



ISLAMIC DIGITAL TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP: A CONCEPTUAL RECONSTRUCTION OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT IN THE DIGITAL ERA

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Abstract:

Digital transformation has brought significant changes in the management and leadership systems of education, including in Islamic educational institutions. The development of digital technology requires Islamic educational institutions to be able to build adaptive, innovative, and technology-based organizational governance without losing their spiritual identity and Islamic values. However, the transformational leadership model that has been used in education management is still considered to have limitations because it is more oriented to organizational effectiveness and has not integrated the spiritual dimension and digital governance comprehensively. This research aims to reconstruct transformational leadership in the management of Islamic education in the digital era through the integration of spiritual leadership and digital governance. The research uses a conceptual model-based Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach by analyzing various relevant scientific articles, academic books, and international reports in the range of 2000–2025. The analysis was carried out through the stages of identification, selection, synthesis, and interpretation of literature to build a conceptual model of Islamic education leadership in the digital era. The results of the study show that the study of transformational leadership, spiritual leadership, and digital governance is still partially developed and has not been fully integrated in the context of Islamic education. This research produces the "Islamic Digital Transformational Leadership" model that integrates three main dimensions, namely transformational leadership as a driver of organizational change, spiritual leadership as an ethical and moral foundation, and digital governance as a technology-based education governance framework. The model contributes to building Islamic educational leadership that is adaptive to digital transformation, humanistic, innovative, and remains oriented to Islamic spiritual values. This research makes a theoretical contribution to the development of Islamic education management as well as a strategic foundation for the development of Islamic educational institution governance in the digital era.

Keywords: *Transformational Leadership, Spiritual Leadership, Digital Governance, Islamic Educational Management, Digital Transformation*

INTRODUCTION

Digital transformation has fundamentally changed global education governance, including in the Islamic education management system. The development of information technology, artificial intelligence, big data, cloud

computing, and digital learning ecosystems presents new challenges for Islamic educational institutions to adapt organizations quickly, flexibly, and innovation-oriented. In this context, educational leadership is no longer enough to be carried out through an administrative-conventional pattern, but requires a transformational leadership model that is able to integrate the vision of change, strengthening spiritual values, and digital governance simultaneously. (Muwafiqus Shobri & Jasmani Jaosantia; 2025).

Transformational leadership as developed by Bernard M. Bass and Bruce J. Avolio emphasizes the ability of leaders to build a collective vision, provide inspiration, stimulate organizational intellect, and pay attention to individual development in a sustainable manner. In education management, this leadership model is considered effective in encouraging institutional innovation, adaptive organizational culture, and improving the quality of learning. However, the development of the digital era shows that the classical transformational approach has not been fully able to answer the complexity of contemporary educational challenges, especially in the context of Islamic education which is not only oriented towards organizational effectiveness, but also on strengthening ethical values, spirituality, and the formation of Islamic character.

On the other hand, Islamic educational institutions are currently facing great pressure due to the acceleration of the digitalization of education. The implementation of technology-based learning, digital administration systems, virtual work cultures, and changes in educational communication patterns require the presence of leadership who is able to manage digital transformation strategically and humanistically. This condition is increasingly complex when many Islamic educational institutions are still facing limitations in digital competence, organizational cultural resistance, weak technology governance, and institutional innovation gaps. (Muwafiqus Shobri & Jasmani Jaosantia; 2025)

In this context, the concept of digital governance is important as an approach to technology-based education governance that emphasizes the effectiveness of decision-making, organizational transparency, digital collaboration, and the use of data in institutional development. Digital governance is not only related to the use of administrative technology, but also concerns the cultural transformation of educational organizations towards a system that is more participatory, responsive, and adaptive to global changes. Therefore, transformational leadership in Islamic education requires a paradigm reconstruction in order to be able to integrate the orientation of organizational change with ethical digital governance based on Islamic spiritual values. (Fatkurohimi, et al. 2025).

In addition to the challenges of digitalization, another fundamental problem in the management of Islamic education is the emergence of a tendency for leadership pragmatism that places too much emphasis on administrative aspects and formal performance achievements, but pays less attention to the spiritual and moral dimensions of the organization. In fact, Islamic education is essentially built on the foundation of prophetic values such as amanah, siddiq, tabligh, fathanah, sincerity, and shurrah. These values have an important role in building humanistic, ethical, and benefit-oriented leadership. In this perspective, spiritual leadership is a relevant approach to strengthen the moral and transcendental dimension in Islamic educational leadership practices in the digital age. (Akmal Mundiri, et al. 2025).

Previous studies have shown that transformational leadership has a significant contribution to improving the quality of Islamic education, strengthening organizational culture, learning innovation, and institutional adaptation to technological change. However, most research still discusses

transformational leadership partially and separately from the dimensions of spiritual leadership and digital governance. Previous research has tended to focus on the effectiveness of madrasah head leadership, improving teacher competence, or strengthening organizational culture without building a comprehensive conceptual integration between transformational leadership, spiritual leadership, and digital governance of Islamic education. (Sulis Maryati, 2025).

Research by Mundiri et al., for example, emphasizes the importance of integrating Islamic values in transformational leadership to improve the institutional performance of Islamic education. However, the study has not linked the integration of spiritual values to the challenges of digital governance in modern education management. Meanwhile, Prasetyowati et al.'s research develops a transformative leadership framework based on Islamic values and 21st century skills, but has not specifically reconstructed transformational leadership models in the perspective of Islamic education digital governance. Other research places digitalization only as an instrument of educational technology, not as a new paradigm in the management of Islamic educational organizations.

Based on these conditions, there is an academic need to reconstruct transformational leadership models in Islamic education management to be more relevant to the dynamics of the digital era. This reconstruction is important through the integration of Islamic spiritual values and the principles of digital governance so as to produce a leadership model that is not only innovative and adaptive, but also ethical, humanistic, and oriented towards strengthening Islamic values. Thus, Islamic education leadership is not only an instrument of organizational change, but also a means of moral, spiritual, and social transformation in the face of global digital disruption. (Gohar Rahman, 2025).

This research aims to reconstruct the paradigm of transformational leadership in Islamic education management in the digital era through the integration of spiritual leadership and digital governance. The research uses a qualitative approach with the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method based on the conceptual model to produce a theoretical synthesis and a new conceptual framework on transformational leadership of Islamic education that is adaptive to the development of digital technology but still rooted in Islamic spiritual and ethical values. (Reni Suwenti, et al. 2025).

Various previous studies have examined transformational leadership in Islamic education, both in the context of improving the quality of education, organizational culture, and strengthening institutional performance. Other research is also beginning to highlight the importance of spiritual leadership and digital transformation in modern education governance. However, most of the research is still conducted in a partial manner and has not built a conceptual integration between transformational leadership, spiritual leadership, and digital governance in the context of Islamic education management in the digital era. In addition, previous research tends to place digitalization as an educational technology instrument, not as a paradigm for the governance of Islamic educational organizations that are transformative and based on spiritual values.

Based on these conditions, this study offers novelty in the form of a reconstruction of transformational leadership models in Islamic education management through the integration of spiritual leadership and digital governance. This research not only develops a theoretical synthesis of Islamic educational leadership in the digital era, but also builds a conceptual framework of leadership that is adaptive to technological transformation while remaining oriented to Islamic spiritual, ethical, and humanistic values.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with the *Systematic Literature Review* (SLR) method based on a conceptual model to reconstruct transformational leadership in Islamic education management in the digital era through the integration of *spiritual leadership and digital governance*. This approach was chosen because the research is not oriented towards testing statistical hypotheses, but on theoretical synthesis, identification of research *gaps*, and the development of a new conceptual framework for Islamic education leadership that is adaptive to digital transformation. The SLR method allows researchers to conduct a systematic, transparent, and structured study of various previous studies so as to produce a more comprehensive and valid synthesis of knowledge (Snyder, 2019).

The research uses the *Systematic Literature Review* design referring to the *Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses* (PRISMA) framework. The PRISMA model is used because it has a systematic procedure in the process of identification, screening, selection, and analysis of the literature so as to increase the credibility of the research results (Page et al., 2021). In this study, the SLR stage is carried out through four main processes, namely: *identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion*.

The first stage is the identification of the literature. Researchers searched scientific articles through several reputable academic databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, DOAJ, SpringerLink, Taylor & Francis, Emerald Insight, and Elsevier ScienceDirect. The search was conducted using keywords relevant to the research focus, including: "transformational leadership", "spiritual leadership", "digital governance", "Islamic educational management", "digital leadership", "Islamic education", and "educational transformation". Keyword combinations are carried out using Boolean operators such as AND and OR to obtain more specific articles and in accordance with the research objectives.

The second stage is the screening process. *At this stage, the articles obtained are selected based on the suitability of the title, abstract, and keywords with the focus of the research. This study sets several inclusion criteria, namely: (1) articles discussing transformational leadership, spiritual leadership, digital governance, or Islamic education management; (2) the article was published in the range of 2019–2026; (3) articles from accredited national journals or reputable international journals; and (4) the article is available in full text.* The exclusion criteria include articles that are not relevant to the research theme, duplicate articles, non-reviewed proceedings, and documents that do not have methodological clarity.

The third stage is the evaluation of *eligibility*. At this stage, the article is analyzed in depth to ascertain the quality of the substance, its theoretical relevance, and its contribution to the focus of the research. The researcher conducts a critical reading of key concepts related to transformational leadership, spiritual leadership, digital governance, and Islamic education management transformation. This process aims to identify patterns, tendencies, and weaknesses of previous research which are then used as a basis for building a reconstruction of the conceptual model.

The final stage is data synthesis and analysis. The analysis was carried out using *thematic synthesis* techniques to group various concepts, findings, and theoretical arguments into the main themes of the research. This technique is used because it is able to produce a more systematic and in-depth integration of concepts in literature-based research (Thomas & Harden, 2008). Furthermore,

the results of the synthesis are analyzed interpretively through *a conceptual framework development* approach to build a model of transformational leadership reconstruction in Islamic education management in the digital era.

In the analysis process, the researcher focuses the study on three main dimensions, namely: (1) the characteristics of transformational leadership in Islamic education; (2) the dimension of spiritual leadership based on Islamic values; and (3) the principles of digital governance in modern education governance. These three dimensions are then integrated to produce a conceptual model of Islamic education leadership that is adaptive, humanistic, spiritual, and responsive to digital transformation.

To maintain the validity and credibility of the research, the researcher applied *the source triangulation technique* through the comparison of various literature sources from international journals, accredited national journals, and relevant academic books. In addition, the analysis process is carried out systematically and transparently by documenting the stages of article selection, the theme categorization process, and the development of conceptual synthesis. Thus, the results of the research are expected to have strong academic validity and be able to make a theoretical contribution to the development of Islamic education management in the digital era.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of *the Systematic Literature Review* (SLR) show that the development of educational leadership studies in the last two decades has undergone a significant paradigm shift. Digital transformation has driven major changes in the governance of educational organizations so that conventional leadership models are no longer considered to be fully able to answer the complexity of contemporary educational challenges. In the context of Islamic education, these changes are increasingly complex because Islamic educational institutions are not only required to be adaptive to technological developments, but also must maintain spiritual, moral, and Islamic values in the process of organizational transformation.

Based on the results of the literature synthesis, it was found that transformational leadership is still the dominant leadership model in education management research because it has the ability to encourage organizational innovation, build a collective vision, and increase the motivation and commitment of organizational members. Nevertheless, most studies show that classical transformational leadership approaches tend to be oriented towards organizational effectiveness and institutional change without paying adequate attention to the spiritual dimensions and digital governance.

On the other hand, research on spiritual leadership shows that the spiritual dimension has an important contribution in building a humanistic, ethical, and values-oriented organizational culture. Spiritual leadership not only increases the loyalty and commitment of the organization, but also strengthens the moral integrity, exemplary, and meaning of work in educational organizations. However, most spiritual leadership research still focuses on aspects of organizational culture and work motivation, and has not been systematically integrated with the digital transformation of education.

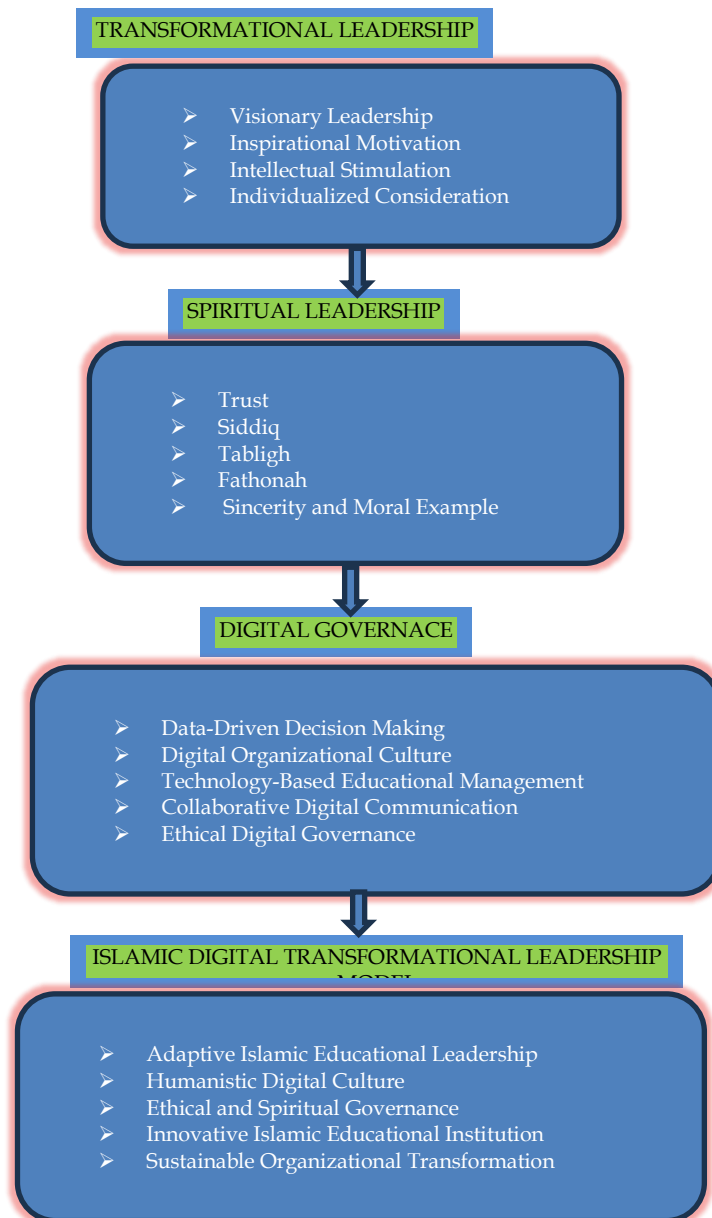
In addition, the development of research on digital governance shows that digital governance is a strategic element in the transformation of modern education. Digital governance enables educational institutions to build more effective administrative systems, data-driven decision-making, digital organizational communication, and technology-based learning innovations. However, digital governance research tends to be more technocratic and does not

consider the ethical or spiritual dimensions of education governance much.

The results of the literature synthesis show that there is a conceptual gap in the development of Islamic education leadership models in the digital era. Most research still discusses transformational leadership, spiritual leadership, and digital governance separately. An integrative leadership model that comprehensively connects these three dimensions in the context of Islamic education management has not been found.

Based on the results of the analysis, this study reconstructs the transformational leadership model in Islamic education management in the digital era through the integration of three main dimensions, namely: (1) transformational leadership; (2) spiritual leadership; and (3) digital governance. The integration of these three dimensions results in an Islamic education leadership model that is adaptive to technological change, but still oriented towards the spiritual, ethical, and humanistic values of Islamic education. The Conceptual Model of Reconstruction of Islamic Education Leadership in the Digital Era in this study can be described as follows:

Figure 1.
Conceptual Model of Transformational Leadership Reconstruction in
Islamic Education Management in the Digital Era



The results of the study show that transformational leadership remains relevant as an educational leadership approach in the digital era because it has the ability to build organizational vision, encourage innovation, and increase institutional adaptation to social and technological changes. Nevertheless, the digital transformation of education presents new challenges that cause classical transformational leadership models to require conceptual reconstruction to better suit the characteristics of modern Islamic education.

In the perspective of Islamic education, leadership is not only understood as the ability to influence an organization to achieve institutional goals, but also

as a moral and spiritual mandate oriented towards character building, civilization building, and social welfare. Therefore, transformational leadership in Islamic education is not enough to focus only on organizational effectiveness and institutional innovation, but must also integrate spiritual and ethical dimensions in the process of organizational transformation.

The results of the research synthesis show that spiritual leadership is an important element in strengthening the humanistic dimension of Islamic educational leadership. The integration of spiritual leadership in transformational leadership enables educational leaders to build an organizational culture that is not only innovative, but also religious, ethical, and oriented to Islamic values. In this context, values such as amanah, siddiq, tabligh, and fathanah become the moral foundation in the process of transforming educational organizations.

In addition, the development of digital governance shows that the digital transformation of education requires a leadership model that is able to manage technological changes systematically and adaptively. Islamic education leaders in the digital era are required to have digital literacy skills, organizational data management, collaborative digital communication, and technology-based decision-making. However, digital transformation must not eliminate the humanitarian and spiritual dimension of Islamic education.

In this context, this study offers the "Islamic Digital Transformational Leadership" model as a reconstruction of Islamic educational leadership in the digital era. This model is built through the integration of three main dimensions, namely transformational leadership as a driver of organizational change, spiritual leadership as an ethical and moral foundation, and digital governance as a technology-based education governance framework.

This model has several key characteristics. First, leadership is adaptive to technological changes and the development of educational digitalization. Second, leadership remains oriented to Islamic spiritual values and organizational character development. Third, leadership places technology as an instrument to strengthen the quality of education, not just an administrative tool. Fourth, leadership encourages the formation of an innovative, collaborative, and humanistic organizational culture.

The results of this study strengthen the view that digital transformation of education is not enough to be carried out through a technological approach alone, but requires a reconstruction of a leadership paradigm that is able to integrate digital innovation with ethical and spiritual values. In the context of Islamic education, such integration is important to maintain a balance between organizational modernization and strengthening the Islamic identity of educational institutions.

Theoretically, this research contributes to the development of Islamic education management through the formulation of an integrative digital-spiritual transformational leadership model. This research also expands the study of transformational leadership by including the dimensions of spiritual leadership and digital governance in one complete conceptual framework.

Practically, the model developed in this study can be a strategic foundation for madrasah heads, pesantren leaders, and managers of Islamic educational institutions in building educational governance that is adaptive to technological developments while maintaining the spiritual and cultural values of Islamic organizations. Thus, the reconstruction of Islamic educational leadership in the digital era not only produces innovative and effective educational organizations, but also educational institutions that are humanistic, ethical, and oriented towards the development of Islamic civilization

CONCLUSION

This research shows that digital transformation has brought fundamental changes in education governance and leadership, including in the context of Islamic education management. The transformational leadership model, which has been the dominant approach in educational organizations, is still relevant because it is able to encourage innovation, organizational change, and strengthen institutional vision. However, the development of the digital era shows that the classical transformational leadership approach is not yet fully able to answer the challenges of contemporary Islamic education, especially those related to the spiritual dimension, digital ethics, and technological governance. Based on the results of the *Systematic Literature Review* (SLR), this study found that studies on transformational leadership, spiritual leadership, and digital governance are still partially developed. Research on transformational leadership emphasizes more on organizational effectiveness and institutional innovation, while spiritual leadership focuses on strengthening moral values, organizational culture, and the humanistic dimension of leadership. Meanwhile, digital governance tends to be understood as digital-based governance and education administration without strong integration with the spiritual values and leadership of Islamic education.

Therefore, this study reconstructs the transformational leadership model in Islamic education management in the digital era through the integration of three main dimensions, namely transformational leadership, spiritual leadership, and digital governance. The integration resulted in an "Islamic Digital Transformational Leadership" model that places Islamic educational leadership as an adaptive, innovative, spiritual, humanistic, and digital governance-based leadership system. The conceptual model developed in this study has the main characteristics in the form of: (1) adaptability to the digital transformation of education; (2) strengthening Islamic spiritual values and ethics in organizational governance; (3) the development of a humanistic digital organizational culture; (4) strengthening technology-based institutional innovation; and (5) the development of sustainable Islamic education governance and oriented towards social benefits. Theoretically, this research contributes to the development of Islamic education management studies through the formulation of an integrative digital-spiritual transformational leadership model. This research also expands the theory of transformational leadership by including the dimensions of spiritual leadership and digital governance in one complete conceptual framework.

Practically, the results of this research can be a strategic foundation for madrasah heads, Islamic boarding school leaders, Islamic school managers, and education policy makers in building educational leadership that is able to answer the challenges of the digital era without losing the moral and spiritual identity of Islamic education.

However, this research is still conceptual because it is based on a systematic literature review. Therefore, further research is recommended to conduct empirical testing of the "Islamic Digital Transformational Leadership" model through quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods approaches in various Islamic educational institutions in order to obtain a more comprehensive conceptual and implementive validation

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