

The Impact of Spiritual-Transformational Leadership in Advancing Organizational Culture at LPD Al-Bahjah

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Article Info

Article history:

Received 2026-02-11

Revised 2026-02-25

Accepted 2026-03-04

Keywords:

Constructivism

Islamic education

Organizational culture

Spiritual leadership

Transformational leadership

ABSTRACT

This study addresses the growing challenge faced by Islamic da'wah institutions in balancing managerial effectiveness with the preservation of spiritual values. Many religious organizations struggle to integrate performance-based leadership with transcendental and prophetic principles, leading to either managerial stagnation or value dilution. In response to this issue, this research aims to examine how a spiritual-transformational leadership model is constructed at the Al-Bahjah Da'wah Development Institute (LPD) and how it shapes organizational culture and institutional commitment. This study employs a qualitative design grounded in a constructivist paradigm. Data were collected through systematic field observation, in-depth interviews with organizational actors, and analysis of institutional documentation. The data were analyzed using thematic interpretation involving coding, categorization, and reflective triangulation to ensure credibility and analytical rigor. The findings reveal that leadership at LPD Al-Bahjah is built on the integration of tawhid-based values, moral exemplarity (uswah), a visionary da'wah orientation, and the structured empowerment of human resources. This integration generates a religious-adaptive organizational culture characterized by collective worship practices, high member loyalty, ethical innovation, and sustained institutional growth. The study demonstrates that spiritual and transformational dimensions function synergistically rather than separately, forming a leadership model that strengthens organizational identity, commitment, and resilience amid contemporary social change.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The acceleration of global disruption and digital transformation has significantly reshaped the governance of contemporary organizations, including Islamic educational and da'wah institutions. These institutions are no longer merely centers for religious

transmission but complex socio-religious organizations required to demonstrate managerial accountability, innovation capacity, and institutional sustainability [1]. This shift creates a structural tension: how can da'wah institutions maintain the authenticity of transcendental values while simultaneously adopting modern organizational systems that demand efficiency, adaptability, and measurable performance? This unresolved tension constitutes the central research problem of the present study.

Leadership becomes the pivotal variable in responding to this dual challenge. Organizational transformation does not occur solely through structural reform, but through leadership patterns that shape vision, institutional identity, and collective work culture [2]. In Islamic institutions, leadership carries not only managerial authority but also moral and spiritual legitimacy. Therefore, the failure to integrate spiritual authority with transformative capacity may result in either bureaucratic stagnation or value dilution.

From a theoretical standpoint, transformational leadership theory developed by Bass emphasizes idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration as drivers of organizational change [3]. This framework has been widely validated in improving institutional performance and member commitment. However, within religious organizations, an excessive focus on performance indicators may marginalize transcendental commitments and prophetic ethics that form the ontological foundation of da'wah movements [4]. Conversely, Fry's spiritual leadership theory highlights vision, faith, and altruistic love as determinants of intrinsic motivation and meaningful work. While this model strengthens moral commitment, its operational integration into adaptive and innovation-oriented organizational systems remains insufficiently elaborated.

Recent empirical studies reinforce the importance of leadership in shaping religious organizational culture. For instance, Alazmi and Bush (2023) demonstrate that Islamic-oriented leadership frameworks contribute to institutional coherence in Muslim educational contexts [5]. Similarly, Basri et al. (2024) find that transformational leadership in pesantren strengthens adaptive capacity and educational competitiveness [6]. More recently, Zaini (2025) confirms that spiritual value-based transformational leadership enhances religiosity and collective engagement among educators [7]. Although these studies acknowledge the relevance of spirituality and transformation, they tend to examine formal educational institutions and focus primarily on performance or religiosity outcomes. There remains limited empirical exploration of how spiritual and transformational dimensions are integratively constructed within non-formal da'wah institutions and how this integration systematically shapes organizational culture.

This gap is particularly visible in rapidly developing da'wah organizations that operate beyond conventional educational frameworks. The Al-Bahjah Da'wah Development Institute (LPD) in Cirebon represents a significant case in this regard. Under the leadership of Buya Yahya, the institution has expanded across multiple sectors, including Islamic boarding schools, formal education, sharia economic initiatives, and digital da'wah media. The sustained growth of the institution, accompanied by high levels of volunteer loyalty and organizational cohesion, indicates a distinctive leadership model that transcends conventional managerial paradigms. However, scholarly investigation into

the internal mechanism by which spiritual values are translated into productive and innovative organizational behavior within LPD Al-Bahjah remains scarce [8].

In response to this gap, this study proposes an integrative analytical framework that combines spiritual leadership and transformational leadership into a contextual spiritual-transformational leadership model. The author argues that transcendental values such as tawhid and amanah must not merely function as symbolic rhetoric but should be operationalized through transformational mechanisms that institutionalize innovation, empowerment, and adaptive governance. This integrative approach constitutes the proposed solution to the identified research problem [9].

However, to date, little research has systematically examined the mechanisms by which internalized spiritual values lead to productive and innovative organizational behavior in the Al-Bahjah LPD environment [10]. Many da'wah institutions stagnate when spiritual values are not operationalized into work systems, or when the demands of modernity erode work ethics grounded in sincerity. The absence of an integrative conceptual model often leaves religious leadership practices to run normatively, without a measurable managerial framework [11].

Accordingly, this research aims to: (1) identify the defining characteristics of spiritual-transformational leadership at LPD Al-Bahjah; (2) analyze the mechanisms through which spiritual and transformational values are internalized into organizational culture; and (3) formulate a contextual leadership model applicable to non-formal da'wah institutions. The research questions guiding this inquiry are: How is spiritual-transformational leadership constructed at LPD Al-Bahjah? How does it shape and strengthen organizational culture? What implications does it have for institutional effectiveness and sustainability?

The expected contribution of this study is twofold. Theoretically, it seeks to bridge the conceptual divide between spiritual leadership and transformational leadership by offering an integrative model grounded in empirical findings from a non-formal da'wah institution. Practically, the study provides a strategic framework for Islamic organizations seeking to modernize without compromising their spiritual foundations. By articulating a leadership model rooted in amanah yet adaptive to social change, this research aspires to contribute to the development of resilient, ethical, and future-oriented da'wah institutions.

2. METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with a constructivist paradigm. This paradigm was chosen because the research aims to understand how the meaning of spiritual-transformational leadership is socially constructed by actors in the Al-Bahjah Da'wah Development Institute (LPD). In the constructivist perspective, organizational reality is viewed as the result of interactions, experiences, and subjective interpretations of the actors involved in it [12]. Therefore, the method emphasizes exploring meaning through direct observation in the Al-Bahjah LPD environment, enabling researchers to capture the dynamics of leadership, communication patterns, role models, and the process of internalizing spiritual values in the organization's daily activities. This approach aligns

with the view that belief and value systems influence institutional practices and collective behavior [13].

Data collection techniques included *direct* observation of leadership activities, interactions between leaders and members, and the work culture that developed within the organization. Observations were conducted systematically with field notes to identify patterns of behavior, symbols, and practices that reflected the integration of spiritual and transformational dimensions [14]. The data obtained was analyzed thematically through a process of reduction, categorization, and inductive interpretation of meaning. To maintain validity, this study applied data triangulation and continuous reflection on field findings [15]. The analytical framework refers to the integration of the concepts of *spiritual leadership* and *transformational leadership* as a theoretical lens in understanding the formation of organizational culture, as well as comparing the findings with previous studies that highlight the influence of belief and self-regulation factors on collective performance [16].

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents research findings from direct observation at LPD Al-Bahjah and a constructive analysis of the spiritual-transformational leadership practices that have developed within it. The research results are presented descriptively and empirically to show how transcendental values are constructed and internalized in organizational culture, then analyzed theoretically in the discussion section to explain the conceptual contribution of the leadership model found [17]. This section not only presents field data but also relates it to the theoretical framework developed in the previous section.

3.1. Results

Based on direct observation at the Al-Bahjah Da'wah Development Institute (LPD), it was found that spiritual-transformational leadership practices were evident not only at the conceptual level but also in daily institutional activities. Leadership was practiced as a mandate oriented towards the values of tawhid, exemplary behavior, and service to the people [18]. These values are not only conveyed through da'wah narratives, but also institutionalized in governance, collective worship practices, and organizational coordination systems [19].

Empirically, leadership at LPD Al-Bahjah demonstrates the integration of spiritual (trust, exemplary behavior, collective worship) and transformational (vision for change, innovation, member empowerment) dimensions. This integration shapes an organizational culture that is both religious and adaptive to the times, especially in the management of education, sharia economics, and da'wah media [20].

Table1 . Spiritual-Transformational Leadership Practices at LPD Al-Bahjah

Observed Aspects	Empirical Findings in the Field	Organizational Culture Implications
Institutional Vision and Mission	Vision is linked to the welfare of the people and an orientation towards the hereafter.	Work culture based on worship values
Leadership Exemplarity	Leaders are active in worship activities and provide direct guidance	High levels of trust and loyalty
Habit of collective worship	Group prayers, recitations, and regular studies are integrated into the work schedule.	Internalization of spiritual values into organizational habitus
Innovation in Da'wah Services	Development of dakwah media and sharia economics	Adaptive and progressive organizations
Personal Development	Attention to the spiritual development and welfare of members	Formation of a humanistic and solid working community

Table 1 shows that every aspect of leadership has concrete manifestations in organizational activities. Collective worship practices do not stand alone as rituals, but rather form the foundation for the formation of a work ethic [21]. Similarly, institutional innovation is not separated from the values of trust and benefit. This shows consistency between spiritual values and managerial practices.

In addition to the descriptive data in the table, direct observation also reveals visual symbols and physical spaces that reflect the organization's religious culture.



Figure 1 . Leadership Activities and Organizational Culture at LPD Al-Bahjah

Figure 1 shows empirical activities at the research site that reflect the integration of spiritual and managerial values. For example, figure (a), congregational worship and Islamic studies attended by leaders and members of the organization, illustrates *idealized influence* as well as the process of collective internalization of values. Meanwhile, figure (b), coordination meetings and da'wah service activities, shows the transformational dimension in organizational management. This documentation reinforces the finding that spiritual-transformational leadership at LPD Al-Bahjah is not merely a normative concept but is practiced in the organization's daily activities [22].

Overall, the study's results show that the organizational culture at LPD Al-Bahjah is shaped through a continuous process of social construction, in which the values of tauhid and amanah serve as the foundation for collective behavior [23]. It is this integration between spirituality and organizational transformation that characterizes the leadership model in this institution [24].

3.2. Discussion

The results of the study show that leadership at LPD Al-Bahjah cannot be categorized solely as *spiritual leadership* or *transformational leadership*, but rather as an integration of the two in a contextual and operational form. Theoretically, Fry's *spiritual leadership theory* emphasizes three main elements: vision, faith, and altruistic *love* as the foundation of intrinsic motivation in organizations [25]. Field findings show that the vision at LPD Al-Bahjah is formulated within the framework of the welfare of the people and an orientation towards the hereafter, thereby giving meaning to work as worship. This reinforces the thesis that organizational members' motivation is not merely instrumental but also transcendental [26].

At the same time, the dimensions of *transformational leadership* as formulated by Burns and further developed by Bass through the 4I framework (*idealized influence*, *inspirational motivation*, *intellectual stimulation*, and *individualized consideration*) are clearly evident in the leadership practices at LPD Al-Bahjah [27]. The exemplary leadership in worship and moral integrity reflects *idealized influence*. The narrative of preaching that inspires enthusiasm for serving the community is inspirational. The encouragement of sharia economic innovation and media preaching demonstrates *intellectual stimulation*. Meanwhile, personal guidance and attention to members' welfare are forms of *individualized consideration* [28]. Thus, the results of this study show that the transformational dimension does not stand apart from spirituality, but rather derives its legitimacy and energy from the values of tawhid and amanah [29].

This finding reinforces the argument that belief systems and values significantly influence institutional practices and collective behavior [30]. In the context of LPD Al-Bahjah, spiritual values do not stop at the normative level; they are institutionalized in the structure of routine activities, such as congregational worship and periodic studies. This internalization aligns values across all levels of the organization, fostering a culture of religious work that develops organically. This aligns with previous research, which confirms that beliefs and self-regulation contribute to improved collective performance [31].

The integration of spiritual transformation at LPD Al-Bahjah shows that spirituality is not an obstacle to organizational modernization. On the contrary, spirituality serves as a source of moral legitimacy and ethical stability in the transformation process. When innovation is developed within the framework of trust and benefit, the organization does not lose its Islamic identity even though it expands into the sharia economy, digital media, and formal education sectors. In this regard, the research findings expand on previous discourse that tended to separate religious leadership from modern strategic management [32].

Compared with previous studies on transformational leadership in Islamic educational institutions, most emphasize academic quality improvement or managerial effectiveness alone [33]. However, this study shows that at LPD Al-Bahjah, the spiritual dimension is the primary driver of converting the vision of change into a stable, sustainable organizational culture. This difference marks the research's conceptual contribution: the formulation of a spiritual-transformational leadership model based on amanah, an operational synthesis of transcendental values and organizational transformation strategies [34]. To clarify this conceptual construction, the following is a presentation of the analytical model resulting from the synthesis of field findings:

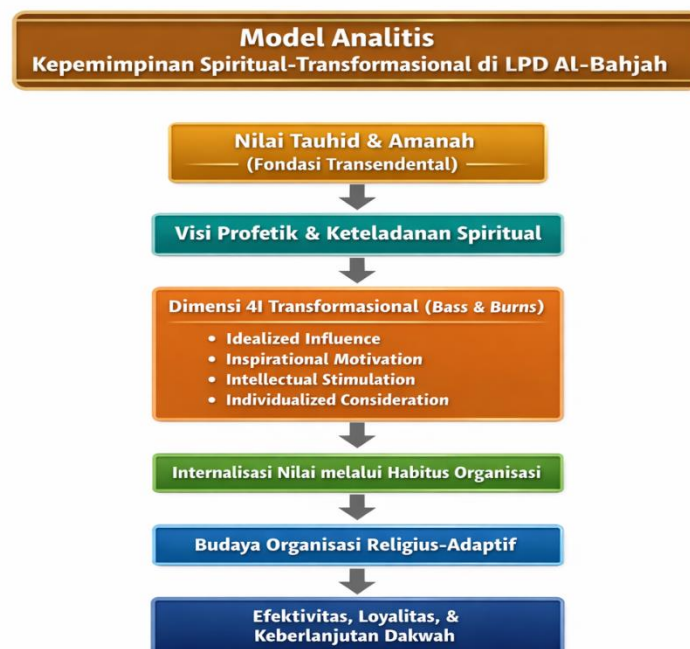


Figure 2. Analytical Model of Spiritual-Transformational Leadership at LPD Al-Bahjah

This model shows that tauhid and amanah form the epistemological foundation of leadership. These values are translated into prophetic vision and spiritual exemplarity, which are then operationalized through the 4I transformational dimensions. This process results in the internalization of values as an organizational habitus, which shapes a religiously adaptive culture. The ultimate impact is increased member loyalty, effectiveness of da'wah services, and institutional sustainability [35].

Theoretically, this model offers an integration between *spiritual leadership* and *transformational leadership* within a more contextual framework for non-formal da'wah institutions. If Fry emphasizes intrinsic motivation and Bass emphasizes organizational transformation, this study's findings show that the two can be synergized within a trust-based framework [36]. Thus, this study not only confirms the relevance of previous theories but also extends their application to Indonesian da'wah institutions.

In addition to its theoretical contribution, this research also has practical implications. Other da'wah institutions facing managerial stagnation can adopt this integrative approach by making spiritual values the foundation of transformation, rather

than merely symbolic ornaments [37]. When leaders combine moral exemplarity with a systematic vision of change, the organizational culture will be more robust and better able to adapt to the challenges of modernity [38].

This discussion confirms that the success of LPD Al-Bahjah is not only the result of modern managerial strategies, but also of a social construction of leadership that links the heavenly dimension (transcendence) with the earthly dimension (organizational transformation). This integration is at the core of the spiritual-transformational leadership model and is also the main contribution of this study to the development of contemporary Islamic leadership studies [39].

4. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that spiritual and transformational leadership can be integratively constructed into a coherent leadership framework within non-formal Islamic da'wah institutions. The findings indicate that transcendental principles such as *tawhid* and *amanah* can function as normative foundations that guide organizational transformation without diminishing managerial effectiveness. Rather than operating as parallel dimensions, spirituality and transformation reinforce one another in shaping institutional direction, collective commitment, and adaptive organizational culture. This integrative construction constitutes the study's main contribution, offering a contextual leadership model rooted in trust-based governance while remaining responsive to contemporary organizational demands.

Theoretically, this research bridges the conceptual gap between spiritual leadership and transformational leadership by proposing a synthesized spiritual-transformational model applicable to religious institutions. Practically, the study provides strategic insight for Islamic organizations seeking modernization without compromising ethical and spiritual authenticity. By emphasizing the operationalization of spiritual values into systems of empowerment, innovation, and structured governance, this research contributes to the broader discourse on sustainable faith-based organizational development. It offers a framework that may strengthen institutional resilience in periods of social and digital transformation.

Nevertheless, this study is limited to a qualitative case analysis of a single institution, which restricts broader generalization. The reliance on interpretive data also suggests the need for empirical measurement to validate the model's effectiveness across different contexts. Future research may employ quantitative or mixed-method approaches to examine the relationship between spiritual-transformational leadership and variables such as performance, organizational commitment, and community impact. Comparative and cross-institutional studies would further enhance theoretical refinement and practical applicability, while expanding the relevance of this leadership model for the wider public and faith-based organizations globally.

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