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TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP THE QUALITY DEVELOPMENT OF MA'HAD AL-IZZAH INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL THE STONE TOWN

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Abstract

This study is motivated by the importance of transformational leadership in improving the quality of modern Islamic boarding school-based education that integrates spiritual values, academic culture, professionalism, and a global orientation. Ma'had Al Izzah International Islamic Boarding School in Batu City is challenged to develop an excellent and adaptive educational system while maintaining its traditional Islamic boarding school values. This study aims to analyze the implementation and evaluation system of transformational leadership in the institution's quality development. This research employed a qualitative approach with a case study design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation involving the principal, board of directors, teachers, dormitory supervisors, and various institutional activities. The analysis was conducted based on the perspective of transformational leadership within the context of modern Islamic education. The findings reveal that transformational leadership at Ma'had Al Izzah is implemented through strengthening the institutional vision, fostering a quality-oriented culture, integrating Islamic and academic curricula, developing students' character, and enhancing human resources based on exemplary conduct, discipline, and quality orientation. The leadership evaluation system is carried out systematically through supervision, program evaluation, institutional coordination, and continuous improvement to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of educational quality.

Keywords: *Transformational Leadership; Ma'had Quality; International Islamic Boarding School.*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh pentingnya kepemimpinan transformasional dalam meningkatkan mutu pendidikan Islam modern berbasis pesantren yang



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mampu mengintegrasikan nilai spiritual, budaya akademik, profesionalisme, dan orientasi global. Ma'had Al Izzah International Islamic Boarding School Kota Batu dituntut untuk mengembangkan sistem pendidikan yang unggul dan adaptif tanpa meninggalkan nilai-nilai kepesantrenan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis implementasi serta sistem evaluasi kepemimpinan transformasional dalam pengembangan mutu lembaga tersebut. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus. Data diperoleh melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi, dan dokumentasi yang melibatkan pimpinan, jajaran direktur, tenaga pendidik, pengasuhan, serta berbagai aktivitas kelembagaan. Analisis dilakukan berdasarkan perspektif kepemimpinan transformasional dalam konteks pendidikan Islam modern. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan transformasional di Ma'had Al Izzah diwujudkan melalui penguatan visi lembaga, pembangunan budaya mutu, integrasi kurikulum keislaman dan akademik, pembinaan karakter santri, serta pengembangan sumber daya manusia yang berorientasi pada keteladanan, disiplin, dan kualitas. Evaluasi kepemimpinan dilaksanakan secara sistematis melalui pengawasan, evaluasi program, koordinasi kelembagaan, dan perbaikan berkelanjutan guna menjaga efektivitas serta keberlanjutan mutu pendidikan.

Kata Kunci: *Kepemimpinan Transformasional; Mutu Ma'had; Pondok Pesantren International.*

INTRODUCTION

The increasing complexity of contemporary education has fundamentally transformed the way educational institutions are expected to be managed (Basri et al., 2024; Huang et al., 2024; Mena-Guacas et al., 2025; Zou et al., 2025). Rapid technological advancement, globalization, changing stakeholder expectations, and increasing competition among educational institutions have shifted the focus of educational leadership from administrative management toward strategic leadership capable of fostering innovation, organizational learning, and continuous quality improvement. International organizations have emphasized that educational institutions must become more adaptive, inclusive, and sustainable in responding to contemporary global challenges while preparing learners with competencies required for the twenty-first century (Mokski et al., 2022; OECD, 2023; Ul Hassan et al., 2025; UNESCO, 2021). For Islamic educational institutions, these challenges are even more demanding because they are expected not only to achieve academic excellence and organizational effectiveness but also to preserve Islamic values, strengthen students' moral character, and maintain the distinctive identity of pesantren-based education. Consequently, educational leadership in Islamic boarding schools must simultaneously address institutional

competitiveness, educational quality, and spiritual development within an increasingly dynamic educational environment.

Educational quality has become one of the most important indicators of institutional sustainability and public trust. Previous studies have consistently demonstrated that sustainable educational quality depends not only on curriculum development, adequate facilities, or competent teachers, but also on leadership capable of building a shared vision, cultivating organizational commitment, empowering human resources, and establishing a culture of continuous improvement (Jerab & Mabrouk, 2023; Kareem et al., 2024; Riza et al., 2025; Schein, 2010). Among various leadership approaches, transformational leadership has received considerable scholarly attention because of its emphasis on inspiring organizational members, encouraging innovation, facilitating organizational change, and improving institutional performance through shared values and collective commitment (Bass & Avolio, 1994; López et al., 2023; Pedraja-Rejas et al., 2025; Wang et al., 2023). More recent educational leadership studies also suggest that transformational leadership contributes significantly to school improvement, organizational learning, teacher commitment, and institutional effectiveness across different educational settings. Nevertheless, empirical investigations examining transformational leadership within Islamic boarding schools remain relatively limited, particularly those focusing on its role in sustaining educational quality.

Although transformational leadership has been extensively discussed in educational leadership literature, existing studies generally conceptualize it using the theoretical framework proposed by Bass and Avolio (1994), emphasizing idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. While this framework has contributed significantly to understanding educational leadership, it has largely been developed from Western organizational contexts and pays limited attention to the theological, spiritual, and ethical dimensions that fundamentally shape leadership practices in Islamic educational institutions. In pesantren-based education, leadership is inseparable from Islamic values such as *tawhid*, *amanah*, *ihsan*, *siddiq*, *tabligh*, and *itqan*, which function not merely as ethical principles but also as organizational drivers influencing decision-making, institutional culture, and quality development (Bahri et al., 2026; Beekun & Badawi, 1999; Fadlillah & Achadi, 2026; Kawakip & Sulanam, 2023; Maryamah, 2026; Mundiri & Iqna'a, 2025; Setiawan et al., 2026; Yugo, 2025). Consequently, the direct application of conventional transformational leadership theory may not fully capture the complexity of leadership practices within modern Islamic boarding schools.

Recent research has increasingly acknowledged the importance of integrating spirituality, organizational culture, and educational leadership to enhance institutional effectiveness. Studies on spiritual leadership have demonstrated positive relationships between spiritual values, organizational commitment, employee motivation, organizational citizenship behavior, and institutional performance (Fry & Griswold, 2003). Similarly, research on Islamic leadership emphasizes that religious ethics strengthen accountability, integrity, justice, and social responsibility within educational organizations (Beekun & Badawi, 1999). Meanwhile, organizational culture has consistently been recognized as an essential mechanism through which leadership influences educational quality, institutional commitment, and sustainable organizational development (Schein, 2010). However, these studies generally examine transformational leadership, spiritual leadership, Islamic leadership, organizational culture, and quality management as separate constructs. Very few studies have attempted to integrate these complementary perspectives into a comprehensive leadership framework specifically designed for modern Islamic boarding schools. Therefore, a significant theoretical gap remains concerning how transformational leadership can be contextualized within Islamic educational institutions while simultaneously supporting sustainable quality development.

This study addresses that gap by examining transformational leadership practices at Ma'had Al-Izzah International Islamic Boarding School, Batu City, an institution recognized for integrating Islamic boarding school traditions with modern educational management and an international educational orientation. Unlike previous studies that primarily describe leadership styles or organizational management practices, this research seeks to explain how transformational leadership is operationalized through Islamic theological values, ethical leadership principles, institutional vision, organizational culture, and quality management practices. By positioning Islamic values as strategic organizational resources rather than merely normative principles, the study extends existing transformational leadership scholarship and offers a contextual understanding of leadership practices within contemporary pesantren education.

Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the implementation of transformational leadership in developing educational quality at Ma'had Al-Izzah International Islamic Boarding School and to identify the leadership mechanisms through which Islamic values are translated into institutional policies, organizational culture, human resource development, curriculum integration, and continuous quality improvement. Rather than merely describing leadership activities, the study seeks to develop a contextual understanding of transformational

leadership that reflects the distinctive characteristics of Islamic boarding schools and contributes to educational leadership theory within Islamic educational settings.

This study argues that transformational leadership in modern Islamic boarding schools cannot be adequately understood solely through conventional transformational leadership theory. Instead, transformational leadership becomes substantially more effective when integrated with Islamic theological values, ethical leadership, and institutional quality culture. It is therefore proposed that sustainable educational quality emerges from the interaction between visionary transformational leadership, Islamic spiritual values, organizational commitment, and continuous quality improvement mechanisms. This argument provides the conceptual foundation for developing a contextually relevant model of transformational leadership for modern Islamic boarding schools, which constitutes the principal theoretical contribution of this study.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative case study design to explore how transformational leadership is implemented in developing educational quality at Ma'had Al-Izzah International Islamic Boarding School, Batu City. A qualitative case study was considered the most appropriate approach because the study sought to obtain an in-depth understanding of leadership practices within their real-life organizational context rather than to test predetermined hypotheses or measure causal relationships. Consistent with the characteristics of case study research, the investigation focused on understanding the interaction between leadership practices, Islamic values, organizational culture, and institutional quality development as an integrated phenomenon.

The research was conducted at Ma'had Al-Izzah International Islamic Boarding School, Batu City, East Java, Indonesia. The institution was purposively selected because it represents a modern Islamic boarding school that integrates Islamic educational traditions with international-oriented educational management while continuously implementing quality improvement programs. This unique institutional context provided a rich setting for examining how transformational leadership is contextualized within Islamic educational governance.

Participants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure that all informants possessed direct experience and strategic responsibilities related to institutional leadership and quality development. The participants consisted of the Head of Ma'had, members of the foundation board, institutional directors, vice principals, senior teachers, dormitory supervisors, and administrative personnel

responsible for quality assurance and institutional management. These participants were considered key informants because they were actively involved in strategic planning, policy implementation, educational management, and institutional evaluation.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, non-participant observations, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews enabled participants to explain their experiences regarding transformational leadership, organizational culture, quality management, and the integration of Islamic values into institutional governance. Observations focused on leadership interactions, institutional meetings, learning activities, quality assurance practices, and daily boarding school life to capture leadership behaviors within their natural setting. Documentary evidence, including institutional strategic plans, quality assurance documents, curriculum guidelines, annual reports, organizational regulations, meeting minutes, and internal evaluation reports, was examined to corroborate the interview and observational data.

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis following an iterative process of data reduction, coding, categorization, theme development, and interpretation. Initially, all interview transcripts, field notes, and documentary evidence were organized and read repeatedly to achieve data familiarization. Open coding was subsequently conducted to identify meaningful units related to transformational leadership practices, Islamic leadership values, organizational culture, quality development, and institutional sustainability. Similar codes were then grouped into broader categories, from which overarching themes were developed through constant comparison across different data sources. These themes subsequently formed the basis for interpreting how transformational leadership contributes to educational quality development within the institutional context.

To enhance the trustworthiness of the findings, several strategies were employed throughout the research process. Credibility was strengthened through triangulation of interviews, observations, and documentary evidence, as well as member checking with several key informants to verify the accuracy of interpretations. Dependability was supported by maintaining a systematic audit trail documenting the research procedures, coding decisions, and analytical processes. Confirmability was ensured by continuously comparing emerging interpretations with empirical evidence obtained from multiple sources, while transferability was facilitated through detailed descriptions of the institutional context, participant characteristics, and leadership practices, enabling readers to assess the applicability of the findings in similar educational settings.

The study adhered to established ethical principles for qualitative research. Participation was voluntary, informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection, confidentiality was maintained through anonymization of participants' identities, and all collected information was used exclusively for academic purposes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Internalization of Islamic Values as the Foundation of Transformational Leadership

The analysis revealed that transformational leadership at Ma'had Al-Izzah International Islamic Boarding School is fundamentally rooted in Islamic theological values that shape both leadership philosophy and institutional governance. Rather than functioning merely as administrative principles, values such as *tawhid*, *amanah*, *siddiq*, *tabligh*, *ihsan*, and *itqan* constitute the normative foundation guiding strategic decision-making, organizational behavior, and quality development. The convergence of interview data, institutional observations, and documentary evidence indicates that these values are systematically internalized through institutional policies, leadership practices, and daily educational activities.

Interview findings indicate that institutional leaders consistently position educational quality as an integral component of religious responsibility rather than solely an administrative obligation. Leadership is therefore understood as an *amanah* (trust) requiring accountability not only to organizational stakeholders but also to Islamic ethical principles. This theological orientation influences strategic planning, institutional goal setting, and quality assurance practices, ensuring that organizational development remains aligned with both educational excellence and spiritual values.

Observational data further demonstrate that the internalization of Islamic leadership values extends beyond formal policy documents into everyday institutional culture. Leadership meetings, teacher development programs, student mentoring activities, and routine religious practices consistently reinforce shared institutional values. Such practices contribute to the establishment of a quality culture in which discipline, responsibility, collaboration, and continuous improvement are perceived as religious as well as professional obligations.

Document analysis also confirms this pattern. Institutional strategic plans, quality assurance documents, and educational development programs consistently integrate Islamic values with organizational objectives. Rather than separating academic achievement from character formation, institutional documents

emphasize the simultaneous development of intellectual competence, spiritual maturity, leadership capacity, and global competitiveness.

Collectively, these findings suggest that transformational leadership at Ma'had Al-Izzah is not simply an adaptation of Western leadership theory but represents a contextually grounded leadership practice in which Islamic theological values function as strategic organizational resources supporting sustainable quality development.

Table 1. Empirical Evidence Supporting Theme 1

Source of Evidence	Key Findings	Contribution to Transformational Leadership
Interviews with institutional leaders	Leadership is interpreted as amanah and collective responsibility	Establishes ethical and spiritual foundations for leadership
Institutional observations	Islamic values are integrated into daily organizational practices	Reinforces organizational commitment and quality culture
Strategic planning documents	Institutional vision combines Islamic values and educational excellence	Aligns quality management with long-term institutional goals



Figure 1. Internalization of Islamic leadership values through institutional activities

Figure 1 illustrates the internalization of Islamic leadership values through institutional activities. The photograph documents routine leadership and educational activities in which organizational values, discipline, and collective commitment are reinforced as part of daily institutional practice

Visionary Leadership and the Development of a Quality Culture

The second major theme emerging from the analysis concerns the role of visionary leadership in establishing a sustainable quality culture. Data from interviews, observations, and institutional documents consistently indicate that the institutional vision serves as the central mechanism through which transformational leadership aligns organizational members toward common educational objectives.

Rather than functioning as a formal statement displayed in institutional documents, the vision is continuously translated into strategic policies, curriculum development, human resource management, and quality assurance programs. Interview data reveal that institutional leaders emphasize the importance of communicating the vision through regular meetings, professional development activities, and organizational coordination. This continuous communication enables teachers, administrators, and boarding supervisors to understand their respective roles in achieving institutional goals.

Observational evidence further demonstrates that leadership practices encourage collaboration, collective decision-making, and organizational learning. Staff meetings are characterized by participatory discussion rather than hierarchical instruction, reflecting the transformational leadership principle of empowering organizational members. Such participatory governance contributes to the emergence of mutual trust and shared responsibility for institutional improvement.

Institutional documents also show that quality policies are formulated through systematic planning, needs assessment, benchmarking with leading educational institutions, and continuous evaluation. Consequently, quality development is not perceived as a series of isolated programs but as an integrated organizational process supported by a shared institutional vision.

These findings indicate that transformational leadership contributes to educational quality not only through managerial effectiveness but also through the development of an organizational culture that promotes innovation, collaboration, accountability, and continuous improvement.

Table 2. Leadership Practices Supporting Organizational Quality Culture

Leadership Practice	Evidence	Organizational Impact
Shared institutional vision	Strategic planning documents	Organizational alignment
Participatory decision-making	Leadership meetings	Increased organizational commitment

Leadership Practice		Evidence	Organizational Impact
Continuous development	professional Teacher programs	training	Improved human resource quality
Quality-oriented communication	Institutional coordination		Sustainable quality culture



Figure 2. Institutional coordination and strategic planning activities

Figure 2 presents documentation of institutional coordination and strategic planning activities illustrating how transformational leadership is operationalized through collaborative governance and quality-oriented management.

Transformational Leadership in the Implementation of Educational Quality Standards

The third theme emerging from the analysis demonstrates that transformational leadership is institutionalized through the implementation of educational quality standards. Rather than functioning only as a leadership philosophy, transformational leadership is translated into systematic quality management practices that influence curriculum development, human resource management, educational processes, institutional governance, and continuous quality assurance.

Analysis of institutional documents indicates that educational quality development is guided by a comprehensive quality management system integrating the Eight National Education Standards with the strategic vision of Ma'had Al-Izzah. This integration allows institutional leaders to align national educational

requirements with the distinctive characteristics of pesantren education, thereby maintaining compliance with governmental regulations while preserving Islamic educational values.

Interview findings further indicate that leadership plays an essential role in coordinating curriculum innovation and institutional quality assurance. Institutional leaders continuously encourage collaboration among teachers, dormitory supervisors, administrative staff, and management units in designing educational programs that integrate Islamic knowledge, academic excellence, leadership development, and global competencies. Consequently, curriculum development becomes a collaborative organizational process rather than an administrative responsibility delegated to individual teachers.

Observational data also reveal that transformational leadership is reflected in classroom practices and boarding school activities. Educational activities consistently demonstrate the integration of student-centered learning, character education, bilingual communication, leadership development, and religious mentoring. Rather than separating academic and spiritual development, the institution promotes a holistic educational approach in which cognitive competence, moral character, leadership capacity, and social responsibility develop simultaneously.

Furthermore, documentary evidence confirms that quality development is implemented systematically across all institutional components, including graduate competencies, curriculum content, instructional processes, educator development, educational facilities, institutional management, financial governance, and educational assessment. Continuous monitoring and periodic evaluation enable institutional leaders to identify areas requiring improvement while ensuring consistency between institutional vision and operational practices.

These findings indicate that transformational leadership contributes not merely to organizational administration but also to the institutionalization of quality management practices capable of sustaining educational excellence in a rapidly changing educational environment.

Table 3. Transformational Leadership Across Educational Quality Standards

Educational Standard	Leadership Practices	Evidence Source	Expected Institutional Outcome
Graduate Competency	Integration of spirituality, leadership, and global competence	Interviews, Documents	Holistic graduate profile

Educational Standard	Leadership Practices	Evidence Source	Expected Institutional Outcome
Curriculum Content	Integration of national, Islamic, and international curricula	Documents	Curriculum relevance and adaptability
Learning Process	Student-centered learning and character education	Observation	Active and meaningful learning
Educators and Staff	Continuous professional development	Interviews	Improved teaching competence
Facilities	Development of modern learning facilities	Observation	Supportive learning environment
Institutional Management	Participatory governance and strategic planning	Interviews, Documents	Organizational effectiveness
Financing	Transparent and accountable financial management	Documents	Sustainable institutional management
Assessment	Holistic assessment integrating academic and character dimensions	Observation, Documents	Comprehensive educational evaluation



Figure 3. Transformational leadership within educational quality management

Figure 3 illustrates the implementation of transformational leadership within educational quality management. The documentation depicts institutional facilities and educational activities supporting curriculum implementation, leadership development, and continuous quality improvement. These visual materials complement the interview and documentary findings by demonstrating how leadership practices are embedded in the institutional environment.

Smart and Sustainable Program Planning for Continuous Quality Improvement

The fourth theme highlights that transformational leadership at Ma'had Al-Izzah extends beyond daily management toward long-term institutional sustainability through a Smart and Sustainable planning approach. The analysis indicates that institutional planning is designed not only to achieve immediate educational objectives but also to strengthen organizational resilience and continuous quality improvement.

Interview data reveal that institutional leaders formulate educational programs through strategic planning involving needs assessment, institutional evaluation, benchmarking activities, and consultation among organizational stakeholders. This participatory planning process enables institutional leaders to anticipate educational challenges while maintaining consistency with the institution's long-term vision.

Observational findings demonstrate that Smart planning is reflected in the utilization of educational technology, digital administration, adaptive curriculum development, and evidence-informed decision-making. Institutional leaders encourage innovation by promoting technology-supported learning, professional development programs, and systematic institutional evaluation. These initiatives increase organizational responsiveness to changing educational demands without compromising the institution's Islamic identity.

The Sustainable dimension is evident in the continuous development of organizational systems rather than dependence on individual leadership. Documentary analysis indicates that institutional regulations, strategic planning documents, quality assurance procedures, and periodic evaluation mechanisms are designed to institutionalize leadership practices beyond the tenure of current administrators. Such institutionalization reduces organizational dependence on charismatic leadership while strengthening organizational continuity.

Another important finding concerns the integration of continuous evaluation into institutional governance. Program implementation is regularly reviewed through supervision, coordination meetings, performance evaluation, and strategic reflection. Rather than functioning as a mechanism for identifying failure, evaluation is understood as an organizational learning process supporting continuous institutional improvement.

Overall, the Smart and Sustainable planning approach demonstrates that transformational leadership at Ma'had Al-Izzah operates through dynamic interaction between visionary planning, organizational learning, technological adaptation, quality assurance, and Islamic ethical values. This interaction enables

the institution to maintain educational quality while adapting to increasingly complex educational environments.

Table 4. Smart and Sustainable Leadership Framework

Smart Dimension	Sustainable Dimension	Leadership Contribution
Educational technology	Institutional governance	Adaptive organizational management
Data-informed planning	Continuous evaluation	Evidence-based decision making
Curriculum innovation	Quality assurance system	Sustainable educational quality
Professional development	Organizational learning	Human resource capacity building
Strategic collaboration	Institutional culture	Long-term organizational resilience

Table 4 presents documentation of institutional planning and quality improvement activities. The image illustrates collaborative meetings and strategic coordination among institutional leaders, reflecting the participatory planning process that characterizes transformational leadership within the institution.

Empirical Synthesis of the Findings

The findings collectively demonstrate that the implementation of transformational leadership at Ma'had Al-Izzah International Islamic Boarding School extends beyond individual leadership practices and functions as an integrated institutional system embedded within Islamic values, organizational culture, educational quality management, and continuous improvement mechanisms. Cross-theme analysis indicates that the four major themes are not independent constructs but mutually reinforcing dimensions that collectively shape sustainable institutional development.

The first theme, namely the internalization of Islamic values, provides the normative and philosophical foundation upon which leadership practices are constructed. Rather than functioning merely as ethical principles, Islamic values such as *tawhid*, *amanah*, *siddiq*, *tabligh*, *ihsan*, and *itqan* operate as strategic organizational resources that influence decision-making, institutional governance, and organizational commitment. The second theme demonstrates that visionary transformational leadership translates these values into a shared institutional vision capable of cultivating a sustainable quality culture through collaboration, empowerment, and collective responsibility.

The third theme further reveals that transformational leadership is operationalized through the systematic implementation of educational quality standards. Leadership is institutionalized by integrating strategic planning,

curriculum development, human resource management, quality assurance, and organizational governance into a coherent quality management system. Consequently, educational quality is developed not through isolated managerial interventions but through coordinated organizational processes aligned with both national educational standards and the distinctive characteristics of Islamic boarding school education.

Finally, the fourth theme highlights that Smart and Sustainable program planning serves as the institutional mechanism through which transformational leadership ensures organizational continuity and long-term quality development. Strategic planning, evidence-informed decision-making, technological adaptation, organizational learning, and continuous evaluation collectively strengthen institutional resilience while maintaining alignment with the school's Islamic educational mission and long-term strategic objectives.

Taken together, these findings suggest that transformational leadership within the context of modern Islamic boarding schools should not be understood solely as an individual leadership style. Instead, it represents a multidimensional institutional mechanism that integrates Islamic theological values, visionary leadership, organizational culture, and quality management into a dynamic system capable of sustaining educational excellence. This integrated perspective provides the empirical foundation for the conceptual model proposed in the subsequent discussion and represents the principal theoretical contribution of the present study.

Discussion

Transformational Leadership in the Context of Modern Islamic Boarding Schools

The findings demonstrate that transformational leadership at Ma'had Al-Izzah International Islamic Boarding School extends beyond the conventional dimensions proposed by transformational leadership theory. Consistent with the framework developed by Bass and Avolio (1994), institutional leaders exhibited the four core dimensions of transformational leadership through articulating a shared vision, motivating organizational members, encouraging innovation, and empowering teachers and staff to participate actively in institutional development. These findings reinforce the argument that transformational leadership remains an effective approach for facilitating organizational change and improving institutional performance in educational settings.

However, the present study also reveals an important contextual distinction. Unlike the conventional application of transformational leadership in public schools

or corporate organizations, leadership practices within the pesantren environment are fundamentally grounded in Islamic theological values. The empirical findings indicate that values such as *tawhid*, *amanah*, *ihsan*, *siddiq*, *tabligh*, and *itqan* do not merely function as ethical ideals but serve as normative principles that shape institutional decision-making, organizational behavior, and educational quality development. This finding extends Bass and Riggio's (2006) argument that transformational leaders influence followers through shared values by demonstrating that, within Islamic educational institutions, those shared values are explicitly rooted in religious beliefs and spiritual accountability.

The findings also support the Islamic leadership perspective proposed by Beekun and Badawi (1999), who argue that leadership in Islam is characterized by accountability before God, justice, consultation (*shura*), and moral responsibility. Nevertheless, this study advances their conceptualization by demonstrating that Islamic values are institutionalized within organizational governance, strategic planning, and quality assurance systems. Rather than remaining normative principles guiding individual behavior, these values become organizational mechanisms that sustain institutional transformation and educational quality improvement.

Accordingly, the findings suggest that transformational leadership theory requires contextual adaptation when applied to Islamic educational institutions. Leadership effectiveness is determined not only by managerial competence but also by leaders' ability to integrate spiritual legitimacy, ethical responsibility, and institutional vision into organizational systems. This contextualization represents an important theoretical contribution because it broadens transformational leadership theory beyond its predominantly Western organizational origins.

Islamic Values as Organizational Resources for Educational Quality Development

Another important finding concerns the strategic role of Islamic values in organizational development. Previous leadership studies frequently position Islamic values as ethical guidelines for individual leaders. By contrast, the present findings indicate that Islamic values operate as organizational resources that influence institutional culture, quality assurance, human resource development, and strategic decision-making.

This finding is consistent with Spiritual Leadership Theory proposed by Fry (2003), which emphasizes that spiritual values strengthen organizational commitment, intrinsic motivation, and organizational performance. Similarly, the findings demonstrate that shared Islamic values cultivate collective responsibility,

strengthen institutional discipline, and encourage organizational members to pursue continuous quality improvement. Consequently, leadership effectiveness is enhanced not only through structural authority but also through shared spiritual commitment.

The present study, however, extends previous scholarship by illustrating how Islamic values become embedded within organizational systems rather than remaining solely individual virtues. Institutional policies, curriculum planning, teacher development programs, and quality management procedures consistently reflect values of *amanah*, *ihsan*, and *itqan*. This institutionalization explains why educational quality can be maintained through organizational routines rather than depending exclusively on charismatic leadership.

These findings therefore suggest that Islamic educational leadership should be conceptualized as the interaction between spiritual values and institutional management practices. Such a perspective complements existing transformational leadership literature by emphasizing that organizational transformation within Islamic educational institutions is simultaneously a managerial and spiritual process.

Organizational Culture as the Mediating Mechanism between Leadership and Educational Quality

The findings further indicate that organizational culture functions as the primary mechanism through which transformational leadership influences educational quality. Rather than improving institutional performance through direct managerial intervention, leaders cultivate shared beliefs, professional commitment, collaborative practices, and continuous improvement that gradually become embedded within institutional culture.

This finding strongly supports Schein's (2010) theory that organizational culture is created, reinforced, and sustained through leadership. According to Schein, leaders shape organizational assumptions by repeatedly communicating values, modeling desired behaviors, and institutionalizing organizational norms. The empirical findings of the present study confirm this proposition. Institutional vision at Ma'had Al-Izzah is continuously reinforced through strategic meetings, teacher development activities, quality assurance programs, religious habituation, and daily boarding school practices. These repeated organizational processes transform leadership values into institutional culture.

Nevertheless, this study extends Schein's organizational culture model by demonstrating that, within Islamic boarding schools, organizational culture is reinforced not only through administrative systems but also through religious

practices and theological commitments. Daily worship activities, Qur'anic studies, ethical mentoring, and Islamic character development function simultaneously as mechanisms for organizational socialization and quality culture formation.

Consequently, organizational culture should be understood as the bridge connecting transformational leadership with sustainable educational quality. This perspective explains why institutional quality can continue beyond the tenure of individual leaders once leadership values have been successfully institutionalized within organizational routines.

Institutionalizing Quality Management through Transformational Leadership

The implementation of educational quality standards provides additional evidence that transformational leadership operates through institutional systems rather than isolated leadership behaviors. The findings indicate that curriculum development, human resource management, quality assurance, financial accountability, infrastructure development, and educational assessment are coordinated through integrated leadership processes.

These findings align with Total Quality Management principles in education, which emphasize continuous improvement, stakeholder participation, systematic evaluation, and organizational learning. However, unlike conventional quality management approaches that primarily focus on organizational efficiency, the present study demonstrates that quality management within Islamic boarding schools simultaneously pursues educational excellence and spiritual development.

Furthermore, the integration of national educational standards, Islamic curriculum, international educational orientation, bilingual education, and leadership development illustrates that transformational leadership functions as a strategic mechanism for balancing educational modernization with religious identity. This finding contributes to educational quality literature by demonstrating that institutional competitiveness and Islamic values are complementary rather than contradictory objectives.

Towards an Islamic Transformational Leadership Model

One of the principal contributions of this study is the development of an Islamic Transformational Leadership Model for Sustainable Educational Quality Development. Existing transformational leadership literature generally conceptualizes leadership as a process through which visionary leaders motivate followers and facilitate organizational change. The empirical findings of this study suggest a broader perspective.

The proposed model positions Islamic theological values as the foundational layer of transformational leadership. These values shape leadership philosophy, institutional governance, organizational culture, and quality management. Organizational culture subsequently functions as a mediating mechanism through which leadership values are translated into collaborative practices, continuous improvement, and sustainable institutional development. Quality management systems operationalize these values through curriculum integration, teacher development, quality assurance, and institutional governance, ultimately contributing to educational quality, organizational resilience, and graduate excellence.

This conceptualization differs from conventional transformational leadership theory because it explicitly incorporates theological values and organizational quality culture as essential determinants of leadership effectiveness. Accordingly, the proposed model contributes to leadership theory by integrating transformational leadership, Islamic leadership, organizational culture, and quality management into a coherent conceptual framework specifically applicable to modern Islamic boarding schools.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretically, this study contributes to transformational leadership scholarship by demonstrating that the effectiveness of transformational leadership is context-dependent. While the core dimensions proposed by Bass and Avolio remain relevant, their implementation within Islamic educational institutions is mediated by theological values, organizational culture, and institutional quality systems. Consequently, the study extends transformational leadership theory by providing an integrated conceptual model suitable for faith-based educational organizations.

The findings also contribute to Islamic educational leadership literature by moving beyond normative discussions of Islamic leadership toward an organizational perspective. Rather than conceptualizing Islamic values solely as ethical principles, the study demonstrates their operational role in shaping governance, strategic planning, quality assurance, curriculum development, and organizational learning.

Practically, the findings suggest that leaders of Islamic boarding schools should strengthen both cultural and structural dimensions of leadership. Building a shared vision, internalizing Islamic values, institutionalizing quality assurance systems, promoting professional learning communities, and implementing evidence-informed strategic planning are essential for sustaining educational

quality. Policymakers may also consider integrating transformational leadership development with Islamic leadership principles in leadership training programs for Islamic educational institutions.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the implementation of transformational leadership in developing educational quality at Ma'had Al-Izzah International Islamic Boarding School and demonstrated that leadership effectiveness extends beyond the conventional dimensions of transformational leadership. The findings reveal that sustainable educational quality is achieved through the integration of Islamic theological values, visionary leadership, organizational culture, quality management systems, and continuous institutional improvement. Rather than functioning solely as a managerial approach, transformational leadership operates as an integrated institutional mechanism that simultaneously promotes academic excellence, character formation, spiritual development, and organizational sustainability within the context of modern Islamic boarding schools.

The principal theoretical contribution of this study lies in extending transformational leadership theory through the development of the Islamic Transformational Leadership Model for Sustainable Educational Quality Development. While the core dimensions of transformational leadership proposed by Bass and Avolio remain relevant, the findings demonstrate that leadership effectiveness in Islamic educational institutions is strengthened by the integration of theological values such as *tawhid*, *amanah*, *ihsan*, *siddiq*, *tabligh*, and *itqan* into organizational culture and quality management practices. Accordingly, this study provides a contextual framework that enriches transformational leadership scholarship by integrating Islamic leadership, organizational culture, and educational quality into a coherent conceptual model.

From a practical perspective, the findings suggest that leaders of Islamic educational institutions should strengthen both the cultural and structural dimensions of leadership by embedding Islamic values into strategic planning, institutional governance, professional development, and quality assurance systems. Sustainable educational quality depends not only on visionary leadership but also on the institutionalization of collaborative organizational culture, evidence-informed decision-making, and continuous improvement mechanisms. Consequently, the proposed model offers practical guidance for school leaders and policymakers seeking to improve institutional quality while preserving the distinctive identity and values of Islamic education.

Despite these contributions, this study is limited by its single-case qualitative design, which may restrict the transferability of the findings to other educational contexts. Future research is therefore encouraged to validate the proposed model through comparative multi-case studies, quantitative or mixed-method approaches, and investigations across different types of Islamic educational institutions. Further studies should also explore the influence of digital transformation, educational technology, and artificial intelligence on transformational leadership and sustainable quality development to refine and expand the applicability of the proposed framework.

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