

## Transformational Leadership of Pesantren as a Role Model for Contemporary Islamic Education Institutions

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### Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui tentang kepemimpinan transformasional pesantren sebagai *role model* lembaga pendidikan Islam kontemporer dan mengetahui karakteristik kepemimpinan transformasional pesantren. Metode penelitian ini adalah penelitian kepustakaan (*library research*). Penelitian kepustakaan adalah penelitian dimana data-data atau bahan-bahan yang diperlukan dalam menyelesaikan penelitian yang berasal dari perpustakaan baik buku, ensiklopedia, kamus, jurnal, majalah dan lain sebagainya. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa model kepemimpinan transformasional pesantren sebagai *role model* lembaga pendidikan Islam kontemporer pesantren harus memiliki empat dimensi, yaitu kepemimpinan kharismatik, pemimpin yang mampu membuat para pengikutnya dapat mengagumi, menghormati, dan memercayainya. Kepemimpinan *inspirational motivation*, pemimpin yang mampu mengartikulasikan pengharapan yang jelas dari seluruh anggotanya. Kepemimpinan *intellectual stimulation*, pemimpin yang mampu menumbuhkembangkan ide-ide baru dari bawahannya. Dan kepemimpinan *individualized consideration*, pemimpin yang selalu mendengarkan aspirasi dan masukan-masukan orang lain. Penelitian ini memberikan implikasi praktis dan rekomendasi kebijakan untuk pesantren dan lembaga pendidikan Islam lainnya yang ingin mengadopsi strategi kepemimpinan transformasional. Dengan pemahaman yang lebih baik tentang peran kepemimpinan transformasional dalam pesantren, diharapkan pesantren dapat terus berkembang sebagai model pendidikan Islam kontemporer yang relevan dan berdaya saing di era digital saat ini.

**Kata kunci:** Kepemimpinan, Transformasional, Pesantren, Pendidikan

### Abstract

*This study aims to find out about the transformational leadership of Islamic boarding schools as role models in contemporary Islamic educational institutions and knowing the characteristics of Islamic boarding school transformational leadership. This research method is library research. Library research is research in which the data or materials needed to complete research come from the library in books, encyclopedias, dictionaries, journals, magazines and so on. The results of this study indicate that the transformational leadership model of pesantren as a role model for contemporary Islamic educational institutions must have four dimensions: charismatic leadership, a leader who can make his followers admire, respect, and trust him. Inspirational motivation leadership, leaders who can articulate clear expectations from all members. Intellectual stimulation leadership is a leader who can develop new ideas from his subordinates. And individualized consideration leadership is a leader who always listens to the aspirations and inputs of others. This research provides practical implications and policy recommendations for Islamic boarding schools and other Islamic educational institutions that wish to adopt transformational leadership strategies. With a better understanding of the role of transformational leadership in Islamic boarding schools, it is hoped that Islamic boarding schools can continue to develop as models of contemporary Islamic education that are relevant and competitive in today's digital era.*

**Keywords:** Leadership, Transformational, Islamic Boarding School, Education

## INTRODUCTION

Leadership is something that is often the subject of discussion in all parts of the world. In fact, not a few humans aspire to become a leader, both in the household, in the community, even the leader of a country. Because basically since man was created into this world, the main mission besides to serve and worship Allah is to become a caliph or a leader in the world (Watsiqotul, 2018). As a leader, it is likened to a bus driver who is responsible for delivering passengers to their destinations safely. In an organization, of course, a leader is needed as a mobilizer, setting the direction of the goals to be achieved.

Islamic education has a central role in shaping and maintaining religious, cultural, and moral values within Muslim societies (Anwar, 2016). However, amid the rapid development of technology and profound social changes, Islamic educational institutions have had to face complex challenges. One of the main challenges faced is how to achieve relevance and sustainability in the context of changing times. Pesantren, as a traditional Islamic educational institution in Indonesia and several other countries, has become a distinctive feature in the development of Islamic education (Hidayat, 2018). Although pesantren have an important historical role in maintaining Islamic values, the sustainability of pesantren as contemporary Islamic educational institutions faces some serious problems.

One of the main problems is the mismatch between the traditional methods and curriculum of pesantren with the demands of modern education. Pesantren often have difficulty blending more traditional approaches with more contemporary and global educational needs (Kurnia, 2019). This can cause Islamic boarding school students to experience difficulties in adapting to technological developments and modern life. Apart from that, another challenge is how to ensure that Islamic boarding schools produce leaders who are not only competent in religious aspects but also in social, economic and political aspects. Future leaders in Muslim societies need to have a deep understanding of Islamic values and be able to play a role in overcoming various complex contemporary problems.

Islamic boarding school is an institution that really needs a leader. Namely a leader who can take the Islamic boarding school in a better direction. Because whether the management system in the Islamic boarding school environment is good or bad is determined by the nature and character of the leader. Therefore, Islamic boarding schools really need a good management and leadership system. Apart from that, Islamic boarding schools also need leaders who have a good and orderly mindset, carry out consistent activities, and are alert in responding to the various kinds of problems they face.

One leadership concept that can move Islamic boarding schools in a better direction is a leader who has a transformational spirit. Namely, the leadership that emerges as an innovative solution in the context of Islamic education is transformational leadership. Transformational leadership emphasizes establishing a shared vision, developing skills, increasing motivation, and instilling strong moral values in the educational process. Islamic boarding schools that apply the transformational leadership model not only function as educational institutions, but also as models of positive change in society. Apart from that, transformational leadership is a characteristic of a leader who is able to inspire or motivate his subordinates to work better (Rafsanjani, 2019).

Apart from that, transformational leadership is a leader who can provide inspiration and direct the mindset of his subordinates so that they can put aside all matters of personal interest by prioritizing the common interest. Thus, the common thread can be drawn that transformational leadership is leadership that prioritizes mutual cooperation, helping each other with other teams in order to achieve a performance that has been planned together and obtain excellent results. In fact, transformational leadership is leadership which continuously makes changes and improvements to an institution (Slahanti dan Ani Setyowati, 2021).

This is proven by research conducted by Moh. Hasan Afini Maulana, regarding "The Effectiveness of Islamic Boarding School Transformational Leaders for Improving the Quality of Islamic Education Institutions". The results of his research stated that transformational leadership can increase the effectiveness of Islamic boarding schools for improving the quality of Islamic educational institutions. Namely, the Islamic boarding school leader who is always open and sincere in accommodating all suggestions and aspirations of teachers, students and suggestions from the community with the aim of improving an institution or organization (Maulana, 2021, 25). Apart from that, Suyatminah also mentioned that there is a significant influence between transformational leadership and the work discipline of civil servant kindergarten teachers in Bantul District (Suyatminah, 2013, 87).

Therefore, transformational leadership is an alternative solution to create an institution or organization that can bring about change for the better. So with this transformational leadership style, an institution or organization that is led can direct all members or subordinates to realize all the dreams that have been previously planned. If this can be implemented by a leader, then it will be said to be transformational leadership.

Although there have been several studies on leadership in the context of Islamic education, such as research in the form of journals on:

"transformational leadership in Islamic boarding schools" (Maunah, 2023). Research on: transformational leadership style at the Kauman Padang Panjang Islamic boarding school in improving student achievement and the quality of Islamic boarding schools (Fitra Murni AR dan Suswati Hendriyani, 2022). Research with the title "Transformational Leadership of Kyai in Islamic educational institutions (Bashori, 2019). Research on: Kyai leadership in modern Islamic boarding schools: organizational development, team building and innovative behavior (Devi Pramitha, 2020). Research on: transformational leadership models in the world of education in the digital era (Makmur, 2023).

However, research that specifically explores transformational leadership in Islamic boarding schools as a model for contemporary Islamic educational institutions is still relatively rare. So this research has several advantages and uniqueness that differentiate it from previous research in the context of transformational leadership in Islamic boarding schools: such as a comprehensive approach: This research does not only limit itself to one particular aspect of transformational leadership in Islamic boarding schools, but includes various dimensions such as forming a shared vision, developing skills, increasing motivation, and instilling moral values. Thus, this research can provide a more holistic understanding of the role of transformational leadership in improving the quality of Islamic education in Islamic boarding schools.

Apart from that, focusing on the role of Islamic boarding schools as contemporary models, one of the unique features of this research is the emphasis on the role of Islamic boarding schools as models of contemporary Islamic educational institutions. While previous research tends to focus more on the influence of transformational leadership on student achievement or the internal development of Islamic boarding school organizations, this research sees Islamic boarding schools as models that can provide inspiration and examples for other Islamic educational institutions in facing the challenges of the modern era, including the digital era.

Thus, this research will not only provide a valuable contribution to the understanding of transformational leadership in Islamic boarding schools, but will also provide new insights into the role of Islamic boarding schools as models of Islamic educational institutions that are relevant and effective in facing the dynamics of the contemporary era.

Then, previous research tends to focus more on traditional aspects of Islamic education in Islamic boarding schools without paying attention to the role of leadership in forming character and facing the challenges of the times.

## METHOD

The type of research used in this research is library research or library research. Library research is a type of research model of searching, collecting and analyzing several data sources to fulfill the interests of a library research report. This library research requires correct sources from books, dictionaries, journals, magazines and so on to complete research (Herman, 2019, 134).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Transformational Leadership of Pesantren

#### 1. Understanding Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is a leadership model that is widely used by leaders throughout the world. This transformational leadership model is always identified with a leadership model that is open to all members or those they lead. Then this transformational leadership model is also identified with leaders who have lots of the latest ideas which of course with these ideas can bring about a change in an institution or organization so that the institution can achieve very good results. (Hutahean, 2021, 23). If we discuss more deeply the meaning of transformational leadership, there are several opinions from experts who specifically explain from their point of view related to the transformational leadership model.

According to Hersey and Blanchard, transformational leadership is an effort made by a leader to influence all members or subordinates to achieve the desired goals. Meanwhile, according to Burn, what is meant by transformational leadership is a leader who is able to motivate his subordinates to be more active in carrying out their respective obligations and responsibilities.

As Allah Swt. says in the Al-Qur'an surah Al-Hajj verse 41 as follows:

الَّذِينَ إِذَا مَكَتَاهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَحْقَمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا  
الزَّكَاةَ وَأَمَرُوا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَوْا عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَاقِبَةُ  
الْأُمُورِ

Meaning: "Those are those who, if We established their position on earth, would surely offer prayers, pay zakat, command what is right and forbid what is wrong, and to Allah all matters return.

The purpose of the verse above is an effort to complete and strengthen everyone involved in a team, so this verse is the spirit that every individual in a complete team must complement each other and remind each other. Calling for virtue and vice versa. Mobilization of all available resources to equip and strengthen everyone involved in achieving the vision and goals. Transformational leaders will always seek

followers who are full of responsibility (Minan, 2019).

Thus, a leader who has a transformational leadership model will definitely have extraordinary appeal so that he is able to change the meaning of the people around him. The attractiveness of a transformational leader makes it very easy for him to influence his members, so that his members trust, admire and respect him. (Istikomah, 2020, 67).

What is the essence or core of this transformational leadership concept is sharing of power by involving the members they lead together in carrying out activities aimed at bringing about change. It should be noted that in formulating any policy changes, a humane approach must usually be used. This means that in a group environment it must be decided jointly by the leader and subordinates and must be done openly and openly without any secrets.

If this transformational leadership concept is successful in being implemented in an institution or organization. So this leadership model will be a guide for many people throughout the world. This means that the transformational leadership model will be widely applied by leaders in creating extraordinary changes, bringing excellent innovations and creativity, because transformational leadership is open to everyone. All members he leads may provide criticism, solutions or constructive thoughts, or the latest ideas in achieving the vision and mission that has been well designed previously (Nasukah, Binti, 2021, 43).

Therefore, we can understand that transformational leadership is a leadership that has a transparent spirit or a leader who is open to anyone, a leader who continuously provides very significant ideas for change, a leader who does not just order his subordinates but rather a leader who provides opportunities. anyone can give their thoughts while these thoughts can take an institution in a better direction. This transformational leadership can also be understood as a leader who continuously provides motivation, support to his subordinates, cooperates with each other, as well as leaders who have expertise in solving problems together for the purpose of preparing a good future for the benefit of Islamic educational institutions in particular.

## **2. Pengertian Pesantren**

The origin of the word pesantren is santri, which begins with "pe" and ends with "an", and is written "boarding school", but for simplicity it is pronounced "boarding school". The word santri can be interpreted as an expert in the holy books of the Islamic religion, which in terms of terminology is a person who focuses on learning about Islamic religious knowledge (Hasyim, 2014).

Based on the definition above, what is meant by Islamic boarding school is a traditional Islamic

educational institution that prioritizes the process of learning religious knowledge. The learning process in the Islamic boarding school environment is to deepen and study religious knowledge by understanding and appreciating each book studied and practicing it in everyday life after studying it.

Islamic boarding schools will be called Islamic boarding schools if they contain several elements that are characteristic of Islamic boarding schools, especially Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia, namely:

### **a. Kyai**

If you think about it, a country or region definitely needs a leader. This leader is the one who regulates all activities within a country or institution. As a leader is needed in Islamic boarding schools, the term Kyai is a leader who organizes all activities in the Islamic boarding school, who will move the Islamic boarding school institution like a ship captain sailing the seas. Kyai is like a ship captain who is very responsible for the safety of his ship. Therefore, just like leaders in Islamic boarding schools, Kyai are the ones who are responsible for the progress or decline of the Islamic boarding school. (Hidayat, 2018, 464)

### **b. Cottage (Hostel)**

Pondok is where students, kyai and Islamic boarding school administrators are in one environment or one residence. A boarding house or dormitory where students live together with students from different backgrounds. In a boarding school or dormitory, a student must be managed from going to bed until waking up. This means that a student who is in the boarding school must obey all the rules that have been set, a student will have set times for bathing, eating, studying, praying, even time for exercise, all activities contained in the boarding school or dormitory, the student must carry them out. (Resmiwal, 2020).

### **c. Santri**

Santri are people who study and study at Islamic boarding schools. Santri are one of the most important elements in education at Islamic boarding schools. Usually students are divided into two, namely some who live in the Islamic boarding school environment, and some who live in their own homes. Usually, students live in Islamic boarding schools because they live very far from the Islamic boarding school, so these students live in boarding schools provided by the Islamic boarding school. (Pakar, 2019, 199).

### **d. Mosque**

Since the time of the Prophet Muhammad. Mosques are the center of Islamic civilization. Mosques are not only used as places to carry out prayers and other forms of worship (Fathurrahman, 2015). However, mosques are also used as educational centers or places to study religious knowledge. This is usually used by kyai to provide religious studies in mosques. Therefore, mosques

are an important element that cannot be separated from Islamic boarding school institutions

e. Teaching the Classics

One of the elements that characterizes learning at Islamic boarding schools is learning that uses Arabic books or what is often known as the yellow book. Most of the books studied in Islamic boarding schools are books that do not have lines. That's why a student must have a high enthusiasm to learn, understand and be able to use and be able to explain the content contained in the book, as well as practice it in everyday life (Zulhimma, 2013, 169).

### **Characteristics of Transformational Leadership of Pesantren**

Transformational leadership of pesantren is one of the role models in Islamic educational institutions. Because in the development of Islamic education in the contemporary era, a leader who is open to anyone is needed. So that this transformational dream has certainly been applied to Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia in particular (Maunah, 2023).

The biggest reason this transformational leadership model is believed to be a good leadership model. Because there are several reasons, namely: First, this transformational leadership model always provides support to its members to be more enthusiastic in working, even this transformational leadership must know what are the needs of each member it leads. Second, this transformational leadership always pays attention to what each member needs. In fact, he is also able to provide understanding to his members to carry out whatever obligations must be completed. Third, transformational leadership is a leader who supports all subordinates so that each subordinate is able to lead their respective work obligations (Kholiq, 2017, 34).

This transformational leadership in addition to providing support to every member he leads. So this transformational leadership model is also the best solution in giving birth to the golden generation who will certainly be the successor of the nation in the future. Thus, the application of transformational leadership models in Islamic educational institutions will be an alternative solution in bringing changes in Islamic educational institutions in a good direction. Even the transformational leadership model of pesantren will be a role model in increasing the progress of an institution.

It should be noted that this transformational leadership model if applied in an institution, it should not only rely on personal abilities or the ability of its leaders. However, this transformational leader is a leader who directs his subordinates to carry out their respective obligations (Basirun dan Turimah, 2022). As the transformational leadership

model of pesantren always prioritizes independence in every person within the scope of pesantren. This means that every member in the pesantren institution has been directed in advance regarding the obligations that must be completed. So that every individual is accustomed to carrying out their obligations as caregivers of Islamic boarding schools and obligations as students (Maesaroh, 2022).

Then the transformational leadership model always provides the idea of making changes for an institution by improving, weighing and determining a decision that is implemented together. Therefore, from the transformational leadership of pesantren, it can be said that the leader has a transformational spirit if it has the characteristics as below:

1. Have the soul to continue making changes
2. Have a soul that is not timid and always in the leading position in facing all problems that come
3. Always be prejudiced, that is, always give confidence to his subordinates
4. Doing work on the basis of common interests not personal interests
5. Make continuous changes
6. Able to deal with various complex problems.
7. Have a vision and mission for the future (amcanda, 2023).

Apart from that, Bass and Avolio also explained the characteristics of leaders who are said to be transformational leaders, namely:

- a. Leaders who always encourage their subordinates to always be enthusiastic about doing a job
- b. Directing subordinates to develop a good level of thinking power
- c. Directs his subordinates to always pay attention to their respective interests (Sinaga, 2021, 843).

Therefore, studies in educational institutions have indicated that transformational leaders appear to be figures who always help members/staff by developing and maintaining a collaborative and professional school/Islamic boarding school culture, assisting in the development of teachers/clerics, and assisting them in solving problems. together effectively. Then, transformational leadership is always identified with leaders who are open to anyone, whose thoughts always help their members or subordinates, and even always provide motivation to many people.

The motivations that can be carried out by leaders who have a transformational spirit at Islamic boarding schools are to give awards to each member or student if they have carried out a good activity or excelled. Thus, it is certain that leaders with a transformational spirit are very much needed in Islamic educational institutions in the contemporary era. Therefore, to support the success of transformational leadership, there are several things that must be considered, namely that the

transformational leader has determined the vision, mission and goals in the institution he will lead, carries out the teaching and learning process and has a pleasant learning environment.

To realize the vision and mission and goals of an Islamic boarding school institution, as a leader you should have formulated the vision and mission and goals of the institution you will lead. Transformational leadership can certainly bring changes in improving the teaching and learning process, being able to encourage, guide and monitor the learning activities of students. If we look at the learning activities in Islamic boarding schools, an Islamic boarding school leader has set positive expectations and standards, provides motivation for students to be active and diligent in studying, and is able to motivate educators or caregivers in Islamic boarding schools to be more active and diligent in carrying out obligations.

Then in the pesantren environment, a transformational leader should provide a safe and orderly atmosphere or environment, and provide opportunities for students as widely as possible to develop the abilities possessed by each student.

Thus, this transformational leadership always provides stimulus to educators or administrators in the pesantren environment. This means that the leader must pay great attention to his subordinates. Both attention to caregivers or educators as caregivers for students, as well as great attention to students as students who carry out their duties as students to study seriously.

Therefore, in managing pesantren, transformational leaders must at least implement the four transformational leadership characters of pesantren as role models for Islamic educational institutions.

- 1) Charismatic, as a leader must be able to make his followers admire him, respect and trust him.
- 2) Inspirational Motivation, which is a leader who is able to articulate clear expectations from all his followers, both to gain external calm and inner calm.
- 3) Intellectual stimulation, which is a leader who is able to grow new ideas from his subordinates, provide innovative and creative solutions to existing problems
- 4) Individualized consideration, which is a leader who is willing to listen to the aspirations and inputs of others (Susanto, 2017, 30).

Therefore, transformational leadership in pesantren, which is considered a key model for Islamic educational institutions, can be identified through four key characteristics that influence and shape the role of the leader. First, the charismatic character describes the ability of a leader to charm, respect, and gain the full trust of his followers, creating a strong aura around him. Second, inspirational motivation characterizes the leader's ability to clearly express the inspiring expectations

of all community members, both in physical and spiritual aspects. Third, intellectual stimulation character shows leaders who encourage the development of creative and innovative ideas from their subordinates, and provide unique solutions to overcome complex and diverse problems. Finally, the character of individualized consideration reflects the attitude of leaders who care and actively listen to the aspirations and input of individuals in their community. Through these characteristics, transformational leadership in pesantren becomes a strong foundation for forming modern, inspiring, and competitive Islamic educational institutions.

## CONCLUSION

Transformational leadership in the context of Islamic boarding schools has proven to be the main pillar in maintaining Islamic boarding schools as role models for contemporary Islamic educational institutions. By applying the principles of transformational leadership, Islamic boarding schools can adapt to changing times without sacrificing the underlying Islamic values. This allows Islamic boarding schools to integrate contemporary education, such as the use of modern technology and innovative learning approaches, while still promoting moral values, ethics and social responsibility. Islamic boarding schools that successfully implement transformational leadership also have a significant positive influence in society, producing graduates who are committed to community development, peace and social welfare. Although Islamic boarding schools are faced with a number of challenges, their strong leadership and adaptability enable them to remain relevant and influential centers of Islamic learning in building a better society.

## Suggestion

Considering the importance of the transformational leadership model applied in the Islamic education environment. So it is hoped that Islamic education leaders, especially in Islamic boarding schools, will study and apply the transformational leadership model in the contemporary era. So that Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia will continue to progress and develop with the presence of leaders with a transformational spirit. Then, it is hoped that Islamic education activists will popularize the transformational leadership model with the best writings that will continue to be read by many people, so that this will have implications in this modern era.

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