International Journal Corner of Educational Research
Vol. 5, No. 3, 2027, pp. 359~366
E-ISSN 2962-164X, P-ISSN 2962-8237, DOI: https://doi.org/10.54012/ijcer.v5i3.916

Managing Institutional Change in Islamic Educational Institutions: A Scoping Review of Leadership, Organizational Culture, and Innovation

Asep Ariffudin[1], Emil Maliki[2], Anis Zohriah[3], Abdul Muin[4]
[1]Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten, Indonesia
[2]Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten, Indonesia
[3]Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten, Indonesia
[4]Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten, Indonesia

Article Info

Article history:

Received November 7, 2026
Revised November 17, 2026
Accepted November 20, 2026

Keywords:

Scoping Review;
Islamic Education;
Institutional Change;
Leadership;
Organizational Culture;
Educational Innovation;
Pesantren and Madrasah

ABSTRACT

Islamic educational institutions face intensifying demands for change driven by digitalization, policy shifts, and societal expectations, all while the core values of religious tradition must be preserved. This research aims to map existing evidence on how leadership, organizational culture, and innovation intersect in the management of institutional change within Islamic educational institutions. This study aims to map the scope, characteristics, main themes, and literature gaps concerning these three issues through a scoping review that follows the Arksey and O'Malley framework and the PRISMA-ScR guidelines. The search was conducted on open journal aggregators in November 2026 using the criteria of empirical, peer-reviewed articles in Indonesian or English. Seven empirical studies in the initial corpus were mapped through data charting and thematic analysis. The results show a predominance of qualitative case study designs in pesantren and madrasah in Java and Sumatra, with four themes: transformational leadership and the transition of authority, pesantren values as a cultural resource, the stages of planned change, and leadership as a driver of innovation. The main gaps include the scarcity of longitudinal studies, evidence on learning outcomes, validated cultural instruments, and cross-regional studies. These findings provide a basis for a research agenda and for further systematic reviews.

This is an open access article under the CC BY-SA license.

Corresponding Author:

Asep Ariffudin
Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin State Islamic University of Banten, Indonesia
Email: asepariffudi7@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

Islamic educational institutions, namely pesantren, madrasah, and Islamic schools, stand at the crossroads between preserving scholarly tradition and meeting the demands of modernization, digitalization, and quality standards [1]. Institutional change in this setting is not merely a technical update. It touches the structure of authority, shared values, and the religious identity of the institution. For this reason, managing change in Islamic education has a character different from that in general schools. Literature-based studies have described the application of transformational leadership in pesantren and madrasah [2] as well as the concept of pesantren organizational culture grounded in

the principle of tauhid [3]. Neither study uses field data, so in this article they are positioned only as background and not as units of analysis.

Conceptually, three frameworks are commonly used. First, transformational leadership, which emphasizes idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration [4]. Second, organizational culture as a pattern of shared assumptions learned by a group and passed on through leadership [5]. Third, planned change theory, which divides the change process into the stages of unfreezing, moving, and refreezing [6]. The three are interrelated, but in research practice they are often examined separately, so the relationship among leadership, culture, and innovation as a single system of change has not been clearly mapped.

Islamic educational institutions currently face a dual demand: to maintain their Islamic identity while simultaneously responding to rapid changes in institutional management, curriculum, pedagogy, and digital transformation. In this context, leadership cannot be understood merely as an administrative function; rather, it is a process of steering change while remaining firmly rooted in core values. Transformational leadership characterized by vision, accepted authority, and participation [4], [7], provides the impetus for such change. However, this momentum depends on organizational culture, the shared values, norms, and assumptions that shape how a leader's vision is interpreted [5]. In Islamic institutions, this is reflected in a participatory school culture and a collectively constructed vision [8].

The interplay between these elements becomes meaningful when manifested through educational innovation. Studies on madrasah (Islamic schools) and Islamic religious education institutions indicate that transformational leadership influences management innovation [9], [10] as well as innovation within pesantren (Islamic boarding schools) and madrasahs [11]. Ultimately, long-lasting educational change requires a focus on processes and context, rather than just the implementation of new programs [12].

The problem at hand is that the empirical evidence is scattered. Existing studies use diverse designs, contexts, and units of analysis, ranging from case studies in a single pesantren to surveys across several madrasah. It is not yet clear how much evidence is available, in which types of institutions and regions it is concentrated, which methods dominate, and in which aspects the evidence is still lacking. Under such conditions, a narrow question about the effectiveness of a particular leadership style is not yet appropriate, because the baseline evidence map has not been built.

A scoping review was chosen because it is designed to map the scope, types, and characteristics of evidence on broad and heterogeneous topics and to identify knowledge gaps without narrowly assessing effectiveness [13], [14], [15]. Reporting follows PRISMA-ScR so that the process can be traced and replicated [16].

This study aims to map (a) the volume and characteristics of empirical studies, (b) the types of methods and research contexts, (c) the main themes at the intersection of leadership, organizational culture, and innovation in institutional change in Islamic education, and (d) the literature gaps that need to be addressed. This article is organized into Introduction, Methods, Results, Thematic Mapping, Research Gaps, Discussion, and Conclusion

Based on the review questions, the main question is: What is the scope, and what are the characteristics, of the empirical evidence on managing institutional change in Islamic education that involves leadership, organizational culture, and educational innovation? The sub-questions are: RQ1: What are the volume, distribution by year, and characteristics of the available studies? RQ2: What methods and contexts (type of institution, region) are used? RQ3: What main themes emerge at the intersection of the three concepts? RQ4: What gaps remain in the literature?

2. METHOD

2.1. Eligibility Criteria

The criteria were developed using the Population–Concept–Context (PCC) framework [15]. Population: Islamic educational institutions (pesantren, madrasah, Islamic schools) and their leaders, teachers, and education staff. Concept: leadership, organizational culture, and innovation or change management in the

context of institutional change. Context: not restricted by region, although the search was conducted using Indonesian and English terms.

2.2. Database and Search Strategy

The search was conducted on 5 November 2026 through a web search engine that indexes Garuda, DOAJ, institutional repositories, and OJS-based journal portals. The keyword string used was: ("kepemimpinan" OR leadership) AND ("budaya organisasi" OR organizational culture) AND ("inovasi" OR innovation OR change management) AND (pesantren OR madrasah OR Islamic education). The query was run in several variations, for example transformational leadership in madrasah, organizational culture and change in pesantren, and educational innovation and leadership in Islamic schools. Searches of subscription databases such as Scopus and Web of Science have not been conducted, and this is acknowledged as a limitation.

2.3. Inclusion-Exclusion Criteria

Table 1. Inclusion-Exclusion Criteria

Criterion	Inclusion	Exclusion
Publication type	Empirical, peer-reviewed journal articles	*Review* articles, literature reviews, opinion pieces, proceedings, books
Language	Indonesian or English	Other languages
Period	2015–2026	Before 2015
Context	Islamic education (pesantren, madrasah, Islamic schools)	General education without an Islamic context
Focus	At least one of leadership, organizational culture, or innovation within the framework of institutional change	Other foci (for example, classroom learning only)
Data	Empirical primary or secondary data	Purely conceptual analysis
Metadata	Author, year, and source can be verified	Metadata cannot be verified

Review articles and literature reviews were used only as background [2], [3].

2.4. Screening Process

Screening was carried out in two stages by a single reviewer: title and abstract, then full text or article page. The initial search yielded 30 records before duplicate removal. Duplicate records from several aggregators were merged. Two records that were literature reviews were removed from the unit of analysis and used as background. Two records that were conference proceedings were excluded because they were not journal articles. A number of topically relevant articles were set aside because their authors, year, or volume could not be verified at the time of the search. Seven studies met all criteria and entered the final corpus. The single reviewer and the small corpus are limitations discussed in the Discussion section.

2.5. Data Charting and Extraction

Data were charted using a form designed for this review and refer to the guidance of Levac et al. [14]. The variables extracted were: author and year, type of institution, region, research design, data source, concept focus (leadership, culture, innovation), theoretical framework, and main findings. No formal quality appraisal was conducted, in line with the character of a scoping review [13], [15], but visible reporting inconsistencies were noted as observations.

2.6. Synthesis and Mapping Approach

Synthesis was carried out through (a) numerical descriptive mapping (year, design, context, region), (b) a concept intersection matrix to show which studies address leadership, culture, and innovation, and (c)

inductive thematic analysis [17] of the main findings. Themes were built from similarities in findings across studies and not from the calculation of effect sizes.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Volume and characteristics of the studies

Seven empirical studies met the criteria (Table 2). Their publication years range from 2019 to 2026, with two studies in 2022 and two in 2026. Five studies used descriptive qualitative or case study designs [18], [19], one study combined qualitative and survey approaches [20], [21], and one study used a quantitative correlational design [10],[22], [23]

,

Table 2. Characteristics of the included studies

No	Study	Context and region	Design	Key findings
[12]	Prayoga et al., 2019	Madrasah Aliyah Ma'arif Cilageni, Kadungora, West Java	Descriptive qualitative (interviews, observation, documents)	The madrasah head demonstrated idealized influence and motivation, as well as policymaking that encouraged cultural change and quality improvement
[13]	Romli and Faizin, 2022	Nurul Jadid Pesantren, Probolinggo, East Java	Qualitative case study	Change management based on Islamic culture follows Lewin's stages, from *unfreezing* to *refreezing*
[14]	Prasetyo, 2022	Pesantren in Southeast Aceh	Qualitative and survey	A transformative model integrates culture and organizational efficiency; leadership behavioral competence is a factor
[15]	Siregar and Prasetyo, 2023	Dayah Perbatasan (government-affiliated pesantren), Aceh	Descriptive qualitative (interviews, observation, FGD, documents)	Pesantren development innovation is analyzed through organizational development theory and change management
[16]	Trimulyo et al., 2025	Madrasah Aliyah, Pamijahan Subdistrict, West Java	Quantitative correlational (questionnaire)	Transformational leadership is strongly correlated with management innovation ($r = 0.762$; $R^2 = 0.584$)
[17]	Mustaqim et al., 2026	Madinatul Munawwarah Pesantren, Bukittinggi, West Sumatra	Qualitative (interviews, observation, documents)	The transition from charismatic to participatory leadership made organizational culture more open and systematic, with a decline in the number of students during the transition period
[18]	Khoiri, 2026	MA NU Banat Kudus, Central Java	Qualitative case study	Pesantren ethics serve as a cultural resource that is both enabling and potentially constraining

3.2. Context and distribution

By type of institution, four studies were set in pesantren [19], [20], [21], [22] and three in madrasah [10], [18], [23]. By region, four studies came from Java[10], [18], [19], [23] and three from Sumatra, namely Aceh and West Sumatra [20], [21], [22]. There were no studies from Kalimantan, Sulawesi, Nusa Tenggara, Maluku, or Papua, and no studies from outside Indonesia in this corpus.

3.3. Concept focus

Table 3. Concept intersection matrix (● = main focus; ○ = supporting focus; – = not prominent)

Study	Leadership	Organizational culture	Innovation
[12]	●	●	–
[13]	○	●	–
[14]	●	●	○
[15]	○	●	●
[16]	●	–	●
[17]	●	●	–
[18]	○	●	–

No study places all three concepts as the main focus simultaneously. Organizational culture appears most often (six of the seven studies), while innovation is the main focus in only two studies [10], [21].

3.4. Thematic Mapping

Theme 1: Transformational leadership and the transition of authority. Studies in madrasah link the transformative leadership of madrasah heads with changes in culture and quality [18], while a quantitative study reports a strong correlation with management innovation [10]. In pesantren, the issue shifts to sustainability: the transition from charismatic to participatory leadership improves openness and organizational systematization, but is accompanied by a decline in the number of students during the transition period [22]. Leadership behavior is also viewed as a competence that shapes the pesantren transformation model [20].

Theme 2: Pesantren values as a cultural resource that is both enabling and constraining. Pesantren values and ethics are understood as an ethical framework that shapes leadership integrity and social accountability, and this role is context-dependent and can function as both an enabler and a constraint [23]. Islamic culture also serves as the basis for change management in pesantren [19] and is integrated with organizational efficiency in the transformative model [20].

Theme 3: Planned change as a process framework. Lewin's stages are used explicitly to read the change process in pesantren [19], while organizational development theory and change management are used to explain the development innovation of the dayah [21]. Their use tends to be descriptive, to structure the narrative, rather than to test the relationships among the stages.

Theme 4: Leadership as a driver of management innovation. The innovation examined is mainly at the management level, covering curriculum development and technology integration, with the finding that the involvement of parents and the community remains weak [10]. In pesantren, innovation is read as part of organizational development related to the effectiveness of organizational culture [21].

3.5. Research Gaps

Thin outcome evidence. Only one study touches an institutional outcome indicator, namely the number of students [22]. No study in this corpus yet links institutional change with learning outcomes or teacher performance.

Designs dominated by single or dual case studies. There are no longitudinal studies, cross-institutional comparisons, or rigorously integrated mixed-methods studies. There is only one quantitative study [10].

Organizational culture is rarely measured in a standardized way. Culture is mostly described narratively, without validated instruments that would allow comparison across studies.

Innovation is understood narrowly. Innovation mainly means management, curriculum, and technology innovation, while pedagogical innovation and value innovation are rarely discussed.

Uneven geographical distribution. Evidence is concentrated in Java and Sumatra, with no studies from eastern Indonesia or international comparisons.

Focus on top leaders. The voices of teachers, education staff, students, and parents, as well as the issues of resistance and failed change, are not yet represented.

Reporting quality. In one quantitative study, the abstract states 150 respondents, while the methods and results sections report a sample of 60 from a population of about 150. The reported standardized beta coefficient in simple linear regression (0.265) also appears inconsistent with the correlation coefficient (0.762) [10]. This indicates the need for stricter reporting standards.

3.6. Discussion

The evidence map shows that knowledge about institutional change in Islamic education is largely descriptive and contextual. The strength of case studies lies in their depth in capturing the dynamics of values and authority, for example the story of the shift from charismatic to participatory leadership [22] and the dual role of pesantren values [23]. Their weakness is limited generalizability and the difficulty of comparing findings across contexts. The only quantitative study gives an indication of the relationship between transformational leadership and management innovation [10], but a correlational design does not support causal claims, and the reporting inconsistencies mean its results should be read with caution.

Critically, transformational leadership [4] tends to be treated as a factor that is almost always beneficial. Studies in pesantren show a more complex picture: dependence on a charismatic figure can drive growth, but makes the institution vulnerable when that figure is gone [22]. Likewise, cultural values do not automatically benefit change [23]. This finding is consistent with the view that culture and leadership shape each other [5]. The use of Lewin's theory [6] in pesantren [19] is useful as a process framework, but its predictive usefulness has not been tested.

In practical terms, institutional managers need to design leadership transitions as part of change planning, use local values as a resource without closing space for criticism, and broaden the participation of stakeholders, including parents and the community, who in study [10] remain a weak point. For researchers, the implications are the need for longitudinal designs, validated cultural instruments, outcome indicators, and studies in regions that are not yet represented.

This review has limitations. The corpus consists of only seven studies and was obtained from open aggregators without searching subscription databases. Screening was done by a single reviewer, so the risk of selection bias cannot be ruled out. Several relevant articles were set aside because their metadata had not been verified. The restriction to Indonesian and English may also exclude other evidence. The map presented is therefore preliminary and needs to be updated with a broader search and dual reviewers.

4. CONCLUSION

This scoping review mapped seven empirical studies on managing institutional change in Islamic education. The evidence is dominated by qualitative studies in pesantren and madrasah in Java and Sumatra, with four main themes: transformational leadership and the transition of authority, pesantren values as a cultural resource, planned change, and leadership as a driver of management innovation. No study centers all three concepts at once. The most important gaps are the scarcity of longitudinal studies, outcome evidence, standardized measurement of culture, and the representation of regions and stakeholders. Future researchers are advised to extend the search to subscription

databases with dual reviewers, and then to design cross-context studies that link leadership, culture, and innovation with institutional outcomes.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to express their deepest gratitude to God Almighty for His endless blessings, strength, and guidance throughout the process of completing this article. Without His grace, this work would not have been possible.

The first author dedicates this work to his late father, whose love, sacrifice, and wisdom continue to guide his steps even though he is no longer present. The values of hard work and perseverance that he instilled have shaped who the first author is today, and it is hoped that this achievement makes him proud. The first author is also profoundly grateful to his beloved mother for her unconditional love, endless prayers, and unwavering support in every chapter of his life. Her prayers have been the quiet strength that carried him through the most difficult moments.

The first author extends his sincerest thanks to his beloved wife for her patience, understanding, and constant encouragement. She stood beside him through long nights and demanding days, and never stopped believing in him. To his first and second children, thank you for being his greatest source of joy and motivation. Their smiles and laughter reminded him why he strives to keep learning and growing.

The first author also wishes to thank his older and younger brothers and sisters for their kindness, support, and encouragement, whether through words of motivation, practical help, or simply their presence. Heartfelt appreciation also goes to all extended family and relatives, whose prayers and moral support have meant more than words can express.

The second, third, and fourth authors would like to express their heartfelt gratitude to their parents, spouses, children, and families for their love, patience, and understanding throughout this research. Their constant prayers, sacrifices, and encouragement gave the authors the strength and motivation to see this work through to completion.

The authors sincerely appreciate their lecturers and supervisors for their valuable guidance, constructive feedback, and generous sharing of knowledge. Their patience and insights have greatly improved the quality of this article and enriched the authors' academic journey.

Finally, the authors would like to thank their friends and colleagues who have supported them along the way through discussions, advice, and encouragement. Their companionship made this journey lighter and more meaningful. To everyone who has contributed in any way, whether mentioned here or not, the authors offer their sincere thanks. May all their kindness be repaid with abundant blessings.

Finally, the authors would like to express their deepest gratitude to their families, friends, colleagues, workplace, and Universitas Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa for becoming important parts of this journey. This research and article would not have been completed without the combination of prayers, encouragement, knowledge, opportunities, understanding, and support received from those around the authors. The authors recognize that academic achievement is not solely the result of individual effort but is also shaped by the support and contributions of many people and institutions. Therefore, the authors sincerely dedicate their appreciation to everyone who has accompanied, supported, and encouraged them throughout this process.

The authors hope that the knowledge, experiences, and lessons gained through the completion of this research will contribute positively to their academic and professional development and, more importantly, provide meaningful benefits to the broader academic community and society. The authors are deeply grateful for every opportunity, challenge, lesson, and form of support that has been part of this journey. May all the kindness, sacrifices, prayers, encouragement, and contributions extended to the authors be rewarded with lasting goodness, blessings, and success. With sincere appreciation, the authors thank everyone who has been part of their journey and who has helped make the completion of this research and article possible.

REFERENCES

[1] Z. Dhofier, "Tradisi pesantren: Studi tentang pandangan hidup kyai," *(No Title)*, 1982.

[2] M. N. Ekawati and T. Hamami, "Kepemimpinan Transformasional Pada Lembaga

Pendidikan Islam di Indonesia," *Paedagogie*, vol. 21, no. 1, pp. 519–532, 2026.
[3] M. A. Al Aziz, "Budaya Organisasi Pesantren Perspektif Organizational Culture dalam Islam," *J. Tahdzibi Manaj. Pendidik. Islam*, vol. 10, no. 1, 2026.
[4] B. M. Bass and R. E. Riggio, "Transformational leadership," 2006.
[5] E. H. Schein, "Organizational culture and leadership 4th Edition," *San Fr.*, 2010.
[6] K. Lewin, "Frontiers in group dynamics: Concept, method and reality in social science; social equilibria and social change," *Hum. relations*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 5–41, 1947.
[7] K. Leithwood and D. Jantzi, "Transformational school leadership for large-scale reform: Effects on students, teachers, and their classroom practices," *Sch. Eff. Sch. Improv.*, vol. 17, no. 2, pp. 201–227, 2006.
[8] A. F. Hamzah and A. Qusairi, "Transformational Leadership in Islamic Education: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Enhancing Inclusivity and Diversity," *Al-Tanzim J. Manaj. Pendidik. Islam*, vol. 10, no. 4, pp. 1400–1414, 2026.
[9] A. W. Fahrub, M. I. Chailani, K. Latifah, Z. Arifin, and D. Ardiansyah, "Inovasi Manajemen dan Kepemimpinan Transformatif Kelembagaan PAI," *J. Nusant. Educ.*, vol. 5, no. 1, pp. 22–39, 2025.
[10] J. Trimulyo, H. Lestari, I. Rahmawati, and C. C. Thelma, "The influence of transformational leadership on fostering management innovation in Islamic education institutions," *Al-Tanzim J. Manaj. Pendidik. Islam*, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 316–326, 2025.
[11] M. S. Humaisi, M. Thoyib, M. Nurdin, R. Rahmawati, and B. Ngoh, "Pesantren-based transformational leadership in the development of international madrasah innovation," *Cendekia J. Kependidikan dan Kemasyarakatan*, vol. 22, no. 1, 2024.
[12] M. Fullan, *The new meaning of educational change*. Teachers college press, 2025.
[13] H. Arksey and L. O'malley, "Scoping studies: towards a methodological framework," *Int. J. Soc. Res. Methodol.*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 19–32, 2005.
[14] D. Levac, H. Colquhoun, and K. K. O'brien, "Scoping studies: advancing the methodology," *Implement. Sci.*, vol. 5, no. 1, p. 69, 2010.
[15] M. D. J. Peters *et al.*, "Updated methodological guidance for the conduct of scoping reviews," *JBI Evid. Implement.*, vol. 19, no. 1, pp. 3–10, 2021.
[16] A. C. Tricco, "PRISMA extension for scoping reviews (PRISMA-ScR): checklist and explanation," *Angew Chemie Int Ed*, vol. 6, no. 11, p. 951, 1967.
[17] V. Braun and V. Clarke, "Using thematic analysis in psychology," *Qual. Res. Psychol.*, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 77–101, 2006.
[18] A. Prayoga, R. Muharomah, and S. Sutarti, "Implementasi Kepemimpinan Transformatif Kepala Madrasah Aliyah Ma'Arif Cilageni Kadungora," *Attaqwa J. Ilmu Pendidik. Islam*, vol. 15, no. 1, pp. 33–44, 2019.
[19] M. Romli and F. Syamweil, "TRANSFORMATION FROM THE EDGE; ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE MANAGEMENT BASED ON ISLAMIC CULTURE IN PESANTREN," *Manag. Indones. J. Educ. Manag.*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 37–50, 2022.
[20] M. A. M. Prasetyo, "Organizational and cultural transformation of pesantren in creating a competitive culture," *Qalamuna-Jurnal Pendidikan, Sos. dan Agama*, vol. 14, no. 1, pp. 73–88, 2022.
[21] F. A. Siregar and M. A. M. Prasetyo, "The innovation of pesantren development in aceh province through the effectiveness of organizational culture," *J. Kependidikan J. Has. Penelit. Dan Kaji. Kepustakaan Di Bid. Pendidikan, Pengajaran, Dan Pembelajaran*, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 174–187, 2023.
[22] F. Mustaqim, Junaidi, "Transformation of Pesantren Leadership : From Charismatic to Participatory Leadership at Madinatul Munawwarah Islamic Boarding School , Bukittinggi," *Sustainable*, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 55–62, 2025.
[23] N. KHOIRI, "Integrating Pesantren Cultural Values into Madrasah Organizational Development: A Human Service Perspective from Indonesia," *Asian J. Hum. Serv.*, vol. 30, no. 2, pp. e3002-1, 2026.