, and children's readiness to face the future. In addition, support from parents and the community also plays an important role in supporting the success of Islamic education. This support is not only in the form of financial contributions, but also active involvement in madrasah activities, communication with the school, and participation in students' learning processes.

On the other hand, society in general expects madrasah to produce graduates with noble character, broad insight, and the ability to live well in social life. Along with this, the industrial world also influences the direction of education, where graduates are required not only to master religious knowledge, but also to have skills in communication, collaboration, and technological literacy. The integration of technology in education is one important effort to respond to these demands because it not only increases the

effectiveness of learning, but also prepares students to adapt quickly to changes in the world of work and daily life in the digital era (Fitrianti & Annur, 2024). Thus, madrasah needs to understand and adapt to the needs of society and the industrial world so that the formulated vision and mission remain relevant and able to answer the demands of the times without leaving Islamic values behind.

Educational trends are one of the external challenges that continue to develop and need to be responded to adaptively by madrasah in formulating their vision and mission. This development is influenced by the rapid advancement of information and communication technology. The use of information technology in learning, such as e-learning, online learning platforms, and interactive media, has changed the educational paradigm from conventional learning to a more flexible, innovative, and technology-based model. Research findings even show that e-learning, administrative digitalization, and interactive platforms can improve efficiency, accessibility, and learning participation (Icha et al., 2025). In addition, educational trends also include a shift from teacher-centered learning to student-centered learning (Manurung & Khairiah, 2026). This approach emphasizes the active role of students in the learning process, while teachers function as facilitators who guide and direct. Thus, students are expected to develop critical, creative, and independent thinking skills in understanding learning materials.

These developments also encourage the integration of digital literacy in learning so that students are not only able to access information, but also able to select and use it wisely. On the other hand, the emergence of technology-based learning concepts such as blended learning and digital learning ecosystems becomes a challenge for madrasah. This requires infrastructure readiness, teacher competence in using technology, and student readiness to adapt to new learning systems. Therefore, in formulating the vision and mission of madrasah, it is necessary to consider developing educational trends in order to produce graduates who are not only excellent in religious aspects, but also adaptive to technological development and global demands. Thus, madrasah can remain relevant and competitive in the era of modern education.

Competition among educational institutions is one of the external challenges that cannot be avoided in formulating the vision and mission of madrasah. The increasing number of educational institutions, both general and religious-based, requires madrasah to demonstrate their excellence and attractiveness to the community. This competition occurs not only in terms of the number of students, but also in the quality of educational services, academic achievement, and the institution's image in the public eye. Under these conditions, madrasah is required to have a clear identity and competitive advantages that distinguish it from other educational institutions. These advantages may include the strengthening of Islamic values, quality of learning, flagship programs, and the integration of religious and general sciences. In addition, the use of technology and innovation in learning is also an important factor in increasing madrasah competitiveness.

On the other hand, competition also encourages madrasah to continuously evaluate and improve quality on an ongoing basis. Madrasah needs to pay attention to the quality of educators, facilities and infrastructure, and institutional management in order to provide optimal educational services. Thus, competition is not only a challenge, but also an opportunity for madrasah to grow and innovate. In formulating the vision and mission, madrasah needs to consider the existing competitive conditions in order to formulate a strategic direction for development. A clear and adaptive vision and mission

will help madrasah strengthen its position and improve its competitiveness amid the dynamics of the educational world.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the formulation of a madrasah vision and mission should not be viewed merely as a normative administrative requirement but as a strategic process grounded in a comprehensive analysis of internal and external challenges. The principal finding highlights that aligning institutional capacity with environmental dynamics enables madrasah to establish realistic, adaptive, and value-based strategic directions that enhance educational quality and institutional competitiveness. The study contributes to the literature by providing an integrated conceptual framework that links strategic vision and mission formulation with environmental analysis in the context of madrasah management. However, as a library research study, its conclusions are limited to conceptual synthesis without empirical validation. Therefore, future studies are encouraged to employ field-based qualitative or mixed-method approaches to examine how vision and mission are formulated and implemented across diverse madrasah contexts.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to all scholars and researchers whose works contributed to this study. Their valuable publications provided important theoretical insights and references that supported the completion of this research.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The author declares no conflict of interest related to this study.

USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)-ASSISTED TECHNOLOGY

During the preparation of this manuscript, AI-assisted technology was used to support language refinement, structural organization, and academic writing improvement. All generated content was carefully reviewed, revised, and validated by the author. The author takes full responsibility for the scientific accuracy, originality, and integrity of the final manuscript.

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