

Transformation of Islamic Education Organizations Through Adaptive Leadership in Rejang Lebong Regency

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Abstract. The transformation of Islamic education organizations is a strategic need in the face of global disruption, the development of digital technology, and social changes in modern society. This study aims to analyze how adaptive leadership plays a role in encouraging the transformation of Islamic education organizations in madrassas and Islamic schools in Rejang Lebong Regency, Bengkulu Province. The research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design on several Islamic educational institutions. Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and documentation studies. Data analysis uses the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. The results of the study show that adaptive leadership has a significant contribution to the transformation of Islamic education organizations through strengthening innovative organizational culture, digitizing educational administration, developing human resource competencies, improving the quality of learning, and strengthening collaboration between education stakeholders. Adaptive leadership allows Islamic educational institutions to build organizational flexibility in the face of changing modern educational environments without abandoning spiritual values and Islamic identity. In addition, research has found that the success of organizational transformation is influenced by leaders' ability to build participatory communication, collective learning, and responsive decision-making to adaptive challenges.

Keywords: Adaptive Leadership, Organizational Transformation, Islamic Education, Education Digitalization, Islamic Education Management

Introduction

The transformation of educational organizations in the 21st century has become a strategic issue in the global education management discourse. The development of digital technology, social disruption, changes in communication patterns, and the competency demands of modern society have fundamentally changed the paradigm of managing educational institutions. In this context, Islamic educational institutions no longer only function as institutions for the transmission of religious values, but are also required to be able to become an adaptive, innovative, and competitive learning organization in the midst of dynamic global environmental changes (Fullan, 2014; Bush, 2020). This condition places the transformation of Islamic education organizations as an urgent need so that educational institutions are able to maintain their existence while improving the quality of educational services based on Islamic values.

Changes in the global education environment influenced by the Industrial Revolution 4.0 and the concept of Society 5.0 have encouraged educational organizations to digitize administrative systems, innovate learning, and strengthen information technology-based institutional governance. According to modern Educational Leadership, an educational organization that can survive is one that has structural flexibility, an innovative culture, and a high capacity to adapt to changes in the external environment (Kotter, 2012; Robbins & Judge, 2019). In the context of Islamic education, these challenges become increasingly complex because Islamic educational institutions not only face the demands of modernizing education,

but are also obliged to maintain spiritual identity, culture, and Islamic values as the main foundation of educational organizations.

Empirically, many Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia still face various structural and managerial problems, such as low quality of human resources, limited technological infrastructure, weak innovative organizational culture, and resistance to institutional change. This condition causes some Islamic educational institutions to experience organizational stagnation and difficulty competing in the modern education ecosystem (Sahin, 2018). Therefore, a leadership model is needed that is not only oriented towards organizational stability, but also can manage change in a responsive, collaborative, and sustainable manner.

From the perspective of modern organizational theory, leadership has a central position in determining the success of organizational transformation. One of the relevant leadership approaches in dealing with the complexity of change is adaptive leadership or adaptive leadership developed by Ronald Heifetz. Adaptive leadership emphasizes the leader's ability to help organizations face adaptive challenges through collective learning processes, strengthening organizational participation, continuous innovation, and flexible decision-making in response to environmental change (Heifetz et al., 2009). This approach is considered relevant to be applied in Islamic educational organizations because it is able to integrate aspects of organizational change with the strengthening of institutional culture and spiritual values.

Studies about adaptive leadership demonstrate that organizations whose leaders adapt well will have better chances of creating an innovative organizational culture, improving collaboration among stakeholders, and ensuring more efficiency in the process of institutional transformation (Northouse, 2021). Besides, transformative organizational change based on adaptive leadership will also help in enhancing the competency of human resources and the digitalization of education organizations (Gonzalez-Varona et al., 2024). In the context of Islamic education, adaptive leadership is important because organizational change cannot be carried out only through administrative and bureaucratic approaches, but requires the ability to build collective awareness, social participation, and organizational cultural transformation simultaneously.

Rejang Lebong Regency, as one of the educational areas in Bengkulu Province, has a significant development of Islamic educational institutions, both in the form of madrasas, Islamic boarding schools, and integrated Islamic schools. However, Islamic educational institutions in this area also face quite complex modernization challenges, such as the need to digitize education administration, improve the quality of learning, strengthen teacher competence, and adapt to changes in national education policies. This situation requires the presence of educational leadership that is able to manage organizational changes strategically without eliminating the characteristics of local Islamic values that become the institutional identity.

Previous studies have focused more on transformational leadership and change management in education organizations in general, while studies on adaptive leadership in Islamic education organizations in the regions are still relatively limited, especially in the local context of Indonesia. In fact, the local context has different social, cultural, and religiosity characteristics, so it requires a leadership approach that is contextual and based on the needs of Islamic education organizations in the region. This research gap is an important basis for research on the transformation of Islamic education organizations through adaptive leadership in Rejang Lebong Regency.

This study aims to analyze how adaptive leadership plays a role in driving the transformation of Islamic education organizations through strengthening organizational culture, digitizing education, developing human resources, and increasing collaboration of educational stakeholders. This research is expected to make a theoretical contribution to the development of the study of Islamic Educational Management and Islamic education leadership, as well as make a practical contribution as a model for the development of adaptive, innovative,

and sustainable Islamic educational organizations in the era of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 and Society 5.0.

Material and Method

This study uses a Mixed Methods approach with a Sequential Explanatory Design, which is the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods sequentially to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the transformation of Islamic education organizations through adaptive leadership in Rejang Lebong Regency. The mixed methods approach was chosen because it is able to integrate the power of generalizing quantitative data with in-depth and contextual qualitative data so as to produce a more holistic interpretation of the phenomenon of Islamic educational organizations (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

In the first stage, the study used a quantitative approach to measure the influence of adaptive leadership on the transformation of Islamic educational organizations through the distribution of questionnaires to the study respondents. Furthermore, the second stage uses a qualitative approach through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and documentation studies to strengthen the interpretation of quantitative results and explore the socio-organizational dynamics that occur in Islamic educational institutions.

This approach is considered relevant because the organizational transformation of Islamic education is a multidimensional phenomenon that cannot be explained through statistics alone, but also requires an exploration of the values, organizational culture, communication patterns, and leadership practices that develop in the Islamic educational environment (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Ivankova et al., 2006).

Research Location and Context

The research was carried out at several Islamic educational institutions in Rejang Lebong Regency, Bengkulu Province, which include aliyah madrasas, tsanawiyah madrasas, integrated Islamic schools, and modern Islamic boarding schools. The selection of research locations was carried out purposively by considering the characteristics of institutions that are carrying out the process of organizational transformation, digitization of education, and strengthening institutional governance based on educational innovation.

Rejang Lebong Regency was chosen because it has significant dynamics of Islamic education development in Bengkulu Province and faces complex educational modernization challenges, especially in the aspects of administrative digitalization, improving the quality of learning, and developing the competence of Islamic education human resources.

Population and Research Sample

At the quantitative stage, the research population consists of madrasah heads, teachers, education staff, and managers of Islamic educational institutions in Rejang Lebong Regency. The sampling technique uses purposive sampling with the criteria of respondents who are directly involved in the organizational transformation process of educational institutions.

The number of quantitative samples was 120 respondents from various Islamic educational institutions. This number is considered representative to measure the relationship between research variables using inferential statistical analysis (Hair et al., 2021).

At the qualitative stage, research informants were selected using snowball sampling techniques and involved:

1. Head of the madrasa/Islamic school;
2. Teacher;
3. Education personnel;
4. Islamic education supervisor;
5. Community leader;
6. School committee;
7. Islamic boarding school administrator.

The selection of informants is carried out based on their level of involvement in the process of transforming Islamic educational organizations.

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection is carried out through the following techniques:

Questionnaire

Questionnaire instruments are used to measure variables:

1. Adaptive leadership;
2. Organizational transformation;
3. Innovative organizational culture;
4. Digitalization of education;
5. Stakeholder collaboration.

The questionnaire uses a five-level Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The development of the instrument refers to the adaptive leadership theory of Heifetz et al. (2009), transformational leadership from Bass (2006), and the organizational transformation framework from Kotter (2012).

In-Depth Interview

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore:

1. Adaptive leadership strategies;
2. Organizational decision-making patterns;
3. Resistance to change;
4. Culture of institutional innovation;
5. Education digitalization strategy;
6. Strengthening Islamic values in organizational transformation.

The interview technique allows researchers to obtain reflective and contextual data related to the dynamics of Islamic educational organizations (Yin, 2018).

Participatory Observation

Observations were made on the activities of educational organizations such as:

1. Digital-based administrative processes;
2. Organizational meetings;
3. Learning activities;
4. Interactions among stakeholders;
5. Implementation of organizational culture.

Participatory observation helps researchers understand organizational phenomena directly in the natural context of Islamic educational institutions.

Documentation Studies

Documentation includes:

1. Institutional work program;
2. Education policy documents;
3. School digitization archives;
4. Educational evaluation reports;
5. Organizational structure;
6. Human resource development documents.

Documents are used as supporting data to strengthen the validity of research results.

Data Validity and Reliability

At the quantitative stage, the validity of the instrument is tested using:

1. Construct validity test;

2. Pearson Product-Moment correlation test;
3. Cronbach's Alpha reliability test with a minimum value of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2021).

At the qualitative stage, data validity is carried out through:

1. Source triangulation;
2. Technique triangulation;
3. Member checking;
4. Peer debriefing;
5. Audit trail.

The technique is used to increase the credibility, dependability, and confirmability of research results (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Data Analysis Techniques

Quantitative Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics with the help of SPSS/SmartPLS software. The analysis is carried out through:

1. Normality test;
2. Multicollinearity test;
3. Linear regression analysis;
4. Coefficient of determination test;
5. Hypothesis testing (t-test and F-test).

This analysis aims to determine the influence of adaptive leadership on the transformation of Islamic educational organizations.

Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014) through:

1. Data condensation;
2. Data display;
3. Conclusion drawing and verification.

The analysis was carried out simultaneously from the data collection process to the drawing of conclusions to obtain the patterns, themes, and meanings of the transformation of Islamic educational organizations.

Integrasi Data Mixed Methods

The integration stage is carried out by linking quantitative and qualitative results at the final interpretation stage of the research. Data integration aims to:

1. Reinforce statistical results with empirical field findings;
2. Explaining organizational phenomena within their context;
3. Developing a conceptual model of adaptive leadership for the transformation of Islamic education.

This integration model allows research to generate a deeper and more comprehensive understanding compared to the use of a single method (Creswell, 2014).

Research Ethics

The research is carried out by paying attention to the principles of academic ethics, including:

1. Informed consent;
2. Confidentiality of respondent identities;
3. Research objectivity;
4. Data transparency;
5. Use of data solely for academic purposes.

The researcher also maintains the sensitivity of cultural and religious values of Islamic educational institutions during the research process.

Results and Discussion

Results

Cultural Transformation of Islamic Education Organizations

The results of the study show that adaptive leadership has a significant influence on organizational culture transformation in Islamic educational institutions in Rejang Lebong Regency. Based on the results of the quantitative analysis, the adaptive leadership variable obtained a positive influence value on the innovative organizational culture with a regression coefficient of $\beta = 0.712$ and a significance value of $p < 0.05$. These findings show that the higher the adaptive leadership capacity of madrasah heads and leaders of Islamic educational institutions, the stronger the organizational culture that supports organizational innovation, collaboration, and learning.

Empirically, the results of the interviews show that madrasah heads are starting to abandon the bureaucratic-conventional leadership pattern towards a participatory and collaborative approach. Institutional leaders no longer only function as administrative controllers, but also as facilitators of organizational change that encourage the involvement of teachers, education staff, school committees, and the community in the institutional decision-making process.

One of the informants, the head of the madrasah, said:

"Education transformation cannot be done by the leadership alone. We started to build a culture of discussion, openness of ideas, and teamwork so that teachers felt they had a change in the institution."

The statement shows that adaptive leadership has encouraged the formation of an organizational learning culture that allows Islamic educational institutions to be more flexible in dealing with the dynamics of modern education. These conclusions are consistent with the theory of adaptive leadership, proposed by Ronald Heifetz. According to this theory, the key issues are collective learning, adaptive work, and participatory communication.

In addition, the results of observations show a change in the work culture of Islamic educational institutions that have begun to prioritize:

1. Collaboration across work units;
2. Learning innovation;
3. Open communication;
4. Reflection-based organizational evaluation;
5. Strengthening the culture of quality.

This adaptive organizational culture is an important capital in strengthening the resilience of Islamic education organizations to the disruption of education in the digital era. This study's results are aligned with the findings of research conducted by Michael Fullan where it is stated that contemporary educational organizations require a culture of collective learning to sustain institutional change (Fullan, 2014).

In addition, the process of transforming organizational culture in Islamic educational institutions in Rejang Lebong sustains the value identity of Islam as the institutional basis. This can be seen from the integration of religious culture in organizational activities such as ukhuwah-based deliberation based on ukhuwah values, strengthening organizational morals, and internalizing the value of trust and responsibility in educational governance. Thus, organizational transformation does not eliminate the spiritual identity of the institution, but rather strengthens the harmonization between the modernization of education management and Islamic values.

These findings strengthen the argument of Sahin (2018) that effective Islamic education transformation is not just administrative modernization, but also the ability of institutions to maintain a balance between organizational innovation and the strengthening of religious identity.

Digitization of Education System and Organizational Governance

The transformation of Islamic education organizations in Rejang Lebong Regency is also shown through the increasing digitalization of the administrative system, organizational communication, and learning processes. Based on the results of a survey of research respondents, as many as 81% of Islamic educational institutions have started implementing a digital-based administration system, including the use of student data management applications, electronic attendance, online communication media, and digital learning platforms.

Adaptive leadership has proven to have a significant contribution in accelerating the digitalization process of educational organizations. Institutional leaders actively do:

1. Training on the use of learning technology;
2. Teacher support for digital learning;
3. Strengthening digital literacy;
4. Development of school information systems;
5. Technology-based evaluation.

The results of the interviews showed that teachers' resistance to the use of technology began to decrease after the leaders of the institution applied a persuasive and collaborative approach in the process of organizational change.

One of the teachers stated:

"Initially, many teachers found it difficult to use digital media. However, the principal does not directly force, but accompanies gradually through training and joint discussions."

The findings show that adaptive leadership is not only oriented towards technical change, but is also able to manage the psychological and social aspects of the organizational transformation process. This model follows the principles of adaptive leadership theory, in that it recognizes that organizational change necessitates adaptive effort through collective learning and mindset changes in organizations (Heifetz et al., 2009).

From a theoretical point of view, the findings from this study also support the research of Gonzalez-Varona et al. (2024), who argue that the success of organizational digital transformation highly depends on the abilities of leaders to develop organizational competencies for technology innovation.

In addition, field observations show that the digitalization of education has had a positive impact on:

1. School administrative efficiency;
2. Speed of organizational communication;
3. Transparency in education governance;
4. Effectiveness of learning;
5. Access to educational information.

Digital transformation also strengthens the capacity of Islamic education organizations in facing the challenges of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 and Society 5.0. Islamic educational institutions are beginning to use social media as a means of institutional branding, public communication, and strengthening community-based educational networks.

However, the research found that the digitalization process still faces several obstacles, including:

1. Limited technology infrastructure;
2. Uneven internet access;
3. Low digital competence among some senior teachers;
4. Limited budget for educational technology development.

However, adaptive leadership has been proven to be able to reduce these barriers through gradual transformation and collaborative problem-solving strategies.

Human Resource Development in Organizational Transformation

The results of the study show that the success of the transformation of Islamic education organizations is greatly influenced by the quality of human resource (HR) development. In this context, adaptive leadership plays an important role in building the capacity of teachers and education personnel to be able to face changes in the modern education system.

Research data show that adaptive Islamic educational institutions have a higher level of teacher training participation compared to institutions that still use the administrative-conventional leadership pattern. The forms of human resource development carried out include:

1. Curriculum workshop;
2. Digital learning training;
3. Strengthening pedagogical competence;
4. Teacher leadership training;
5. Development of a culture of research and scientific publication.

Heads of educational institutions actively encourage teachers to participate in national seminars, educational technology training, and ongoing professional development activities. This strategy creates an organizational learning culture that strengthens institutional adaptability.

These results are consistent with the position held by Peter G. Northouse regarding the strategic role of adaptive leadership in developing organizational capacity and organizational readiness for environmental changes (Northouse, 2021).

Qualitatively, the results of the interviews showed that teachers began to have a new awareness of the importance of learning innovation and mastery of educational technology. One of the teachers said:

"Now we are required to continue learning. Principals often motivate teachers not to be left behind by technological developments."

This shows that the transformation of Islamic education organizations is not only structural, but also touches on changing the mindset and culture of professionalism of educators.

In addition, human resource development is also directed at strengthening the moral and spiritual integrity of teachers as part of the characteristics of Islamic education. Thus, the development of professional competence goes hand in hand with the strengthening of religious values and Islamic educational ethics.

The findings of this study support the transformational leadership theory of Bernard M. Bass, which affirms that effective leaders are able to inspire organizational behavior change through motivation, empowerment, and development of human resource potential (Bass, 2006).

Strengthening Collaboration and Stakeholder Participation

The transformation of Islamic education organizations in Rejang Lebong Regency is also supported by strengthening collaboration between education stakeholders. Adaptive leadership has been proven to be able to build more synergistic relationships between:

1. Educational institutions;
2. School committees;
3. Parents;
4. Religious leaders;
5. Local government;
6. Local community.

The results showed that stakeholder involvement increased significantly after institutional leaders implemented participatory and transparent communication patterns. Institutional leaders began to engage stakeholders in:

1. Formulation of school programs;
2. Evaluation of education policies;

3. Development of educational facilities;
4. School digitalization program;
5. Strengthening the institution's religious culture.

The collaboration strengthens social trust and a sense of belonging to changes in Islamic educational organizations. One of the community leaders stated:

"Now schools are more open to the community. School programs are often discussed together so that the community supports educational change."

These findings suggest that adaptive leadership contributes to the formation of collaborative governance in Islamic educational organizations. According to Bush (2020), educational organizations that successfully face change are organizations that are able to build collaborative networks and social participation at large.

From the perspective of Islamic education management, stakeholder collaboration has a strategic dimension because Islamic educational institutions cannot be separated from social support and community legitimacy. Therefore, adaptive leadership is an important instrument in building harmonization between organizational change and socio-religious expectations of the community.

The Challenges of Adaptive Leadership in the Transformation of Islamic Education

Although adaptive leadership has shown significant contributions to the transformation of Islamic educational organizations, this study finds some of the main challenges still faced by Islamic educational institutions in Rejang Lebong Regency.

These challenges include:

1. Organizational cultural resistance to change;
2. Technological infrastructure limitations;
3. Low digital competence among some educators;
4. Limited education funding;
5. A lack of training in organizational transformation-based leadership.

Organizational resistance mainly arises from some educators who are still comfortable with traditional and bureaucratic work patterns. In addition, the limitation of technological facilities is a serious obstacle in the process of digitizing education, especially in Islamic educational institutions in semi-rural areas.

Nevertheless, the results show that adaptive leaders are able to overcome these challenges through the following approaches:

1. Persuasive communication;
2. Organizational empowerment;
3. Collective learning;
4. Phased mentoring;
5. Reinforcing the motivation for change.

This approach shows that the transformation of Islamic education organizations requires a gradual process and is based on organizational culture. This finding is in line with the theory of organizational change from John P. Kotter, which asserts that the success of organizational change is influenced by the ability of leaders to build a vision for change, effective communication, and organizational participation (Kotter, 2012).

Overall, this study confirms that adaptive leadership is a strategic approach in strengthening the transformation of Islamic educational organizations in the digital era and globalization of education. Adaptive leadership enables Islamic educational institutions to build organizational flexibility, institutional innovation, and educational sustainability without losing spiritual identity.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the research, it can be concluded that adaptive leadership has a strategic and significant role in encouraging the transformation of Islamic education

organizations in Rejang Lebong Regency. The transformation not only takes place in administrative and structural aspects, but also touches on the cultural dimension of the organization, human resource development, digitization of education, and strengthening socio-religious collaboration between education stakeholders. The findings of the study show that Islamic educational institutions that apply adaptive leadership patterns tend to have organizational capacity that is more flexible, innovative, and responsive to the dynamics of global educational changes without losing the identity of Islamic values as the institutional foundation.

Adaptive leadership has been proven to be able to build a learning organization culture characterized by increasing participatory communication, institutional collaboration, learning innovation, and strengthening the organization's quality culture. In this context, Islamic education leaders no longer only function as bureaucratic administrators, but transform into facilitators of change who are able to drive collective learning and build organizational awareness of the importance of sustainable institutional transformation. These findings reinforce the adaptive leadership theory developed by Heifetz et al. (2009), that the success of modern organizations is greatly influenced by the ability of leaders to manage adaptive challenges through collective learning, participatory communication, and organizational capacity building.

This study also indicates that digitalization of education is one of the key elements of the transformation of Islamic educational institutions in the age of Industrial Revolution 4.0 and Society 5.0. Adaptability has proven its role as an important tool to increase the speed of the implementation of digitalized administrative systems, creation of online education, improvement of technological literacy of educators, and modernization of the management system. Digitalization not only increases efficiency of the administration and the quality of learning process, but also helps to improve competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions in the context of educational disruption on the global level. The results of this study correspond with the findings of Gonzalez-Varona et al. (2024), where it is stated that digital transformation of the organization presupposes the presence of leadership that can develop innovative culture.

In addition, the research found that human resource development is a fundamental element in the successful transformation of Islamic educational organizations. Adaptive leadership encourages the creation of a culture of teacher professionalism through continuous training, strengthening digital pedagogic competencies, developing a research culture, and increasing the capacity of learning innovation. At the same time, the development of professional competencies is still integrated with the strengthening of Islamic spiritual, moral, and ethical values so that organizational transformation does not lead to the secularization of education, but to the harmonization between the modernization of education and the strengthening of Islamic identity. This strengthens the view of Sahin (2018) that the sustainable transformation of Islamic education must be able to maintain a balance between institutional innovation and the preservation of religious values.

This research also shows that the success of Islamic education organization transformation is greatly influenced by the ability of leaders to build collaborative governance through strengthening the participation of education stakeholders, including teachers, school committees, parents, religious leaders, communities, and local governments. Adaptive leadership allows for the creation of more open, participatory, and trust-based institutional relationships. From the perspective of Islamic education management, such collaboration is an important social capital in strengthening the legitimacy and sustainability of educational organization transformation.

However, this study found that the transformation of Islamic education organizations still faces various challenges, such as organizational cultural resistance to change, limited technological infrastructure, low digital competence of some educators, and limited education funding. However, adaptive leadership approaches have been proven to be able to minimize these barriers through persuasive communication strategies, gradual mentoring, organizational

empowerment, and strengthening collective motivation for institutional change. In effect, the change of Islamic educational institutions would be nothing but an evolutionary process which demands visionary, flexible, and values-based leadership.

Theoretically, this study would contribute to the development of the field of Islamic Educational Management by integrating the ideas of adaptive leadership, organizational change, and modernization of Islamic education in Indonesia. This research strengthens the argument that the transformation of Islamic educational organizations cannot be carried out only through administrative and technocratic approaches, but requires a leadership approach that is humanistic, collaborative, innovative, and based on spiritual values. In a practical context, the results of this research can be a strategic model for the development of adaptive, sustainable, and competitive Islamic education organizations in the midst of global changes in 21st-century education.

Finally, this study confirms that adaptive leadership is a relevant and strategic leadership paradigm to build the future of modern Islamic education in Indonesia. Through adaptive leadership, Islamic educational institutions are not only able to survive global disruption, but also have the potential to become superior educational organizations that are able to integrate managerial innovation, digital transformation, strengthen organizational culture, and internalize Islamic values in a harmonious and sustainable manner.

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