Adaptive Leadership In Islamic Education Management To Face Challenges In The Digital Era

Kepemimpinan Adaptif Dalam Manajemen Pendidikan Islam Untuk Menghadapi Tantangan Di Era Digital

Umu Hani[1*], Selnistia Hidayani[2]

Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin State Islamic University

Email: 231250091.umu@uinbanten.ac.id[1], selnistia.hidayani@uinbanten.ac.id[2]*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji kepemimpinan adaptif Ronald Heifetz dalam konteks manajemen pendidikan Islam di era digital. Kemajuan pesat dalam teknologi informasi telah mengubah lembaga pendidikan untuk beradaptasi terus menerus sambil melestarikan nilai-nilai dasar Islam. Penelitian ini menerapkan metode kualitatif menggunakan pendekatan penelitian kepustakaan untuk mengetahui peran kepemimpinan adaptif dalam pengelolaan pendidikan Islam dan nilai-nilai keislaman yang memperkuat praktik kepemimpinan ini di era digital dengan meninjau dan menganalisis jurnal atau artikel yang relevan. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan adaptif sangat penting untuk menanggapi tantangan digitalisasi karena menyoroti kapasitas pemimpin untuk berpikir kritis, inovasi, fleksibilitas, dan pengambilan keputusan yang efektif. Nilai-nilai Islam seperti Amanah, adl, shura, Ikhlas, shddiq, fathanah, dan tabligh berfungsi sebagai landasan etika yang memperkuat praktik kepemimpinan adaptif. Nilai-nilai ini tidak hanya meningkatkan efektivitas manajerial dalam lembaga pendidikan untuk menyeimbangkan kemajuan teknologi dengan prinsip-prinsip agama, tetapi juga membantu, tetap tangguh dalam lingkungan pendidikan yang berubah dengan cepat dalam masyarakat kontemporer.

Kata Kunci : Kepemimpinan Adpatif, Pendidikan Islam, Informasi teknologi.

Abstract

This study examines an Ronald Heifetz adaptive leadership in the context of Islamic education management in the digital era. Rapid advances in information technology have transformed educational institutions to adapt continuously while preserving fundamental Islamic values. This research applies a qualitative method using a library research approach to find out the role of adaptive leadership in Islamic education management and the Islamic values that reinforce this leadership practice in the digital era by reviewing and analyzing relevant journals, articles, and academic books. The findings demonstrate that adaptive leadership is essential for responding to digitalization challenges because it highlights leaders' capacity for critical thinking, innovation, flexibility, and effective decision making. Islamic values such as Amanah, adl, shura, shiddiq, fathanah, and tabligh function as ethical foundations that reinforce adaptive leadership practices. These values not only enhance managerial effectiveness within educational institutions to balance technological advancement with religious principles, but also help them remain resilient in the rapidly changing educational environment in contemporary society.

Keywords : Adpative Leadership, Islamic Education, Technology information.

INTRODUCTION

In the digital era that continues to undergo rapid changes, education can no longer be maintained only with traditional paradigms and methods (Sinaga and Firmansyah 2024). This fundamental shift directly affects the governance and management of Islamic educational institutions, demanding an effective managerial strategy to ensure the quality and relevance of education in the midst of contemporary challenges (Anshory, Citriadin, and Maujud 2024). These complexities, which include issues of digital ethics, resource management, and the need to adapt the organization's internal policies, require leaders who have the ability to adapt wisely in managing institutions without neglecting Islamic moral and spiritual values.

Challenges in the digital era are often no longer technical problems that are easy to solve with existing solutions, but are adaptive problems that require a comprehensive change in organizational attitudes, values, and culture (Romandoni, Sulistyorini, and Efendi 2024). This is where the role of leaders becomes very crucial, where leaders are not only required to be capable in resource management but must also be able to maintain the stability of the organization's Islamic values. Islam itself has provided strong leadership principles, such as *Shura* (deliberation) and example, which must be combined with a professional attitude and competence in strategic decision-making. Leadership has a meaning is a person's ability to influence and direct members to work together to achieve the same goal (Al-Mada, Aziz, and Hanun 2025). To respond to these needs, a leadership model is now needed that is methodically able to guide Islamic educational institutions.

Adaptive leadership initiated by Ronald Heifetz offers a relevant framework. This theory focuses leaders on the ability to move organizations in the face of adaptive challenges by prioritizing critical thinking, innovation, and flexibility in facing change (Rachmawati, Hidayatullah, and Anshori 2023). Adaptive leaders must be able to make a proper diagnosis, ensuring that the problems facing the organization are not technical problems, but problems that require behavioral and value changes. Thus adaptive leadership becomes an essential managerial strategy in the context of modern Islamic education.

Although adaptive leadership and Islamic values have been recognized for their relevance in the digital age (Sartini et al. 2024), literature review is still limited in analyzing the functional relationship between the main Islamic values (*Amanah, Adl, Shura, Shiddiq, Fathanah,* and *Tabligh*) and the operational principles of adaptive leadership. Existing research generally tends to discuss Islamic values and adaptive leadership separately or only as a moral foundation. This gap raises profound questions about how Islamic education leaders can methodically use spiritual values as an active and functional managerial strategy in managing technological change without sacrificing the moral identity of the institution.

Therefore, this literature study research aims to find out the role of adaptive leadership in Islamic education management to face challenges in the digital era and identify Islamic values such as (*Amanah, Adl, Shura, Shiddiq, Fathanah,* and *Tabligh*).

RESEARCH METHODS

This research applies a qualitative approach through the library *research* method. The selection of this approach is based on the focus of research that focuses on understanding various relevant literature sources. This study examines various theories, findings of previous research, and expert opinions that discuss the concept of adaptive leadership in the context of Islamic education management in the digital era. This study utilizes data from primary and secondary sources. Primary data was obtained from scientific articles, rotating journals, and academic books that discuss the themes of adaptive leadership, Islamic education management, and educational changes in the digital era. Meanwhile, secondary data include supporting research results, and online publications that fit the focus of the study. The data collection procedure is taken through literature search, namely by identifying, collecting, and studying scientific documents that are directly related to the research topic.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Technical and Adaptive Challenges in Islamic Education in the Digital Era

Amid the demands of the rapid adaptability of institutions in the digital age, adaptive leadership emphasizes that a leader's fundamental task is to conduct a careful diagnosis of the situation to separate between the two types of challenges. Leaders must distinguish between technical problems that are already available for example through SOPs or managerial expertise from adaptive problems that demand changes to organizational values, behaviors, and cultures. In the context of Islamic education management, leaders are required not to fall into the temptation of providing easy technical solutions, but rather to identify whether the challenge really requires changes in strategy, structure, and internal processes (Fridayani 2021).

Analysis of the diagnosis shows that managerial challenges in Islamic educational institutions are clearly divided. Technical issues are generally limited to implementation and procurement issues, such as the decision to purchase a new server or the preparation of standard operating procedures (SOPs) for online registration. Solving this problem does not require adaptive work from the staff. However, the majority of challenges in the digital era demand more than just technical solutions, because changes have permeated fundamental aspects of the organization (Abnisa and Azis 2025).

Adaptive problems actually arise when digital challenges directly intersect with the ethos and Islamic values embedded in the institution. Managerial challenges that are adaptive include:

1. Human resource resistance to the implementation of *e-governance*.
2. The need for adaptive curriculum development that demands a consensus of values and a change in deep understanding from teachers and leaders.
3. Efforts to implement *transparent good governance*, and require leaders to manage conflicts and encourage organizational behavior change towards openness.

In the face of this adaptive complexity, adaptive leadership is needed to encourage institutions to do adaptive work, resulting in sustainable managerial change.

Adaptive Leadership Action Strategies in Managing Change in Islamic Education Institutions

Adaptive leadership action strategies are an important stage for school principals as managers of Islamic educational institutions after successfully diagnosing adaptive challenges. The implementation of this adaptive leadership centers on the leader's three main capacities for managing change: directing, managing, and empowering the members of the institution. Directing capacity requires leaders to have a visionary outlook and a strong commitment that aligns with the goals of the institution. Meanwhile, the ability to manage is realized through the efforts of school principals to maintain institutional stability in the midst of disruption pressures, while creating a safe environment to discuss value conflicts and resistance to change constructively. Finally, the empowering aspect is a crucial action where leaders encourage team collaboration and delegate adaptive problem-solving responsibilities to members of the institution. By focusing action on these three capacities, principals can ensure that the resolution of adaptive problems, such as human resource resistance or curriculum development, is new, is carried out in a participatory manner and results in sustainable managerial change (Elmanisar et al. 2024).

Strategically, the successful implementation of school principals' adaptive actions is determined by their ability to manage the impact of automation and technological disruption on the workforce (HR), which is a fundamental adaptive problem in the modern era. Adaptive leaders should encourage members of Islamic educational institutions to dare to transform, learn from mistakes, and develop new solutions to face difficulties, especially related to the threat of manual work transfer by automated systems. This strategy requires leaders to go beyond focusing on routine problem-solving, but instead focus on developing high adaptive abilities in staff. In other words, leaders must actively use the principle of empowerment to ensure that institutional human resources not only accept technology, but also be able to innovate and create in the midst of an increasingly digitized work environment, so that the relevance of the role of human resources in Islamic educational institutions is maintained (Fitriatun et al. 2025).

In addition to human resources, the next biggest adaptive challenge lies in managing curriculum changes, especially for institutions that have strong traditions. In this context, the implementation of adaptive leadership requires leaders to emphasize flexibility, participation, and innovation in formulating a curriculum that is in line with the digital and needs of the younger generation. Leaders carry out empowering actions by involving all components of education, including teachers and internal figures in the process of curriculum adjustment. This action aims to ensure the curriculum not only integrates 21st-century technology and competencies, but also maintains a strong foundation of Islamic values. In other words, adaptive leaders use participatory strategies to transform the curriculum from technical issues (document change) to adaptive work that requires a consensus of values across the institution (Hariyadi et al. 2024).

Islamic Values as Leverage for the Application of Adaptive Leadership

Adaptive leadership in the management of Islamic educational institutions cannot be separated from the ethical foundation that comes from Islamic values. The Prophet's leadership

values such as *Shiddiq, Amanah, Fathanah, and Tabligh, Adl, Shura* function as ethics that strengthen adaptive leadership practices (Prayogi, Saputra, and Putera 2024). These values are the leverage that provides moral legitimacy for leaders when facing difficult adaptive work. Without this foundation, efforts to adapt to technology or curriculum will be prone to losing direction and focus, because adaptive leadership requires high trust and accountability from all members of the institution.

In terms of implementation, the values of *Fathanah* (intelligent/visionary) and *Tabligh* (delivering) functionally strengthen the action of directing leaders. *Fathanah* demands leaders to have a visionary outlook and a deep understanding of global challenges, including technological disruption and curriculum change. This intelligence and wisdom enables the principal to carry out the principle of looking from a distance (*Getting on the Balcony*), analyze complex patterns, and formulate the right strategic direction before taking action. *Fathanah* is crucial in adaptive leadership because it allows leaders to turn adaptive problems into innovation opportunities, as needed in curriculum adjustments in the digital age.

Finally, the principle *of Shura* (deliberation) directly supports empowering actions (*Give the Work Back to the People*) which is the core of adaptive leadership. In the context of institutional initiation in the digital era, *Shura* ensures that school principals involve all members and institutions in formulating solutions and innovation culture based on Islamic values. *Shura* embodies the participation needed to manage curriculum changes, where decisions are made through consensus involving teachers and staff. The value *of Tabligh* complements Shura   by ensuring that the leader's communication is persuasive and educational. By integrating these values, adaptive leadership in Islamic educational institutions not only transforms management, but also creates a strong organizational culture that is balanced between modern progress and Islamic principles (Zahroh et al. 2025).

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the success of Islamic educational institutions in managing change in the midst of the rapid flow of digital disruption is highly dependent on the implementation of adaptive leadership by school principals. The managerial challenges facing today are diagnosed as adaptive, not merely technical, problems that require fundamental changes to the values, structure, and culture of the institution. Crucial adaptive issues identified include human resource management, curriculum development, and *good governance*.

Adaptive leadership action strategies are formulated through three key capacities: directing, managing, and empowering. These actions are realized by encouraging flexibility and innovation in the pesantren curriculum, as well as managing the impact of automation on the workforce. Furthermore, the application of adaptive leadership is functionally enriched by Islamic values (*Shiddiq, Amanah, Fathanah, Tabligh, Shura* and *Adl*). The integration of these values serves as leverage that provides moral legitimacy for leaders, ensuring that the process of change takes place in a participatory, transparent, and visionary manner, so that Islamic educational institutions can achieve the ideal balance between technological advances and religious principles.

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