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The Effectiveness of Leadership in Islamic Education Management in The Digital Era

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Abstract

This study highlights the importance of leadership effectiveness in Islamic education management within the digital era, focusing on the integration of Islamic values and the utilization of information technology. The findings reveal that the application of Islamic principles such as honesty, justice, and ihsan (excellence in conduct) by leaders, when combined with the use of digital technology, can foster an adaptive and innovative learning environment. Furthermore, digital communication skills and the ability to build strong online networks play a crucial role in establishing trust and loyalty among staff and students. Managerial competencies in data-driven strategic decision-making and digital resource management are key factors in achieving educational goals. This study emphasizes that stakeholder support and technological infrastructure significantly influence leadership effectiveness. Therefore, the success of Islamic education management in the digital age depends on the synergy between Islamic values, managerial competence, and technological adaptation to optimize the achievement of institutional vision and mission. The implications of this research underline the urgency of digital leadership training for leaders of Islamic educational institutions to effectively navigate contemporary challenges.

Keywords ; effectiveness, management, islamic education, leadership

INTRODUCTION

Leadership plays a vital role in educational management, especially in the context of Islamic education in the digital era. Islamic education requires a distinctive approach that not only emphasizes academic achievement but also focuses on character development and the integration of Islamic values through the wise use of technology. The success of Islamic educational institutions today largely depends on the effectiveness of leadership in managing human resources, digital learning technologies,

digital curricula, and technology-based learning environments. Leadership in digital education management is crucial in determining the direction and overall success of the institution. An effective leader can inspire and motivate both staff and students through the implementation of relevant and adaptive digital strategies.

Good leadership is not only about managing administration and resources but also about creating a clear digital vision and an innovative and conducive learning environment (Baidi & Sutrisno, 2022). In the context of digital Islamic education, a leader also acts as an agent of innovation who can face contemporary challenges, encourage the use of digital platforms, and ensure that the educational community moves in a unified direction. Effective leadership in this context can improve teaching quality and student academic outcomes through supportive digital systems (Cardozo & Srimulyani, 2021).

Furthermore, leadership plays an important role in shaping a positive and inclusive digital school culture. Islamic education leaders must create a culture that supports professional teacher development through digital training, online collaboration, and the involvement of parents and the community in digital platforms. A supportive digital environment encourages student engagement and motivation through technology-based learning systems (Candra et al., 2022). In the long run, strong digital leadership will bring significant changes to school performance and equip students to contribute positively in a technology-based society. Therefore, investment in the development of digital-based leadership becomes essential to achieve the vision and mission of Islamic education (Rajaminsah et al., 2022).

However, although many studies have been conducted on leadership in general education contexts, there is still a lack of research specifically addressing leadership effectiveness in digital-based Islamic education management. Many Islamic educational institutions face challenges such as low digital literacy, limited technological infrastructure, and insufficient ICT training for teachers and staff (Hidayat et al., 2021). Another issue is that Islamic education leaders often face a dilemma between maintaining traditional values and adopting digital innovation. Effective leadership must be able to balance classical Islamic values with modern needs, including digital transformation. Traditional values such as trustworthiness (*amanah*), responsibility, and commitment remain relevant as the ethical foundation in digital leadership (Taja et al., 2021). Leaders with these values tend to build trust through digital approaches rooted in Islamic teachings. They use moral principles as the basis for ethical and accountable digital decision-making (Arif et al., 2023).

On the other hand, modern leadership values emphasize innovation, flexibility, and responsiveness to technological change. Islamic education leaders must be open to new digital platforms, online learning methods, and efficient data-based management (Yanto et al., 2022). A collaborative digital approach allows all school elements to actively engage in creating an adaptive and responsive Islamic education system (Falah, 2021). Thus, ideal leaders are those who can harmoniously integrate traditional Islamic values with digital technology to create a resilient and relevant education system.

Therefore, this study aims to explore how effective leadership in Islamic education management can be developed and adapted in the digital era to improve education quality and achieve institutional vision and mission.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach using a literature review method. Data were collected from a range of primary and secondary sources, including peer-reviewed journal articles indexed in Scopus and Sinta, academic books, and relevant research reports focusing on leadership, Islamic education management, and digital technology integration. The collected data were analyzed using content analysis to identify key themes related to Islamic leadership principles, managerial competencies, and the application of digital technology in educational leadership (Firman, 2018; Suyitno, 2021).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Leadership in the Context of Islamic Education in the Digital Era

Leadership in Islamic education is a dynamic process that combines Islamic spiritual values with modern managerial principles. In today's digital era, leaders in Islamic education are expected not only to formulate a vision and mission aligned with Islamic values, but also to utilize technological advancements to support learning effectiveness and institutional management (Sitopu et al., 2024; Ismail et al., 2022). Islamic education leaders must be proficient in using digital platforms such as Learning Management Systems (LMS), school management applications, and social media as tools for dawah, communication, and education. Nevertheless, integrity, honesty, and exemplary character remain non-negotiable foundations (Sellami et al., 2022; Samsudin et al., 2021).

Leaders must act as innovators capable of designing technology-based learning strategies grounded in noble character. A holistic yet adaptive approach is essential, for example, by incorporating spiritual content and Islamic values into digital learning media (Rosyadi et al., 2023).

The principle of shura (consultation) remains relevant and can now be implemented through digital forums like online meetings or virtual discussion groups, which allow broader participation from teachers, parents, and communities (Nikmatullah et al., 2023). This supports inclusive collaboration and accelerates participatory decision-making.

The spirit of dawah and trust in Islamic education leadership can also be expanded through digital media. Leaders can disseminate Islamic messages on a massive scale through platforms such as YouTube, podcasts, and Islamic education webinars (Pratomo et al., 2022; Asnawan, 2021).

Islamic education leaders must also be lifelong learners open to technology. This includes self-development through digital training, online certification, or active involvement in virtual communities of educators and education leaders (Zarkasyi,

2021). Islamic learning culture can also be cultivated through virtual activities such as online halaqah, digital Quran recitation (tadarus), or online character mentoring programs. In this way, Islamic values can still be internalized within a digital ecosystem (Zaim et al., 2024).

Finally, synergy among leaders, teachers, students, and parents can be strengthened through digital communication apps such as parent WhatsApp groups, student monitoring platforms, and online evaluation forums, to achieve effective, collaborative, and sustainable education (Sholeh et al., 2021).

Evaluation of Leadership Effectiveness in Islamic Education Management in the Digital Era

Evaluating leadership effectiveness in the digital era must include the leader's ability to manage both human and technological resources. Effective leaders are those who can guide digital transformation without compromising Islamic values (Zaid et al., 2022). Assessment aspects include the adoption of technology for online learning, transparency in digital communication, and data-based decision-making skills (Helmi & Sari, 2021). Student behavior, character development, and stakeholder satisfaction remain key indicators of managerial effectiveness. Islamic education leaders must also be able to build tech-savvy teams. Providing digital tools training to teachers and staff is a crucial part of effective modern management (Bakar et al., 2023; Zaini et al., 2023).

Evaluation should also assess how well leaders engage communities virtually, for instance, by involving parents in Islamic parenting webinars or online consultation forums (Khotimah et al., 2024). In terms of innovation, leadership effectiveness is also reflected in the extent to which leaders drive digital curriculum innovations that reflect Islamic values, such as morality-based gamification, interactive tafsir apps, and character-based assessment systems.

Factors Influencing Leadership Effectiveness in the Digital Era

Factors influencing the effectiveness of leadership in Islamic education in the digital era include:

- **Digital and spiritual competence:** Leaders must possess technological skills such as managing learning platforms and digital media use, while upholding Islamic principles (Shofiyah et al., 2023).
- **Islamic digital organizational culture:** A work culture that adapts to digitalization while instilling values of unity, trustworthiness, and responsibility.
- **Active online participation:** Encouraging collaboration through virtual media to ensure all parties feel involved and valued (Ali, 2022; Yanto et al., 2022).
- **External digital conditions:** Leaders must be sensitive to rapid technological and social **changes**, such as AI, big data, and digital ethics, to adapt their strategies (Warisno & Hidayah, 2022).

- Digital-transformational leadership style: Transformational leadership is highly relevant, promoting technological advancement for collective progress, inspiration, and motivation (Rahtikawatie et al., 2021; Trinova et al., 2022).
- Digital interpersonal relationships: Empathic and effective communication through digital platforms is important for maintaining positive relationships within the education ecosystem (Siregar et al., 2023).
- Digital stakeholder support: Collaborating with external partners such as edtech startups, online teacher communities, and digital Islamic influencers is key to expanding leadership influence and effectiveness (Zubairi et al., 2022).

CONCLUSION

The effectiveness of leadership in Islamic education management in the digital era depends greatly on leaders' ability to consistently apply Islamic values while adapting to digital technology developments. Islamic values such as honesty, justice, trustworthiness, and ihsan (doing good) must underpin every leadership decision and action. Leaders who uphold these principles can create a religious, open, and conducive organizational culture for learning and student character development. In the midst of digital transformation in education, Islamic education leaders must be capable of integrating technology into management and learning systems without neglecting spirituality and morality.

The ability to utilize digital media, online learning platforms, and educational information systems is an important indicator of leadership effectiveness. However, the use of this technology must still be guided by Islamic ethical values, to maintain direction in moral and character development. Beyond spiritual and ethical aspects, leadership effectiveness is greatly influenced by the managerial capacity of leaders in managing human, financial, and technological resources. Leaders who can devise digital education strategies, manage change, and anticipate digital era challenges will find it easier to realize a superior and sustainable Islamic education vision. Skills in policy-making, strategic decision-making, and conflict resolution are integral to successful leadership. Active participation from all stakeholders—teachers, students, parents, communities, and governments—is also a vital supporting factor.

Collaboration built through online forums, virtual consultations, and educational social media strengthens an adaptive, transparent, and quality-oriented Islamic education ecosystem. In conclusion, the effectiveness of leadership in Islamic education management in the digital era is the result of synergy between Islamic value integrity and modern leadership skills that leverage digital technology optimally. Leaders who can bridge the two will guide Islamic educational institutions toward progressive change while remaining rooted in solid Islamic principles.

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