

# KITA-ESD and KIVSA Leadership Typologies: The Role of Influencer Leadership, Islamic Performance, and Dedication in Developing Leading Schools

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## Abstract

Education currently faces significant challenges, including global competition, rapid digital transformation, increasing demands for quality improvement, and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 4 on quality education. This study aims to quantitatively and qualitatively analyze the extent to which influencer leadership affects Islamic performance and dedication, as well as its contribution to the development of ESD-based flagship schools. Additionally, this research explores leadership typologies as an emerging model relevant to 21st-century Islamic educational institutions. This study employed a mixed-method approach using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) across four ESD-based schools in Malang Regency. Data were collected through a survey involving 100 respondents, including school principals, teachers, and educational staff. A pragmatic model with an expansive design was utilized, combining statistical analysis with qualitative exploration through observations, interviews, and document analysis. The findings indicate that influencer leadership has a positive and significant effect on enhancing Islamic dedication and performance, with a p-value of 0.00, and directly contributes to the establishment of superior schools. Islamic dedication plays a crucial role in strengthening institutional quality, while Islamic performance, although not directly significant (p-value 0.136), supports operational success. Furthermore, two leadership typologies were identified: *KITA-ESD* (Aswaja Transformational Influencer Leadership) and *KIVSA* (Aswaja Spiritual Visionary Influencer Leadership). These findings highlight that institutional success depends not only on infrastructure but also on leadership strength, Islamic work culture, and collective commitment.

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## INTRODUCTION

The rapid transformation of education in the digital era has intensified the demand for institutions to remain competitive, adaptive, and sustainable (Alabdali & Salam, 2022; Du et al., 2023; Shehadeh et al., 2023). Educational systems are increasingly required not only to produce academic excellence but also to foster character development, well-being, and long-term sustainability aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 4 on quality education (Juliana et al., 2024; Laspita et al., 2024; Muthuswamy & Nithya, 2024). Within this context, Islamic educational institutions face a distinctive challenge: balancing technological adaptation with the preservation of moral and spiritual values. Despite policy reforms and institutional efforts, many schools and madrasahs continue to experience difficulties in achieving sustainable excellence due to limitations in leadership capacity, weak organizational culture, and insufficient commitment among educators (Supit et al., 2024).

From a theoretical perspective, leadership is widely recognized as a critical determinant of organizational effectiveness. Transformational Leadership Theory emphasizes the role of vision, inspiration, and intrinsic motivation in driving organizational change (Darmawan et al., 2024). Complementing this, Spiritual Leadership Theory posits that leadership rooted in meaning, altruistic values, and ethical commitment fosters sustainable organizational outcomes (Fry, 2003). In educational contexts, Instructional Leadership highlights the importance of leaders in improving teaching quality and student achievement (Branson, 2010). These perspectives collectively suggest that effective leadership extends beyond managerial functions to encompass cultural, ethical, and transformational dimensions. Within Islamic education, leadership is further grounded in the concept of moral responsibility (*amanah*), where leaders are expected to embody ethical values while guiding institutional development (Astra et al., 2024).

Building on these theoretical foundations, this study focuses on four interrelated constructs: influencer leadership, Islamic performance, Islamic dedication, and leading schools. Influencer leadership represents a contemporary leadership approach characterized by digital competence, relational influence, and the ability to shape attitudes and behaviors through communication and engagement (Kempner, 2024). Islamic performance refers to work outcomes that integrate professionalism with Islamic ethical values such as sincerity (*ikhlas*), trustworthiness (*amanah*), and accountability (Sulphey, 2023). Islamic dedication reflects a deeper level of commitment involving emotional attachment, loyalty, and spiritual engagement with institutional goals. Meanwhile, leading schools are conceptualized as institutions that integrate academic excellence, character development, student well-being, and sustainability-oriented practices.

Empirical studies have explored these variables in fragmented ways. Research on sustainable leadership emphasizes the integration of vision and innovation in educational institutions (Pastore & Massacesi, 2020). Studies on Islamic education highlight the role of ethical values in shaping organizational culture and performance (Hajar, 2024). Additionally, organizational commitment research demonstrates that affective and normative commitment significantly influence institutional effectiveness and reduce turnover (Baksi Maiti et al., 2021; Qialian et al., 2024). However, existing literature tends to treat leadership, performance, and commitment as separate constructs, with limited attention to their integrated role in shaping sustainable educational outcomes, particularly within Islamic contexts.

A critical gap emerges in the absence of integrative models that simultaneously incorporate digital leadership, spiritual values, and sustainability orientation. Furthermore, most previous studies rely predominantly on quantitative approaches, which are effective in identifying relationships but often insufficient in capturing the contextual and experiential dimensions of leadership practices. This limitation underscores the need for a mixed-method approach that combines statistical analysis with qualitative insights to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how leadership operates in real educational settings.

Based on these theoretical and empirical considerations, this study proposes a model in which influencer leadership influences Islamic performance and Islamic dedication, which in turn affect the development of leading schools. Influencer leadership is expected to enhance performance through improved work behavior and competence, while also strengthening dedication by fostering emotional and spiritual commitment. Islamic dedication is hypothesized to play a more significant role in shaping institutional excellence, as commitment is closely linked to organizational sustainability. In contrast, Islamic performance, while important, may function more as an operational support rather than a direct determinant of excellence.

Accordingly, this study proposes several hypotheses grounded in the theoretical framework and prior empirical findings. Influencer leadership is expected to have a positive and significant effect on Islamic performance, as leaders with strong influence are able to shape work behavior, enhance competence, and improve task execution within educational institutions. In addition, influencer leadership is also hypothesized to positively and significantly influence Islamic dedication, given its role in fostering emotional attachment, loyalty, and value-based commitment among teachers and staff. Furthermore, Islamic dedication is expected to have a positive and significant effect on the development of leading schools, as commitment reflects a deeper organizational force that sustains long-term institutional excellence. In contrast, Islamic performance is not expected to have a significant direct effect on leading schools, as performance tends to operate at an operational level and may function more as a supporting factor rather than a primary determinant of institutional excellence.

This study aims to analyze both quantitatively and qualitatively the influence of influencer leadership on Islamic performance and dedication, as well as its impact on the development of leading schools based on ESD principles. The mixed-method approach enables the study to not only test structural relationships using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) but also explore contextual dynamics through qualitative inquiry, including interviews, observations, and document analysis.

## RESEARCHS METHOD

This study employed a mixed-methods design, integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Buchholtz & Vollstedt, 2024; Halevi Hochwald et al., 2023; Quinlivan & Dunphy, 2023). The quantitative phase was conducted to examine the structural relationships among influencer leadership, Islamic performance, Islamic dedication, and the formation of leading schools. This was followed by a qualitative phase aimed at providing deeper insights into how these relationships are enacted in real educational settings. The study adopted an explanatory sequential design within a

pragmatic paradigm, where quantitative findings were further explored through qualitative inquiry (Jung et al., 2023; Mageda et al., 2023; Marcellana, 2024). The research was empirical, descriptive, and verificative in nature, utilizing a causal explanatory survey. The unit of analysis consisted of individuals, including school principals, teachers, educational staff, and administrators from five private Islamic junior secondary schools (Madrasah Tsanawiyah) under the supervision of L.P. Ma'arif Malang Regency. A cross-sectional approach was applied, where data were collected at a single point in time.

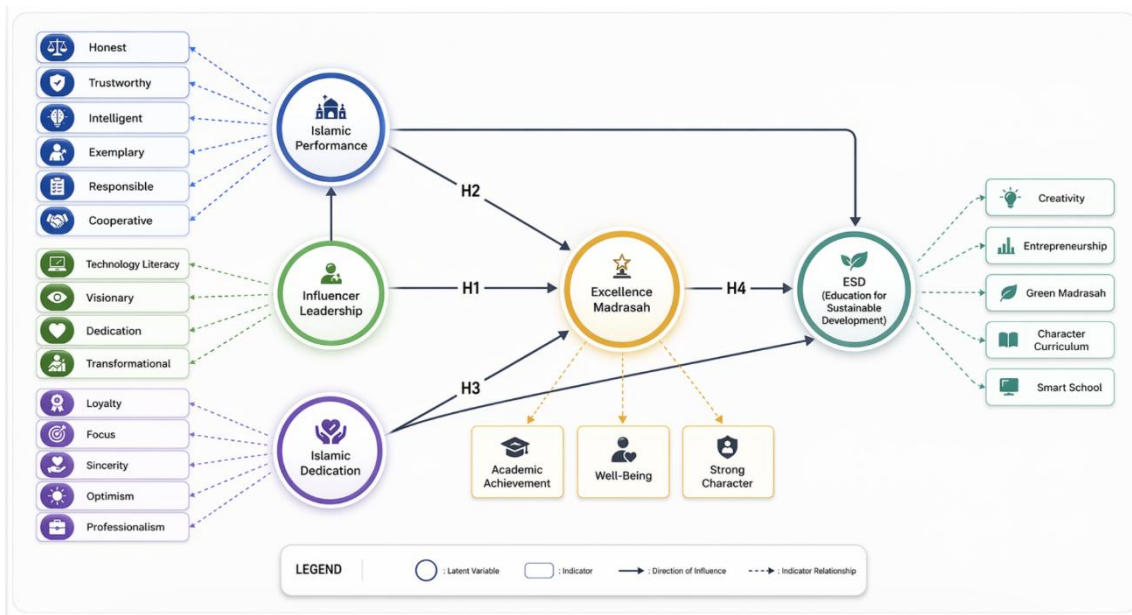
Quantitative data in this study were obtained through structured questionnaires distributed to respondents, with instruments developed based on indicators derived from the main variables, namely influencer leadership, Islamic performance, Islamic dedication, and the formation of leading schools, while responses were measured using a Likert scale to enable statistical analysis of relationships among variables. To ensure clarity regarding the measurement framework, the indicators used for each variable are summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1. Research Variable Indicators**

Variable	Dimensions	Key Indicators
Influencer Leadership (Zhang et al., 2024)	Competence	Digital capability; Decision-making ability
	Attitude	Exemplary behavior; Discipline and integrity
	Collaboration	Teamwork participation; Deliberative engagement
	Responsibility	Evaluation practices; Accountability
	Commitment	Loyalty; Institutional dedication
Islamic Performance (Yusuf, 2016)	Work Quality	Timeliness; Accuracy; Task completion
	Responsibility	Role compliance; Instruction adherence; Work consistency
	Productivity	Task efficiency; Work capacity
	Achievement	Competency development; Student achievement support
	Work Method	Resource utilization; Supervision and evaluation
Islamic Dedication (Caniago & Mustoko, 2020)	Time	Discipline; Consistency
	Energy	Work enthusiasm; Total involvement
	Action	Task effectiveness; Role alignment
	Motivation	Persistence; Positive attitude
	Internal Drive	Sense of purpose; Meaningful contribution

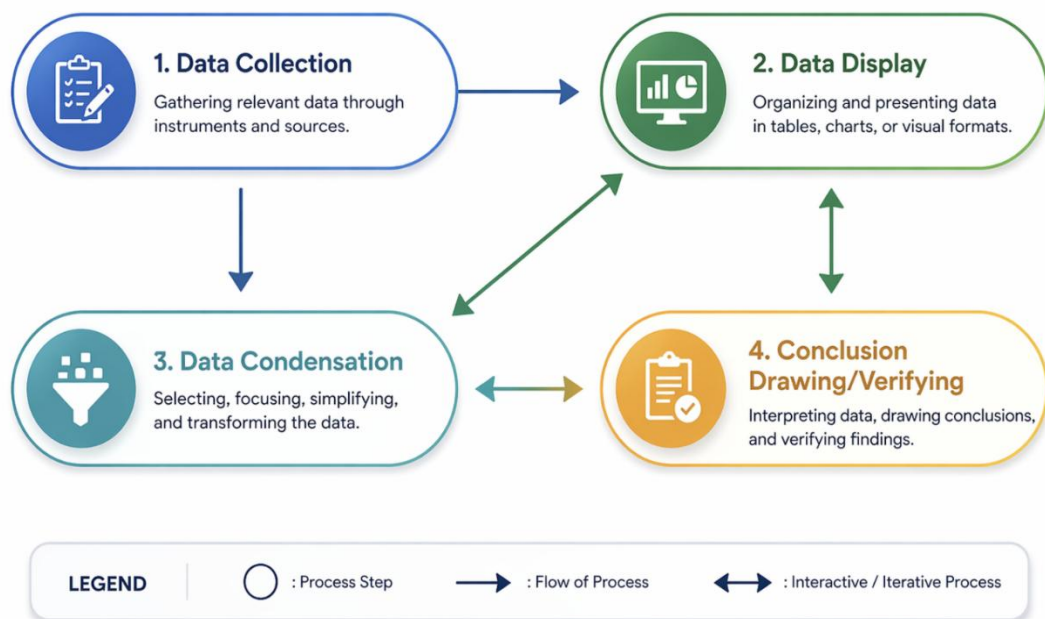
To complement these findings, qualitative data were collected through a combination of in-depth interviews with key informants, including school principals, teachers, and administrative staff, aimed at exploring leadership practices and their role in shaping leading schools and supporting Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), alongside participant observations that focused on capturing real interactions among school members and understanding how Islamic performance and leadership are enacted in daily practices, as well as document analysis involving institutional policies, work programs, and reports to examine organizational strategies and implementation processes. Overall, the study utilized both primary data obtained directly from the field through questionnaires, interviews, and observations, and secondary data derived from relevant literature, institutional documents, and supporting reports, allowing for a more comprehensive and triangulated understanding of the research problem.

Quantitative data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to examine the relationships among latent variables and to test the proposed hypotheses. To clarify the conceptual relationships among the variables examined in this study, the research model is presented in Figure 1.



**Figure 1. Research Model**

Qualitative data analysis was conducted in an interactive and iterative manner, following the framework proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña. The analysis process consists of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. To provide a clearer overview of this process, the stages of qualitative data analysis are illustrated in Figure 2.



**Figure 2. Qualitative Data Analysis Process**

As illustrated in Figure 2, the analysis involves continuous interaction between data collection, condensation, display, and verification (Asipi et al., 2022). This iterative process ensures that interpretations remain grounded in empirical evidence while allowing refinement of emerging findings throughout the research process. In practice, qualitative analysis begins with data condensation, where raw data from interviews, observations, and documents are selected, simplified, coded, and categorized according to relevant research indicators (Ivey, 2023). The condensed data are then organized through data display in the form of thematic matrices, tables, and narrative descriptions to facilitate the identification of patterns and relationships. Based on these displays, conclusions are gradually developed and continuously verified through triangulation of sources, cross-site comparison, and alignment with relevant theoretical frameworks, ensuring the credibility and consistency of the findings (Donkoh, 2023).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Result

The results of this study indicate that influencer leadership has a positive and significant effect on improving Islamic performance and Islamic dedication, while also contributing directly to the development of leading schools. Islamic dedication is proven to be a crucial factor in strengthening institutional quality, whereas Islamic performance does not have a direct significant effect but functions as an operational foundation that supports institutional success. These findings confirm that the success of educational institutions is determined not only by infrastructure or accreditation, but also by leadership strength, Islamic work culture, and collective commitment. To systematically evaluate the proposed model, the analysis begins with the assessment of the coefficient of determination (R-square), followed by the evaluation of the measurement model and structural relationships among variables. This step is essential to determine the predictive accuracy and explanatory power of the model.

The results of the coefficient of determination (R-square) for each endogenous construct are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2. Coefficient of Determination (R<sup>2</sup>) for Endogenous Constructs**

Variable	R-square	R-square adjusted
Islamic Dedication	0.589	0.585
Islamic Performance	0.680	0.677
Leading School	0.710	0.701

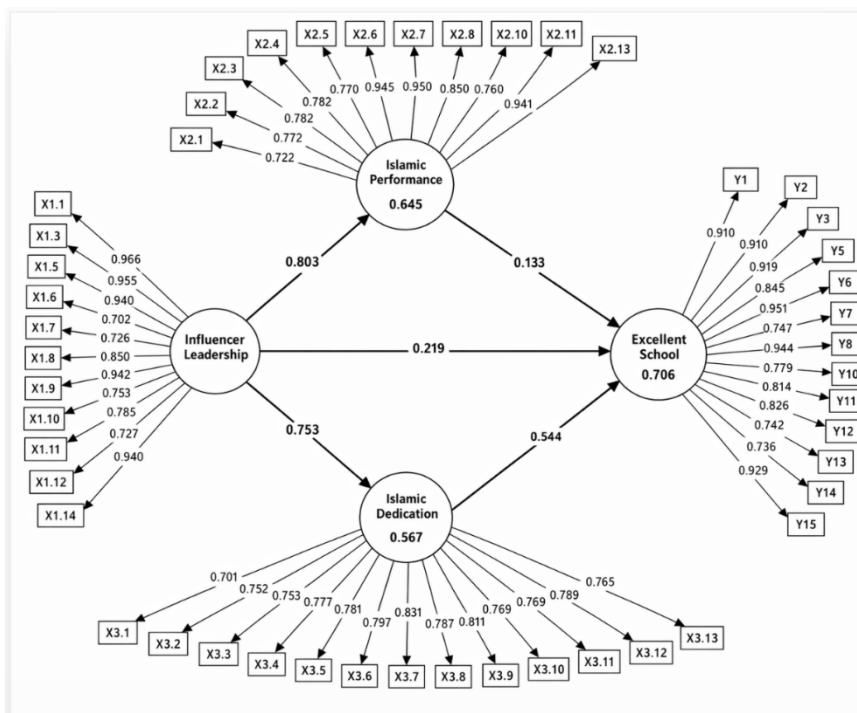
From Table 2, it can be explained that the variable "Islamic Dedication" has an R-Square value of 0.589. This indicates that the influencer leadership variable is able to explain 58.9% of the variation in influencing the Islamic dedication variable. The variable "Islamic Performance" has an R-Square value of 0.680, which means that influencer leadership is able to explain 68% of the variation in influencing the variable "Islamic Performance". Furthermore, the variable "Excellent School" has an R-Square value of 0.710, which indicates that the combination of the variables of influencer leadership, Islamic dedication, and Islamic performance is able to explain 71% of the variation in improving the quality of excellent schools. The values above indicate that the research model has strong predictive power.

The R<sup>2</sup> results indicate that the structural model has substantial predictive power in explaining the endogenous constructs. However, before interpreting the relationships among variables further, it is essential to ensure that the measurement model meets the required standards of reliability and validity. Therefore, the evaluation of the measurement model is conducted through reliability and convergent validity analysis. The results of the reliability and validity assessment for each construct are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3. Construct Reliability and Validity**

Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Islamic Dedication	0.940	0.948	0.605
Influencer Leadership	0.963	0.968	0.739
Islamic Performance	0.956	0.963	0.703
Leading School	0.964	0.969	0.706

Table 3 shows that all variables have a Cronbach's Alpha value above 0.90, indicating a very high level of internal consistency. Furthermore, the Composite Reliability value for all constructs is also above 0.96, indicating that the indicators used in this study have excellent reliability. The overall Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value for the variables studied is also above 0.50, indicating that the constructs are able to explain more than half of the variance in the measured indicators. To provide a visual representation of the structural relationships among constructs, the structural model with standardized path coefficients is presented in Figure 1. This visualization illustrates the direction and magnitude of the relationships between variables in the proposed model.



**Figure 3. Structural Model with Standardized Path Coefficients and Outer Loadings**

Figure 3 displays the structural configuration of the model, showing that influencer leadership exerts a strong and consistent influence on both Islamic dedication and Islamic performance, thereby positioning it as the primary driving force within the system. The magnitude of the coefficients indicates that leadership practices characterized by clear vision, effective communication, and digital adaptability are more directly translated into performance outcomes, while simultaneously cultivating deeper forms of institutional commitment. More importantly, Islamic dedication emerges as the most decisive pathway toward the realization of a leading school, suggesting that loyalty, internalization of values, and spiritual engagement function as the core mechanisms sustaining institutional excellence. In contrast, the relatively weak relationship between Islamic performance and leading school implies that operational effectiveness alone is insufficient to produce superior outcomes. This pattern points to a structural dynamic in which performance plays a supporting role, whereas dedication acts as the key mediating force that transforms leadership influence into sustainable organizational quality, reinforcing a model that is fundamentally commitment-driven rather than merely performance-oriented.

While Figure 3 provides a descriptive overview of the direction and strength of the relationships among variables, statistical significance testing is required to confirm whether these relationships are empirically supported. To statistically validate the proposed relationships, hypothesis testing was conducted using the bootstrapping procedure in SEM-PLS. This analysis evaluates the significance of the structural paths based on path coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values. The results of the hypothesis testing are presented in Table 4.

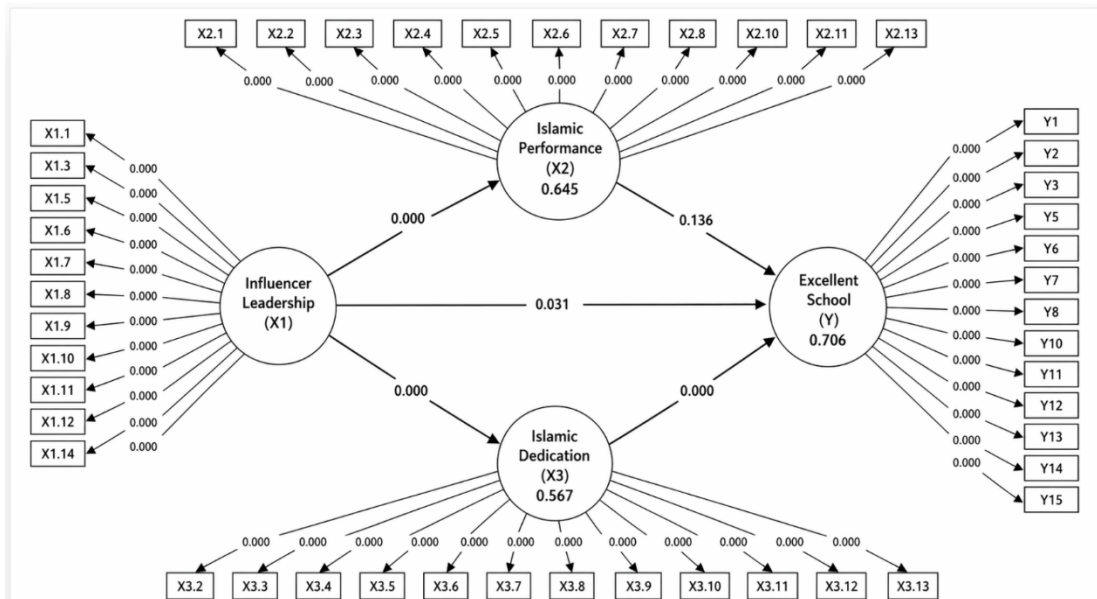
**Table 4. Path coefficients**

Path	O	M	STDEV	T Statistics	P Values
Islamic Dedication → Leading School	0.544	0.547	0.107	5.079	0.000
Influencer Leadership → Islamic Dedication	0.753	0.756	0.045	16.712	0.000
Influencer Leadership → Islamic Performance	0.803	0.806	0.041	19.395	0.000
Influencer Leadership → Leading School	0.219	0.221	0.117	1.872	0.031
Islamic Performance → Leading School	0.133	0.127	0.121	1.096	0.136

To further illustrate the significance levels of each relationship, the bootstrapping results are visualized in Figure 4.

The results presented in Table 4 and Figure 4 indicate that Influencer Leadership has a positive and statistically significant effect on both Islamic Performance ( $\beta = 0.803$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and Islamic Dedication ( $\beta = 0.753$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), confirming its central role in strengthening value-based performance and commitment within Islamic educational institutions. Furthermore, Influencer Leadership also demonstrates a direct, albeit relatively weak, effect on High-Performing Schools ( $\beta = 0.031$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), suggesting that leadership contributes to institutional excellence not only indirectly but also through a direct structural pathway. In contrast, Islamic Performance does not have a statistically significant effect on High-Performing Schools ( $\beta = 0.136$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), indicating that performance alone is insufficient to directly drive superior institutional outcomes without the support of other mediating factors. Meanwhile, Islamic Dedication shows a strong and significant influence on High-Performing Schools ( $\beta = 0.544$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), highlighting its critical role as a mediating construct that translates leadership into tangible institutional success. Overall, these findings suggest that while leadership

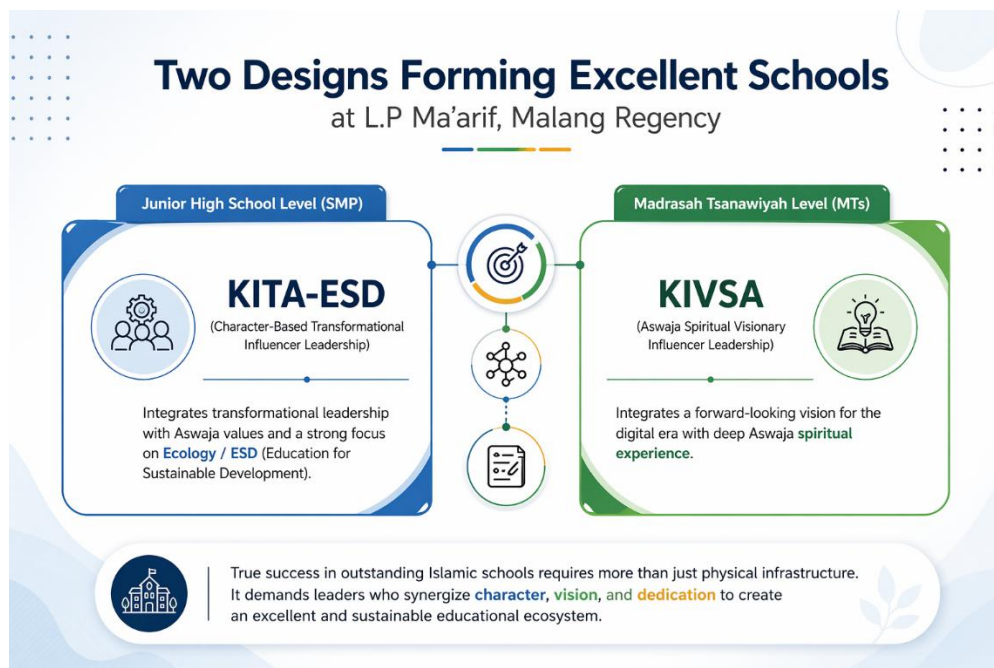
directly impacts institutional outcomes, its more substantial contribution occurs indirectly through the enhancement of dedication, which emerges as the key mechanism in achieving high-performing Islamic educational institutions.



**Figure 4. Structural Model with P-Values (Bootstrapping Results)**

In addition to the quantitative results, qualitative data obtained through interviews, observations, and document analysis provide a more nuanced understanding of how leadership is enacted in everyday institutional practices. The analysis does not simply confirm the statistical relationships identified earlier, but reveals patterns of behavior, interaction, and decision-making that shape how leadership is experienced by teachers and staff. Across different schools, leadership was consistently described not only in terms of authority or performance expectations, but in relation to how values were communicated, embodied, and sustained over time.

From this analysis, two leadership typologies emerge as recurring patterns rather than predefined categories, reflecting how leadership is both practiced and interpreted within Islamic educational settings. The first typology, referred to as *KITA-ESD* (Aswaja-based Transformational Influencer Leadership), represents a leadership orientation that is outward-looking and adaptive, where leaders actively integrate technological responsiveness with a sustainability-driven vision. In contrast, the second typology, *KIVSA* (Aswaja-based Spiritual Visionary Influencer Leadership), emphasizes the internal dimension of leadership, highlighting moral consistency, spiritual depth, and the ability to cultivate commitment through value-based example. Although these typologies highlight different emphases, they are not mutually exclusive. Rather, they operate in a complementary manner, where *KITA-ESD* shapes the institution's capacity to respond to external demands, while *KIVSA* sustains its internal coherence and value-based identity. To further clarify this relationship, the interaction between these two typologies is illustrated in Figure 5.



**Figure 5. Sustainability Model with Three Core Elements**

From this analysis, two leadership typologies emerge as recurring patterns rather than predefined categories. The first, referred to as *KITA-ESD* (Aswaja-based Transformational Influencer Leadership), reflects a leadership orientation that is outward-looking and adaptive. Leaders associated with this typology tend to emphasize innovation, digital responsiveness, and alignment with broader educational agendas such as sustainability and institutional competitiveness. In practice, this is reflected in how schools adopt new learning strategies, integrate technology into daily operations, and position themselves within a rapidly changing educational landscape. At the same time, these efforts remain anchored in Islamic values, ensuring that adaptation does not lead to a loss of identity.

The second typology, *KIVSA* (Aswaja-based Spiritual Visionary Influencer Leadership), captures a different but equally important dimension of leadership. Here, the emphasis shifts from external adaptation to internal formation. Leadership is expressed through moral consistency, spiritual awareness, and the ability to inspire commitment through example rather than instruction. Teachers and staff often interpret leadership influence through everyday interactions—such as how leaders communicate, respond to challenges, and maintain fairness—rather than through formal policies alone. This creates a sense of trust and emotional attachment that strengthens organizational cohesion.

While these two typologies highlight different emphases, they are not mutually exclusive. Rather, the findings suggest that effective leadership in Islamic educational institutions emerges from the interaction between these orientations. *KITA-ESD* shapes the institution's capacity to respond to external demands, whereas *KIVSA* sustains its internal coherence and value-based identity. The coexistence of these patterns reflects a leadership model that is simultaneously adaptive and grounded, allowing institutions to navigate change without compromising their foundational principles.

## Discussion

The increasing complexity of leadership within Islamic educational institutions calls for approaches that extend beyond administrative efficiency toward value-oriented and adaptive frameworks. Within this context, this study set out to examine how influencer leadership contributes to the development of leading schools, particularly through the mediating roles of Islamic performance and Islamic dedication. The findings reveal a pattern that shifts the emphasis of institutional success: while influencer leadership significantly enhances both performance and dedication, it is the latter that ultimately plays a more decisive role in shaping school excellence.

This distinction suggests that performance, although important, operates primarily at an operational level, whereas dedication reflects a deeper form of engagement rooted in shared values, loyalty, and spiritual commitment. Institutional excellence, therefore, appears to be less dependent on what is achieved in measurable terms and more on how consistently values are internalized and practiced within the organization. Such a perspective challenges the dominant assumption that performance is the main driver of success and instead points toward a commitment-based mechanism in which leadership influence is translated into long-term institutional quality.

From a theoretical standpoint, these findings resonate with Transformational Leadership theory, particularly in its emphasis on intrinsic motivation and cultural change, while also aligning with Spiritual Leadership Theory, which highlights the importance of meaning, vision, and moral influence in shaping organizational outcomes (Al-Kayyal et al., 2024; Ladkin & Patrick, 2022; Prahawan et al., 2023). However, the present study extends these frameworks by situating them within an Islamic educational context, where ethical and spiritual dimensions are not complementary, but central to leadership effectiveness. In this setting, commitment is not merely psychological but also moral and transcendental, reinforcing the relevance of the Organizational Commitment framework, especially the affective and normative dimensions proposed by Dunger (2023).

The absence of a significant direct relationship between Islamic performance and leading schools may initially appear counterintuitive, yet it becomes more understandable when considering the nature of value-based institutions. Performance tends to reflect task execution and procedural efficiency, whereas institutional excellence requires a deeper alignment with values such as sincerity, trustworthiness, and responsibility. Without such grounding, performance risks becoming mechanical and disconnected from the broader mission of education. This interpretation is consistent with prior studies emphasizing the role of ethical work values and organizational commitment in sustaining institutional effectiveness (Cortez & Guhao, 2024; Martinez & Javier, 2024). To further contextualize this relationship, the linkage between commitment dimensions and school effectiveness can be summarized in Table 5.

As shown in Table 5, higher levels of commitment are consistently associated with improved school climate, stronger participation, and enhanced institutional sustainability. This indicates that dedication is not merely an individual attribute but a collective organizational force that strengthens institutional resilience and long-term performance.

**Table 5. Relationship Between the Growth of Commitment in Schools/Madrasahs**

No	Focus on School/Madrasah	Key Findings	Relation to the Three Components
1	Commitment and school/madrasah climate	High commitment is associated with an orderly climate, participative decision-making, and improved student achievement.	Primarily affective and normative commitment (Bading, 2023).
2	Factors influencing commitment	Distributed leadership, participation in decision-making, teamwork, and organizational support foster stronger commitment.	Strengthens affective and normative commitment while reducing dependence on continuance commitment (Baksi Maiti et al., 2021).
3	Impact on performance and turnover	High commitment reduces turnover intention and enhances school sustainability.	All components are relevant, with affective commitment being the most dominant (QiaLian et al., 2024).

Beyond the structural relationships identified in this study, a more substantive contribution lies in the emergence of two leadership typologies, namely *KITA-ESD* (Aswaja-based Transformational Influencer Leadership) and *KIVSA* (Aswaja-based Spiritual Visionary Influencer Leadership). These typologies offer a more grounded interpretation of how influencer leadership operates within Islamic educational contexts. *KITA-ESD* reflects a leadership orientation that integrates digital adaptability with a sustainability-driven vision, positioning leaders not only as change agents but also as facilitators of long-term institutional transformation aligned with Education for Sustainable Development. In contrast, *KIVSA* emphasizes the internal dimension of leadership, where moral exemplarity, spiritual depth, and visionary thinking become the foundation for influencing organizational behavior.

What becomes particularly significant is that both typologies reinforce the central finding of this study—that leadership effectiveness is not merely a function of managerial competence, but of its ability to cultivate value-based commitment. While *KITA-ESD* operates more prominently at the systemic and strategic level, *KIVSA* functions at the cultural and ethical level, shaping how values are internalized and sustained within the institution. Together, these models illustrate that successful leadership in Islamic education requires a balance between external adaptability and internal integrity, bridging technological progress with spiritual grounding.

From a practical standpoint, the findings suggest that school leaders need to move beyond a narrow focus on performance indicators and instead prioritize the cultivation of a value-based work culture. This can be operationalized through specific leadership practices, as summarized in Table 6.

Table 6 demonstrates that leadership practices grounded in vision, altruistic values, and moral integrity contribute directly to increased motivation, trust, and organizational cohesion. Leaders who integrate spiritual values into institutional routines are more likely to foster a strong sense of belonging and shared purpose among teachers and staff. To synthesize these findings into a more integrative conceptual perspective, the relationship between leadership, culture, and dedication can be understood as a unified system that underpins sustainable school development. This interaction is illustrated in Figure 6.

**Table 6. The Role of Influencers' Spiritual Leadership in Institutions**

No	Practice Focus	Implementation	Main Impact
1	Vision and hope/faith	The principal articulates a clear educational and religious vision, establishes meaningful goals, and sets challenging targets.	Enhances commitment, strengthens motivation, and fosters a more positive school/madrasah culture.
2	Altruistic love	Demonstrates role modeling, shows care for teachers and students, maintains open communication, and provides emotional support.	Builds psychological safety, trust, and a strong sense of community (emotional bonding and attachment to the institution).
3	Spiritual and moral values	Integrates values such as <i>ihsan</i> , <i>amanah</i> , justice, and worship into institutional policies and daily practices.	Promotes student character development and nurtures an inclusive, ethical culture (mutual respect and familial atmosphere).



**Figure 6. Sustainability Model With Three Core Elements**

Figure 6. illustrates that the sustainability of leading schools cannot be attributed to a single dominant factor, but rather emerges from the dynamic interaction among visionary leadership, Islamic work culture, and collective dedication. Leadership provides direction and a sense of purpose, while work culture shapes everyday practices and institutional norms. At the same time, dedication sustains continuity through long-term commitment and shared responsibility. The intersection of these elements suggests a mutually reinforcing relationship, where each component strengthens and depends on the others. When one element weakens, the overall system becomes less stable, underscoring the need for balance and integration across all dimensions.

Beyond its empirical findings, this study contributes to the development of leadership theory within Islamic educational contexts by highlighting the central role of value-based commitment as a mechanism linking leadership and institutional excellence. The identification of *KITA-ESD* and *KIVSA* further extends existing leadership frameworks by demonstrating how adaptive and spiritual dimensions of leadership can coexist within a unified model that is both contextually responsive and normatively grounded. At the practical level, these insights suggest that leadership development

within Islamic educational institutions should not be limited to administrative or technical competence, but must also incorporate digital adaptability alongside spiritual and ethical capacity. The findings also indicate that strengthening a value-based work culture should be positioned as a strategic priority, particularly given the decisive role of dedication in shaping school excellence. In addition, the integration of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) into institutional vision reflects the need for leadership that is not only responsive to change, but capable of shaping long-term educational direction grounded in both sustainability and moral integrity.

## CONCLUSION

The challenges faced by Islamic educational institutions today are not merely technical in nature, but are deeply rooted in how leadership shapes values, commitment, and collective direction within the organization. This study set out to understand how influencer leadership operates within this context, and the findings point to a pattern that is difficult to ignore: while leadership significantly enhances both performance and dedication, it is the latter that ultimately determines whether a school can sustain its status as a leading institution. The absence of a direct effect of Islamic performance on school excellence suggests that operational capability alone does not carry sufficient weight when it is detached from ethical grounding and spiritual commitment. Instead, institutional strength appears to grow from a shared sense of purpose, where values are not only articulated but lived consistently within daily practices. In practical terms, this places a greater responsibility on school leaders to cultivate environments that nurture trust, meaning, and long-term engagement, rather than focusing solely on measurable outputs. At the same time, the identification of leadership typologies such as *KITA-ESD* and *KIVSA* offers a direction for future development, particularly in aligning technological adaptation with moral and spiritual orientation. These findings open space for further inquiry, especially in exploring how commitment-based leadership models can be sustained across different institutional contexts and over time, while also acknowledging that the present study is limited by its scope and cross-sectional design.

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