



Improving the Quality of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Through Transformational Leadership

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Abstract

Purpose: This research aims to explore more deeply the application of transformational leadership in Islamic education and its role in improving educational standards and school performance, as well as realizing the importance of leadership in utilizing the potential of school resources. **Methods:** This research uses descriptive research methods with a qualitative approach. This is because researchers carry out direct observations in the field to observe and provide an accurate picture of the reality that occurs in the field. **Results:** The research results show that madrasa heads bear the responsibility of supervising all aspects of educational activities, starting from managing teachers and students, developing curriculum and programs to building relationships with parents and the community. By using a three-stage strategy that includes input, process, and output, this research shows that there is a strict selection process for students and teachers who enter the input stage, while remaining focused on optimizing the learning process to produce quality educational results. These strategies are intricately designed to complement and strengthen each other, fostering an inclusive and conducive educational environment. **Conclusion:** These findings underscore the positive impact of transformational leadership on the overall educational landscape at MI Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany, South Tangerang City, where madrasa heads, through inclusive and astute leadership, prioritize improving the quality of education. Therefore, this research explains the important role of transformational leadership in raising educational standards and improving school performance, and offers valuable insights for improving the quality of education in similar settings.

Keywords: *leadership, transformational, quality of madrasah.*

INTRODUCTION

Leadership plays a pivotal role within every organization, serving as the driving force behind the attainment of set objectives and goals. Through effective regulation and management, leaders assume the responsibility of directing activities, making crucial decisions, and efficiently managing organizational resources. Rohman & Dalimunthe, (2024) emphasize that these functions are essential for ensuring the effective and efficient achievement of organizational goals.

Moreover, leaders are instrumental in establishing and upholding the core values of an organization (Priatna, 2020; Schott et al., 2020; Díez et al., 2020). They serve as beacons of inspiration, motivating members to actively engage in the pursuit of shared objectives. By fostering a work environment that encourages collaboration and innovation, leaders cultivate a sense of belonging and commitment among team members. This alignment of values and motivation is crucial for sustaining high levels of performance and productivity within the organization.

According to Navaridas-Nalda et al., (2020), the relationship between leadership and work culture is dynamic and interdependent. Effective leadership fosters a positive work culture characterized by open communication, mutual respect, and a shared vision. In turn, a healthy work culture reinforces effective leadership practices, creating a cycle of success within the organization. This symbiotic relationship between leadership and work culture is fundamental in shaping the overall dynamics and success of an organization.

In the realm of education, leadership plays a pivotal role, particularly within madrasas where the harnessing of resources is crucial. Principals of madrasas bear the weighty responsibility of steering and overseeing all facets of educational endeavors. This encompasses not only the management of teachers and students but also the shaping of curriculum, the fostering of program development, and the cultivation of relationships with parents and the wider community. As noted by Hanafi et al., (2021), effective leadership is paramount in galvanizing these elements towards the attainment of educational objectives.

In navigating the intricate and ever-evolving landscape of educational challenges, the leadership exhibited by madrasa principals must amalgamate managerial acumen with a compelling vision and the implementation of pertinent strategies (Garira, 2020; Didham & Ofei-Manu, 2020; AlAjmi, 2022). It is through this multifaceted approach that madrasa leaders can effectively mobilize resources towards enhanced achievement levels, a deeper appreciation of educational principles, and the integration of innovative practices in both learning and curriculum development (Žalėnienė & Pereira, 2021; Navaridas-Nalda et al., 2020; Shen et al., 2020).

Leadership has two meanings, namely as the ability to move and influence people. Leadership is defined as the process of directing and influencing the work-related activities of group members. A leader basically has the skills to influence the behavior of others in his work through the use of power. Power is the ability to direct and influence subordinates in carrying out tasks. Stoner argued that the more sources of power a leader has, the greater the potential for effective leadership. The selection of leaders is usually based on the existence of a clear vision and mission, and it becomes difficult for someone to become a leader if they do not have a clear vision and mission. The presence of a clear vision and mission can provide direction for the future of an organization (Talebizadeh et al., 2021; Gore et al., 2021; Žalėnienė & Pereira, 2021).

Over the years, experts have dedicated significant effort to defining leadership, yet a universally accepted definition has remained elusive since the commencement of these endeavors in 1993 (Chaithanapat et al., 2022; Costa et al., 2021; Krafft et al., 2024). Visvizi et al., (2020) characterize leadership as an asymmetrical relationship marked by influence, guidance, and direction, directing individual behavior towards predefined objectives across a specified timeframe.

Leadership is viewed as a distinctive phenomenon with the capacity to shape organizational attitudes and the performance outcomes of its members within a company (Didham & Ofei-Manu, 2020; Liu et al., 2021; Christian-Brandt et al., 2020). Effective leadership, as Hennessy et al., (2022) underscores, hinges on fostering robust understanding between leaders and subordinates, particularly crucial in endeavors aimed at achieving satisfactory performance results.

However, Vogel et al., (2021) posit contrasting perspectives, suggesting that while leadership may appear straightforward to define in practice, its inherent complexity renders precise definition a formidable challenge. The intricate nature of leadership complicates the quest for a singular, universally embraced definition, making its attainment uncertain in the foreseeable future.

Leadership models are numerous and broad in scope. One model of leadership in the field of education that is expected to increase the effectiveness of educational institutions is transformational leadership. This leadership model describes a leader's ability to change the mindset and behavior of followers to be more positive through example and encouragement to do things that may seem difficult at first. This leadership concept brings a view of change that involves all educational institutions, so that followers realize the importance of their contribution to building an institution that is ready to face change and is even able to create change itself (Day et al., 2021; Sokal et al., 2021). Transformational leadership is closely related to positive outcomes that encourage subordinates to achieve high-level needs, such as self-actualization and self-esteem. Leaders in this model are able to motivate their subordinates by focusing on common interests that are higher than personal interests. This helps create a spirit of cooperation and collective commitment which leads to better achievements (Sancar et al., 2021; Madigan & Kim, 2021).

Guthrie & Ph assert that the leadership demonstrated by an individual in a position of authority profoundly shapes the orientation and policies within their leadership framework. Within the realm of Islamic educational leadership, it is emphasized that a leader's capacity to exert influence across all facets of an institution enables more effective direction and management of organizational members towards predetermined objectives (Zguir et al., 2021; Cummings et al., 2021). Leaders are likened to locomotives, serving as the primary drivers in endeavors aimed at enhancing both human lives and the overall organizational dynamics.

Transformational leadership, as elucidated by Porfirio et al., (2021), operates on the basis of fostering strong values within the leader-team relationship. This leadership model prioritizes individual commitment, empowerment, achievement, enhancement of self-efficacy, and facilitation of individual development. Leaders adopting this approach are deeply engaged in prioritizing goals and demonstrating personal commitment to empower their team members towards collective success.

The efficacy of a leader in fulfilling their leadership role can be gauged by their ability to inspire and influence subordinates towards the attainment of organizational goals. However, it is important to recognize that motivation and encouragement from external sources also play significant roles in influencing the achievement of organizational objectives (Castellano et al., 2021). Effective leadership, therefore, encompasses not only the leader's capacity to inspire but also the ability to create an environment that fosters motivation and encourages the collective pursuit of common goals.

In this context, a transformational leader is an individual who is able to inspire his followers to ignore personal interests for the sake of collective interests, organizational progress, and the general benefit. They have significant skills and influence over their group of followers (Shen et al., 2020). As has been shown by the principal of Madrasah Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany, his success is reflected in his efforts to develop competence and strengthen the commitment of teaching staff, the education system, and all staff within the school environment. One indicator of success is the success of students who have achieved various achievements.

Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany is an Islamic educational institution that operates as a foundation under the supervision of the Ministry of Religion. In the implementation of education in this school environment, the Islamic boarding school nuance is very strong. Apart from receiving general education, students are also taught yellow books such as *Jurumiyah*, *Nature 20*, *Harmony*, and *Akhlakulil Banen*. This approach reflects the transformational leadership pattern adopted at this school. Transformational leadership focuses on how a leader is able to influence his subordinates, so that graduates are produced in accordance with set standards, as well as the vision, mission and goals of the school (McCauley & Palus, 2021).

The results of research conducted by Arifin & Maunah stated that Islamic educational institutions have a prophetic religious spirit. Bernard Bass's transformational leadership theory is used as the main framework in developing Islamic organizations through three prophetic cultural models; structural models, formal models, and mechanical models. Studies conducted by Nazmul Islam, Furoka, & Idris also show that transformational leadership has a significant impact on employee trust in leadership and employee superior behavior during organizational change (Shah et al., 2020). However, transformational leadership is not the only determining factor the success of a leader in leading an organization. This is confirmed by the results of research conducted by Indrawati at the Sunan Derajat Islamic Boarding School. This research shows that K.H. Abdul Ghofur prioritizes motivation and inspiration patterns rather than charismatic patterns in the transformational leadership he implements (Corriveau, 2020).

Leadership in Islamic education believes that every human being is sent to earth to become a leader, as explained in the Al-Quran verse Surah Al-Baqarah (2:30). In particular, men are considered to be the ideal reflection in leadership roles, while women are considered to be individuals who are led (although this concept can still be explained in more depth) as confirmed in Surah An-Nisa' (4:34). This understanding is reflected in the choice of the Prophet Ibrahim as imam for the Muslim community, because of his ability to carry out commands, avoid prohibitions, and face the tests given to him (Surah Al-Baqarah 2:124-129). Apart from that, the Prophet David was appointed as caliph who was ordered by Allah to make decisions on various issues with full justice (Surah Sad 38; 26).

An effective leader is one who does not use force to oppose change, but is able to accelerate change through strong personal integrity, inspiring his subordinates, and realizing the organization's vision. In managing change, the role and contribution of leaders has a significant level of importance and impact. Based on the results of various studies that have been conducted, transformational leadership has been recognized as one of the most optimal leadership styles to be adopted in overcoming challenges and restructuring in the school context (Hennessy et al., 2022). Transformational leadership has the potential to increase the level of commitment among teachers. Apart from that, effective leadership has a crucial role in developing both organizations and individuals to become superior (AlNuaimi et al., 2021).

The principal plays a very important role as a figure who can be used as an example by teachers and other staff. They are expected to be trusted, respected, and have the ability to make decisions that are in the best interests of the school. Each type of leadership has its own goals in an effort to increase organizational effectiveness, thereby creating leadership that is valued and desired by staff members (Farrukh et al., 2022). Madrasahs that achieve high achievements generally have a development system that is integrated and well realized in the learning process. Apart from that, madrasahs have also adopted innovations in school cultural activities and recorded and introduced madrasah culture which is in line with local, national and international values. This cannot be separated from the leadership role carried out by madrasah leaders (Susiloningsih & Munadi, 2023).

The Madrasah Head has a dual role as an educator and also as an administrator in madrasah management. The success of an educational institution really depends on the leadership of the madrasah head. Because the madrasah head is a leadership figure within the institution, he is expected to have the ability to guide the institution towards achieving the stated goals. Apart from that, madrasah heads must also have the ability to respond to changes and plan for a better future in the era of globalization. The responsibility of the madrasah head includes smooth and successful organizing and managing all aspects formally to superiors and informally to the community who have confidence in their children's education. The success of the madrasah itself cannot be separated from the quality and effectiveness of the madrasah head who leads it.

This research aims to delve deeper into the application of transformational leadership within the context of Islamic education, specifically focusing on its potential contributions to enhancing educational standards and school performance in terms of quality. The study will concentrate on analyzing how transformational leadership is implemented at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany in South Tangerang, particularly in improving the quality of Islamic education. This institution is distinguished by its motto, "Servant of the Qur'an and Love of Ulama," and its outstanding curriculum, which includes memorization of essential texts such as 'Aqidatul 'Awam, Jurumiyah, Nahwu Shorof, and tahfidz Al-Qur'an. The principal of this madrasah aspires to cultivate a generation that not only possesses a profound understanding of the Quran and ethics but also excels in science and technology.

What makes this research particularly noteworthy is its relevance in an era marked by rapid technological advancements. The skills required by future generations have evolved beyond mere memorization; adaptation and higher-order thinking skills have become imperative. Hence, the exploration of transformational leadership within an educational setting that emphasizes Quranic understanding alongside the development of scientific and

technological competencies holds significant value. This novel approach aligns with the evolving educational needs of contemporary society, where the integration of traditional values with modern knowledge is increasingly crucial. By examining the practical implementation of transformational leadership within this unique educational environment, the research endeavors to shed light on innovative strategies for enhancing educational outcomes and nurturing well-rounded individuals equipped to navigate the complexities of the modern world.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research method used in this research is a qualitative approach with a case study approach (Tomaszewski et al., 2020). A qualitative approach was chosen because this research focuses on an in-depth understanding of the experiences, perceptions and practices of transformational leadership in the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah environment. The case study was chosen so that researchers could investigate in detail how the application of transformational leadership has an impact on improving the quality of education in institutions. A qualitative approach allows researchers to delve deeply into context and details that cannot be explained simply by numbers or statistics. Therefore, this research aims to provide a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under study.

Data collection techniques used in this research include in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. In-depth interviews will be conducted with leaders, teachers, administrative staff, and possibly also students at the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah selected as a case study. Participatory observation will allow researchers to directly understand the dynamics of interactions between leaders and members of the madrasah community. Document analysis will involve a review of policies, programs and other relevant documents relating to the implementation of transformational leadership in madrasas.

Sampling was carried out purposively, namely by selecting madrasas that have a good reputation for implementing transformational leadership and have a track record of significantly improving the quality of education. This will ensure that the data collected is relevant to the research focus and can provide in-depth insight into the influence of transformational leadership on educational quality.

After the data was collected, data analysis was carried out by applying the Miles and Huberman analysis technique (Schoch, 2020), which is outlined in the following framework:

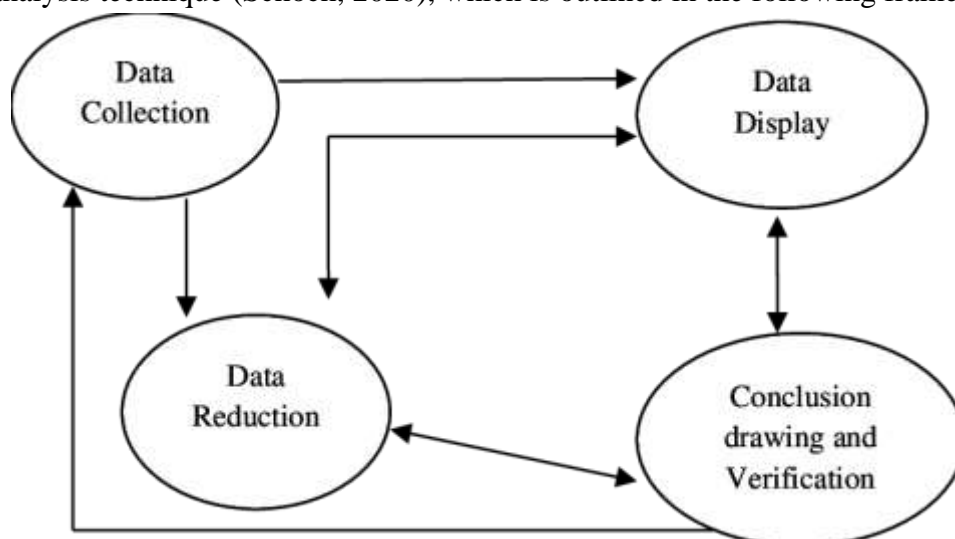


Figure 1. Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis is carried out using a thematic approach, where data from interviews, observations and document analysis will be coded and categorized based on the main themes that emerge. Then a comprehensive analysis will be carried out on the relationship between these themes and the concept of transformational leadership. This approach will enable researchers to identify patterns, trends and implications of implementing transformational leadership in improving the quality of education at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah.

Research validity is a crucial aspect that demands careful consideration in any study. In this research endeavor focusing on transformational leadership and Islamic education within the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah context, several strategies will be employed to ensure the credibility and reliability of the findings.

One of the key methods to enhance research validity is data triangulation. This involves the integration of data from multiple sources, such as interviews, observations, and documents. By combining information gathered through diverse methods, a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation can be attained. In this study, data triangulation will enable researchers to corroborate findings from different perspectives, thus strengthening the overall validity of the research outcomes.

Furthermore, member-checking will be implemented as a means to validate the findings. This process entails revisiting the research findings with participants or stakeholders to confirm the accuracy and authenticity of the interpretations made by the researchers. By engaging participants in the validation of results, any discrepancies or misunderstandings can be identified and addressed, thereby enhancing the trustworthiness of the research outcomes.

Additionally, researcher reflection will be employed as a mechanism to ensure the rigor and credibility of the study. This involves the continuous examination and critical analysis of the researcher's own biases, assumptions, and interpretations throughout the research process. By maintaining reflexivity, researchers can mitigate the influence of personal biases and ensure that their understanding and interpretation of the data remain faithful to the participants' experiences and perspectives.

By incorporating these strategies into the research methodology, the validity of the findings will be rigorously upheld. This commitment to methodological rigor not only enhances the reliability of the research outcomes but also underscores the relevance of the findings to the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah context. Ultimately, this study aims to make a meaningful contribution to the literature on transformational leadership and Islamic education, thereby advancing scholarly understanding in these domains.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Transformational Leadership of the Head of Madrasah Ibtidaiyyah Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany

Transformational leadership, as expounded by Goraliski & Tan, (2020), revolves around the meticulous process of instilling unwavering commitment towards organizational objectives while imbuing followers with the confidence and belief in their ability to accomplish these goals. Central to this leadership theory is the examination of how leaders can catalyze shifts in organizational culture, devise structural alterations, and implement management strategies that align with overarching organizational aims.

This approach underscores the critical significance of inspiring and guiding followers towards unlocking their fullest potential. Leaders operating within the framework of transformational leadership are tasked with fostering an environment conducive to embracing necessary changes for the betterment of the organization as a whole (Piwowar-Sulej & Iqbal, 2023). They are not merely administrators but visionaries who champion progress and innovation, motivating their teams to strive for excellence and adapt to evolving circumstances.

The transformational leadership style reflects tough management and focuses on driving higher motivation. This style inspires subordinates with a vision of the future that motivates them to take desired actions. Transformational leadership can be defined as a process in which the leader and followers work together to increase morality and motivation. Apart from producing high motivation, this approach is also able to optimize performance to achieve organizational goals (Sinnema et al., 2020).

According to Bass, transformational leadership in several aspects can be considered an extension of the concept of transactional leadership. Transactional leadership emphasizes the transactions or exchanges that occur among leaders, colleagues, and followers. On the other hand, transformational leadership has a deeper dimension, where leaders inspire their followers to follow and commit to the vision and goals of the organization. In addition, transformational leadership encourages followers to face challenges as innovative problem solvers, while also developing individual capacity through a process of coaching, guidance, and providing necessary support and challenges (Geerts et al., 2020).

Herman et al., (2020) delineates a comprehensive set of attributes characterizing effective transformational leadership, which are pivotal in guiding leaders towards achieving organizational objectives. These attributes can be seen in more detail in table 1, as follows:

Table 1. Characteristics of Effective Transformational Leadership

Characteristic	Discussion
Acting as an agent of change	Transformational leaders proactively drive change initiatives within the organization, steering it towards growth and progress.
Willingness to take calculated risks	While daring to take risks, transformational leaders exercise prudent judgment and careful consideration to minimize potential negative impacts.
Sensitivity to the needs and aspirations of subordinates	Transformational leaders demonstrate empathy and understanding towards the concerns and aspirations of their team members, fostering a supportive and inclusive work environment.
Providing behavioral and orientation guidance	Transformational leaders serve as role models, embodying the values and behaviors they wish to instill in their team members.
Flexibility in navigating diverse situations	Transformational leaders exhibit adaptability and flexibility in their leadership approach, effectively addressing various challenges and scenarios.
Possessing strong cognitive skills	Transformational leaders exhibit astute cognitive abilities, enabling them to analyze complex situations and make informed decisions.
Exuding confidence in problem-solving	Transformational leaders approach challenges with confidence and discipline, employing a systematic and methodical approach to problem-solving.
Proposing a compelling vision for the future	Transformational leaders articulate a clear and inspiring vision for the organization's future, instilling confidence and motivation in their team members to strive towards collective goals.

Through the practice of transformational leadership, a profound shift occurs in the organizational dynamics, fostering heightened levels of trust, pride, commitment, respect, and loyalty towards the leader. This transformation empowers subordinates to elevate their efforts and performance, surpassing previous benchmarks. Transformational leaders endeavor to enact a "transforming of visionary" approach, wherein they cultivate a shared vision among their team members, fostering collaboration towards actualizing that vision (Wallace et al., 2021). In transformational leadership there are several behavioral components that shape the process. These components are Martin et al., (2020) can be seen in more detail in table 2, as follows:

Table 2. Components of transformational leadership behavior

Characteristic	Discussion
Idealized Influence (Ideal and Charismatic Influence)	Transformational leaders become role models for their followers. They have strong character, high integrity, and personal charm that can inspire others. These leaders are respected and followed because of the positive traits they possess.
Inspirational Motivation (Motivation and Inspiration)	Transformational leaders are able to inspire and motivate their subordinates by providing a strong vision and goals. They communicate a compelling vision, providing deep meaning and purpose to followers, thereby moving them to work hard to achieve shared goals.
Individualized Consideration	Transformational leaders understand the individual needs and aspirations of their subordinates. They provide personal attention and support to each team member, understanding their potential and weaknesses, and encouraging personal development.
Intellectual Stimulation	Transformational leaders encourage innovation and creative thinking in teams. They stimulate employees' minds to think out-of-the-box, tackle challenges in new ways, and develop innovative solutions.

The behavioral components above are a collaborative framework for forming a transformational leadership process that leads to individual development, strong motivation, and achieving organizational goals in an inspiring way and having a positive impact.

Based on the results of interviews and in-depth observations, the behavior implemented in the transformational leadership of the head of the Ibtidaiyah Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany madrasah includes the following aspects:

1. **Ideal Influence and Charisma:** The madrasa head is a role model for teachers and students by showing strong character and high integrity. The inspiring attitude of the madrasa head will motivate members of the madrasa community to be positive and have integrity.
2. **Motivation and Inspiration:** The madrasa head has the ability to provide an inspiring vision and clear goals to all madrasa members. Through effective communication, they are able to motivate teachers and students to make maximum efforts to achieve the vision and goals that have been set.
3. **Individual Consideration:** Madrasah principals understand the needs and potential of each individual teacher and student. They pay special attention, listen to aspirations, and provide appropriate support, thereby establishing a close bond between the madrasa head and madrasa members.

4. **Intellectual Stimulation:** Madrasah principals encourage teachers and students to think creatively and innovatively. They provide space for new ideas, stimulate intellectual discussion, and support the development of knowledge and skills.
5. **Building Close Relationships:** The head of the madrasah creates good interpersonal relationships with all madrasah members. The listening attitude, effective communication and open atmosphere created by the madrasa head make members feel valued and supported.
6. **Assigning Responsibility and Autonomy:** The head of the madrasah assigns responsibility to teachers and students. They provide room for autonomy in decision making that supports the learning process and overall development of the madrasah.
7. **Providing Constructive Feedback:** The head of the madrasah provides constructive and development-oriented feedback. This helps teachers and students continue to improve their performance and achievements.
8. **Encouraging Collaboration:** The head of the madrasah encourages cooperation and collaboration among all members of the madrasah. They create an environment where all members feel supportive of each other and jointly contribute to achieving common goals.

All of these behaviors work together to create a transformational leadership culture that encourages individual growth, motivation, and the achievement of educational goals in an inspiring and effective manner within the Ibtidaiyah Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany madrasah.

Based on the results of interviews conducted by researchers, and supported by observations made by the author regarding the transformational leadership carried out by the head of the Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany madrasa, it has been proven to be able to produce cultural changes in the madrasa to be better than before. The innovative and empowering efforts continuously carried out by madrasa heads in facing the challenges of the times have produced a positive impact. This transformational leadership has provided strong motivation to staff, employees and teachers at madrasas. Madrasah heads have the readiness and ability to face changes in the world of education. The impact can be seen in the effective and efficient quality of education at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany. This madrasah is superior in terms of academics and achievements, as well as being a quality educational institution, research-oriented, skills-oriented and dormitory-based. Apart from that, the performance of teachers at this madrasa has also experienced a significant and optimal increase. All of this shows that the transformational leadership implemented by the madrasa head has succeeded in having a positive impact on organizational culture, motivation, quality of education, and individual performance at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany.

Documentation data shows that the leadership of the head of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany in carrying out his role as a leader is carried out effectively through continuous innovation and empowerment efforts, especially in facing the challenges of the times. The head of this madrasah is able to provide training that can provide strong motivation to madrasah members. In the context of transformational leadership in madrasas, there are several components that reflect the role of the madrasah head as a transformational leader in educational institutions. First, the madrasa head identifies himself as an agent of change and renewal. Second, they have strong charisma and self-confidence, which makes them role models for madrasa members. Third, the madrasa head is able to inspire and stimulate the intellectual minds of his subordinates (Abad-Segura & González-Zamar, 2021).

Previous research findings align with the observations made regarding the transformative leadership practices employed by the head of the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. Studies have

underscored the significance of leaders who actively promote and instill noble values within their organizational culture. By encouraging all stakeholders, including teachers, students, and staff, to align their actions with the core values of the madrasah, the leadership fosters a cohesive environment conducive to achieving shared objectives. This resonates with prior research highlighting the importance of shared values in enhancing organizational effectiveness and fostering a sense of community among members.

Moreover, the implementation of transformational leadership by the madrasa head serves as a catalyst for aligning the entire madrasa community towards the attainment of its overarching goals. Previous studies have emphasized the pivotal role of visionary leadership in fostering organizational readiness and commitment to achieving strategic objectives. By embodying the values and vision of the madrasah, the leadership cultivates a sense of purpose and direction among stakeholders, thereby fostering a collective drive towards excellence. This is consistent with prior research suggesting that transformational leaders inspire and empower individuals to strive for higher levels of performance and achievement.

Furthermore, the emphasis on readiness and preparedness instilled by the transformational leadership approach contributes to the overall efficacy of the madrasa community in realizing its objectives. Research has indicated that organizations led by transformational leaders exhibit higher levels of adaptability and resilience in the face of challenges. By nurturing a culture of continuous learning and growth, the leadership ensures that the madrasa community remains agile and responsive to changing circumstances. This finding reinforces the notion that transformational leadership fosters organizational agility and effectiveness, thereby enhancing the capacity of the madrasah to fulfill its mission and vision.

In summary, the transformative leadership practices observed in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah are consistent with prior research highlighting the importance of values-based leadership and visionary guidance in organizational settings. By fostering a culture rooted in noble values and shared goals, the leadership cultivates a sense of community and purpose among stakeholders. Moreover, the emphasis on readiness and adaptability prepares the madrasa community to navigate challenges and seize opportunities effectively. This convergence with existing research underscores the significance of transformational leadership in driving organizational success and achieving sustainable outcomes.

Transformational leaders distinguish themselves by their focus on revitalizing the enthusiasm and unlocking the potential of both their followers and the organization at large. Unlike the conventional top-down approach, where decisions trickle down from the upper echelons of authority, transformational leaders prioritize a more inclusive and participatory style of leadership. This contrast in leadership paradigms is exemplified by the practices of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany's head, who has embraced a decentralized approach to decision-making within the realm of education.

At Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany, the head of the institution has implemented a system where each teacher is entrusted with the autonomy to make decisions regarding the learning process independently. This empowerment extends to the freedom to innovate, be creative in curriculum design, and execute teaching strategies. Such a model resonates with the ethos of transformational leadership, wherein leaders foster an environment of trust and autonomy, empowering their subordinates to actively engage in decision-making and personal growth.

By devolving decision-making authority to the teaching staff, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany's leadership fosters a culture of creativity and collaboration among its educators. This approach not only encourages innovative teaching methods but also promotes active participation and ownership of the educational process. Consequently, the madrasa cultivates a dynamic and forward-thinking learning environment that is conducive to continuous improvement and adaptation.

Through this transformative leadership style, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany empowers its teachers to become proactive agents of change within the educational landscape. By embracing autonomy and fostering a culture of trust, the institution not only enhances the quality of education but also cultivates a sense of ownership and commitment among its stakeholders. This exemplifies the profound impact that transformational leadership can have on organizational dynamics and outcomes, particularly within the context of educational institutions.

Quality Management Strategy of the Head of Madrasah Ibtidaiyyah Wali Song Asy-Syirbaany

Improving the quality of education is a topic that continues to be discussed in education administration and management. Efforts to improve the quality of education must be carried out continuously so that the goal of quality education that meets needs can be achieved. Success in realizing quality education is the hope and demand of all parties involved in education. The main role of leadership in educational institutions, such as madrasa heads, is to create an environment that supports the teaching and learning process so that teachers can teach effectively and students can learn well. In carrying out this task, the madrasa head has dual responsibilities. First, they must manage madrasa administration to create a conducive learning environment. Second, they are also responsible for supervising teacher performance, so that their competence can increase and become professionals in teaching (Rohman & Dalimunthe, 2024).

Madrasah heads are expected to have an important role in inspiring teachers' work enthusiasm and forming a madrasah culture that encourages improving the quality of education. As a manager, of course the madrasa head must have specific skills; 1) Organizational coordination abilities, namely being able to coordinate all interests and activities within the organization effectively: 2) Interpersonal Skills, namely having the ability to work well in interacting with other people, being able to understand and motivate individuals and groups: 3) Administrative Skills, namely being able to carry out planning, organizing, staffing and supervision well: 4) Technical Skills, namely having the ability to use the tools, techniques and procedures required in a particular field, such as the use of relevant equipment or technology (Schott et al., 2020). By mastering these skills, madrasah heads can effectively lead, manage and direct all aspects of madrasah activities towards improving the desired quality of education.

Based on the results of research conducted by the head of the MI Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany madrasa, it was found that a number of steps had been taken to improve the quality of education at the madrasa. One of the steps taken is to develop madrasah input, especially in terms of teaching staff. Efforts to improve the quality of teaching staff are carried out by developing their abilities through training such as the 2013 curriculum seminar which was carried out in collaboration with the publishers of the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Religion. Apart from that, there is also guidance on child protection and training in reading or recitations which will later be applied to students at MI Wali Songo Asy-

Syirbaany. The madrasa head is also involved in developing yellow book reading skills for teaching staff.

From the student side, improving the quality of education is carried out through fairly strict selection when accepting new students. The selection process includes various aspects such as writing, reading, maturity tests, and interviews with parents of prospective students. The aim of this selection is to obtain students with good quality so that the teaching and learning process in the madrasah can run efficiently and effectively, producing output that is in accordance with the vision and mission of the madrasah. Apart from that, the madrasa head is also actively involved in various activities both inside and outside the madrasa to support improving the quality of education. All of these steps were taken with the aim of optimizing the development of educational quality at MI Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany.

The madrasah head is not only active within the madrasah, but is also involved in various activities outside the madrasah. Apart from that, the madrasa head carries out a number of activities with the aim of developing children's abilities in both academic and non-academic aspects. One of the main focuses is improving quality in the religious field, especially in reading the Koran and the Yellow Books. This has created public trust in MI Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany. Many parents want to send their children to MI Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany to ensure that they can read the Koran well and correctly and have an understanding of classical books, so that they have strong provisions for life and interaction in society.

From the description above, it can be concluded that the efforts made by madrasa heads to improve the quality of education have many benefits. These benefits are not only felt by teachers and education staff at MI Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany, but also by students and society as a whole. Training and seminars held by foundations and madrasa heads have had a positive impact, improving the abilities of teachers, encouraging creativity and innovation in teaching and learning activities, having a positive impact on students, and helping to build public trust in MI Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany both from within and outside the madrasah area.

The leadership of the madrasa head at MI Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany can be identified as charismatic democratic leadership. The madrasa head consistently holds deliberations with the teacher council, staff and administration in making every decision. This approach reflects a democratic leadership style that provides space for participation and contribution from all members in the decision-making process. Apart from that, madrasa heads also have charismatic qualities that are able to influence and inspire madrasa members.

The madrasa head shows wisdom and responsibility in carrying out his role. They are able to make wise decisions, solve problems effectively, and ensure responsibility for their leadership. The pleasant working climate at this madrasa reflects the effectiveness of the leadership of the madrasa head in creating a harmonious and productive work environment.

One important aspect of this leadership is equality between the madrasah head and madrasah members. There are no strict boundaries or differences between the madrasa head and the teacher council, staff and administration. All madrasa members are treated as one unit who collaborate to achieve common goals. This reflects the madrasa head's charismatic approach which creates strong bonds and a sense of belonging among all madrasa members.

The madrasa head at MI Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany has a very important role in improving the quality of education. They apply programs that have been planned and prepared to achieve the desired educational quality goals. Evaluation of education quality programs is also an integral part of the role of the madrasa head. Madrasah heads carry out regular

evaluations to measure the success of these programs and to identify possible failures. Evaluations are carried out weekly on work programs involving teachers, education staff and students. Apart from that, the head of the madrasah is also involved in monitoring in classes to monitor the development and performance of students and ensure the achievement of the madrasah's vision and mission.

In this context, madrasah heads have various roles, including as educators, managers, administrators, supervisors, leaders, innovators and motivators. They carry out various work programs to improve the quality of madrasas, such as:

1. Articulate the vision into a mission that leads to quality targets. This involves awards or prizes for outstanding students, congregational midday and noon prayers, as well as extracurricular activities such as scouting, English and Arabic on Saturdays.
2. Formulate short-, medium- and long-term quality goals and targets for the next year.
3. Analyze the challenges, opportunities, strengths and weaknesses of madrasas in the context of education quality.
4. Collaborate with the foundation in making madrasa budget decisions.
5. Involve the teacher council and administration in decision making and the preparation of quality programs.

At Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany, the heads are not merely administrators but visionaries dedicated to nurturing a thriving educational atmosphere. Their unwavering commitment to enhancing the quality of education is palpable through their proactive initiatives. They understand the transformative power of education in shaping tomorrow's leaders and society. This understanding fuels their determination to ensure that MI Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany shines brightly as a symbol of educational excellence. Talebizadeh et al., (2021) corroborated these observations in their study on educational leadership within Islamic schools, underscoring the impactful strategies implemented by the leaders of MI Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany.

Their commitment is evident in the various measures they have undertaken to enhance the educational landscape within the madrasah. From implementing innovative teaching methodologies to fostering a culture of continuous improvement, the heads of MI Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany have demonstrated their proactive approach towards nurturing a conducive learning environment.

Moreover, their dedication extends beyond mere administrative duties, as they actively engage with stakeholders to solicit feedback and input. By fostering open channels of communication and collaboration, they create an inclusive environment where the voices of all stakeholders are heard and valued.

The heads of MI Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany exhibit a proactive stance towards addressing emerging challenges and opportunities in the field of education. Whether it's adopting new technologies or revamping curriculum frameworks, these leaders display a forward-thinking approach aimed at equipping students with the skills and knowledge needed to thrive in an ever-evolving world.

The proactive initiatives spearheaded by the heads of MI Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany underscore their unwavering commitment to fostering a better and more effective quality education environment. Through their visionary leadership and dedication, they inspire excellence and innovation, ensuring that the madrasah remains at the forefront of educational excellence. These endeavors resonate deeply with the principles of transformational leadership,

as delineated by Farrukh et al., (2022), which emphasize four key behaviors characteristic of transformational leaders can be seen in more detail in table 3, as follows:

Table 3. Four Key Behaviors Characteristic of Transformational Leaders

Characteristic	Discussion
Credibility and Commitment	Transformational leaders exhibit high levels of credibility by ensuring consistency between their words and actions, and by demonstrating unwavering commitment to the values and goals of the organization. At MI Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany, the heads of the madrasah maintain transparency and integrity in their leadership approach, thereby instilling trust and confidence among stakeholders.
Opportunity Creation	Another hallmark of transformational leadership is the creation of opportunities for the development of others. Leaders at MI Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany actively foster an environment that encourages initiative, innovation, and continuous learning among teachers, students, and staff. By providing support and space for growth, they empower individuals to reach their full potential and contribute meaningfully to the educational community.
Caring and Concern	Transformational leaders demonstrate genuine care and concern for the well-being of their followers. At MI Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany, this ethos is reflected in the inclusive and supportive culture cultivated by the heads of the madrasah. Through their empathetic leadership style, they ensure that all members of the educational community feel valued and appreciated, fostering a sense of belonging and mutual respect.
Effective Communication	Effective communication is a cornerstone of transformational leadership. Leaders at MI Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany excel in communicating clearly and transparently with stakeholders, fostering open dialogue and building strong relationships. By listening attentively to the needs and perspectives of others, they create a culture of collaboration and trust, enabling the free flow of ideas and feedback.

Transformational leadership represents a fusion of four pivotal behaviors: credibility and commitment, opportunity creation, caring and concern, and effective communication. Each of these components plays a crucial role in shaping the overarching leadership paradigm, which goes beyond traditional hierarchical authority structures. At its core, transformational leadership aims to cultivate an atmosphere conducive to personal and collective advancement, where individuals are empowered to realize their full potential.

Credibility and commitment form the foundation of transformational leadership. Leaders who exhibit authenticity, integrity, and a steadfast dedication to their vision earn the trust and respect of their followers. By demonstrating consistency between words and actions, they inspire confidence and loyalty, fostering a cohesive organizational culture built on mutual trust and accountability.

Opportunity creation is another hallmark of transformational leadership. Effective leaders identify and capitalize on opportunities for innovation, growth, and development within their organizations. They empower their team members to explore new ideas, take calculated risks, and push beyond conventional boundaries, thereby fueling creativity and driving continuous improvement.

Caring and concern for the well-being of individuals underpin the transformative impact of leadership. Leaders who genuinely value the welfare of their team members foster a

supportive and nurturing environment where individuals feel valued, respected, and motivated to excel. By demonstrating empathy, compassion, and a genuine interest in the personal and professional growth of their followers, transformational leaders forge strong interpersonal connections and foster a sense of belonging within the organization.

Effective communication serves as the linchpin that ties together the various facets of transformational leadership. Leaders who excel in communication skillfully articulate their vision, goals, and expectations, ensuring clarity and alignment throughout the organization. They actively listen to the concerns and perspectives of their team members, fostering open dialogue, collaboration, and collective problem-solving. Through clear, transparent communication, transformational leaders inspire confidence, instill a sense of purpose, and mobilize collective action towards shared objectives.

Transformational leadership transcends the confines of traditional hierarchical authority structures, embodying a holistic approach that emphasizes personal growth, collaboration, and the pursuit of lofty organizational objectives. By integrating credibility and commitment, opportunity creation, caring and concern, and effective communication, transformational leaders create an environment where individuals thrive, innovation flourishes, and organizational excellence becomes attainable.

At its core, transformational leadership serves as a catalyst for individual development, empowering individuals to unlock their full potential and thrive within the organizational context. By embodying credibility and commitment, leaders inspire trust and confidence among their followers, laying the foundation for a collaborative and supportive environment conducive to growth and learning.

Moreover, transformational leaders actively foster opportunity creation, recognizing the inherent value in empowering others to develop their skills and expertise. Through mentorship, support, and encouragement, they provide the necessary scaffolding for individuals to explore new horizons, innovate, and realize their aspirations within the organizational framework.

Caring and concern form another cornerstone of transformational leadership, as leaders demonstrate genuine empathy and compassion towards their followers. By acknowledging the intrinsic worth of each individual and fostering a culture of inclusivity and support, they cultivate a sense of belonging and mutual respect within the organizational community.

Effective communication serves as the linchpin that binds these behaviors together, facilitating the exchange of ideas, feedback, and constructive dialogue. Transformational leaders excel in articulating a compelling vision, listening attentively to the needs and concerns of their followers, and fostering open channels of communication that promote transparency and collaboration.

In essence, transformational leadership transcends traditional hierarchical structures, galvanizing individuals towards collective action and the pursuit of higher organizational goals. By fostering an environment characterized by trust, empowerment, and shared vision, transformational leaders inspire a sense of purpose and commitment that propels organizations towards sustained growth and excellence.

CONCLUSION

Transformational leaders are individuals who are able to inspire their followers to ignore personal interests for the sake of collective interests, organizational progress, and the general benefit. They have significant skills and influence over their group of followers. The principal

has a very important role as a role model for teachers and other staff. They are expected to be figures who have integrity, are respected, and are able to make decisions that are in the best interests of the school. The head of the MI Wali Songo Madrasah Asy-Syirbaany, as a manager in the management of educators and education personnel, has taken several strategies to improve the quality of madrasahs: 1) Deliberation and Joint Decisions; The madrasa head is active in involving the teacher council, staff and administration in the planning and decision-making process. Through deliberation, all parties can provide input and views that contribute to better and more inclusive decisions; 2) Wise and Responsible: The head of the madrasah decides wisely and responsibly. They not only make decisions, but also commit to solving problems as they arise. This reflects leadership with integrity and the aim of advancing madrasahs; 3) Positive Work Climate: The head of the madrasah has succeeded in creating a pleasant work climate. They ensure that the relationship between the madrasah principal, teacher council, staff, and administration is inclusive and collaborative. There are no distinctions or boundaries between positions, all madrasa members are united in a common goal; 4) Strategy for Improving Madrasah Quality: Madrasah heads adopt a strategy that includes three stages, namely input, process and output. In input, strict selection is applied to both new students and teachers. The learning process is also given serious attention to produce quality output. These strategies are interrelated and support each other. The leadership of the madrasa head who is inclusive, wise, and focused on improving the quality of education has had a positive impact on the overall educational environment at MI Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany.

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