

ADAPTIVE LEADERSHIP AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF MADRASAH RELIGIOUS CULTURE

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Abstract: Adaptive Leadership and the Construction of Madrasah Religious Culture

Educational leadership in Islamic institutions faces challenges in adapting Western leadership theories that are often more managerial and less attentive to ethical and spiritual dimensions. Many madrasahs frequently construct religious culture symbolically, failing to fully internalize it into their everyday organizational behavior. This study aims to analyze the adaptive leadership practices of madrasah principals in constructing religious culture and to reinterpret Hersey–Blanchard’s situational leadership theory within the context of Islamic education. The study employed a qualitative approach using a critical case study design at a madrasah in East Java, Indonesia. Data collection was conducted using qualitative techniques, including interviews, observation, and document analysis, involving principals, vice-principals, teachers, and administrative staff. The results suggest that the process of adaptive leadership in madrasahs cannot be analyzed in a linear way by the S1-S4 situational leadership model since the practice is highly motivated by religion-based morality and ethical considerations. The critical case identified in this study indicates that the principles of shura (deliberation), amanah (moral responsibility), and especially uswah (exemplary behavior) function not merely as complementary values but as core dimensions that modify and strengthen the effectiveness of situational leadership practices in Islamic educational institutions. This study contributes to the development of a value-based adaptive leadership model as a contextual extension of situational leadership theory in Islamic education management.

Keywords: Religious Culture, Adaptive Leadership, Islamic Education Management.

Abstrak: Kepemimpinan Adaptif dan Konstruksi Budaya Religius Madrasah

Kepemimpinan pendidikan di lembaga-lembaga Islam menghadapi tantangan dalam mengadaptasi teori kepemimpinan Barat yang seringkali lebih bersifat manajerial dan kurang memperhatikan dimensi etika dan spiritual. Banyak madrasah seringkali membangun budaya keagamaan secara simbolis, gagal untuk sepenuhnya menginternalisasikannya ke dalam perilaku organisasi

sehari-hari mereka. Studi ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis praktik kepemimpinan adaptif kepala madrasah dalam membangun budaya keagamaan dan untuk menafsirkan kembali teori kepemimpinan situasional Hersey-Blanchard dalam konteks pendidikan Islam. Studi ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus kritis di sebuah madrasah di Jawa Timur, Indonesia. Pengumpulan data dilakukan menggunakan teknik kualitatif, termasuk wawancara, observasi, dan analisis dokumen, yang melibatkan kepala sekolah, wakil kepala sekolah, guru, dan staf administrasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa proses kepemimpinan adaptif di madrasah tidak dapat dianalisis secara linier dengan model kepemimpinan situasional S1-S4 karena praktik tersebut sangat dimotivasi oleh moralitas berbasis agama dan pertimbangan etika. Kasus kritis yang diidentifikasi dalam penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa prinsip-prinsip *syura* (musyawarah), *amanah* (tanggung jawab moral), dan terutama *uswah* (perilaku teladan) berfungsi bukan hanya sebagai nilai-nilai pelengkap tetapi sebagai dimensi inti yang memodifikasi dan memperkuat efektivitas praktik kepemimpinan situasional di lembaga pendidikan Islam. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada pengembangan model kepemimpinan adaptif berbasis nilai sebagai perluasan kontekstual dari teori kepemimpinan situasional dalam manajemen pendidikan Islam.

Kata Kunci: Budaya Religius, Kepemimpinan Adaptif, Manajemen Pendidikan Islam.

INTRODUCTION

Educational leadership in the 21st century faces increasing complexity due to rapid social change, demands for public accountability, and the need for continuous organizational innovation (Hallinger, 2020). Educational institutions no longer function simply as institutions for transmitting knowledge, but rather as learning organizations that are required to be responsive to environmental dynamics (Sliwka et al., 2023). In this context, leadership is a key factor in determining the direction and quality of educational institutional transformation.

These strategic environmental changes have a direct impact on the redefinition of the role of the principal or madrasah head. The principal of an educational institution is no longer positioned merely as a bureaucratic administrator but rather as a learning leader and architect of organizational culture (Bush et al., 2019). This role requires the ability to build a vision, mobilize resources, and shape a value system that supports the institution's sustainability. Thus, educational leadership requires a flexible, adaptive, and contextual approach.

One of the prominent models used to understand the concept of flexible leadership is the situational theory of leadership proposed by Hersey and Blanchard (1969). The theory suggests that the effectiveness of the leader depends on his/her capability to adjust the style of leading according to the level of readiness of the subordinates. The difference in styles of "telling," "selling," "participating," and

"delegating" is seen as a response to the combination of individual abilities and willingness in the organization.

The situational theory of leadership has been recognized as a prominent adaptive model of educational management theory (Northouse, 2025; Su, 2024). The model has provided a useful framework for educational managers to deal with differences in the characteristics of the subordinates and the working situations. However, it has been argued by some researchers that the theory is still focused on the psychological organizational approach and does not allow space for values, ethics, and spirituality (Mujtaba et al., 2025). The deficiency is evident in a number of Islamic learning institutions, where leadership success is assessed using the criteria of administrative success, the performance measures of the teachers, and the institution's certification, sometimes without due regard to how well the religious values are internalized by the teachers and students. Field observations in some madrasahs have revealed that management success is not necessarily linked to the enhancement of Islamic identity and religious culture in the institutions. Consequently, a management approach to leadership can be deficient for Islamic learning institutions, where there should be an ethic-based leadership strategy.

These limitations become even more relevant when situational leadership theory is applied in the context of Islamic education. From an Islamic point of view, leadership is not only a managerial process but also a moral and spiritual obligation (Beekun & Badawi, 1999). Leadership has a transcendental aspect that relates to social responsibility and accountability to God.

The values of *shura* (deliberation), *'adl* (justice), and *uswah hasanah* (exemplary behavior) are the normative guidelines that make Islamic leadership distinct from the secular approach (Ali, 2009). These values are not only additional characteristics but also the ethical bases that determine interaction patterns and decision-making. Thus, the application of Western leadership theory in the context of Islamic educational institutions demands a critical and reflective process of contextualization to ensure that it is not divorced from the context of religious values.

In a madrasah, the institution prioritizes religious culture as its primary identity, unlike other schools that emphasize different aspects. The religious culture as a value system plays an instrumental role in building character and work ethics among teachers (Deal & Peterson, 2016). It has been found that there is a positive relationship between organizational culture and the effectiveness of schools and their performance (Leithwood et al., 2020). Nevertheless, recent research shows that constructing the concept of religious culture in many madrasah is confined only to symbolic events, including ceremonies and religious rituals, without profound internalization in the behavior of people (Supriyono et al., 2025; Ubaidillah et al., 2025). Consequently, there is a disjunction between the religious identity of the organization and the practice of organizational processes. Thus, the presence of

adaptive leadership in such cases will be critical to the consistent internalization of religious values in organizational behavior.

Several previous studies have also proven the impact of situational leadership on the effectiveness of educational institutions. In a study by Aziz & Nurdin (2023), it was proven that the application of situational leadership can increase teacher readiness. Ubaidillah et al. (2025) also showed that the leadership style of the madrasah principal can affect the culture of the school, particularly in the dimensions of discipline and collaboration. Furthermore, Yuneti et al. (2019) confirmed that participatory communication by madrasah principals increases teacher involvement in decision-making. However, these studies have not yet deeply examined the integration between situational leadership theory and Islamic leadership values in the construction of religious culture.

Based on the above description, it can be seen that there is an academic necessity to formulate a synthesis between adaptive leadership and the construction of religious cultures from the perspective of Islamic education. It is important to mention that the construction of such a synthesis is not only important to enhance the theory of educational leadership but also to strengthen the theory of madrasah management in the face of the challenge of globalization. It is in this context that the research on the adaptive leadership of madrasah principals in the construction of religious cultures becomes relevant and strategic.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study will utilize a qualitative research methodology through a critical case study design to examine and analyze the adaptive leadership practices of madrasah school principals within the context of religious cultural construction (Mubarok & Qodhi, 2024). The research was undertaken at one private madrasah located in East Java, Indonesia, that was purposefully chosen owing to the strong institutional focus of religion-based cultural activities and participatory leadership. The data collection process lasted for four months, from January to April 2025. Eight informants were involved in the research process and consisted of one madrasah principal, two vice principals, four teachers, and an administrative officer. It would be fair to note that a qualitative research strategy was deemed appropriate in terms of this study since it focuses on the examination of the phenomenon under study and its meaning. This qualitative research approach was considered appropriate inasmuch as this study aims to examine the meaning, process, and dynamics of a particular phenomenon in a particular socio-cultural context. In the qualitative paradigm, reality is considered a social construction created through the interaction and interpretation of organizational actors (Creswell & Poth, 2016). This study departs from an interpretative-constructivist paradigm inasmuch as it considers leadership as a phenomenon contextualized in the daily practices of Madrasah.

The critical case study design was used because this research goes beyond simply describing a phenomenon, but also conducts a reflective analysis of the application of situational leadership theory in the context of Islamic education. Case studies allow researchers to explore phenomena in depth within the confines of a specific system, whether individual, institutional, or social process (Yin, 2009, 2018). The selected madrasah serves as a prime example of how it prioritizes the integration of organizational management into its operations by adopting values that align with the Islamic religion. The madrasah was chosen because of the specific leadership style practiced at the institution, where the principal ensures consistent involvement in decision-making, integrates religious values into the process, and enforces strict organizational discipline in supervising both teachers and students. Further, the institution has established various programs that relate to the religious culture that are not only ceremonial but also incorporated in their daily activities, such as group prayers, modeling of teachers' behavior, and disciplinary measures based on values. In this context madrasah are positioned as units of analysis representing leadership practices within the Islamic educational environment. A critical approach is used to assess the suitability and limitations of Hersey–Blanchard theory when implemented in a religious value system.

Data collecting methods that have been used include in-depth interviews, participant observations, and document analysis. In-depth interviews were used to gather information about the perspective and experience of the madrasah principal regarding the management of the religious culture. An in-depth interview usually takes 45–90 minutes and is conducted in a semi-structured way based on the interview guidelines for leadership adaptability, decision-making, delegation, and religious culture construction. Participant observation was conducted during weekly meetings, religious activities, and daily school activities to determine leadership behavior and the process of internalizing values. Document analysis was done on vision and mission, program of works, and regulations of the madrasah for enhancing religious culture. The purpose of using these three data collection methods in the study was to triangulate the data (Miles et al., 2013).

The data analysis employed a thematic methodology involving reduction, categorization, and interpretation of the gathered data. Technically, the analysis process was conducted through several stages. In the first step, all interviews as well as observations recorded were transcribed word by word. Second, the researchers did open coding to come up with significant statements regarding adaptive leadership and religious culture practices. Third, statements with common codes were classified into major categories like participatory leadership, value internalization, delegation, and religious discipline, among others. Fourth, these categories were interpreted critically by making comparisons between findings and the theories of situational leadership and Islamic leadership literature. The collected data were analyzed by transcribing and categorizing them into various themes associated with adaptive

leadership styles, approaches to religious culture, and Islamic values in leadership practices. The analysis of the data was done using iterative methods of juxtaposing the collected data against the theoretical approaches of situational leadership and Islamic leadership literature (Saldaña, 2021).

To ensure the credibility and validity of the data collected in this research, the methods of source triangulation, method triangulation, and member checking with the use of an audit trail were employed (Almusaed et al., 2025; Enworo, 2023). Practically, source triangulation was carried out by comparing information obtained from the principal, vice principals, teachers, and administrative staff. Method triangulation was conducted by comparing interview findings with observational data and institutional documents. Member checking was implemented by returning interview summaries and preliminary interpretations to several key informants to confirm the accuracy of the researchers' interpretations. In addition, the research-maintained field notes, coding records, and documentation archives as part of the audit trail process to ensure transparency and consistency throughout the research process. The triangulation of sources and methods was achieved by comparing the findings from different sources and methods. The member checking was achieved by cross-checking the findings with the key informants. Maintaining a clear and consistent research process ensured the audit trail. The methods employed in this research are consistent with the trustworthiness criterion of qualitative research. The trustworthiness criterion comprises credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

RESULTS

Adaptive Leadership as a Dynamic Pattern in Decision Making.

The field study indicates that madrasah principals do not rely on one type of leadership style but vary according to the context and teachers' characteristics. However, the findings also show that leadership practices in madrasah cannot be rigidly classified into the S1–S4 categories of Hersey and Blanchard. In practice, leadership adaptation occurs dynamically through continuous negotiation between organizational needs, religious values, and institutional culture. The principal not only considers the readiness level of teachers, but also evaluates moral responsibility, collective harmony, and the preservation of religious identity before determining a leadership response. This indicates that adaptive leadership in madrasah operates as a value-oriented social process rather than merely a technical adjustment of leadership behaviour. The above can be noted in the context of holding regular meetings once a week, not only for administrative purposes but also for deliberative purposes to foster collective understanding. The madrasah principal stated: "We always discuss every policy we plan to implement in the Monday meeting. I welcome all teacher input, and then we work together to ensure it aligns with madrasah values."

This statement suggests a participatory style (S3), in which leaders include their subordinates in the process of making decisions. The principal, on the other hand, recognized the need for a directive approach in some situations that called for assertiveness. For example, "When it comes to discipline or basic rules, I have to be firm to stop repeated violations."

This proves the fact that participative and directive leadership styles are not considered opposing ways of being a leader but two complementary methods based on Islamic leadership principles. The use of participative leadership can be linked to the principle of *shura*, whereby discussion leads not only to increased involvement but also to moral responsibility among teachers in the organization. Simultaneously, the principle of *uswah* justifies the use of directive leadership, as toughness is warranted when the leader exhibits personal discipline. Thus, teachers follow the leader not because they obey but because they appreciate his morality.

This mix of two approaches shows that adaptive leadership practices don't follow a strict model. This adaptability shows that the principal evaluates the level of teacher readiness and the urgency of the situation before deciding how to intervene. Consequently, these findings indicate that adaptive leadership in madrasah transcends mere application of situational theory; it constitutes a reflective process grounded in the evaluation of values and context.

Religious Culture Construction Strategy through Internalization of Values

The following findings indicate that adaptive leadership is strategically directed toward building a religious culture as an organizational identity. Religious culture in madrasah is not understood merely as ritual activities, but as a value system that governs daily behavior. The principal emphasized: "Religious culture is not just about congregational prayer or reciting prayers, but how teachers and students demonstrate morality, discipline, and responsibility."

Observations indicate that the values of discipline and courtesy are part of daily habits, such as greeting teachers, regular class entry times, and the habit of praying before and after lessons. These practices do not emerge spontaneously, but rather through repeated supervision and reinforcement in meetings and informal interactions.

The quote from the religious teacher interviewed was, "The principal always reminds us to be role models." He himself arrives early and oversees morning activities."

The quote shows that the development of religious culture is done in an exemplary way (*uswah*) and participatory manner. The principal takes on the role of a role model, not only an enforcer. The quote above shows that adaptive leadership is used as a way to internalize values, not control.

Integration of Shura Principles in Participatory Practices

An analysis of the meeting dynamics and policy-making process shows that the madrasah principal's participatory practices bear substantive similarities to the shura principle in Islamic leadership traditions. The vice-principal of curriculum stated, "He never makes decisions alone." There is always discussion and collective deliberation before implementing policies."

This proves that the participatory style is not only a managerial approach, but it also has a normative component as well, which is in line with the value of deliberation. The madrasah principal explained, "It should be based on Islamic norms and teachings," which proves that flexibility in leadership cannot exist without an ethical framework based on religion.

It should be noted that not all situations are managed in a deliberative way. In situations related to rule-breaking or disorderliness, the madrasah principal takes a more assertive approach. This dual approach of participation and assertiveness proves that there is a reinterpretation of the values related to the integration of the situational theory.

Dynamics of Delegation and Strengthening of Mandate

The findings also indicate that the madrasah principal entrusts the vice principal and teachers with the implementation of certain programs. The vice principal for student affairs explained: "For student activities, we are given the freedom to manage the technical aspects of their implementation, as long as they remain in line with the madrasah's vision."

This practice demonstrates the implementation of a delegating style (S4), where technical responsibility is handed over to those deemed competent. However, this delegation is not entirely hands-off, but remains within a framework of value oversight. The madrasah principal stated, "Delegation does not mean freedom without direction, but rather a shared responsibility."

The above statement implies that the concept of delegation has a moral aspect. It means that the moral aspect of the delegation mandate includes the aspect of values. Therefore, in the madrasah, the delegation does not only mean the distribution of certain responsibilities but also the reinforcement of values.

Adaptive Leadership as the Architecture of Organizational Culture

From a general perspective, it is apparent that, based on the data, the adaptive leadership style of madrasah school principals acts as a form of architecture for religious culture building. The pattern is used to discipline, sell, participate, and delegate. These four patterns, it is apparent, are not mutually exclusive but rather act in a complementary manner to build a value system within an organization.

From a general perspective, it is apparent that, based on the data, situational leadership theory is contextualized within madrasah school settings. While it is

apparent that adaptation is not exclusively dependent on subordinate readiness, it is equally apparent that it is dependent on religious values and character building. As a result, it is apparent that, within this specific context, adaptive leadership is a form of religious culture building that is normative and managerial.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that the leadership practices of madrasah principals cannot be understood linearly through the typology of telling, selling, participating, and delegating styles as formulated by Hersey and Blanchard (1969). Rather than functioning as fixed behavioural categories, these styles overlap and interact within the broader framework of religious and organizational values. The empirical findings reveal that leadership adaptation in madrasah is influenced not only by subordinate readiness but also by ethical considerations, institutional identity, and the need to sustain religious culture. Consequently, leadership flexibility in Islamic educational institutions should be understood as a multidimensional process involving managerial, moral, and symbolic dimensions simultaneously. Although empirically, these four styles appear to be used, practice in the field reveals normative and religious dimensions that are not fully accommodated within this theoretical framework.

Conceptually, Hersey and Blanchard (1969) strongly argued that the effectiveness of leadership is contingent on the level of readiness of the subordinates, which is determined by a combination of ability and willingness. In the madrasah context, it is found that the madrasah principal's decision is not only contingent on the technical readiness of the teachers but also on the religious values and the objective of character building. This implies that the variable "subordinate readiness" is not independent but is taken together with the moral aspect and spiritual responsibility.

Modern leadership literature has also criticized situational theory for being too simple and not taking into account the intricacies of the organizational context (Northouse, 2025). This study backs up these concerns by showing that at madrasah, leadership is not just about changing your style to fit the needs of your subordinates but also about following the rules and staying true to your values. Principals of madrasah are not only adaptive managers, but they are also value guardians.

In participatory practices, for example, the participating style described by Hersey and Blanchard (1969) is technically oriented toward increasing the commitment and motivation of subordinates. However, the findings of this study indicate that participation in madrasah carries a deeper socio-religious meaning. Deliberative interaction through shura functions not merely as a managerial technique for consensus-building, but also as a mechanism for strengthening collective ethical awareness and institutional legitimacy. Through deliberation, teachers perceive themselves not only as organizational members but also as moral

actors responsible for maintaining the religious identity of the institution. This shows that participation in Islamic educational leadership possesses both organizational and spiritual functions simultaneously. The principle of deliberation is not merely a managerial strategy to increase effectiveness but a normative obligation with a theological basis (Beekun & Badawi, 1999). Thus, participation in madrasah is not only instrumental but also ethical.

The same trend can also be seen in the concept of delegation. In situational theory, the concept of delegation is defined as "the assignment of responsibility to subordinates who are highly prepared" (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969). However, according to the results of this study, the concept of delegation in madrasah is defined as "*amanah*" or trust. The concept of trust has moral consequences. Delegation is not only about delegating tasks but also about enhancing spiritual responsibility. This concept is not included in situational theory.

The research findings also show that telling, or a directive approach, is used not merely to address the low readiness of subordinates, but also to maintain norms and discipline that are considered part of the madrasah religious identity. In this case, telling does not always have authoritarian connotations, but rather a form of leadership responsibility in maintaining order and organizational values. This interpretation broadens the understanding that a directive style in the context of Islamic education can have a different moral legitimacy than in secular organizations (Buanaputra et al., 2021; Supriyono et al., 2025).

Theoretically, it can be argued that the implications of this study suggest that situational leadership theory has to be interpreted from a values-based perspective in the context of Islamic educational institutions. This perspective is in consonance with Ali's (2009) assertion that "Islamic leadership focuses on the moral and spiritual aspects of leadership."

This study also supports the assertion that organizational culture in educational institutions is shaped largely by leadership (Abidin et al., 2025; Leithwood et al., 2020). However, unlike findings in the context of public schools, the religious culture of madrasah is shaped not only through systems and policies, but also through the personal example of the principal. The findings identify *uswah* (exemplary behaviour) as the central novelty of this study because this dimension is not explicitly accommodated within the original Hersey–Blanchard situational leadership framework. Empirically, *uswah* strengthens the effectiveness of other adaptive leadership styles by creating moral legitimacy and trust among organizational members. Directive leadership becomes more acceptable when principals consistently demonstrate discipline and integrity in daily practices. Participatory leadership also becomes more meaningful because teachers perceive the principal not merely as an authority figure, but as an ethical role model whose actions reflect institutional values. In this sense, *uswah* functions as the moral foundation that integrates and reinforces the effectiveness of situational leadership behaviours in

the madrasah context. The role model (*uswah*) aspect is a central element not explicitly covered in the Hersey–Blanchard theory. Therefore, the conceptual contribution of this study lies in the addition of the role model dimension as a crucial variable in value-based adaptive leadership.

Moreover, this research proves that the adaptation of leadership style not only reacts to the situation of the subordinates but also to the needs of the culture and vision of the institution's values. This shows that the concept of adaptability in the madrasah context is not only adaptive to individuals but also to values and organizational goals. This view extends the original concept of situational theory, which was more focused on the interpersonal relationship between leaders and their subordinates.

In the context of Islamic educational management, this research offers a conceptual contribution in the form of a combination of situational leadership theory and Islamic leadership values. This combination offers a model of adaptive leadership based on religious values that consist of three major pillars: deliberation as a means of participation, trust as the basis of delegation, and exemplary behavior as the basis of leadership legitimacy. This model adds value to the existing body of knowledge in educational leadership studies by offering a more contextual approach to madrasah. Another theoretical implication of this study lies in the necessity of creating theories of leadership that are more responsive to cultural and religious factors. As Bush (2019) argued, leadership theories in education are often formulated in Western culture and cannot be assumed to be fully applicable in educational institutions with different value characteristics. The results of this research confirm that contextualization of leadership theory is not only a technical but also an epistemological issue. Moreover, it can be noted that the effectiveness of leadership in madrasah can be evaluated not only through administrative criteria but also through the level of internalization of religious values in the organizational culture. Such an approach expands the discourse on leadership effectiveness beyond administrative criteria and introduces such criteria as character and morality into it. Thus, it can be noted that the contribution of this study is not only descriptive but also normative and conceptual. Nevertheless, the reinterpretation of situational theory in this study is not intended to reject its relevance as a whole. Rather, this research demonstrates that the theory retains its utility as a basic framework for leadership flexibility, but requires value enrichment when applied in the context of Islamic education. In other words, situational theory can serve as a behavioral structure, while Islamic values serve as its spirit or moral orientation.

From the above discussion, it can be confirmed that the adaptive leadership of madrasah principals in the development of religious culture in madrasah is not just an application of the concept of situational theory but an integration of managerial flexibility and value commitment in madrasah. The study demonstrates that leadership effectiveness in Islamic educational institutions emerges from the

interaction between adaptive managerial practices and the leader's moral credibility. Therefore, the contribution of this research lies not merely in reinterpreting situational leadership theory, but in extending it through the incorporation of value-based dimensions that are contextually relevant to Islamic educational organizations. The conceptual contribution of this research is the formulation of adaptive leadership in terms of religious values as an extension of educational leadership theory in the context of madrasah.

CONCLUSION

This study also confirmed the strategic role of adaptive leadership by the madrasah principal in building a religious culture with the integration of managerial flexibility and religious values. The main finding of this study shows that adaptive leadership in madrasah cannot be understood solely through the behavioural flexibility proposed in situational leadership theory, because leadership effectiveness is also shaped by moral legitimacy and religious value internalization. The novelty of this research lies in identifying *uswah* (exemplary behaviour) as a central dimension that strengthens the effectiveness of participatory, directive, and delegative leadership practices within Islamic educational institutions. In the madrasah context, leadership adaptability is therefore not merely managerial, but also ethical and value-oriented. Practically, these results suggest that madrasah headmasters should enhance their organizational culture not only by developing policies but also by providing good role models, participative discussion, and value-laden supervision in day-to-day operations within the organization.

However, it is important to note that there are limitations to this study. First, the nature of the case study, which was carried out in a single madrasah, affects the level of generalization of the results. Second, the study, which is focused on the views of internal organizational members, may not provide a complete view of external views, such as those of parents or policymakers. Third, this study is focused on conceptual and interpretive aspects, thereby not testing the model that has been quantitatively formulated. Future studies are recommended to develop quantitative or mixed-methods approaches to test the relationship between adaptive leadership, *uswah*, religious value internalization, and organizational effectiveness in madrasah. Further research may also construct measurable indicators for the adaptive-religious leadership model proposed in this study and examine its applicability across different Islamic educational institutions.

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