



CHARACTERISTICS OF CHANGE MANAGEMENT IN TRANSFORMATIVE ISLAMIC EDUCATION: A MULTI-SITE STUDY OF RURAL PRIVATE MADRASAHs



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Abstract

Private madrasahs in rural areas face various challenges, such as limited resources, declining student enrollment, and increasing competition among educational institutions. Although change management in Islamic education has been extensively studied, research in the context of private rural madrasahs remains limited. This study aims to examine the characteristics of transformative change management in Islamic education through a multisite study of three private madrasahs in rural Kediri Regency, Indonesia. The study employed a qualitative approach with a multisite design. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and document analysis, then analyzed through the stages of data collection, data reduction, verification, and drawing conclusions. The results of the crosssite analysis revealed relatively consistent characteristics, including transformational leadership based on Islamic values, collaborative human resource development, an integrative curriculum, a religious and adaptive organizational culture, and institutional partnerships. Although different strategies were implemented, the changes occurred gradually, were participatory, and were oriented toward improving the quality of education and strengthening Islamic values. This study produced a value based transformative change management model as a theoretical foundation and practical guide for the sustainable development of rural private madrasahs.

Abstrak

Madrasah swasta di pedesaan menghadapi berbagai tantangan, seperti keterbatasan sumber daya, penurunan jumlah siswa, dan meningkatnya persaingan antarlembaga pendidikan. Meskipun manajemen perubahan dalam pendidikan Islam telah banyak dikaji, penelitian dalam konteks madrasah swasta pedesaan masih terbatas. Penelitian ini bertujuan mengkaji karakteristik manajemen perubahan transformatif dalam pendidikan Islam melalui studi multilokasi pada tiga madrasah swasta di pedesaan Kabupaten Kediri, Indonesia. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi multilokasi. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, observasi, dan analisis dokumen, kemudian dianalisis melalui tahapan pengumpulan data, reduksi data, verifikasi, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil analisis lintas lokasi menunjukkan karakteristik yang relatif konsisten, meliputi kepemimpinan transformasional berbasis nilai-nilai Islam, pengembangan sumber daya manusia secara kolaboratif, kurikulum integratif, budaya organisasi religius dan adaptif, serta kemitraan kelembagaan. Meskipun menerapkan strategi berbeda, perubahan berlangsung bertahap, partisipatif, dan berorientasi pada peningkatan mutu pendidikan serta penguatan nilai-nilai Islam. Penelitian ini menghasilkan model manajemen perubahan transformatif berbasis nilai sebagai landasan teoretis dan panduan praktis bagi pengembangan madrasah swasta pedesaan secara berkelanjutan.

INTRODUCTION

Islamic education in the contemporary era is confronted with increasingly complex challenges driven by globalization, technological disruption, and rapidly evolving social dynamics. Islamic educational institutions, including madrasahs, are no longer expected merely to serve as centers for the transmission of religious knowledge. Rather, they are



required to function as agents of social transformation capable of developing adaptive, innovative, and competitive human resources (Arsyillah & Muvid, 2025). In this context, organizational change is no longer an option but an inevitable necessity that must be managed systematically through effective change management strategies. Change management in education is a strategic process encompassing the planning, implementation, and evaluation of organizational change to achieve institutional goals. Within the perspective of Islamic education, however, change extends beyond structural and administrative dimensions to embrace values, organizational culture, and spirituality as the fundamental foundations of transformation (Helmianti et al., 2025). Consequently, a transformative approach to change management becomes essential, emphasizing not only the improvement of existing systems but also the transformation of organizational paradigms, institutional culture, and educational practices.

The concept of transformative Islamic education emphasizes aligning Islamic values with contemporary societal needs, fostering educational practices that are both normatively grounded and contextually relevant. Transformational leadership has been shown to enhance teachers' performance, strengthen students' learning motivation, and cultivate collaborative and religious organizational cultures (Pepilina, 2024). Grounded in Islamic principles such as *uswatun hasanah* (exemplary leadership) and *fastabiqul khairat* (competing in good deeds), transformational leadership plays a pivotal role in improving academic quality, fostering Islamic character, and enhancing institutional adaptability to technological advancement and globalization (Ramadina et al., 2025). Within this framework, adaptive leadership in Islamic education should integrate Islamic values, technological literacy, stakeholder collaboration, and holistic change management strategies to ensure that Islamic educational institutions remain relevant, effective, and competitive amid global challenges and the rapid development of educational technology (Sahudi, 2025). Furthermore, the effectiveness of leadership strategies depends on the integration of Islamic spiritual values, transformational leadership practices, and collaborative organizational behavior in managing institutional change (Erlina et al., 2025). Accordingly, the characteristics of change management in Islamic education cannot be separated from religious values, visionary leadership, and the capacity to adapt to dynamic environmental changes.

Despite these theoretical advances, empirical evidence indicates that implementing change management in madrasahs, particularly those in rural areas, continues to face substantial challenges. Rural private madrasahs generally operate under constraints such as limited student enrollment, inadequate financial resources, and insufficient educational facilities and infrastructure. In addition, the quality of human resources varies considerably in terms of pedagogical competence, professional expertise, and the ability to integrate educational technology into teaching and learning practices. In this context, transformational leadership plays a pivotal role in strengthening institutional vision, fostering intrinsic motivation, encouraging innovation, and cultivating an organizational culture founded on the Islamic values of *amanah* (trustworthiness), *uswah* (exemplary conduct), and *shura* (consultative decision-making) (Sugianto, 2026). Furthermore, transformational leadership has been shown to generate significant benefits for Islamic educational institutions by enhancing students' motivation, improving instructional quality, increasing student engagement, and promoting character development (Habibulloh et al., 2025). These internal challenges are further intensified by increasing competition among educational institutions, requiring madrasahs to innovate to

continuously remain competitive and maintain public trust (Rodiyana & Pamungkas, 2024).

These challenges are also evident among the private madrasahs affiliated with the Kelompok Kerja Madrasah (KKM, Madrasah Working Group) of MTsN 5 Kediri, namely MTs Miftahul Huda Ngreco, MTs Al Fajar Kandat, and MTs Sunan Ampel Deyeng Ringinrejo. These three institutions share several common characteristics, including their rural location, relatively small student enrollment of approximately 100 students, leadership rooted in respected local community figures, and a teaching workforce comprising both senior and early-career teachers with diverse levels of professional experience. The combination of these internal constraints and external pressures arising from competition with better-established schools underscores the need for change management strategies that are not only adaptive but also transformative.

Previous studies have extensively examined change management in Islamic education, particularly within the contexts of Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) and Islamic higher education institutions. Existing literature suggests that transformative change management in Islamic education is a structured and comprehensive process that enables educational institutions to respond to contemporary developments while preserving Islamic spiritual and moral values. This process encompasses systematic planning, effective organizational structuring, implementation through visionary leadership and human resource empowerment, and continuous monitoring to ensure that organizational change aligns with institutional objectives (Rodliyan et al., 2026). Furthermore, change management extends beyond planning and implementation by fostering organizational learning and enhancing institutional capacity for continuous innovation (Rofik, 2024).

Transformational leadership constitutes a fundamental pillar of organizational change management because it facilitates changes in the values, attitudes, and behaviors of organizational members through an inspiring vision and exemplary leadership. It promotes fundamental organizational transformation by integrating religious values, institutional systems, and organizational culture to stimulate innovation and creativity among followers in pursuit of shared institutional goals (Mustofa et al., 2024). Within the context of Islamic education, transformational leadership performs not only administrative functions but also embodies moral and spiritual dimensions that are consistent with Islamic values. Consequently, it strengthens collective awareness, reinforces organizational commitment, and fosters a shared sense of responsibility for achieving institutional transformation (Khoiri & Mahrus, 2026).

Despite these contributions, most previous studies have focused on Islamic boarding schools (pesantren), Islamic higher education institutions, or relatively well-established educational organizations with more adequate institutional resources. Consequently, empirical investigations into the characteristics of change management in rural private madrasahs remain limited. This is a significant omission because rural madrasahs operate under distinctive conditions, including limited financial and human resources, relatively small student enrollment, restricted access to teachers' professional development opportunities, and a high dependence on support from local communities. These contextual differences suggest that the patterns and dynamics of organizational change in rural private madrasahs may differ substantially from those observed in other Islamic educational institutions.

Furthermore, previous studies have primarily concentrated on specific dimensions of organizational change, such as leadership, change strategies, or educational quality

improvement. Comparatively little attention has been paid to the comprehensive characteristics of transformative change management that integrate transformational leadership, human resource development, curriculum innovation, organizational culture, and institutional partnerships within the context of rural private madrasahs. Similarly, studies employing a multi – site approach to examine the characteristics of transformative change management in rural private madrasahs remain scarce. Given the distinctive social, cultural, and economic conditions of rural communities, change management requires contextualized strategies that are firmly grounded in local values and institutional realities. Nevertheless, existing research has tended to emphasize change strategies or organizational change models, while providing limited insight into the distinctive characteristics and practical dynamics of transformative change management implemented in rural Islamic educational institutions.

Based on the foregoing review, three major research gaps can be identified. First, existing studies on change management in Islamic education have predominantly examined relatively well – established institutions, whereas rural private madrasahs have received considerably less scholarly attention. Second, previous research has generally investigated organizational change from a fragmented perspective by focusing on isolated dimensions, such as leadership, organizational culture, or human resource development, rather than providing a holistic understanding of the characteristics of transformative change management in Islamic education. Third, although the integration of Islamic values into educational change management has been widely discussed at the conceptual level, empirical evidence demonstrating how these values are operationalized in the organizational change processes of rural private madrasahs remains limited.

Building upon these research gaps, this study aims to examine the characteristics of transformative change management in Islamic education within the context of rural private madrasahs through a multi – site research approach. Specifically, the study seeks to identify the patterns of organizational change reflected in transformational leadership, human resource development, curriculum innovation, organizational culture, and institutional partnerships. Accordingly, this study offers significant theoretical and practical contributions. From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the advancement of Islamic educational management by proposing an empirically grounded, value – based model of transformative change management derived from cross – site analysis of rural private madrasahs. From a practical perspective, the findings are expected to provide valuable insights for madrasah principals, educational administrators, and policymakers in designing effective, context – sensitive, and sustainable change management strategies for the development of rural Islamic educational institutions.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach using a multi – site research design to explore the characteristics of transformative change management in Islamic education across three rural private madrasahs in Kediri Regency, Indonesia: MTs Miftahul Huda Ngreco, MTs Al Fajar Kandat, and MTs Sunan Ampel Deyeng Ringinrejo. The study was conducted from March to April 2026. The research participants consisted of madrasah principals, teachers, administrative staff, and members of the madrasah committee. Each research site involved ten purposively selected participants, comprising one principal, five teachers, three administrative staff members, and one committee member, resulting in a total of thirty participants across the three sites. Participants were selected based on their direct involvement in organizational change processes within their respective madrasahs.

The study adhered to ethical principles of qualitative research by ensuring voluntary participation, maintaining participants' confidentiality, and using the collected data exclusively for academic purposes.

Data were collected through in–depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. The interviews were conducted face–to–face at each madrasah, allowing participants to share their experiences and perspectives regarding organizational change. Participant observation focused on organizational activities, institutional culture, and change management practices, while document analysis was used to corroborate and enrich the findings obtained from interviews and observations. data collection, all participants were informed about the objectives of the study and voluntarily agreed to participate. Data were analyzed using the interactive model developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaca, which consists of data collection, data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification (Miles et al., 2023). The analysis was conducted in two stages. First, a within–case analysis was conducted to identify the characteristics of change management at each madrasah. Second, a cross–case analysis was conducted to compare findings across the three sites and identify shared patterns as context–specific characteristics of transformative change management in Islamic education. To enhance the trustworthiness of the findings, data credibility was ensured through source triangulation, methodological triangulation, and time triangulation, complemented by member checking with the participants to verify the accuracy and credibility of the interpreted findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

Cross-Site Findings on Transformative Change Management in Islamic Education

The findings from the three research sites—MTs Miftahul Huda Ngreco, MTs Al Fajar Kandat, and MTs Sunan Ampel Deyeng Ringinrejo—revealed relatively consistent patterns of organizational change despite differences in their institutional characteristics and organizational dynamics. The cross–site analysis identified five principal characteristics of transformative change management in Islamic education: (1) transformational leadership grounded in Islamic values; (2) human resource development; (3) curriculum and instructional innovation; (4) a religious and adaptive organizational culture; and (5) institutional partnerships.

Table 1. Cross–Site Findings on the Characteristics of Transformative Change Management in Islamic Education

Aspect	MTs Miftahul Huda Ngreco	MTs Al Fajar Kandat	MTs Sunan Ampel Deyeng Ringinrejo	Cross-Site Pattern
Leadership	The principal involves teachers in program planning and activity evaluation.	The principal emphasizes exemplary leadership and character development.	The principal promotes a religious culture through a participatory leadership approach	Transformational leadership grounded in Islamic values, characterized by vision, participation, and collaboration
Human Resource Development	Teacher training through the Madrasah	Collaborative lesson planning	Mentoring in educational technology	Collaborative and continuous human resource development

Aspect	MTs Miftahul Huda Ngreco	MTs Al Fajar Kandat	MTs Sunan Ampel Deyeng Ringinrejo	Cross-Site Pattern
	Working Group (KKM) and mentoring by senior teachers	among teachers	provided by younger teachers	
Curriculum and Instruction	Integration of Islamic values into general subjects	Active learning through discussions and project – based activities	Utilization of digital learning media alongside character education	An integrative curriculum that combines Islamic values with twenty – first – century competenci
Organizational Culture	Regular consultative meetings and open communication	A family – oriented organizational culture and collective teamwork	Strengthening religious culture and institutional discipline	A religious, adaptive, and collaborative organizational culture.
Institutional Partnerships	Collaboration with the madrasah committee and the local community	Partnerships developed through the Madrasah Working Group (KKM)	Support from community leaders and parents	Institutional partnerships function as an important strategy for strengthening organizational change, although they have not yet been fully optimized.

Table 1 demonstrates that the three madrasahs share a common orientation toward organizational change grounded in Islamic values, although each institution implements distinct strategies that reflect its specific organizational context. Despite variations in the level and approach of implementation, the cross – site findings reveal a consistent pattern of transformative change characterized by transformational leadership, collaborative human resource development, curriculum and instructional innovation, a religious and adaptive organizational culture, and the strengthening of institutional partnerships. These findings indicate that transformative change in rural private madrasahs is not implemented through a single standardized model but is shaped by each institution's context while maintaining a shared commitment to improving educational quality and reinforcing Islamic values.

Table 2. Detailed Cross – Site Findings on Human Resource Development

Findings	Empirical Evidence
Generational Gap among Teachers	Younger teachers adapt more rapidly to educational technology, whereas senior teachers require continuous mentoring in the use of digital learning media and technology – based administrative systems
Mentoring Strategies	Professional development is supported through peer mentoring, training programs organized by the Madrasah Working Group (KKM), and the sharing of best practices in internal madrasah forums.
Impact of Change	The change initiatives have enhanced teachers' competence in utilizing digital learning media and strengthened professional collaboration among teaching staff.

Table 2 demonstrates that the generational differences identified across the three madrasahs are not associated with differences in status or authority, but rather with varying levels of proficiency in educational technology. To address this challenge, all three institutions have adopted collaborative mentoring strategies that encourage younger and senior teachers to engage in mutual learning, knowledge sharing, and professional collaboration. These findings indicate that intergenerational collaboration is an effective means of strengthening teachers' digital competencies while fostering a culture of continuous professional learning.

Table 3. Detailed Cross – Site Findings on Curriculum and Instructional Innovation

Form of Innovation	Implementation
Integration of Islamic Values	Islamic values, including moral conduct (akhlaq), responsibility, and Islamic ethics, are integrated into general subject areas
Instructional Innovation	The implementation of active learning strategies through group discussions, classroom presentations, project – based learning activities, and the use of digital learning media
Character Development	The cultivation of students' character through regular tadarus (Qur'anic recitation), congregational prayers, and Islamic social and community service activities.

Table 3 demonstrates that curriculum innovation extends beyond the adoption of more diverse instructional methods. It also encompasses the integration of Islamic values into the teaching and learning process as well as the systematic development of students' character. These findings suggest that curriculum innovation in rural private madrasahs is implemented through a holistic approach that combines academic learning, character formation, and the internalization of Islamic values to promote students' intellectual, moral, and spiritual development.

Table 4. Detailed Cross – Site Findings on Organizational Culture

Aspect	Findings
Religious Culture	Regular tadarus (Qur'anic recitation), congregational prayers, character development, and teachers' exemplary conduct constitute the core of the institutional religious culture
Family – Oriented Culture	Organizational practices are characterized by consultative decision – making (shura), informal communication, and collective teamwork
Social Partnerships	Collaboration is established with the madrasah committee, parents, community leaders, and the Madrasah Working Group (KKM)
Partnership Status	Institutional partnerships remain predominantly at the level of social networking and have not yet evolved into strategic networking.

Table 4 demonstrates that both the religious and family – oriented organizational cultures function as internal mechanisms that facilitate the acceptance and implementation of organizational change. Meanwhile, institutional partnerships provide important social support for the madrasahs, although these collaborations remain predominantly informal and have not yet been fully integrated into the institutions' strategic planning processes. These findings suggest that strengthening strategic partnerships represents an important opportunity for enhancing the long – term sustainability of transformative change in rural private madrasahs.

DISCUSSION

Transformational Leadership Grounded in Islamic Values as the Driving Force of Organizational Change

The cross – site analysis demonstrates that transformational leadership constitutes the most influential factor in the successful implementation of organizational change across the three madrasahs. However, the characteristics of leadership identified in this study are not entirely consistent with the conventional concept of transformational leadership as developed in the mainstream management literature. Rather than being driven solely by organizational performance targets, the change initiatives implemented in the three madrasahs were primarily motivated by a commitment to preserving Islamic identity while simultaneously improving educational quality.

The principals' vision of change reflects a dual orientation that combines educational quality enhancement with the reinforcement of Islamic values. Previous studies have emphasized that the success of change management depends on transformational leadership, active stakeholder engagement, and a strong commitment to Islamic values. The principals' vision of change reflects a dual orientation that combines educational quality enhancement with the reinforcement of Islamic values. Previous studies have emphasized that the success of change management depends on transformational leadership, active stakeholder engagement, and a strong commitment to Islamic values (Susanti et al., 2025). This orientation explains the relatively high level of acceptance demonstrated by teachers, administrative staff, and madrasah committee members toward organizational change initiatives. Instead of perceiving change as a threat to the existing organizational culture, stakeholders regarded it as an essential strategy to strengthen the madrasah's sustainability and competitiveness amid social transformation and increasing competition among educational institutions. Likewise, transformational and collaborative leadership have been identified as key determinants in developing high – performing and competitive madrasahs (Saripudin, 2025).

This finding is also consistent with the concept of transformative Islamic education, which seeks to reshape educational paradigms and practices through a holistic approach grounded in Islamic values while generating positive impacts on both individuals and society (Hawna, 2024). Transformative Islamic education integrates Islamic knowledge and values throughout the educational process, aiming not only to develop students' academic competence but also to cultivate strong moral character and ethical responsibility. Consequently, learning in transformative Islamic education extends beyond academic achievement by incorporating the internalization of Islamic values as an integral component of educational practice (Susanto et al., 2025).

From a theoretical perspective, these findings extend the transformational leadership framework proposed by (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Whereas the classical model primarily emphasizes inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and the empowerment of organizational members, the present study identifies an additional dimension in the context of rural private madrasahs, namely the integration of Islamic values as the principal source of legitimacy for organizational change. Consequently, leadership effectiveness is determined not only by the leader's capacity to influence organizational members but also by the ability to align change initiatives with the shared religious values and beliefs embraced by the madrasah community. This interpretation is supported by (Shobri, 2025), who argues that visionary madrasah principals formulate inspiring institutional visions, cultivate collaborative and adaptive

organizational cultures, and integrate spiritual values alongside local cultural wisdom into every aspect of educational management.

The findings of this study also differ from those of previous research that conceptualizes leadership as an independent organizational variable (Sholeh et al., 2023). In the present study, transformational leadership functions as an integrating mechanism that connects organizational culture, human resource development, curriculum and instructional innovation, and institutional partnerships into a coherent process of organizational transformation. This finding suggests that successful change management in rural private madrasahs is fundamentally systemic rather than individualistic in nature. Such an interpretation is consistent with (Hamzah, 2026), who emphasizes that transformational leaders inspire organizational members, develop shared visions, strengthen individual capacities, and cultivate a quality – oriented culture deeply rooted in Islamic values. Similarly, Ilham et al. (2026) argue that madrasah principals are responsible not only for improving academic performance but also for fostering harmonious working relationships, promoting ethical leadership, and sustaining continuous positive change in educational practice (Ilham et al., 2026).

Human Resource Development through Collective Learning and Intergenerational Mentoring

One of the most significant findings of this study is the emergence of a generational gap during the organizational change process. This gap was primarily reflected in differences in the ability to adapt to educational technology and digital administrative systems. Younger teachers tended to adopt digital learning applications more rapidly, whereas many senior teachers required a longer period to adjust to these technological changes.

Interestingly, this generational difference did not evolve into organizational conflict, as has been reported in several studies on educational change (Fullan, 2007). Instead, the three madrasahs developed adaptive mechanisms through informal mentoring and collective learning practices. Younger teachers assumed the role of technology facilitators, while senior teachers contributed their extensive pedagogical experience. This complementary relationship fostered a reciprocal process of knowledge exchange that strengthened the overall organizational capacity. These findings are consistent with (Mudaris, 2025), who emphasizes that collaborative cultures involving teachers, students, and parents promote instructional innovation grounded in Islamic values. Likewise, Faizah (2025) argues that the establishment of professional learning communities and peer mentoring systems contributes significantly to improving teachers' pedagogical competence, professional expertise, and job satisfaction (Faizah, 2025).

The findings further demonstrate that successful organizational change does not necessarily depend on uniform levels of competence among organizational members. Rather, it is determined by the institution's capacity to transform differences in knowledge, experience, and technological skills into opportunities for collective learning and organizational development. In this regard, the generational gap identified in the present study should not be viewed as a barrier to change but rather as a form of social capital that strengthens organizational learning and institutional resilience. This interpretation supports the findings of (Yasni et al., 2025), who identify collaborative teacher capacity – building as a key strategy for professional development in private madrasahs. Similarly, Zaky (2022) argues that competency – based human resource management provides an

effective strategic framework for enhancing teachers' professional competencies and achieving organizational objectives (Zaky, 2022). Furthermore, (Ramadhani & Kuswinarno, 2024) emphasize that holistic and sustainable human resource development is essential for maintaining institutional competitiveness and long – term organizational resilience.

Integrative Curriculum and Instructional Innovation

The cross – site analysis reveals that curriculum innovation is manifested not only through the adoption of more diverse instructional approaches but also through the systematic integration of Islamic values throughout the teaching and learning process. Across the three madrasahs, curriculum development was designed to connect academic competencies with character formation by reinforcing the values of akhlaq (moral conduct), responsibility, discipline, and Islamic ethics. In addition to the use of collaborative learning strategies and digital learning media, innovation was reflected in the incorporation of religious activities—such as tadarus (Qur'anic recitation), congregational prayers, and the cultivation of Islamic moral values—into everyday educational practices. Consequently, the transformation observed in the three madrasahs extends beyond methodological improvement to encompass the fundamental purposes of education itself.

These findings are consistent with (Atho'illah & Minarti, 2025) who argue that Islamic education should integrate cognitive, affective, and spiritual dimensions in a balanced manner. The present study further demonstrates that instructional innovation in rural private madrasahs evolves contextually in response to available institutional resources and local educational needs. Unlike the dominant discourse of educational modernization, which frequently emphasizes technology – driven transformation, innovation in the three madrasahs prioritizes the integration of Islamic values and the development of students' character. Accordingly, curriculum innovation identified in this study can be understood as a form of pedagogical transformation that integrates twenty – first – century competencies with Islamic educational values. This interpretation is further supported by (Hayati & Zahroh, 2025), who contend that the integration of Islamic values into all dimensions of educational practice—including curriculum planning and implementation, teachers' exemplary conduct, and the cultivation of a religious and ethical institutional culture – makes a substantial contribution to the development of insan kamil. This individual achieves a balanced intellectual, spiritual, moral, and social character. In this respect, the findings of the present study offer a perspective that differs from much of the previous literature, where curriculum innovation has generally been associated with educational modernization and technological integration (Arsyillah & Muvid, 2025). Instead, this study demonstrates that in the context of rural private madrasahs, curriculum innovation is fundamentally value – oriented, positioning Islamic values as the primary foundation for sustainable educational transformation rather than merely as complementary elements of curriculum reform.

A Religious and Adaptive Organizational Culture as a Catalyst for Organizational Change

The findings indicate that organizational culture plays a pivotal role in determining the success of transformative change. Across the three madrasahs, a religious organizational culture is manifested through regular tadarus (Qur'anic recitation), congregational prayers, character development programs, and teachers' exemplary

conduct. At the same time, a family-oriented culture is reflected in consultative decision-making (shura), informal communication, and collaboration among members of the madrasah community. These cultural practices function not only as expressions of institutional identity but also as mechanisms that facilitate the acceptance and implementation of organizational change. As argued by (Dedik et al., 2025), organizational culture enables educational institutions to adapt and develop in response to changing circumstances. In the present study, strong interpersonal relationships and mutual trust allowed change initiatives to be implemented through shared understanding and collective commitment rather than through coercive organizational practices. This explains why the transformation process remained relatively stable despite the resource constraints faced by the rural private madrasahs.

The present findings support the perspectives of (Bush, 2009) dan (Lase et al., 2025), who identify organizational culture as a strategic determinant of successful educational change. However, this study reveals a more context-specific dimension. In the setting of rural private madrasahs, religious culture functions not merely as a system of organizational values but also as a source of legitimacy that strengthens institutional acceptance of change initiatives. Consequently, organizational culture performs a dual role: it serves both as a stabilizing force that preserves institutional identity and as a catalyst that drives continuous organizational transformation. This interpretation is consistent with (Putri et al., 2025), who argue that the relationship between leadership and organizational culture is dynamic and mutually reinforcing, making both factors essential for sustainable organizational transformation. Accordingly, this dual function of organizational culture represents one of the distinctive characteristics that differentiates change management in rural private madrasahs from that of educational organizations that rely predominantly on administrative or managerial approaches.

Institutional Partnerships as a Strategy for Strengthening Organizational Change

The cross-site findings indicate that all three madrasahs have established partnerships with madrasah committees, parents, community leaders, and the Madrasah Working Group (KKM). These partnerships play a significant role in supporting the implementation of educational programs, strengthening relationships with local communities, and addressing the institutional resource limitations faced by the madrasahs. Nevertheless, the analysis reveals that most of these partnerships remain at the level of social networking. Close interpersonal relationships, informal communication, and moral support from the surrounding community primarily characterize existing collaborations. In contrast, the defining features of strategic networking—including joint planning, clearly defined roles and responsibilities, measurable performance indicators, and a shared commitment to educational quality improvement—have not yet been fully developed.

These findings reinforce the argument of (Ramadhanti et al., 2025) who identify external partnerships as a critical factor in ensuring the sustainability of educational organizations. However, the present study provides a more nuanced understanding of partnership development within rural private madrasahs. Specifically, institutional partnerships tend to evolve initially as a form of social capital before developing into strategic capital that directly contributes to organizational effectiveness. Accordingly, strengthening institutional networks should be regarded as a strategic priority within transformative change management in Islamic education. The transition from social networking to strategic networking is essential to ensure that partnerships extend beyond providing social support and contribute directly to educational quality improvement,

institutional competitiveness, and long – term organizational sustainability. This interpretation is consistent with (Alkautsar et al., 2025), who conclude that institutional partnerships constitute an effective strategy for enhancing quality, professionalism, and the sustainability of Islamic educational institutions.

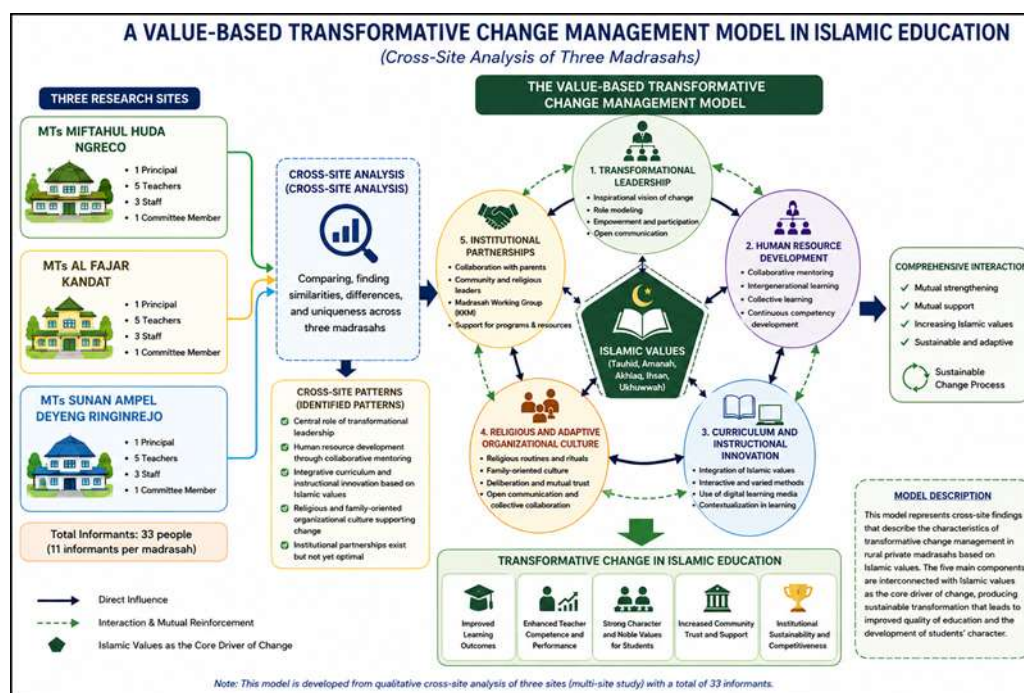


Figure 1. A Model of the Characteristics of Transformative Islamic Education Change Management

A Value – Based Transformative Change Management Model in Islamic Education. The proposed model represents a synthesis derived from the cross – site analysis conducted at MTs Miftahul Huda Ngreco, MTs Al Fajar Kandat, and MTs Sunan Ampel Deyeng Ringinrejo. Unlike a single – case study that seeks to develop an in – depth understanding of a particular institution, the multi – site research design employed in this study enabled the identification of recurring patterns that consistently emerged across three rural private madrasahs with relatively similar organizational characteristics. Consequently, the resulting model does not merely describe change practices within an individual institution but rather represents empirically validated characteristics of transformative change management shared across the three research sites.

The cross – site synthesis demonstrates that transformative change in Islamic education is constructed through the dynamic interaction of five interrelated components: (1) transformational leadership grounded in Islamic values, (2) human resource development, (3) curriculum and instructional innovation, (4) a religious and adaptive organizational culture, and (5) institutional partnerships. These components do not function independently; instead, they interact synergistically to create a sustainable system of organizational transformation.

Within this model, transformational leadership serves as the primary driving force that articulates the vision for change, mobilizes organizational members, and fosters collective commitment. Human resource development strengthens institutional capacity by enhancing teachers' competencies and promoting collaborative professional learning.

Curriculum and instructional innovation functions as the principal mechanism for integrating Islamic values with contemporary educational practices while improving educational quality. Meanwhile, a religious and adaptive organizational culture creates an environment that encourages organizational members to embrace change through shared values, mutual trust, and collective responsibility. Institutional partnerships further reinforce the sustainability of organizational transformation by expanding external support, strengthening community engagement, and promoting collaborative institutional development.

A central finding of the cross–site analysis is that the entire change process is fundamentally anchored in Islamic values, which constitute the core of the organizational system. These values function simultaneously as a moral foundation, a source of organizational legitimacy, and a guiding framework for institutional transformation. Accordingly, the proposed model suggests that the success of transformative change in rural private madrasahs depends less on the availability of material resources than on the institution's capacity to integrate Islamic values, transformational leadership, human resource development, curriculum innovation, organizational culture, and institutional collaboration into a coherent and sustainable system of change.

The proposed Value – Based Transformative Change Management Model therefore extends existing theories of educational change by demonstrating that, within the context of rural private madrasahs, sustainable organizational transformation is achieved not through isolated managerial interventions but through the systematic integration of Islamic values into every dimension of organizational leadership, educational practice, institutional culture, and stakeholder collaboration. This integrative perspective represents the principal theoretical contribution and novelty of the present study.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the cross–site analysis conducted at MTs Miftahul Huda Ngreco, MTs Al Fajar Kandat, and MTs Sunan Ampel Deyeng Ringinrejo demonstrates that transformative change management in rural private madrasahs follows a relatively consistent pattern. This pattern is characterized by transformational leadership grounded in Islamic values, collaborative human resource development, integrative curriculum and instructional innovation, a religious and adaptive organizational culture, and institutional partnerships. Although these components were implemented through different strategies at each madrasah, the change process was consistently gradual, participatory, and oriented toward strengthening educational quality while reinforcing Islamic values.

The principal novelty of this study lies in the development of a Value – Based Transformative Change Management Model in Islamic Education, synthesized from empirical findings across three research sites. This model extends the existing body of knowledge on change management in Islamic education by introducing a value – based perspective that positions Islamic values as the central driving force of sustainable organizational transformation. In addition to its theoretical contribution, the proposed model offers practical guidance for madrasah principals, educational leaders, and policymakers in designing contextual, participatory, and sustainable change management strategies for the development of rural private madrasahs.

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