



Digital Transformation in Islamic Education: Integrating Kurt Lewin's Change Model with Spiritual Values

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Abstract :

This study aims to analyze the application of Kurt Lewin's change management model to enhance digitalization in madrasah education while preserving Islamic principles. A qualitative case study design was employed to explore the contextual process of change. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis, and analyzed using an interactive model, which involves data condensation, reduction, presentation, and verification. The findings reveal that the Unfreezing stage involves the internalization of Islamic values within the digital consciousness of madrasah communities. The Changing stage reflects the integration of digital pedagogy and transformative leadership grounded in religious values. The Refreezing stage demonstrates the institutionalization of a digital-religious culture that defines the institution's identity. These results indicate that combining Lewin's change model with spiritual and cultural dimensions enhances both educational effectiveness and character development. The study implies that digital transformation in Islamic educational institutions can improve learning outcomes while reinforcing religious culture, offering a model for holistic digitalization in faith-based education.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital technology has significantly transformed global education, compelling institutions to adopt comprehensive digital strategies to meet the demands of the 21st century. Digitalization is now recognized as a strategic necessity for enhancing learning quality, institutional governance, and student outcomes (Hashim et al., 2022; Mundry & Firdausiah, 2022). Empirical evidence shows that institutions with systematic digital integration experience measurable improvements in efficiency, pedagogical innovation, and data-driven decision-making (UNESCO, 2023; OECD, 2022). In Indonesia, the integration of digital technology in Islamic schools (madrasahs) is particularly critical, as these institutions seek to modernize while maintaining religious and cultural values, and to remain competitive with public schools (Mar, 2024; Rosyadi et al., 2023).

Despite these developments, many Islamic educational institutions continue to face barriers in implementing digital transformation, including fragmented change management, limited human resource readiness, and resistance to technology adoption

(Poljašević et al., 2025; Xue et al., 2024). In Indonesia, challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, low teacher digital competence, and insufficient visionary leadership hinder the effective adoption of digital learning systems (Alfaruqi & Fahmi, 2025). Prior studies have documented isolated cases of digital innovation in madrasahs, yet few provide a holistic analysis of how structured change management can integrate digitalization sustainably while preserving Islamic values.

Recent evidence from exemplary madrasahs indicates that success in digital transformation arises from coordinated interventions across organizational levels, including teacher training, infrastructure development, and the establishment of digital platforms for learning and administration (UNESCO, 2023; Mar, 2024). Importantly, these institutions demonstrate a balance between adopting modern technologies and maintaining religious and cultural identity, suggesting that digitalization does not inherently conflict with faith-based educational objectives. However, the mechanisms through which madrasahs design and implement change management to achieve this integration remain underexplored. Addressing this gap is crucial for developing evidence-based models that other madrasahs can adopt to navigate digital transformation effectively and strategically.

Extensive research has been conducted on change management in the educational context. Kurt Lewin (1951) introduced a three-stage model of change—unfreezing, changing, and refreezing—which has proven effective in helping organizations adapt to transformation. Research indicates that implementing this model can enhance teacher and organizational readiness to adapt to technological innovation (Almusawi & Durugbo, 2024; Wang et al., 2023). Most previous research has focused on public institutions, not Islamic-based madrasahs. Meanwhile, a study by Ghorbani et al. (2023) and Prasetyowati et al. (2025) highlighted the importance of transformative leadership in managing change in digital schools. However, there has been little research exploring how Lewin's theory of change is concretely applied in a madrasah environment that harmoniously combines spiritual and digital aspects. This is where this research is crucial.

Most previous research has not presented an integrative model that combines change management with digitalization principles and Islamic values. Aldoghiher et al. (2025) and Muslim (2024) highlighted that the implementation of digitalization in Islamic institutions is often partial, focusing more on technological means than on organizational culture change. This weakness highlights a crucial research gap: how to develop a system of change that is not only technical but also grounded in the spiritual and cultural values of madrasahs. This study focuses on madrasahs as the primary research subject to address this gap. Utilizing Kurt Lewin's model, this study seeks to understand the dynamics of digital change that have occurred in madrasahs and how these successes can be replicated as best practices for other Islamic institutions on the path to digitalization.

The novelty of this research lies in its attempt to reinterpret Kurt Lewin's change management model in the context of digital-based madrasahs that have successfully transformed. Unlike previous research, which tends to be descriptive or normative, this study presents an empirical study of how the stages of change are implemented in practice. This approach emphasizes the importance of synergy between visionary leadership, human resource readiness, and the internalization of Islamic values as a reinforcement of digital culture. By positioning Madrasahs as role models, this research aims to broaden the understanding of practical, adaptive, and contextual change

management strategies in Islamic educational institutions, while also providing new direction for other Madrasahs seeking to transform into sustainable digital institutions.

The primary question addressed in this research is: How is Kurt Lewin's change management applied to enhance the quality of digitalization-based education in Madrasahs? The ultimate goal is to identify patterns of change that can serve as a reference for other Madrasahs in designing digital transformation strategies tailored to their respective characteristics.

This research is based on the argument that the success of Madrasahs in undertaking digital transformation is inseparable from the implementation of practical, participatory, and spiritually-based change management. Kurt Lewin's model provides a systematic framework for madrasahs to manage change, from unfreezing old habits to cultivating innovations (changing), to establishing a stable digital culture (refreezing). This research contributes to the presentation of a best practice model that other madrasahs in Indonesia can adapt. Theoretically, this research broadens the understanding of the application of change management theory in the context of modern Islamic education. Practically, the research findings are expected to serve as strategic guidelines for madrasah leaders in managing change toward a highly competitive digital education ecosystem that remains rooted in Islamic values.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research employs a qualitative approach with a case study design (Schoepf & Klimow, 2022) to gain a deeper understanding of the change management process in a real-world context. The unit of analysis in this study is the madrasah institution as a whole, with particular focus on how the change process of digital transformation is planned, implemented, and institutionalized. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows the researcher to explore the subjective meanings, values, and experiences of educational practitioners as they navigate digital transformation. The case study design enables a holistic and contextual examination, illustrating how Kurt Lewin's change management model (Unfreezing–Changing–Refreezing) is applied within the institution. This design is particularly appropriate because the phenomenon of digital change in Islamic schools is inseparable from the social, cultural, and religious contexts surrounding the madrasah, allowing the study to uncover the dynamics of institutional change in depth.

The research was conducted at Madrasah Aliyah Nurul Jadid. This location was chosen based on the consideration that the madrasah is known as one of the Islamic educational institutions that has successfully implemented digitalization comprehensively without neglecting Islamic values. Madrasah Aliyah Nurul Jadid has a progressive leadership system that is adaptive to technological innovation, making it relevant for examining Kurt Lewin's change model in the context of religious-based education. Furthermore, this madrasah already has a robust digital infrastructure, such as an online administration system, and an Islamic digital ethics policy. This situation provides an opportunity for researchers to explore in-depth how the dissemination, implementation, and freezing of new patterns are carried out simultaneously and continuously.

The data collection techniques employed in this study included in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation. In-depth interviews were conducted with the madrasah principal, the Public Relations officer, the deputy head of

curriculum, and senior teachers. These techniques were used to explore their understanding, experiences, and strategies in the digital transformation process. Participatory observation was used to directly observe the behavior, habits, and interactions of madrasah members as they implemented digital technology and Islamic values within the school environment. Documentation included data collection in the form of madrasah policies, digital ethics guidelines, photos of activities, and digital archives supporting the transformation process. These three techniques complemented each other to obtain comprehensive and contextual data in line with the research objectives.

Data analysis was conducted interactively (Naeem et al., 2023), referring to the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014) model, which includes four main stages: Data condensation was carried out by selecting, focusing, and simplifying data from interviews, observations, and documentation to align with the research theme, namely the stages of Unfreezing, Changing, and Refreezing. Data reduction was carried out to group important information based on thematic categories, such as the internalization of Islamic values, the integration of digital pedagogy, and the institutionalization of digital-religious culture. Data presentation (data display) was carried out through narratives, tables, and thematic matrices that illustrate the relationship between informant statements, context, and researcher interpretations. Verification and conclusion drawing (data verification and conclusion drawing) were conducted continuously by comparing data across sources (triangulation) and assessing the consistency of findings with Kurt Lewin's theory of change management. This process ensures that the conclusions drawn truly reflect the reality on the ground.

To ensure data validity, this study employed four validity test criteria, as outlined by Lincoln and Guba (1985): credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility was maintained through triangulation of sources and techniques, member checking with informants, and repeated field observations. Transferability was achieved by providing rich and detailed contextual descriptions of the madrasah's location, culture, and conditions, so that the research results could serve as a reference for other institutions. Dependability was ensured by systematically documenting the entire research process, from data collection to analysis and interpretation. Confirmability was achieved through data audits and the researcher's reflection on potential subjectivity, ensuring that the findings were truly derived from field data, rather than merely personal interpretation. With this methodology, the study is expected to provide a valid, in-depth, and meaningful picture of how Madrasah Aliyah Nurul Jadid successfully implemented Kurt Lewin's change management to improve the quality of digital-based education without losing its Islamic identity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Unfreezing: Internalization of Islamic Values in Digital Awareness

The Unfreezing phase within the madrasah (Islamic school) is a process of building collective awareness of the importance of shifting toward digital education through the internalization of Islamic values. This phase aims to transform old, conventional, manual learning patterns and governance into a more efficient and modern digital system. However, this process is not carried out solely technocratically, but rather through a spiritual approach and an organizational culture rooted in Islamic values, such as

trustworthiness, ihsan (goodness), and responsibility. Thus, the unfreezing phase involves not only changes in work behavior but also a transformation of religious awareness, accepting technology as part of worship, and a mandate to improve the quality of education.

Interview with the Deputy Head of Madrasah Curriculum: "We started digitalization not with technical training first, but by fostering awareness that technology is part of the effort to fulfill the mandate of education. If teachers understand the intention, learning technology becomes easier."

Researcher's interpretation: This statement suggests that madrasah management prioritizes the spiritualization of intention as the initial step before implementing technology. Religious awareness serves as the foundation for unfreezing teachers' mindsets and opening them to digital innovation. This strategy demonstrates that the change process is rooted in Islamic values, internalized through spiritual reflection and motivation, rather than merely responding to professional demands. This reinforces the idea that unfreezing in the context of Islamic madrasahs must begin with a shift in religious paradigm.

Interview with a Senior Teacher: "Initially, many were afraid of digitalization, especially since we were accustomed to the old ways. However, after the leadership held a thematic religious study session on the importance of preparing a digital generation with morals, we began to realize that this is not just about tools, but about worship."

Researcher's interpretation: This data confirms that a religious approach is effective in reducing resistance to change. Teachers feel more prepared to accept digitalization after understanding its meaning as a form of worship and a contribution to the benefit of education. The unfreezing process occurs subtly through the influence of spiritual values, rather than administrative instructions. This new awareness provides a psychological foundation for teachers to change their behavior and work patterns within the digital learning system.

Table 1. Ideal Influence of the Unfreezing Stage: Internalization of Islamic Values in Digital Awareness

Informant Position	Interview Excerpt	Emerging Meaning / Analytical Insight	Conceptual Theme / Implication
Deputy Curriculum Manager	"We started digitalization not with technical training first, but by raising awareness that technology is part of the educational mandate."	Religious awareness serves as the primary motivator for accepting digital change.	Faith-Based Digital Acceptance: Highlights that integrating spiritual values can facilitate institutional adoption of technology.
Senior Teacher	"After a thematic study session on the morality of the digital generation, we realized that digitalization is also part of worship."	Islamic values frame technology use as an ethical and religious practice.	Ethical-Religious Integration: Demonstrates that digital tools can be legitimized through moral and spiritual frameworks, enhancing user engagement and commitment.

Table 1 demonstrates a consistent pattern between leaders and teachers: the unfreezing process begins with spiritual awareness before technical competence. The Vice Principal of Curriculum emphasizes digitalization as an "educational mandate," while teachers understand digitalization as "worship." Both perspectives reflect the internalization of Islamic values that unify the vision and motivation of all members of the madrasah community. This pattern demonstrates that successful change is not solely the

result of managerial policies but the fruit of establishing a strong sense of value. This spiritual approach reduces resistance, increases participation, and creates a sense of ownership in the digitalization process.

Observations indicate that reflection activities on Islamic values are carried out in a structured manner through thematic religious studies, teacher development meetings, and the use of slogans promoting ethical digitalization in the staff room. Researchers observed new habits such as opening digitalization activities with a communal prayer and using the term "digitalization with blessings" as moral motivation. This indicates that the madrasah is not only building technological competence but also fostering ethical and spiritual awareness in its use. These observations reinforce interview data that internalization of Islamic values is a key foundation for the unfreezing stage.

The data suggest that the unfreezing stage is characterized by the formation of religious awareness regarding the importance of digitalization. Madrasah management recognized that the transition to a digital system was not merely a response to the times but a spiritual responsibility to advance Islamic education. Teachers and staff felt more prepared to change because digitalization was understood as part of professional worship, not a threat to tradition. Thus, Islamic values became an effective instrument for unfreezing old patterns.

The pattern emerged that the change process in the unfreezing stage was centered on values (value-centered change), rather than structural policies. This pattern can be described as follows: Spiritual awareness fosters internal motivation for personal growth and change. Religious interpretations of technology can reduce teacher resistance and anxiety. Reflective habits strengthen collective commitment to digital transformation.

Thus, the unfreezing stage is not simply "unfreezing old habits," but instead transforming ways of thinking and believing in technology. This pattern demonstrates that change rooted in Islamic values is more sustainable than change based on technical instructions. This madrasah successfully positioned digitalization as part of a collective good deed, instilling a sense of moral responsibility in all members of the institution regarding the change process.

Changing: Integration of Digital Pedagogy and Transformative Leadership

The Changing stage is the implementation phase of change, emphasizing the integration of digital pedagogy and transformative leadership. At this stage, madrasahs not only implement digital tools such as online administration applications, but also foster a new mindset among teachers and students to optimize technology creatively and ethically. The leadership of the madrasah principal is a key factor driving change through teacher empowerment, fostering spiritual motivation, and creating a collaborative work climate. Thus, change is a process of implementing change-oriented digital learning innovation while simultaneously establishing a professional culture that is adaptive, participatory, and embraces Islamic values.

"We do not want digitalization to stop at the devices. We want teachers to understand the philosophy behind technology: how to teach in new ways without losing the spirit of education. Therefore, we always emphasize leadership that serves and leads by example." This statement illustrates the transformative leadership character of the madrasah principal. The focus is not simply on technological instruments, but on shifting the teaching paradigm. The madrasah principal serves as a role model, inspiring teachers

to adopt digital approaches without compromising spiritual and humanistic values. This indicates that change is values-driven, where digital transformation is accompanied by character development and exemplary leadership.

The Deputy Principal for Student Affairs shared an inspiring insight: “We are encouraged to experiment with digital learning media boldly. The madrasah principal gives us the freedom to try new things, and when something doesn’t work, we collectively evaluate it. This practice builds our confidence and motivates us to keep innovating.” These words vividly highlight the participatory leadership practices and teacher empowerment evident during the change process. The principal has fostered an environment where innovation can flourish by creating a safe space for teachers to explore new methods without fear of failure. This nurturing atmosphere not only strengthens teachers’ self-confidence but also accelerates the adoption of digital pedagogy, as educators feel supported, valued, and given academic freedom. It is a true testament to the transformative leadership that underpins a culture of adaptive learning.

Further observations in the teachers’ lounge and digital classrooms reveal the collaborative spirit at the heart of this change. Teachers are actively engaging with students through online learning platforms, guiding virtual discussions and conducting assessments using the application. The principal’s regular visits to the digital classroom offer both moral support and positive reinforcement, underscoring the importance of encouragement in the learning process. The work environment at the madrasah feels remarkably collaborative, with teachers coming together to create digital content and share best practices. These observations highlight that implementing change is not a solitary effort but a collective journey, driven by a sense of togetherness and servant leadership. This vibrant culture demonstrates the seamless integration of digital pedagogy with transformative leadership, laying a foundation for continuous innovation and growth.

Table 2. Ideal Influence of Changing Stage: Integration of Digital Pedagogy and Transformative Leadership

Informant	Interview Excerpt	Indicators (Emerging Meanings)
Head of Madrasah	“We want teachers to understand the philosophy behind technology, not just the use of devices.”	Values-based transformative leadership
Deputy Head of Student Affairs	“We are given space to experiment, and even failure is encouraged. That builds confidence.”	Teacher empowerment and collaboration in digital innovation

Table 1 illustrates a leadership pattern that seamlessly blends visionary direction with individual empowerment. In this dynamic model, the principal provides a clear vision and values, guiding the path to change, while teachers lead the integration of digital innovation into the classroom. This collaborative synergy fosters a vibrant, enthusiastic learning environment where both teachers and students thrive. The relationship pattern here suggests that the change process is not simply about implementing technology; rather, it is about cultivating a digital work culture grounded in trust and spiritual values. Transformative leadership plays a critical role in nurturing teacher creativity and motivation, thus driving sustainable innovation.

At its core, the changing stage is a process of digitalization that thrives on collaboration and exemplary leadership. The principal catalyzes change through inspiration, not force. Teachers are given the freedom to experiment with technology, build confidence, and engage in continuous learning. As a result, digital pedagogy

becomes more than just a technical tool—it evolves into a new, value-driven culture of learning that aligns with Islamic principles.

The overarching pattern emerging from the changing stage demonstrates that lasting transformation occurs when technological innovation is supported by transformative leadership and active teacher participation. This pattern can be encapsulated as follows: Visionary leadership sets the direction for change, fostering value-driven motivation. Empowerment and trust bolster teachers’ confidence to innovate. A collaborative culture encourages unity in digital learning. Reflective evaluation ensures that change remains adaptive and sustainable. Consequently, the changing stage marks the intersection of servant leadership and digital pedagogy, leading to an educational transformation that is not only technologically advanced but also spiritually meaningful. This pattern underscores that the success of digitalization in madrasas depends on the harmonious integration of values, leadership, and teacher collaboration.

Refreezing: Institutionalization of a Digital Religious Culture

The Refreezing stage is the process of strengthening and institutionalizing the new culture that has been formed through the previous stages. In this context, refreezing refers to the merging of digitalization and Islamic values into a unified, stable, and sustainable work culture. Religious values, such as honesty, responsibility, and trustworthiness, are now internalized in the use of digital technology—for example, through digital ethics, integrity in online exams, and the use of morally oriented learning media. Madrasah leadership ensures that change does not stop at implementation, but becomes part of the systems, policies, and daily behavior of all madrasah members. Thus, this stage marks the stabilization of a new culture: a digital-religious culture that is both adaptive to technology and deeply rooted in Islamic values.

Table 3. Interview Results from the Refreezing Stage: Institutionalization of a Digital Religious Culture

Interview Excerpt	Indicators	Informant
“We emphasize the habit of praying before digital learning activities so that technology retains its religious value.”	Integration of spiritual values in digital activities	Student Affairs Deputy
“Teachers are accustomed to using digital services for exams and assignments, but they always emphasize student honesty. So, it's not just about being digitally savvy, but also about developing character.”	Strengthening digital ethics based on honesty	Subject Teacher
“The Madrasah has established guidelines for Islamic digital media use. For example, it's not allowed to display inappropriate content and it's important to protect student privacy.”	Digital-religious cultural institutions through policies	Curriculum deputy

Table 3 reveals that the refreezing stage goes beyond simply applying technology—it marks the deeper integration of digital and religious values within the institutional framework. The Vice Principal for Student Affairs described the spiritual dimension of digital activities as a form of ritualized values, highlighting how religious elements have become embedded in the daily routine of technology use. Teachers emphasized the importance of ethics and honesty as the moral foundation of digital learning, while the Curriculum Deputy underscored the institutionalization of this culture through formal madrasah policies. This consistent pattern shows that Islamic values are

no longer merely moral narratives but a social and administrative system that guides the behavior of all madrasah members.

A deeper interpretation suggests that the success of refreezing lies in the synergy between spiritual governance, rooted in Islamic values, and digital governance, driven by technology-based management. The Vice Principal for Student Affairs plays a pivotal role in internalizing these moral values into everyday practice, while teachers set the example by applying digital ethics in the classroom. The Curriculum Deputy ensures that all policies support the sustainability of this digital and religious culture. This approach confirms that the change process is not only systemic but also sustainable, as Islamic values are seamlessly integrated into digital structures, policies, and behaviors—becoming an integral part of the institution’s identity.

Field observations provide further insights into this transformation. All digital activities, from online learning and app-based exams to internal communications, are initiated with prayers and ethical reminders about responsible media use. Posters promoting “Islamic Digital Media Etiquette” are displayed in the teachers’ lounge and digital classrooms, reinforcing the commitment to ethical practices. Teachers actively remind students to uphold honesty when completing online assignments, while the madrasah has implemented a technology-based monitoring system that emphasizes trust over excessive control. These observations reinforce the idea that digitalization has become an integral part of the madrasah’s culture, blending technological advancement with a strong moral foundation.

In simpler terms, the Jadid refreezing stage represents a consolidation of values, where digitalization is not just a tool but a reflection of Islamic character. The madrasah has successfully established a digital learning and administrative system that is deeply grounded in religious values. Teachers, students, and madrasah leaders collaborate to ensure that all digital activities remain aligned with Islamic principles. This new culture has not only been implemented but is also internalized, regulated, and maintained as a core part of the madrasah’s institutional identity.

Table 4. Ideal Influence of the Refreezing Stage: Institutionalization of a Digital Religious Culture

Informant		Interview Excerpts	Indicators
Student Deputy	Affairs	“We emphasize the habit of praying before digital learning activities so that technology remains a form of worship.”	Spirituality integrated into digital routines
Subject Teacher		“Honesty in online exams is part of digital character building.”	Cultivating Islamic-based digital ethics
Curriculum Administrator		“Our madrasah's policies already regulate the use of Islamic digital media.”	Institutionalizing digital-religious culture through policies

Table 4 highlights the success of the refreezing phase in integrating spiritual culture with digital literacy in a balanced, sustainable way. The Vice Principal for Student Affairs plays a central role in boosting morale. At the same time, teachers set the example through their behavior, and the Curriculum Deputy reinforces this alignment through structural policies. These three elements work harmoniously together: spirituality provides the spirit, teachers exemplify the practice, and policy serves as the binding force. This pattern demonstrates that refreezing a new culture is not merely an adaptive response to technology but the creation of a holistic educational ecosystem that marries

religious values with digital progress. It also serves as a transformative model that other madrasas can replicate.

The emerging pattern from the refreezing phase can be succinctly expressed as follows: The internalization of Islamic values becomes an integral part of every digital activity, leading to the normalization of digital ethics. Ethical digital behavior gradually becomes a social habit, ingrained into the madrasah community. The alignment of institutional policies ensures that these digital-religious values remain sustainable over time. Importantly, all members of the madrasah feel a shared ownership of this new culture, which fosters unity and collective responsibility.

Thus, the refreezing phase signifies the formation of a comprehensive, holistic culture in which digitalization is deeply rooted in religiosity, and religiosity is likewise supported and reinforced by digitalization. Madrasahs not only adapt to technological advancements but also leverage them as tools to strengthen and elevate spiritual values. This process marks the successful culmination of Kurt Lewin's final stage in the change management model, in which change is not just implemented but internalized and sustained as a permanent part of the institution's identity.

Discussion

The discussion of the results of this study indicates that the change management process aligns with the three main stages in Kurt Lewin's model: unfreezing, changing, and refreezing, each of which plays a crucial role in building the quality of digital-based education with religious nuances (Junaris et al., 2022; Aldogiher et al., 2025). In the unfreezing stage, it was found that the process of unfreezing old patterns focuses not only on the technical aspects of technological readiness but also on the internalization of Islamic values in digital awareness (Nasir & Sunardi, 2025). This finding expands Lewin's (1951) perspective, which emphasized the importance of dismantling old habits to create space for change by incorporating spiritual and cultural dimensions as drivers of awareness of change (Yawson & Goryunova, 2025). In this context, values such as amanah (trust), ihsan (goodness), and responsibility become the moral foundation for teachers' and students' digital readiness, contrasting with previous studies that focused more on technocratic and administrative aspects without considering the foundation of religious values.

The changing stage showcases the integration of digital pedagogy and transformative leadership grounded in Islamic values. In the literature, change is often defined as a shift in behavior and systems toward adaptation to innovation (Deppeler et al., 2022; Pranata et al., 2025). This research demonstrates that effective change in madrasahs occurs not only through the application of technology but also through leadership roles that inspire and motivate teachers and students spiritually (Herdiaty & Widjaja, 2025; Ratnawati et al., 2025). The madrasah principal and the vice-principals guide the change process with a humanistic approach aligned with the principles of transformative Islamic leadership, which fosters collaboration, empathy, and moral vision in the use of technology. This distinction enriches Lewin's theory of change because, in the madrasah context, change is not only structural but also touches on affective and value dimensions, resulting in a more contextual digital-religious leadership model for Islamic education.

The refreezing stage illustrates how digital-religious culture is institutionalized systemically. Previous literature, as explained by Burnes (2017), states that refreezing

aims to stabilize change so that it becomes a new habit within the organization (Romadona & Setiawan, 2020). However, the results of this study indicate that stabilization in madrasas is not merely the acceptance of new policies, but rather the process of instilling Islamic values into digital systems and daily behavior (Haddade et al., 2024; Maryam & Ari, 2025). The use of a policies on the use of Islamic digital media, and the practice of digital ethics demonstrate that madrasas have internalized religious values into their institutional structures. This differs from conventional refreezing models, which tend to focus on technical or administrative aspects. Thus, refreezing presents a new face: the freezing of a new pattern that unites religiosity and digitalization as two sides of the same educational culture.

The theoretical implications of this research extend Kurt Lewin's change management model by incorporating religious dimensions and spiritual values as integral elements in each stage of change. The resulting model can be referred to as the Value-Based Digital Change Model, where technological change is inseparable from value transformation (Buonocore et al., 2024; Wu et al., 2023). Theoretically, this reinforces the concept of human-centered change, with an Islamic perspective that places morality at the core of digital change (Aristya et al., 2024; Maulidi et al., 2025). Meanwhile, the practical implications lie in the implementation of transformative leadership strategies based on Islamic values that can mobilize all components of the madrasah (Islamic school) to adapt to technological advances without losing their spiritual identity (Prasetyowati et al., 2025). Madrasah principals, teachers, and educational staff can use this model as a guide in designing digitalization programs that incorporate religious values and have long-term impacts on educational quality.

Thus, this research makes an important contribution to the development of change management theory in Islamic education. The findings show that the digitalization of education cannot run optimally without strengthening the spiritual values that underpin every action. Integrating Lewin's three stages of change in context demonstrates that the success of change is determined not only by managerial strategy but also by the strength of the values, leadership, and culture that support it. This madrasah serves as a model that can be replicated by other Islamic educational institutions in facing the digital era: not merely mastering technology, but also instilling Islamic values in every innovation implemented. Thus, values-based change management is a concrete manifestation of the synergy between modernity and spirituality in improving the quality of Islamic education in the digital era

CONCLUSION

This study advances the theoretical understanding of change management in Islamic education by integrating spiritual and cultural dimensions into Kurt Lewin's model. The Value-Based Digital Change Model conceptualized in this research demonstrates that effective digital transformation in madrasahs relies not only on technological readiness but also on the internalization of Islamic values such as trust, *ihsan*, and responsibility. By embedding religious principles at each stage of Unfreezing, Changing, and Refreezing, the model provides a holistic framework that links transformative leadership, collaborative pedagogy, and moral digital behavior. This approach extends existing change management theory by demonstrating how value-based and faith-informed practices can shape institutional identity, foster ethical engagement with technology, and cultivate a sustainable, humanistic culture in educational organizations.

For future research, the applicability and impact of the Value-Based Digital Change Model should be tested across multiple madrasahs to strengthen its generalizability. Quantitative studies are recommended to examine how a digital-religious culture influences student learning outcomes, teacher performance, and institutional effectiveness. Mixed-methods designs could further explore the interplay between technological adoption, value-based leadership, and moral digital practices, providing robust evidence for scaling this framework. Such investigations would not only validate the model empirically but also offer actionable insights for educational institutions seeking to implement digitalization while preserving their spiritual and ethical identity.

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