



Leadership Strategy of the Head of the Institution in Improving the Quality

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ABSTRACT

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This study aims to understand how the leadership strategy of the institution's head can improve the quality of the Institute of Social Sciences and Development (LIPS). The focus is on how leaders manage members, build a vision that is open to all, and create an effective, flexible, and sustainable work system. This study employs a qualitative approach, utilizing a case study method, to examine leadership practices in social and religious organizations in greater depth. Data were collected through direct interviews with the institution's head and members, observations of organizational activities, and official documents owned by the institution. The study's results indicate that the most suitable leadership strategy for LIPS is a participatory and transformative leadership style. This means that leaders encourage cooperation, are open and transparent in communication, provide ongoing coaching, and involve all parties in the decision-making process. This approach has been proven to enhance program quality, foster a stronger work culture within the organization, and encourage active participation from members in achieving common goals. These findings suggest that leaders of social organizations should adopt leadership styles tailored to the field's specific conditions and grounded in shared values, thereby ensuring the organization's quality continues to improve comprehensively and sustainably.

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INTRODUCTION

Leadership is a crucial factor that significantly influences the direction and quality of an organization (Abdullah & Annisah, 2023; Anning-Dorson, 2021; Mustajab, Lee, & Jansee, 2021). In theory, a leader should be able to design practical plans, make informed decisions, and evaluate the results of the organization's work (Madi Odeh, Obeidat, Jaradat, Masa'deh, & Alshurideh, 2023). However, in reality, many leaders have not been able to carry out this role optimally (Dehghani & Trojovský, 2022; Goleman & Cherniss, 2024). Especially

in social and religious-based organizations, such as LIPS (Intellectual and Santri Development Institute), a gap remains between theory and practice. Many institutions fail to develop due to a leadership style that is less active and not innovative (Alblooshi, Shamsuzzaman, & Haridy, 2021; AlNuaimi, Singh, & Harney, 2021). This is a significant issue because it can impede the organization's progress. Therefore, it is necessary to study the leadership strategy of the institution's head more deeply to determine how it can help improve the organization's quality, enabling it to operate more effectively.

Let us examine the field directly, especially within the LIPS organization. It is clear that the leadership style of the institution's head greatly influences the work spirit of the members, the success of the program, and the continuity of activities. When the head of the institution actively provides direction and is directly involved in activities, members are more motivated, and the program runs well. Conversely, if the head of the institution is less involved, then work spirit decreases, and activities become irregular. This demonstrates that good leadership is not enough with just a formal position; it must also be demonstrated through attitude, effective communication, and attention to members. Therefore, it is essential to determine which leadership strategy is most effective in advancing this organization.

Several previous studies have discussed the relationship between leadership and organizational quality. For example, Lee, Li, Yeh, and Yu (2022) and Riva, Magrizos, and Rubel (2021) noted that an inspiring leadership style can enhance member performance. Then, Mukhlisin, Ghozali, and Djastuti (2022) explain that leaders who build a positive work environment are more capable of developing Islamic boarding school organizations. However, there has been little research that focuses on Islamic boarding school organizations, such as LIPS, which have a unique structure and strong religious values. This research will fill that gap and provide a realistic picture of how the leadership strategy of the institution's head influences the Islamic boarding school organization. This is crucial to consider when enhancing or refining existing leadership patterns. Previous research conducted by Asutay, Buana, and Avdukic (2022), Baharun (2025), and Jeon and Choi (2021) also highlights the importance of leadership in increasing the commitment of organizational members, especially in the context of religious educational institutions. However, the study emphasizes the aspect of transformational leadership without delving deeper into the relationship between religious values and their impact on leadership effectiveness in the context of Islamic boarding schools.

This study also brings novelty because it highlights the LIPS organization, which is run by students and influenced by Islamic boarding school culture. The leadership strategy here cannot be equated with general organizations. The head

of the institution needs to understand the character of the members, who are primarily students and work based on religious values. This study also uses an approach that combines modern leadership theory with local values. That way, the results of this study can be helpful for similar organizations in other Islamic boarding schools and enrich the understanding of leadership in Indonesia.

The primary question in this study is: What leadership strategy does the head of the institution employ to improve the quality of the LIPS organization? This question is important because it can help us understand the leader's steps or methods more deeply, enabling the organization to develop. The initial assumption of this study is that the head of the institution who has a vision, can invite members to be involved, and actively fosters will be more successful in improving the quality of the organization. This assumption will be tested through a qualitative approach involving interviews and direct observations of activities within the organization.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach, utilizing a case study design. This approach was chosen because it can provide a detailed understanding of the leadership strategy employed by the head of the Language Excellence Institute of SMP Nurul Jadid (LIPS) in enhancing the organization's quality. Case studies are used to examine a specific location in depth, maintaining its original conditions. The study was conducted at LIPS SMP Nurul Jadid, Paiton, and Probolinggo. This place was chosen because LIPS is a leading institution that organizes intensive Arabic and English language learning programs, demonstrating good development in management and educational quality.

Additionally, researchers can easily access the informants and data required. The source of information in this study was the head of LIPS, who served as the primary respondent due to his role as the leader of the institution. Supporting informants included deputy heads, Arabic and English teachers, students actively involved in the language program, and homeroom teachers or BK teachers directly involved in LIPS activities.

Data collection was conducted through three methods: participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observation was used to directly observe the institution's activities and leadership patterns. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore the views of informants, and documentation was used to collect written data, including work programs, activity reports, and curricula. The collected data were analyzed through three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. Data reduction was carried out to filter and select important data, and then the data was presented thematically and narratively so that the patterns that emerged were easier to

analyze. Conclusions were drawn after the results were compared from various sources and data collection methods (triangulation) to ensure the accuracy of the findings.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Strengthening the Vision and Organizational Culture

Strengthening the vision and organizational culture in the context of this study is interpreted as the head of the institution's efforts to instill the direction of the institution's goals (vision) and the values that form the basis of work behavior (organizational culture) to all members of LIPS (Institute for Innovation and Development of Santri). In the field, this strengthening is achieved through the repeated delivery of the institution's vision, instilling work values such as discipline, collaboration, and innovation, and efforts to make the vision and values the primary reference in policy-making and implementing work programs.

To strengthen the findings above, the following are the results of interviews and observations conducted in the field related to efforts to strengthen the vision and organizational culture at LIPS, as listed in the Table 1:

Table 1. Strengthening the Vision and Organizational Culture

Observed Aspects	Observation Findings	Sources
Vision delivery in official activities	The head of the institution explicitly conveys the vision and goals of the organization in coordination meetings and program openings.	Minutes of meetings, video documentation of LIPS annual activities
Internalization of organizational cultural values	There is internal training that instills the values of responsibility, cooperation, and discipline for new members.	New member training modules, organizational orientation leaflets
Alignment of work programs with organizational vision	Each division prepares a program that refers to the direction of the institution's vision, with success indicators that are in accordance with the organization's main mission.	Division annual work plans, program evaluation results
Leadership in building organizational culture	The head of the institution is present on time, is open, and sets an example in completing tasks and giving appreciation to member performance.	Meeting observation results, member testimonials, documentation of field activities

Two key informants expressed similar sentiments. Informant 1 stated, "The Head of LIPS always includes the institution's vision when giving directions, even in informal activities such as weekly discussions, so that we all

understand where we are headed.” Informant 2 added, “His most noticeable habit is consistency; whatever the activity is, it is always associated with innovative and disciplined values.” The researcher interpreted this strategy as a form of cultural reinforcement through symbolic communication and personal example. The head of the institution not only conveys the vision as a formal text but also brings it to life through daily communication and real behavior that members can imitate. The results of the observation showed that in almost every activity, both formal, such as work meetings, and informal, such as weekly mentoring, the head of the institution consistently conveys vision reinforcement and links the program to the institution’s values. For example, when opening an internal training forum, the head of LIPS not only explains the purpose of the activity but also connects it to the institution’s overall direction. In addition, vision and mission posters are displayed in the workroom, and slogans are used that are repeated as a shared reminder. Researchers interpret this as a form of visual and verbal strategy for building a cohesive and directed organizational culture.

In general, the data from this study indicate that strengthening the vision and culture of the organization is not only achieved through official documents or formal greetings but also consistent communication, behavioral examples, and visual symbolism. The head of the institution utilizes various spaces and moments to convey messages that reinforce the institution’s direction so that these values are gradually internalized into the daily lives of its members. This demonstrates that strengthening culture and vision is not an instantaneous process but rather a gradual process of habituation that is built through repetition and exemplary behavior.

From the data patterns that emerge, there is consistency between the leadership style of the LIPS head and the strategy of strengthening organizational culture. The head of the institution acts as the primary communicator of the vision, a role model for organizational values, and a guardian of the institution’s strategic direction. The pattern that is formed indicates that the intensity of vision communication significantly influences the success of strengthening organizational culture, the consistency of the leader’s actions, and the presence of concrete organizational symbols. This strategy has proven effective in creating harmony in the direction of work within LIPS.

Human Resource Development and Competency Improvement

Human resource development (HRD) and competency improvement, in the context of this research, refer to the systematic efforts made by the head of the LIPS institution to enhance the capacity, skills, and professionalism of the institution’s management and members through training, mentoring, strategic

assignments, or performance evaluations. The primary objective of this strategy is to create a productive and adaptable work environment that meets the demands of organizational quality. In the field, HRD development targets not only technical aspects but also encompasses ethics, leadership, and loyalty to the institution's vision.



Figure 1. Human Resource Development and Competency Improvement

The results of an interview with Informant 1, one of the core administrators of LIPS, indicated that the institution's head routinely holds performance reflection sessions at the end of each month and incorporates capacity-building sessions, such as public speaking, proposal writing, and time management. Informant 2 added that the head of the institution provides space for cadre formation by involving new members in real projects, not only as a complement but as the leading actor whom seniors directly guide. The researcher interpreted that this strategy exhibits a leadership pattern that is not only instructive but also transformative, where the leader actively shapes the character and competence of its members through direct experience.

Based on observations conducted over three months, it is evident that most LIPS activities incorporate learning elements. For example, when implementing the literacy program, the institution's head often provides direct feedback on the performance of field members, both personally and openly. The researcher also noted the habit of a "weekly evaluation forum," which serves as a collective learning space among members. Based on this interpretation, competency development is structured yet flexible, as it adjusts to real-time needs in the field while continuing to evaluate progress.

Restatement of the research data shows that the head of the LIPS institution implements a human resource development strategy with an active and participation-based coaching approach. This strategy not only enhances the technical skills of members but also fosters a culture of continuous learning within the organization. The head of the institution positions himself not only as an administrative leader but also as a facilitator of member growth and development. From the description above, the pattern of human resource development in LIPS leadership is collaborative, reflective, and oriented towards continuous quality improvement. This pattern reflects a leadership style that is responsive to the organization's needs and is based on the principle of member empowerment. This also explains why the quality of the LIPS organization can continue to improve, as each member is viewed as an asset that must grow and develop through a collaborative learning process.

Improvement of Work System and Monitoring Evaluation

Improvement of the work system and monitoring evaluation in the context of LIPS leadership is defined as the head of the institution's efforts to organize the organization's workflow in a more structured and systematic manner, as well as to establish a mechanism for periodic evaluation of the program and management performance. This includes the preparation of standard operating procedures (SOP), work schedules, clear division of tasks, and the implementation of continuous program evaluation and reflection. The goal is to ensure that all organizational activities align with the established vision, targets, and success indicators.

The results of the interview with Informant 1 (LIPS secretary) revealed that the head of the institution began to implement a weekly work schedule and periodic reporting system for each division. According to him, "We used to work sporadically; now there is a clear schedule and division of tasks." Meanwhile, Informant 2 (media division coordinator) stated that the bi-monthly evaluation meeting helped his team correct previous program errors. The researcher interpreted that this strategy shows a change from a reactive to a proactive work pattern, where the leader acts as a director and controller of the organizational process on an ongoing basis.

From the observation results, it can be seen that in internal meetings, the head of the institution actively leads the discussion of the division's performance report and asks each administrator to provide updates on their work progress. The researcher also noted that SOP documents, work schedules, and evaluation report templates were distributed to all administrators. This indicates that the head of the institution not only regulates from above but also provides managerial tools, making the work system more measurable and allowing it to

be monitored objectively. In practice, this mechanism encourages internal transparency and accountability.

It can be concluded that the head of the institution actively develops a more orderly and systematic work system, utilizing a monitoring and evaluation-based approach. This change has an impact on increasing work order, fair division of tasks, and more reflective program evaluation. In this case, the role of leadership extends beyond being a decision-maker to also serving as a facilitator of a work structure that supports organizational quality.

The pattern that appears from the data above shows that the effectiveness of the work system improvement strategy and monitoring and evaluation lies in the combination of measurable planning, consistent implementation, and participatory evaluation. The leadership style of the LIPS head is oriented towards the system rather than just personal direction. With a more established system, organizational performance improves because each member works based on clear roles and responsibilities and receives regular feedback for continuous improvement.

Discussion

The results of the study indicate that the head of LIPS implemented a strategy to improve the work system through the preparation of SOPs, scheduling activities, clear division of tasks, and the implementation of periodic evaluations of the program. This finding is in line with the opinion of (Alamsyah, Kusuma, & Ramadhani, 2024; Amiri, Heidari, Navimipour, & Unal, 2023) which states that a structured work system allows organizations to run more effectively and efficiently. In addition, the concept of "management by objectives" introduced by (e Cunha, Parreira, Giustiniano, & Rego, 2025) is also relevant here, where organizational success is determined by clarity of purpose and measurable evaluation processes. In the context of LIPS, a more systematic work system helps members understand the direction of the organization while reducing chaos in program implementation.

When compared to studies (e Cunha et al., 2025; Hefniy, Diana, & Imam, 2025; Zhu, Zahar, & Shaharruddin, 2025) On the effectiveness of leadership in non-formal educational institutions, it was found that institutions that ignore the monitoring system tend to stagnate and experience unmeasured work overload. On the contrary, the findings in this study indicate that the head of LIPS has successfully created a participatory evaluation system that has a positive impact on improving the organization's quality. This suggests consistency with the literature, indicating that monitoring serves not only as a control tool but also as a means of capacity development. However, the difference is that LIPS applies evaluation on a micro-scale, based on personal and team reflection, rather than

using formal indicator devices such as ISO standards.

The implications of this finding are significant. Improvements in the work system have a positive impact on enhancing performance, inter-divisional communication, and overall organizational productivity. The effectiveness of this strategy is evident in the increasingly clear work structure and smoother coordination flow. However, if the system is not consistently maintained, it has the potential to become dysfunctional, reverting to a spontaneous work pattern without proper evaluation. Therefore, the sustainability of the strategy is highly dependent on the leadership's awareness and the active participation of all institution members.

From a structural perspective, the implementation of this work and evaluation system was born from the organization's need to improve previously unorganized work patterns. Lack of direction, weak communication, and overlapping roles are the causes of the need for a new, more adaptive system. The head of LIPS read this need and responded to it with a leadership style that prioritizes systems and participation. This supports the transformational theory of (Campisi et al., 2022; Zhu et al., 2025), which states that Thus, the strategy of improving the work system and monitoring and evaluation implemented by the head of LIPS has proven to be an important foundation in building an adaptive and quality organization. This approach emphasizes that the quality of an organization is not only determined by individuals, but by collective and reflective work mechanisms. Therefore, similar institutions can learn from this practice to reorganize their work systems as an effort to continuously improve institutional quality and professionalism.

CONCLUSION

This study found that the leadership strategy of the LIPS head in improving organizational quality is highly dependent on the ability to build a structured work system and the implementation of continuous monitoring and evaluation. The primary insight from this finding is that organizational quality is not solely determined by individual enthusiasm but rather by a well-organized work system, clear task division, and reflective and participatory evaluation mechanisms. Leaders who can create a working system based on structure and accountability will encourage the organization to become more professional, productive, and adaptable to change.

Scientifically, this study makes an important contribution to enriching the perspective on organizational leadership based on values and systems. Not only focusing on leadership figures but also highlighting how the head of the institution builds a working mechanism and evaluative culture as a strategy to improve quality. The qualitative method used successfully explores the internal

dynamics of the organization in depth, opening up space to examine variables that are often overlooked in conventional leadership studies, such as the role of informal evaluation, collective reflection, and micro-governance. However, this study has several limitations. This study was conducted on a single case organization (LIPS) within the local scope, with limited representation of informants in terms of gender, age, and structural role. Additionally, the qualitative approach has been unable to capture general trends in a quantitative manner. Therefore, further research is needed, employing a mixed-methods approach, as well as a broader scope in terms of location, age, and gender background. The goal is to obtain a more comprehensive and representative picture that can serve as a basis for formulating more appropriate and far-reaching institutional policies.

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