

The Role of Transformational Leadership in Improving the Quality of Human Resources in Islamic Boarding Schools

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Abstract: *This study explores the role of transformational leadership in enhancing human resource quality at the PPIQ Nurul Jadid Quran Tahfidzul Institution, focusing on competence, professionalism, and morality. Using a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through observations, interviews, and internal documents such as training reports and work programs. Informants included deputy directors, regional heads, and teaching staff. Findings indicate that transformational leadership at PPIQ is implemented through a clear vision, student empowerment, motivational and character development, and the creation of a supportive environment. These strategies contribute significantly to building a productive educational culture and achieving the institution's vision of producing superior Quranic generations. The study offers practical insights for leadership development in religious education contexts.*

Abstrak: Studi ini mengeksplorasi peran kepemimpinan transformasional dalam meningkatkan kualitas sumber daya manusia di Lembaga Tahfidzul Qur'an PPIQ Nurul Jadid, dengan fokus pada kompetensi, profesionalisme, dan akhlak. Pendekatan yang digunakan adalah studi kasus kualitatif, dengan pengumpulan data melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumen internal seperti laporan pelatihan dan program kerja tahunan. Informan dalam penelitian ini meliputi wakil direktur, kepala wilayah, dan tenaga pengajar. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan transformasional di PPIQ diterapkan melalui visi yang jelas, pemberdayaan santri, pengembangan motivasi dan karakter, serta penciptaan lingkungan yang mendukung. Strategi-strategi ini berkontribusi signifikan dalam membangun budaya pendidikan yang produktif dan mewujudkan visi lembaga untuk mencetak generasi Qur'ani yang unggul. Studi ini memberikan wawasan praktis bagi pengembangan kepemimpinan di lingkungan pendidikan keagamaan.

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INTRODUCTION

The quality of Human Resources (HR) in Islamic educational institutions, particularly Tahfidzul Qur'an-based Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), is significantly influenced by the leadership style practiced by their leaders (Effendi, 2021; Chaniago, et al., 2024). In today's complex modern era, *pesantren* are expected not only to produce memorizers of the Qur'an (*huffaz*) but also individuals with strong professional and spiritual competencies (Nurdiah et al., 2023). However, many Tahfidz institutions, including PPIQ Nurul Jadid, still face challenges in preparing competent educators and developing effective and adaptive management systems. In this context, transformational leadership emerges as a strategic approach that is believed to enhance motivation, innovation, and the holistic development of human resources (Rifa'i et al., 2024; Owusu-Agyeman, 2021).

Transformational leadership has been extensively studied in general educational contexts. Bass and Avolio (1994) conceptualized this leadership model through four core dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Several studies have shown that implementing transformational leadership positively impacts teacher performance, student achievement, and institutional innovation (Sinaga et al., 2021; Ahmad & Yassir, 2024). In the context of human resource management, visionary leaders tend to foster productive work environments, increase staff retention, and reinforce commitment to institutional missions (Saputra & Zali, 2024; Nanjundeswaraswamy, et al 2025).

However, studies focusing on transformational leadership within Islamic education (especially in *pesantren*) remain limited and have not adequately explored how spiritual values are integrated into leadership practices. *Pesantren*, with their distinctive character, prioritize religious values such as ethics (*akhlaq*), sincerity, and communal harmony as core elements of their educational process (Abrori & Muali, 2020; Mujahid, 2021). Existing research tends to emphasize administrative aspects or curriculum management, lacking analysis on how transformational leadership principles are translated within *pesantren*'s religious organizational culture (Dahri, 2023; Amalia, 2019).

PPIQ Nurul Jadid, which serves as the case study for this research, demonstrates various practices of transformational leadership, such as regular teacher training, technology adoption in learning, and personal approaches in staff development (Mudarris & Rizal, 2023). The institution's leaders act as role models, build shared visions, and foster a harmonious working environment (Muktamar et al., 2024; Kipasika, 2024). These strategies align with the characteristics of transformational leadership, which are believed to enhance learning efficiency and strengthen educators' loyalty and motivation in achieving the institution's vision (Putra et al., 2024).

Despite these practices, a significant research gap remains. Most previous studies have concentrated on the application of transformational leadership in secular educational institutions, with minimal attention given to religious-based

contexts such as pesantren. This indicates that the role of transformational leadership in shaping high-quality human resources who are both professionally competent and spiritually grounded is still underexplored, particularly within the Islamic education landscape of Southeast Asia. This gap underscores the need for research that critically examines how transformational leadership is internalized within pesantren, which possess a strong moral and spiritual vision in their pedagogy.

Conceptually, this study is grounded in Bass and Avolio's transformational leadership theory, applied through a lens that aligns with Islamic values and the cultural context of pesantren. This approach is essential to examine how the four dimensions of transformational leadership are implemented in educational settings where religious values permeate daily practices. Leaders in pesantren are expected not only to be professional motivators but also spiritual role models who exemplify religious integrity in both personal conduct and institutional management (Hayani et al., 2024; Mundiri & Bariroh, 2019; Karim, et al 2022).

This study also highlights the growing global urgency for Islamic educational leaders to be capable of responding to digital and social transformations while maintaining the spiritual integrity of their institutions. Amid technological disruptions and changing societal values, leaders who can integrate innovation with Islamic principles are key to the success of Islamic education in producing Qur'anic generations that are intellectually outstanding and spiritually upright (Rofiki et al., 2023; Riaz, et al 2023). In this context, transformational leadership is a viable strategy to reform the management of pesantren to become more adaptive, professional, and values-driven.

Based on the above background, the primary objective of this study is to examine and analyze the role of transformational leadership in improving the quality of human resources at the PPIQ Nurul Jadid Qur'an Memorization Institute. The study focuses on how leaders inspire and motivate educators and guardians, the strategies used in managing training programs, innovations in teaching methods, and the development of institutional vision. It is hoped that this study will offer both practical and theoretical contributions to the development of effective leadership models in Islamic educational institutions and broaden the scope of transformational leadership studies in culturally and religiously grounded settings.

METHOD

This study on the role of transformational leadership in improving the quality of human resources at the PPIQ Nurul Jadid Qur'an Memorization Institute adopts a qualitative approach using a case study method. This approach was selected to enable an in-depth understanding of the social and cultural context influencing leadership practices within the pesantren environment.

Data were collected through three primary techniques: in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with three key informants selected purposively based on their strategic roles in institutional leadership and HR program implementation. The informants

included the Deputy Director of PPIQ, the Head of the Qur'an Memorization Program, and one core teacher. The interview questions focused on how leaders construct vision, inspire change, enhance educator competence, and foster a harmonious work environment.

Participant observation was conducted by directly attending institutional activities such as teacher training sessions, teaching-learning processes, and weekly evaluation meetings. Field notes were taken to capture leadership behaviors, communication patterns, and organizational dynamics in a natural setting.

Documentary data were obtained from the institution's internal archives, including training reports, annual work programs, and HR development manuals. These documents served to support the primary data and strengthen the study's credibility through data triangulation.

Data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman (1994), consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. To ensure the validity of findings, both source and method triangulation techniques were applied. This methodological framework enabled a comprehensive exploration of how transformational leadership is implemented and how it impacts human resource management within a religious educational context.

Table 1. Informant Profile from Research Interviews

No	Name	Position
1	Rusdi Aziz, S.Ag., S.Pd	Deputy Director of PPIQ
2	M. Sidik Ardiasyah, S.Pd	Head of Qur'an Memorization Program
3	Chatib, S.E	Qur'an Memorization Teacher

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

RESULT

From the results of the research analysis, transformational leadership has an important role in improving the quality of human resources (HR) in various organizations, and educational and religious institutions. Including at the PPIQ Nurul Jadid Tahfidz Institution. This leadership style not only focuses on achieving organizational goals, but also on developing individuals to be more innovative, motivated, and have a high commitment to a shared vision. Through an inspirational approach, transformational leaders can create a conducive work environment, build a collaborative culture, and encourage increased HR competence and professionalism. Thus, transformational leadership becomes a strategic factor in creating superior HR, which ultimately contributes to the progress of the organization as a whole.



Figure 1. Research Results

A clear and inspiring vision is one of the main pillars of the success of an educational institution, which can provide direction and motivation for all elements in it. This vision is not only a formal guideline but also a source of inspiration that drives each individual to work towards a common goal. At the PPIQ Nurul Jadid Quran Memorization Institute, the institution's vision is designed to produce a superior Qur'anic generation in religious knowledge and morals, which is the main foundation in all programs and activities of the institution.

The vision of the PPIQ Nurul Jadid Tahfidzul Qur'an institution emphasizes the creation of a superior Qur'anic generation in religious knowledge and morals. This vision is the main guideline in every activity of the institution, both formal and non-formal so that all elements of the institution have the same understanding of the goals to be achieved. The Deputy Director emphasized that the integration of this vision is applied in every activity of the institution so that the vision becomes a shared guideline. The Head of Tahfidzul Qur'an ensures that this vision is conveyed well to students and teaching staff through discussion forums and routine activities such as halaqah so that it can inspire all parties to achieve common goals. In addition, Tahfidzul Qur'an Teachers feel helped by the existence of a strong vision, which not only serves as a guideline in educating students to memorize the Qur'an but also in forming noble morals. This shows that a clear and focused vision plays an important role in creating harmony in steps toward the success of the institution.

A clear and inspiring vision is an important foundation for the success of an institution in achieving its long-term goals. At the PPIQ Nurul Jadid Quran Memorization Institute, the vision to produce a superior Quranic generation in religious knowledge and morals is not only a formal statement but is also integrated into all aspects of the institution's activities. The Deputy Director of PPIQ emphasized that this vision must be the main guideline that is understood and implemented by all elements of the institution, both in formal activities such as the learning process and non-formal activities such as halaqah and deliberation. The

Head of Quran Memorization ensures that the vision is conveyed effectively through regular forums, so that every individual, from foster parents to students, feels inspired to contribute to achieving common goals. The teaching staff also feel the positive impact of this vision, which is a guideline in educating students to not only focus on memorizing the Quran but also on forming noble characters. This clear vision provides strong direction, builds motivation, and creates unity in a joint effort to achieve the institution's success holistically.

Empowering students is one of the main focuses in efforts to create a generation of Qur'anic scholars who are not only excellent in memorization but also have character and skills that support independence and self-confidence. Through various structured programs, the PPIQ Nurul Jadid Qur'an Memorization Institute is committed to providing opportunities for students to develop their potential optimally.

Empowering students at the PPIQ Nurul Jadid Quran Memorization Institute is one of the main focuses in supporting the development of their potential. The Deputy Director explained that students are given many opportunities to hone their abilities through programs such as leadership training, religious competitions, and community service activities, to form independent and confident students. The Head of Quran Memorization added that students are involved in various activities outside the classroom, such as becoming peer mentors or helping to manage the institution's annual events. These activities are designed to train their responsibility and social skills. In addition, Quran Memorization Teachers give students special roles, such as becoming leaders in study groups. This approach not only helps students memorize the Quran but also trains them to lead and work together. This strategy shows the institution's commitment to supporting the formation of character and students' abilities as a whole.

Empowering students is an important aspect of creating an independent, confident, and characterful generation. At the PPIQ Nurul Jadid Quran Memorization Institute, this empowerment is carried out through various programs and activities designed to develop the potential of students as a whole. The Deputy Director of PPIQ emphasized that students are given many opportunities to participate in leadership training, religious competitions, and community service activities, which aim to increase their self-confidence. The Head of Quran Memorization also ensures that students are involved in various activities outside the classroom, such as becoming peer mentors or playing a role in managing annual events, so that they can learn responsibility and social skills. In addition, Quran Memorization Teachers provide special roles to students, such as becoming leaders in study groups, to train leadership and cooperation skills. With this approach, student empowerment at PPIQ Nurul Jadid does not only focus on academic aspects but also on character development and skills that are relevant to everyday life. This reflects the institution's commitment to preparing students as a Qur'anic generation who can face future challenges.

Motivation and character building are two interrelated and very important aspects of the educational process at the PPIQ Nurul Jadid Quran Memorization Institute. To produce a generation that is not only superior in religious knowledge

but also has noble morals, this institution is committed to continuing to build enthusiasm and positive values in students through various motivational methods and character-building that are integrated into everyday life.

Motivation and character building of students is one of the main priorities at the PPIQ Nurul Jadid Quran Memorization Institute. The Deputy Director explained that the institution gives awards to students who excel and continues to instill the values of honesty, responsibility, and discipline in their daily lives. The Head of Quran Memorization also added that a personal approach, such as informal discussions to listen to the difficulties faced by students, is one way to motivate them. Meanwhile, character building is also carried out through routine activities, such as joint tadarus and structured mentoring programs. In addition, Quran Memorization Teachers also revealed that they often provide inspirational stories from Quranic figures as a source of motivation for students. In addition, values such as patience and hard work are consistently instilled in the learning process. All of these efforts aim to produce students who are not only superior in memorizing the Quran but also have strong and noble characters.

Motivation and character building are important elements in educating students at the PPIQ Nurul Jadid Quran Memorization Institute. Through various approaches, this institution seeks to build a spirit of learning while forming a strong personality in students. The Deputy Director of PPIQ emphasized the importance of giving awards to outstanding students as a form of appreciation that can increase their motivation, accompanied by instilling the values of honesty, responsibility, and discipline in everyday life. The Head of Quran Memorization added that a personal approach such as informal discussions is used to listen to students' difficulties so that they feel appreciated and supported. Character building is also carried out through routine activities, such as Al-Quran recitation and mentoring programs that build closeness between students and mentors. In addition, the Teaching Staff also contributes by providing inspirational stories from Quranic figures and instilling values such as patience and hard work in the learning process. With this approach, students' motivation is maintained, while their character building takes place holistically, creating individuals who not only memorize the Quran but also have noble morals.

Creating a supportive environment is one of the main keys to creating a conducive atmosphere for the development of students. At the PPIQ Nurul Jadid Quran Tahfidzul Institution, attention to the physical and emotional environment is a priority to ensure that students can learn and develop optimally.

Creating a supportive environment is one of the main priorities at the PPIQ Nurul Jadid Quran Memorization Institute. The Deputy Director explained that the institution strives to provide comfortable facilities and organize activities that support the development of students. In addition, mutual respect is instilled among all members of the institution to create a harmonious atmosphere. The Head of Quran Memorization also added that a conducive environment is very important to support the success of students. A quiet place to study, adequate facilities, and a family atmosphere are always maintained so that students feel comfortable and can focus on memorizing the Quran. In addition, Quran Memorization Teachers also

contribute to creating an interactive and supportive classroom atmosphere. They encourage students to ask questions without fear so that the learning process becomes more effective. In addition, a good relationship with students is continuously maintained to provide the emotional support needed in their journey to memorize the Quran. All these efforts are made to create an optimal environment for the development of students.

A supportive environment is an important factor in creating a conducive atmosphere for the development of students at the PPIQ Nurul Jadid Quran Memorization Institute. The Deputy Director of PPIQ emphasized that this institution is committed to providing comfortable facilities and activities that can support the development of students, by instilling the value of mutual respect among all members of the institution. The Head of Quran Memorization also added that a calm environment and family atmosphere greatly support the concentration of students in studying and memorizing the Quran. Providing adequate facilities such as a quiet and comfortable study room is a priority to maintain the focus of students. Teaching staff also support by creating an interactive classroom atmosphere, where students feel free to ask questions and interact without fear. In addition, a good relationship between teachers and students is also maintained so that students feel emotionally supported in their learning process. Overall, this supportive environment plays a major role in creating optimal conditions for students to develop, both in academic and personal aspects.

DISCUSSION

Transformational leadership has a strategic role in improving the quality of human resources at the PPIQ Nurul Jadid Quran Tahfidzul Institution. Leaders who act as role models inspire educators and foster parents to commit to the institution's vision, namely to produce a superior intellectually and spiritually Quranic generation. The leadership strategies implemented include empowering individuals through regular training, implementing a personal approach to understand the needs of each member, and introducing innovations in Quran learning methods. In addition, leaders also encourage collaboration between divisions to create a harmonious and productive work culture. However, many Quran Tahfidzul institutions, including PPIQ Nurul Jadid, face obstacles in preparing competent educators and effective management systems. Practices that support career development, training, and a positive work environment can increase retention. Leaders who care about and support employee needs can create strong bonds, reducing workforce turnover (Saputra and Zali, 2024; Peterson, 2023).

Transformational leadership is seen as being able to transform a visionary in facing various changes so that the organization can realize the vision into reality. Likewise, service leadership has credibility, integrity, perseverance, and a service-based spirit that contributes to the catalyst of change in achieving the organization's vision. Therefore, leaders must have the ability to apply appropriate leadership behavior or style.

Leadership becomes one of the locomotives for organizational growth. Transformational leadership has become a popular leadership style applied in various organizations because it can move employees towards optimal performance so that it can provide benefits for the organization.

Transformational leadership has been widely applied in various educational institutions and companies as one approach to managing human resources effectively (Khoirotunnisa & Pujiyanto, 2023; Al Jubouri, 2023). In its application, a leader with a transformational leadership style not only acts as a superior but also as an inspiration who can provide encouragement and motivation to his team members. The relationship between leaders and members in Transformational Leadership is mutually supportive, where leaders provide clear direction, motivation, and vision, while members are motivated to work better to achieve common goals.

In this leadership process, there is a positive reciprocal relationship between leaders and members, thus creating a more productive and innovative work environment. Transformational Leadership aims to increase work enthusiasm, loyalty, and member involvement in every organizational process (Desti et al., 2023; Lasrado & Kassem, 2021). With strong encouragement from the leader, members will feel appreciated and have a high sense of responsibility for their work.

According to Robbins and Judge, several main characteristics of Transformational Leadership can be used as guidelines for a leader in carrying out his role. These characteristics include the ability to provide inspiration, build a clear vision, create a positive work environment, and encourage creativity and innovation within the organization (Anggraeni & Shobirin, 2024; Lee, et al 2023). A transformational leader must also be able to provide a good example for his subordinates and prioritize effective communication to build trust and cooperation within the team.

By applying the principles of Transformational Leadership, an organization or institution can achieve a more optimal level of performance, increase work effectiveness, and create a positive and dynamic work culture.



Figure 2. Characteristics of Transformational Leadership

Leadership is a tool to move a team or organization forward through vision and direction. This means that leadership is closely related to the future. Thanks to vision, personal approach, and concern for members by eliminating interpersonal conflicts and preventing problems, it is possible to create a highly effective team consisting of people with the same goals and a great interest in achieving those goals (Todorova & Weingart, 2022; Bagga, et al 2023; Zhao, et al 2023).

Transformational leadership has become a very relevant approach in human resource development (HRD), especially in Indonesia which faces the challenges of globalization and technological advancement (Ramadani et al., 2024; Lubis, et al 2022; El Junusi, et al 2021). Through this leadership approach, individuals in the organization are encouraged to function as more valuable and qualified leaders to be an example for each of their subordinates and an organization that will achieve a common goal.

This research presents a novelty in examining the implementation of transformational leadership within a Qur'an memorization institution (PPIQ Nurul Jadid), specifically in integrating leadership practices with the development of student character, vision internalization, and a supportive learning environment. Unlike previous studies that generally focus on corporate or general educational settings, this study reveals how Islamic-based institutions can adopt transformational leadership not only to improve organizational performance but also to produce a generation that excels in memorizing the Qur'an and possesses noble character.

The contribution of this study lies in providing a contextual model of transformational leadership that is deeply rooted in Islamic values, highlighting strategies such as student empowerment, vision-driven educational activities, and character-based motivation. These findings can serve as a reference for other religious and educational institutions seeking to improve the quality of human resources holistically by aligning leadership, pedagogy, and institutional culture with spiritual and moral development goals.

CONCLUSION

PPIQ Nurul Jadid Quran Memorization Institute is fully committed to producing superior Quranic generations by focusing on four main aspects: clear and inspiring vision, empowerment of students, motivation and character building, and creating a supportive environment. The vision of the institution designed to produce superior Quranic generations in religious knowledge and morals is the main foundation in all activities, providing clear guidance and inspiration for all elements of the institution.

Empowerment of students is carried out through various programs such as leadership training, religious competitions, and community service activities, which aim to form students who are independent, confident, and have character. In supporting the educational process, motivation and character building are also a priority, carried out through the provision of awards, personal approaches, and

integration of values such as honesty, responsibility, patience, and hard work in daily activities.

In addition, the institution strives to create a supportive environment by providing comfortable facilities, a family atmosphere, and good relationships between teachers and students. This environment not only supports academic development but also the emotional well-being of students, so that they feel supported in the learning process and character formation.

These four aspects show that the holistic approach implemented by PPIQ Nurul Jadid plays an important role in educating students to become individuals who not only excel in memorizing the Qur'an but also have noble morals, are ready to face challenges and contribute to society.

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