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Spiritual Education as a Catalyst for Quality Learning: Empirical Evidence from *Madrasahs*

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Abstract

Improving the quality of education in madrasahs (Islamic schools) remains a concern, as these institutions strive to balance the development of spiritual values and professional proficiency with supportive learning environments. This study addresses ongoing debates about the quantifiable effects of faith-based pedagogy by examining how spiritual education, teacher professionalism, and school atmosphere influence educational quality. A quantitative design was employed involving 312 purposively selected madrasah teachers, and data were analysed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4. The findings show that while the impact of spiritual education (β = 0.008) is statistically insignificant, the school environment (β = 0.568) and teacher professionalism (β = 0.318) considerably improve educational quality. These results highlight the importance of promoting professional competence and a supportive institutional environment to enhance madrasah performance. Meanwhile, the limited impact of spiritual education suggests the need for a more pedagogically grounded, evidence-based integration of spiritual values into instructional practices.

Keywords: Educational quality enhancement, Faith-based pedagogy, School climate, Teacher professionalism.

Abstrak

Peningkatan kualitas pendidikan di madrasah (sekolah Islam) masih menjadi perhatian karena lembaga-lembaga ini berupaya untuk mencapai keseimbangan antara pengembangan nilai-nilai spiritual, kecakapan profesional, dan suasana belajar yang mendukung. Studi ini membahas diskusi berkelanjutan tentang efek terukur dari pedagogi berbasis agama dengan memeriksa cara-cara di mana pendidikan spiritual, profesionalisme guru, dan suasana sekolah semuanya mempengaruhi kualitas pendidikan. Sebuah desain kuantitatif digunakan dengan melibatkan 312 guru madrasah yang dipilih secara purposif, dan data dianalisis menggunakan Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) dengan SmartPLS 4. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa meskipun dampak pendidikan spiritual (β = 0,008) secara statistik tidak signifikan, lingkungan sekolah (β = 0,568) dan profesionalisme guru (β = 0,318) secara signifikan meningkatkan kualitas pendidikan. Hasil ini menyoroti betapa pentingnya mempromosikan kompetensi profesional dan lingkungan kelembagaan yang mendukung untuk meningkatkan kinerja madrasah. Sementara itu, terbatasnya pengaruh pendidikan spiritual menunjukkan perlunya integrasi nilai-nilai spiritual yang lebih berlandaskan pedagogis dan berbasis bukti dalam praktik pembelajaran.

Kata Kunci*: Iklim sekolah, Pedagogi berbasis agama, Peningkatan kualitas pendidikan, Profesionalisme guru.*

INTRODUCTION

Since the quality of education is now the primary concern for human resource development globally in the twenty-first century, a greater degree of intellectual, social, and moral competency is required (Ainscow, 2020; Subaidi, 2020; Carr-Hill, 2023; Bakar et al., 2023; Mariani et al., 2024; Riski et al., 2024). In Indonesia, raising the standard of education became a national issue, especially in *madrasahs*—Islamic schools that combine academic learning with religious and moral studies (Juhaeni et al., 2021; S. Salim et al., 2021; Abidin et al., 2024; Aminullah et al., 2024). Even with intense reforms, madrasahs continue to fight to balance spiritual development, professional training, and the best learning environment (Atstsaury et al., 2024; Isa et al., 2024; Musa et al., 2024; Qamariah & Hercz, 2025; A. Salim, 2015). Such tension highlights the importance of rethinking the manner in which *madrasahs* can increase overall quality without compromising the spiritual nature.

Previous studies have identified various determinants of educational quality, such as school climate (Thapa et al., 2013; Wang & Degol, 2016; Daily et al., 2019; McChesney & Cross, 2023; Amsalu & Belay, 2024; Mahmood et al., 2024), teacher professionalism (Gunawan & Adha, 2021; Silviani et al., 2022; Bahiyah & Juhji, 2023), and spiritual education (Abdullah, 2018; Karim et al., 2020; Nasrollahi et al., 2020; Fraser-Pearce, 2022; Mulang & Putra, 2023; Samad et al., 2023). A favorable school climate is known to create a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment for all school members (Thapa et al., 2013). Teacher professionalism is also a key element because teachers play a direct role in managing the learning process pedagogically and ethically (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2015). On the other hand, spiritual education plays an important role in shaping students' values and motivation to learn in *madrasahs*, although its influence on academic performance has not been fully proven quantitatively (Reave, 2005; Lovat & Toomey, 2009; Nasution et al., 2025; Falah et al., 2025; Rofiq et al., 2025).

However, most existing research only examines these dimensions (spiritual education, teacher professionalism, and school atmosphere) separately (Halik et al., 2018; Dewi & Khotimah, 2020; Nugraha & Dekawati, 2023; Nabilla, 2024). These isolated studies limit our understanding of how these factors collectively interrelate and influence educational quality, particularly in faith-based *madrasahs* (Islamic schools). Therefore, empirical studies are needed to integrate school climate, teacher professionalism, and spiritual education to explain variations in *madrasah* quality. It will allow for the development of a theoretically relevant framework for improving Islamic educational institutions. To bridge this gap, this study empirically examines the simultaneous influence of school climate, teacher professionalism, and spiritual education on the quality of *madrasah* education using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach. Through the development of an integrated model, this study not only measures the relative contribution of each variable but also examines the dynamic relationship between the three in shaping institutional performance comprehensively. This study advances the theoretical discourse on faith-based education by positioning *madrasahs* as a distinctive lens through which the interplay between spiritual values, teacher competence, and institutional culture can be empirically examined. Unlike previous research that treats spirituality as an abstract or peripheral construct, this study operationalizes spiritual education as a measurable variable alongside established determinants of school

quality. This integrative perspective contributes a novel analytical framework that bridges empirical evidence and faith-based pedagogy, enriching global discussions on educational quality in religious schooling systems. Practically, the findings are expected to inform policymakers and educational leaders seeking to enhance *madrasah* performance through holistic, evidence-driven, and context-sensitive quality improvement strategies.

Thus, this study is expected to advance the theoretical discourse on *madrasahs* as a unique lens through which the interaction between spiritual values, teacher competence, and institutional culture can be empirically examined. Practically, this study is expected to inform policymakers and educational leaders seeking to improve *madrasah* performance through holistic quality improvement strategies encompassing spiritual education, teacher professionalism, and school climate.

METHOD

Research design

This study employed a quantitative explanatory design to examine causal relationships among spiritual education, teacher professionalism, school climate, and the outcome variable educational quality in *madrasahs*. The study was conducted among *madrasah* teachers in Banten Province, Indonesia. This location was chosen intentionally because it represents a heterogeneous mix of urban and rural madrasas, making it suitable for this study.

Ethical approval

Before data collection began, researchers obtained official permission from the participating *madrasahs*. All respondents provided written consent through a form submitted to the principal, teachers, and alums as a commitment to voluntary participation. To maintain confidentiality, all personal identification data was securely stored in encrypted storage accessible only to the research team and was not shared with any other party.

Population and sampling

The population comprised all active *madrasah* teachers in Banten Province. A purposive sampling technique was applied to select teachers who met three inclusion criteria: (a) currently active teaching at a *madrasah,* (b) minimum two years of teaching experience, and (c) willing to complete the questionnaire fully. Sampling was conducted purposively. The research team ensured that respondents had sufficient teaching experience to conduct the assessment. The final sample included 312 teachers. Sample adequacy for PLS-SEM was confirmed using the "10-times rule" and recommendations from Hair (2014); the sample exceeded required minimums for the model's complexity and indicator count.

Instrument development

Data were collected using a structured, closed-ended questionnaire containing items for four latent constructs: (1) Spiritual education: self-awareness, transcendental connection, moral-ethical values, compassion/social concern. (2) Teacher professionalism: pedagogical competence, continuous professional development, professional ethics, commitment & collaboration. (3) School climate: physical and psychological safety, interpersonal relationships, learning environment, leadership, and institutional support. (4) Educational quality: student learning outcomes, instructional effectiveness, stakeholder satisfaction, innovation, and continuous evaluation. Items were developed from the literature and adapted

to local *madrasahs*. An item validation study was conducted to assess item clarity, response variability, and initial reliability. Based on the study results and expert feedback, minor wording revisions were made.

Content validity

Content validity was assessed through a panel of five subject-matter and methodology experts (educational measurement, Islamic education, and quantitative methods). Each item was rated for relevance and clarity; item-level content validity index (I-CVI) and scale-level CVI (S-CVI/Ave) were computed. Items with I-CVI < 0.78 were revised or removed. Expert suggestions also informed the response anchors and operational definitions.

Data collection and coding

Questionnaire responses used a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Coding conventions: responses were entered and coded numerically (1–5) in Microsoft Excel and then imported into SPSS v25 for cleaning and descriptive analysis. Reverse-coded items (if any) were recoded prior to analysis. Data cleaning steps include: (1) Handling of missing data. Cases with >20% missing responses were excluded from this study. For the remaining missing values (<5% overall), mean imputation at the item level was applied by the research team after we confirmed the data were missing at random (Little's MCAR test). (2) Outlier detection: Univariate outliers were inspected via z-scores ($|z|>3.29$ flagged); multivariate outliers were assessed using Mahalanobis distance ($p < 0.001$ criterion). Flagged cases were reviewed and retained only if responses were plausible. (3) Descriptive statistics and normality checks: Skewness and kurtosis were inspected; normality is not a strict requirement for PLS-SEM, but reported for completeness. All data-cleaning and descriptive steps were conducted in SPSS v25 and Microsoft Excel.

Measurement model

Measurement evaluation followed established PLS-SEM practice (Hair, 2014) and included multiple complementary tests: (1) Indicator reliability: outer loadings were inspected; indicators with loadings < 0.70 were considered for removal if removing them improved construct reliability and content coverage (items with loadings between 0.40–0.70 were evaluated case-by-case). (2) Internal consistency reliability. Through Cronbach's alpha, Dijkstra-Henseler's rho_A, and Composite Reliability (CR) are calculated. Our specified thresholds are: $\alpha \geq 0.70$, rho_A ≥ 0.70, and CR ≥ 0.70. (3) Convergent validity. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) with a threshold of AVE ≥ 0.50. 3) Discriminant validity: assessed via Fornell-Larcker criterion and Heterotrait–Monotrait ratio (HTMT); HTMT values < 0.90 (preferably < 0.85) indicated adequate discriminant validity. Bootstrapped confidence intervals for HTMT were inspected. (4) Common method bias: procedural remedies (anonymity, item wording) were applied; statistical checks included Harman's single-factor test (exploratory factor analysis) and full-collinearity VIF (Kock's method). A single factor explaining >50% or VIF > 3.3 would indicate potential bias and require corrective steps; none were found in this dataset.

Structural model

Structural modelling and hypothesis testing were performed in SmartPLS 4.0 with the following stepwise procedure: (1) Model specification: reflective measurement models were specified for all constructs. (2) Assessment of collinearity: inner VIF values were inspected (VIF < 5 recommended). (3) Bootstrapping: significance testing used nonparametric bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples, two-tailed tests, and $\alpha = 0.05$ to obtain t-statistics and p-values for path coefficients. (4) Evaluation of path coefficients: standardized β coefficients, t-values, and p-values reported for each hypothesized relationship. (5) Explained variance. R^2 values for endogenous constructs are reported and interpreted (Cohen's guidelines). (6) Effect size. F^2 effect size is calculated to assess the substantive contribution of each exogenous construct to the R^2 value (thresholds: small = 0.02; medium = 0.15; large = 0.35). (7) Predictive relevance. Q^2 values are estimated using the blindfolding method (omission distance = 7), where $Q^2 > 0$ indicates predictive relevance. (8) Model fit. Standardized root mean square residuals (SRMR) and other global fit indices are also reported; if they are in accordance with the provisions of SRMR < 0.08, then they are considered acceptable. All PLS-SEM procedures (outer/inner models) follow the recommendations of Hair (2014). Additional sensitivity analyses included alternative specifications (e.g., removing low-loading indicators) to test model robustness.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

Outer loadings dari masing-masing indikator

To ensure that each indicator in this study truly represents the construct being measured, outer loadings were tested as part of the measurement model evaluation (outer model). Outer loadings describe the strength of the relationship between each indicator and the latent variable it represents. The ideal value for outer loadings is above 0.70, which indicates that the indicator has good convergent validity. Table 1 below presents the results of outer loadings for each indicator on the constructs of Educational Quality, School Climate, Spiritual Education, and Teacher Professionalism.

Table 1. Outer Loadings Results for Each Indicator

	Outer loadings
EQ_1 <- Educational Quality	0.877
EQ_2 <- Educational Quality	0.908
EQ_3 <- Educational Quality	0.921
EQ_4 <- Educational Quality	0.901
SC_1 <- School Climate	0.919
SC_2 <- School Climate	0.895
SC_3 <- School Climate	0.836
SC_4 <- School Climate	0.880
SE_1 <- Spiritual Education	0.768
SE_2 <- Spiritual Education	0.836
SE_3 <- Spiritual Education	0.883
SE_4 <- Spiritual Education	0.787

TP_1 <- Teacher Professionalism	0.844
TP_2 <- Teacher Professionalism	0.922
TP_3 <- Teacher Professionalism	0.895
TP_4 <- Teacher Professionalism	0.880

For the Educational Quality construct, all indicators (EQ_1 to EQ_4) have high loading values (0.877–0.921), indicating that all indicators strongly and consistently measure educational quality. The School Climate construct also shows excellent indicator validity with values between 0.836 and 0.919, meaning that all four indicators are valid as measures of school climate. Meanwhile, in the Spiritual Education construct, although all loading values are above the minimum threshold of 0.7, the values of SE_1 (0.768) and SE_4 (0.787) are slightly lower than SE_2 and SE_3, but still show acceptable validity. Finally, the Teacher Professionalism construct has indicators with very high values, especially TP_2 (0.922), indicating that this indicator is the strongest in reflecting teacher professionalism. Thus, all indicators in this study meet the criteria for convergent validity, meaning they can be accurately used in the model to represent the constructs being measured. The high validity of the indicators strengthens the reliability of the model in measuring and testing the relationships between constructs in the study.

Measurement Model (Outer Model)

To assess the validity and reliability of the indicators used in this study, the Measurement Model (Outer Model) was tested on 312 *madrasah* teachers. The Spiritual Education (SE) variable includes four indicators: (1) self-awareness (SE_1), (2) transcendental connection (SE_2), (3) moral-ethical values (SE_3), and (4) compassion and social concern (SE_4). The Teacher Professionalism (TP) variable includes four indicators: (1) pedagogical competence (TP_1), (2) continuous professional development (TP_2), (3) professional ethics (TP_3), and (4) commitment and collaboration (TP_4). The School Climate (SC) variable includes four indicators: (1) physical and psychological safety (SC_1), (2) positive interpersonal relationships (SC_2), (3) supportive learning environment (SC_3), and (4) leadership and institutional support (SC_4). The Educational Quality (EQ) variable includes four indicators: (1) student learning outcomes (EQ_1), (2) instructional effectiveness (EQ_2), (3) stakeholder satisfaction (EQ_3), and (4) innovation and continuous evaluation (EQ_4). The test results can be seen in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Measurement Model Testing Results (Outer Model)

	VIF
EQ_1	2.756
EQ_2	3.285
EQ_3	3.795
EQ_4	3.152
SC_1	3.640
SC_2	3.157
SC_3	2.114
SC_4	2.623
SE_1	1.710

SE_2	2.023
SE_3	2.328
SE_4	1.714
TP_1	2.273
TP_2	3.706
TP_3	2.882
TP_4	2.677

The results of the Measurement Model (Outer Model) testing in this study were conducted to evaluate the validity and reliability of the construct indicators in the data collected from 312 *madrasah* teachers. Each latent variable, namely Spiritual Education (SE), Teacher Professionalism (TP), School Climate (SC), and Educational Quality (EQ), was measured using four indicators that were established based on relevant theoretical concepts. The validity of the indicators was tested, among other things, through the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) value, which was used to detect potential multicollinearity between indicators in each construct. In general, all VIF values were below the recommended maximum limit (i.e., <5), indicating that there were no significant multicollinearity issues among the indicators.

The highest VIF values were found in the TP_2 (continuous professional development) indicator at 3.706 and EQ_3 (stakeholder satisfaction) at 3.795, which are still within reasonable and acceptable limits. Meanwhile, indicators SE_1 and SE_4 had the lowest VIF values, 1.710 and 1.714, respectively, indicating a clean contribution from multicollinearity. These findings reinforce that each indicator provides a unique contribution to its construct and can be relied upon to proceed to structural model testing (inner model). Thus, the results of the outer model indicate that the indicators in this study are valid and reliable in representing the constructs being measured, and support the feasibility of the model for further testing in explaining the relationships between latent variables.

Structural Model Testing (Inner Model)

This test was conducted to evaluate the relationship between latent variables through path coefficients, coefficients of determination (R^2), and statistical significance. The results are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Structural Model Testing Results (Inner Model)

	VIF
School Climate -> Educational Quality	2.695
Spiritual Education -> Educational Quality	2.837
Teacher Professionalism -> Educational Quality	3.646

Table 3 presents the results of structural model testing (inner model) aimed at assessing the potential for multicollinearity among predictor variables in explaining the Educational Quality construct. This analysis uses the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) value, where a VIF value less than 5 indicates that there are no serious multicollinearity issues among the independent variables in the model. The three independent variables—School Climate, Spiritual Education, and Teacher Professionalism—show VIF values of 2.695, 2.837, and

3.646, respectively. These values are within an acceptable range, indicating that the three variables do not distort each other's influence on the dependent variable, Educational Quality. Thus, the model is free from multicollinearity issues, and the three constructs can be analyzed simultaneously in the structural model to test the extent of each variable's contribution to improving educational quality. These results support the model's suitability for further analysis using path analysis and significance tests.

Table 4 below shows the path coefficient results, which inform the magnitude of each independent variable's direct influence on the dependent variable, Educational Quality, in the structural model. The path coefficient value reflects the strength and direction of the relationship between latent constructs.

Table 4. Path Coefficient Results (Path Coefficient)

	Path coefficients
School Climate -> Educational Quality	0.568
Spiritual Education -> Educational Quality	0.008
Teacher Professionalism -> Educational Quality	0.318

Based on Table 4, the School Climate variable contributes most strongly to Educational Quality with a coefficient of 0.568, which means that a conducive school climate significantly improves educational quality. Furthermore, Teacher Professionalism also shows a relatively significant positive influence, with a coefficient value of 0.318, indicating that improving teacher professionalism also contributes to the quality of education in a real way. Meanwhile, the Spiritual Education variable only has a path coefficient of 0.008, which indicates a very weak influence and can practically be insignificant to Educational Quality. These results indicate that spiritual education, in this model, does not directly influence educational quality, or its influence may occur indirectly through other mediating variables. Thus, this model confirms that school climate and teacher professional competence play important roles in improving the quality of *madrasah* education.

Table 5. R-square

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Educational Quality	0.717	0.714

Table 5 shows the R-square and adjusted R-square values for the Educational Quality construct, which indicate how much the independent variables in the model can explain the variation in the dependent variable. An R-square value of 0.717 indicates that 71.7% of the variability in educational quality can be explained by three predictor variables, namely School Climate, Teacher Professionalism, and Spiritual Education. Meanwhile, the adjusted R-square value of 0.714 reflects adjustments for the number of predictors and sample size, yet still indicates a high predictive strength. Thus, these results suggest that the structural model constructed has high predictive power and that educational quality in *madrasahs* is substantially influenced by school climate and teacher professionalism. However, the direct contribution of spiritual education is relatively weak.

The Figure 1 is a visualization of the structural model from the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis that tests the influence of three independent variables, namely Spiritual Education, Teacher Professionalism, and School Climate, on the dependent variable Educational Quality. Each construct is measured by four indicators, all of which have a loading factor above 0.7, indicating that these indicators are valid in representing their respective constructs. For example, the SE_3 indicator (0.883) has the highest correlation with Spiritual Education, while TP_2 (0.922) best represents Teacher Professionalism, and SC_1 (0.919) most strongly reflects School Climate. On the other hand, the EQ_3 indicator (0.921) shows the most significant contribution in measuring Educational Quality.

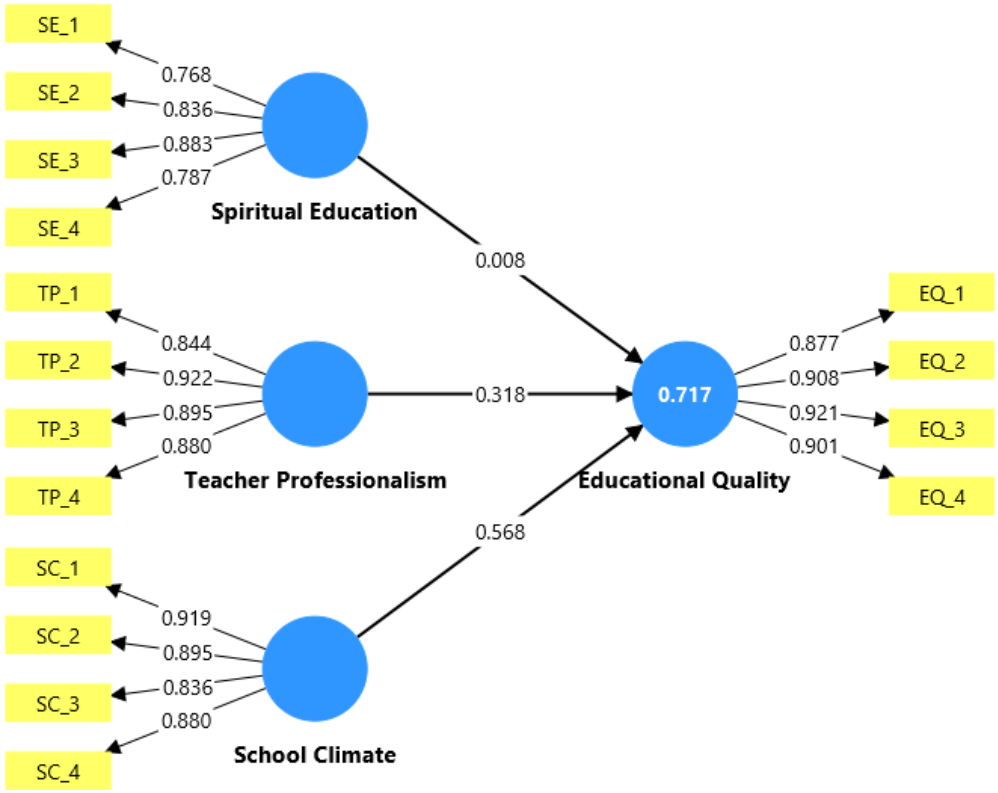

Figure 1. Visualization of the PLS-SEM Model Visualization of the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) Model of Spiritual Education, Teacher Professionalism, School Climate, and Education Quality

In terms of the relationship between variables, it was found that school climate has the most dominant influence on educational quality, with a path coefficient of 0.568, which indicates a substantial and practically significant contribution. Furthermore, Teacher Professionalism also has a positive influence with a coefficient value of 0.318, indicating that teacher professionalism has an important role in improving the quality of education. Meanwhile, spiritual education only has a very weak influence with a coefficient of 0.008, so the direct influence of spiritual education on the quality of education tends to be insignificant.

This model has an R^2 value of 0.717 for the Educational Quality variable, meaning that approximately 71.7% of the variation in educational quality can be explained by the three independent constructs in this model. This figure indicates the model's good predictive power. Thus, this study emphasizes the importance of creating a conducive school climate and improving teacher professionalism as key factors in boosting educational quality. The spiritual approach requires further study of its influencing mechanisms, both directly and through mediating variables.

Discussion

The structural model in the figure shows that Educational Quality can be explained by three primary constructs—Spiritual Education, Teacher Professionalism, and School Climate—with an R^2 value of 0.717. According to Hair (2014), this value is included in the substantial category, indicating strong predictive ability. All indicators of the four constructs have outer loading values above 0.7, indicating excellent convergent validity. Thus, this model measurement is declared statistically valid and able to describe the theoretical concepts well in madrasas.

The School Climate variable has the most decisive influence on Educational Quality with a path coefficient of 0.568. This finding supports previous literature, as stated by Thapa et al. (2013), that a healthy school climate—which includes positive relationships, safety, and structural support—plays a crucial role in promoting academic achievement and student well-being. It confirms that a favorable school climate strengthens motivation, teacher efficiency, and constructive student behavior (Katsantonis, 2019; Finch et al., 2023; Luo & Derakhshan, 2024). For *madrasah* education, this finding underscores that a physically, psychologically, and spiritually supportive environment can improve the quality of learning, which ultimately impacts the quality of education.

Teacher Professionalism also showed a significant positive influence on Educational Quality with a path coefficient of 0.318. It confirms that teacher professionalism—which encompasses pedagogical competence, commitment, and continuous development—is a crucial element in improving educational quality. Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) emphasized that professional teachers consistently create effective and outcome-oriented learning environments. In madrasas, teacher professionalism must also reflect Islamic values, creating learning that is not only high-quality but also morally and spiritually meaningful. It is reinforced by the findings of Juhji et al., (2023) that satisfied teachers who continue to develop their competencies contribute positively to the learning process, especially during the pandemic, reinforcing teachers' role in creating adaptive, effective, and outcome-oriented learning environments.

One interesting finding is that Spiritual Education only has a very weak direct effect on Educational Quality (path coefficient = 0.008). It indicates that the spiritual dimension has not been successfully integrated functionally into educational practices that directly impact quality. It supports the findings of Nurjayanti et al. (2024) that students' Spiritual Quotient (SQ) does not have a significant influence on students' academic achievement. However, it is linked through learning effort factors. Strengthening this, Zhou et al. (2024) found that despite finding a positive correlation between spiritual intelligence (SQ) and learning

achievement, the effect was much weaker than that of emotional intelligence (EQ). It indicates that spiritual education has an indirect impact, or through a mediator, rather than as a primary influence on educational quality. In line with this, Lovat and Toomey (2009) stated that spiritual values tend to have a long-term influence through internalization of values, rather than through directly measurable outputs such as learning outcomes or stakeholder satisfaction. Therefore, the implementation of spiritual education needs to be more strategic and connected to instructional mechanisms.

The weak direct effect of Spiritual Education raises the hypothesis that its influence is indirect through mediating variables such as Teacher Professionalism or School Climate. Egel and Fry (2017) state that spiritual values influence work behavior and commitment through personal transformation and organizational culture. This finding is supported by Reave (2005), who found that spiritual values-based leadership significantly improves professional ethics and interpersonal relationships, two elements highly relevant to other constructs in this model.

These findings have important implications for policy development in *madrasah* environments. An integrative approach is needed to instill spirituality into the work culture, learning, and evaluation of education. Nasution (2017) emphasized that transformative Islamic education connects the values of monotheism, morality, and social charity with concrete and measurable educational practices. This means that spirituality in education is not sufficient merely as a normative doctrine; it must be translated into methods, teacher-student interactions, and the development of transformative teacher competencies.

Based on these findings, further studies are recommended to explore mediation models and test the indirect path between Spiritual Education and Educational Quality. Furthermore, testing a longitudinal model can help uncover the long-term influence of spiritual values in education. As suggested by Hargreaves and Fullan (2012), the integration of moral values and professional development can create moral purpose in educational practice, ultimately contributing to sustainable quality. Therefore, strengthening the collaborations between structural, professional, and spiritual aspects is key to building a holistic and meaningful education.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study provides empirical evidence that school climate and teacher professionalism are the most influential factors in improving the quality of education in *madrasahs,* while spiritual education, taken separately, does not demonstrate a significant direct effect. These findings expand previous theoretical understandings that place spiritual education as a primary factor in determining the quality of education in Islamic institutions. To have a real impact, spiritual values need to be implemented through professional teaching practices and supported by a conducive and collaborative institutional climate. Thus, this study makes an important contribution to the development of Islamic education theory by integrating the dimensions of spirituality, professionalism, and the institutional environment into a comprehensive causal model.

Practically, the results of this study emphasize the importance for education policymakers, *madrasah* leaders, and teacher training institutions to prioritize the development of a positive *madrasah* climate and the improvement of teacher professionalism as key

strategies in strengthening the quality of *madrasah* education. Spiritual education as a program should not stand alone but rather be systematically integrated into the pedagogical practices and culture of the institution. Therefore, policies are needed that strengthen supportive leadership, participatory management, and psychological safety within the *madrasah* environment to maintain a conducive climate. Future research is recommended to use a mixed-methods approach with a broader and more diverse sample size to deepen understanding of the dynamics of the interaction between spiritual values, professionalism, and school climate in shaping the quality of *madrasah* education.

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