

## The Case Study of Islamic-Education Leadership Model: What We Can Learn from the Dynamics of Principals' Leadership in Indonesian Excellence Islamic Boarding-Schools

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**Abstract.** Educational leadership research has been more oriented toward western theories and contexts, ignoring the contextual conditions that shape leadership styles and characteristics. Whereas recent research found that leadership is inseparable from context and is more appropriate according to the setting of a particular society. This study aims to avoid bias when interpreting leadership patterns by finding a concept of Islamic leadership in the field of Education. Indonesia is predominantly Muslim, where Islamic-based education has been facilitated by the state and included in the policy system. This research was conducted using a qualitative case study research approach. The participants of the study were two principals and five academic staffs in two nationally-accredited "Excellent" Islamic senior high schools. Data collection technique employed interviews, observations, online surveys, and documentation complemented by triangulation at data sources level. Study results showed that the principal's leadership pattern implemented Islamic religious values and the context of the society. so the findings can be considered when carrying out educational management based on Islamic values.

**Keywords:** leadership; Islamic-education; Islamic boarding-school; educational-leadership

The importance of the educational leadership research included in the educational administration is explained by Simon Clarke and Tom O'Donoghue (2016) as contextual intelligence that pays more attention to analysing the relationship of leadership and context, especially its implications on different environments. Conceptualization and practice of leadership according to context need to be done to explain the uncertainty, change, and complexity in other contexts. This will provide a wealth analysis of the management and administration of education, not only from western countries, which represent only one set of environments.

Leadership research ideally needs to consider economic, political, and sociocultural factors; in other words, the interpretation of school leadership is shaped by context (Hallinger & Liu, 2016). The explanation of the dynamic of leadership functions, if only through leadership models from the West, will give rise to the opportunity for analysis errors (bias). Research on leadership needs to pay attention to the alignment of values that underlie the dynamic of community leadership in the Southeast Asian Region, which has different values from western countries. Nevertheless, western theory also provides

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an understanding of leadership that takes into account the psychological aspects of the leader's character. Educational leadership needs personality traits and intelligence which both are practical importance for leadership in general and in particular because they can describe the personal character (Kanape-Willingshofer & Bergner, 2015). According to the finding from (Kanape-Willingshofer & Bergner, 2015).

In the same manner, in Muslim-majority communities, leadership used to manage education is influenced by religious learning and religious texts (S. J. A. Shah, 2010). Therefore, Indonesia, which is in southeast Asia and has a majority of Muslim population, where Islamic-based education has been facilitated by the state and entered the policy system, is the ideal foundation for the exploration of the dynamic of principal leadership when carrying out management based on Islamic values. The goal is to avoid bias when interpreting leadership patterns by finding a new construct, namely Islamic leadership, in the field of education, raising the question of how school leaders apply Islamic leadership in leading Islamic schools in the Indonesian context.

Islamic leadership is claimed to be appropriate in the context of Muslim societies or organisations (Egel & Fry, 2016). Education leadership is conceptualised differently between and within communities and cultures. This is how society then interprets leadership differently, reflecting on how they view leadership according to how they assume it philosophically and theoretically (S. J. A. Shah, 2017). The current development of leadership theory shows the imbalance that leadership has been far discussed from the perspective of western researchers, with most of the focus of perspectives in Western contexts and constructs (Davies, 2009). This is because the concept of "ethnocentric theory and practice in education, dominated by philosophical and western values, tends to ignore the growth of the organic nature of multicultural culture in educational institutions (S. J. A. Shah, 2017).

Shah's leadership model (S. J. A. Shah, 2006) has three dimensions, namely parents (showing commitment to care and responsibility), educators (teaching with knowledge and understanding), and prophetic values (Prophet)/leader (guiding with values and virtues). Caring, teaching, and guiding are interrelated activities with broader responsibilities (S. J. A. Shah, 2006). Islamic education leadership with such dimensions in educational leadership with a high and noble level of commitment. This form of responsibility is the internal encouragement of leaders to provide the best activities they can do for the community, and all of this is based on belief in Allah SWT (S. J. A. Shah, 2017).

Brooks and Mutohar (2018) explain Islamic education leadership concepts other than Shah. According to them, the leadership framework of Islamic education consists of the outer and inner circles. The external circle framework consists of 4 domains of leadership beliefs, namely: Islam, education, culture, and leadership. There is a dynamic relationship between the four outer circle domains of Brooks and Mutohar's theory (Brooks & Mutohar, 2018), namely the firmness of the leader's beliefs and the four domains surrounding Islamic values (likened to values as the core of turnover) in the outer circle of the Islamic education leadership framework. The external process of the framework consists of eight values, namely: *nasiha* (good advice); sincerity, *shura* (consultation),

*ikhtilaf* (dissent), *maslaha* (public interest), *al-amr bi al-marufwa'l-nahy an al-munkar*, *hisba* (accountability) and *tafakkur* (reflection) (Brooks & Mutohar, 2018). The description above describes the leadership of Islamic education in contrast to the leadership of education other than Islam. From the perspective of Islamic education, the leader's responsibility is towards his followers and Allah Almighty.

There are emerging studies that explore Islamic education leadership but no study has been carried out in the Indonesian context. Authors such as (Jaffar et al., 2019; Othman et al., 2018; Salleh, 2018) have attempted to define the concept of Islamic education leadership. Few studies focused on the context of Southeast Asia regarding Islamic educational leadership in the Southeast Asian context (Abbas & Tan, 2019; Arifin et al., 2018; Milligan, 2009; Raihani, 2008, 2017; Shulhan, 2018). Only one study by Abbas and Tan (2019) that focused on transformational Islamic leadership based on a case study of a madrasah in Singapore. There has also been limited research using exploratory research design such as qualitative case study. Research on Islamic Education leadership, in a nutshell quantitatively researched in Malaysia, using the term, *Rabbani* (Ahmad & Salamun, 2017; Salamun, 2016; Salamun & Shah, 2012), *murabbi leadership* (Ail & Abdullah, 2016), *ulul albab* leadership (Jaffar et al., 2019; Taib et al., 2016). The underlying concepts are values-based leadership practices in Islamic-schools and influenced by moral values according to the will of Allah SWT. Each of these concepts is measured using a questionnaire instrument on the characteristics of leadership in Islamic education latent. *Rabbani* leadership uses 15 items (Ahmad & Salamun, 2017), *ulul albab* uses 73 items (Taib et al., 2016). *Murrabi's* leadership was measured using 132 items developed from qualitative research (Ail & Abdullah, 2016).

All research findings show that educational leaders have Islamic Education leadership attributes. Even so, the western leadership model has been widely adapted and modified for the preparation of instruments. The quantitative studies above show that the results of this type of study on the nature of school leaders have been confirmed by Western leadership theories. Although these studies have used the available models and instruments, they have not yet captured all the in-depth realities in schools in the Southeast Asian Region, considering the diversity of cultures and social variations. According to (Adams et al., 2021) the instrument that measures the three leadership styles of *rabbani*, *murrabi*, and *ulul albab* leadership needs more exploration of the cultural context. As such, this research aims to fill the gap by exploring Islamic-Education leadership model in two nationally-accredited "Excellent" Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia. This study poses the following research question "How are Islamic values personally owned and applied to the dynamic of leadership in schools? How are Islamic values in schools applied to leadership management patterns in schools? How do the dynamic of Islamic values interact personally and organizationally with school leadership practices?"

## Method

The research with this qualitative method uses a case study approach as described by Yin (2009), which seeks to answer how, why, and what about a situation being studied. This approach allows researchers

to understand the context of Islamic leadership applied in Indonesia by looking at it from various data sources and understanding the reasons why things happened or were implemented in leadership.

*The Case Study at State Islamic Schools*

Two case studies were chosen purposively, these were Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) (State Islamic High School) AA and MAN BB (name of the schools were anonymised). The two schools are nationally-accredited at "Excellent" (Unggul) by the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MORA) Indonesia. In the Indonesian context, there is the term "sekolah-unggulan" (Excellent School), that is MORA's flagship program legislated under a MORA regulation (see (Mujtahid, 2011)). MAN-AA was the first of MAN-AA in Indonesia, established in 1996 by Prof. Ing. B.J. Habibie, a former Vice President of Indonesia, when he was the Minister of Research and Technology. MAN-AA is currently spread across 23 provinces throughout Indonesia. MAN-AA occupies the top position of the 1,000 best schools in Indonesia based on scores of the 2021 computer-based written exam (UTBK) (Shaid, 2021). Meanwhile, MAN-BB is in the top 10 (out of 8,319) MANs mandated by the MAN-PK [Historically, in the 1950s, due to the government's regulation to establish MAN, Al-Islam Foundation elevated the status of madrasa from private school to state school. MAN Religious Program (MAN-PK) is one of the leading national specialisation programs in dormitory-based religion that is part of the existence of Regular-MAN. MAN-PK is the prototype of a superior Madrasah-Aliyah in the religious field (PMA No. 60 of 2015)] organising program by MORA, and this school has championed achievements in the national and international levels. MAN-BB has a MAN-PK study program in the form of a boarding school which is religious in nature, a science boarding school, and programs MA-K (vocational) and MAN-regular.

Researchers used a purposive sampling technique to select subjects based on those who were considered to know in-depth the leadership applied in the schools and trustworthy. The selection of those who are key informants requires the person concerned to have personal experience in accordance with the problem under study and they should be the principal of the school being studied, and has extensive knowledge of the problem under study. The key informants in this study were the school principals at Islamic boarding schools. The principals of MAN-AA is still relatively new, he is a university graduate with a bachelor of religion degree, has capital related to religious-studies, followed by a master of economics where his mastery of marketing knowledge also applied to promote MAN-AA, and a doctoral in administration-education so as to understand intricacies of making policies in schools. Prior to Jakarta, he had served as headmaster at MAN-AA Kendari (Sulawesi) which in fact had just been initiated and under his leadership they had succeeded achievements both in national and international such as national-science competitions, madrasah science-competitions, student-exchanges and scouting-activities abroad. Five years later, he was appointed as principal at MAN-AA, where assignment of principal to Serpong from Sulawesi was considered different from the usual tradition of principal-exchange. The success of pioneering MAN-AA Sulawesi led him to become principal at central MAN-AA. Principal of MAN-BB has taught for many years and received a mandate to become principal after previously serving in Yogyakarta as lecturer at private campus, teacher, and recruitment-head and has a permit as head of performing-art-festival task-force at Yogyakarta

state university. By last four years, he had been principal MAN-AA, he has scientific-background in physics and educational-management, as well as colouring his leadership pattern of successfully managing budgets to build and utilise astronomical-laboratory in school. The Significant others are those who had deep knowledge and understanding of the schools studied and were fully involved in educational-management of MAN-AA and MAN-BB as Excellence State Islamic Schools. Significant others as secondary data sources are the vice principals who were under the direct position of the principal, the heads of the administration section, and staff including librarians, heads of student dormitory, and the administration section, all of which interact directly with school leadership and students.

#### *Data Collection, Data Sources, and Analysis*

Researchers used three data collection techniques: interviews, observation, and documentation. Interviews are the primary data collection tool and observation and documentation are additional data collection tools. In this study, a semi-structured interview technique (Ahlin, 2019) was employed with a series of questions based on the former study of the concept of Islamic leadership (Brooks & Mutohar, 2018; Jamil et al., 2018; S. J. A. Shah, 2006, 2017), in the interview guide (list of questions), which were developed by the researchers according to the context during the interview. The interviews and the order of the questions were adjusted according to the respondents' situation in the actual interview context. The interview guide is used for checking for researchers regarding the aspects that must be discussed, as well as a checklist of whether these relevant aspects have been discussed or questioned. In this case the aim is to find data on implementing Islamic leadership in the education sector. Implementation and order of questions adapted to the circumstances of the respondents. The interviews were aimed at capturing the ins and outs of the excellent Islamic schools' leadership to understand their way as leaders in a senior Islamic high school, what principals at well-known excellent Islamic schools in Indonesia have done in their leading schools, including Islamic-leadership values, principles, and academic innovation of madrasa leaders. Data sources came from interviews with key informants and significant others (7 study participants), researchers (Kusumaputri, Muslimah, and Hayati interviewed participants in MAN-BB Surakarta) and (Kusumaputri and Muslimah) interviewed participants in MAN-AA Serpong.

The researchers manually carried out data analysis by reading interview transcripts several times, classifying them, selecting meaningful quotes that answered our main research questions, and arranging them into categories. The interviews were crosschecked with other data resources for the validity purpose, namely using the triangulation method (using direct interviews, observations, and online surveys) as mentioned above and data sources triangulation using non-participatory observations, school archives, photos, and video documentation, while the researchers were at the research location. Additional supporting educational data documents, namely the alumni data, including information on the university they entered to adapt the interview results to the context, school achievement data to find out innovations made by leaders in leading Islamic schools side by side with modernization, and related documents which contain what excellent programs are unique.

Photos, video documentation, included interview activities, counselling room for students, library room and librarian work desks, MAN AA School building (laboratory facilities; student work, trophies, and interior wall hangings), school building exterior and madrasah environment, facilities mosque. In the MAN-BB school building, there is also a photo of the architectural design of the integration of Islamic philosophy and science); the atmosphere in the madrasa environment (including arrangement, cleanliness, and spatial planning); and the condition of the boarding school dormitories. Islamic Boarding School Dormitory Support Facilities and Learning Facilities as well as scientific work results in the form of Journals.

On the day of the data collection process, researchers also took part in activities at teacher meetings for science competition in order to observe directly the interactions in the meeting forum and how school leaders make decisions based on deliberation. Observation is conducted so that the interview results can be understood in context. Documentation is needed to support the correctness of research data, all data became an inseparable discussion in explaining the leadership model applied in Islamic schools. The additional questions to explore data were sent to participants after the first interview, for this purpose the online open question using google form was used. Another data collection method was the unstructured observation, the observation made without using observation guidelines, so that researchers develop their observations based on developments that occur in the field (Bungin, 2007). The fixed comparison data analysis model from Glaser and Strauss (Moleong, 2010) was used in this study. In general, the data analysis process includes: data reduction, data categorization, synthesis, and ends with developing a working hypothesis. Data reduction in order to find the smallest part that is found in which has meaning when associated with the focus and research problem. Furthermore, categorization is an attempt to sort out each unit into parts that have similarities. After that, synthesis is carried out, namely looking for links between one category and another, the categories are then given a label or name and then forwarded by compiling themes that emerge from the existing data. The collected data is arranged, sorted, and grouped, then given a code, and the researcher categorises it. Organising and managing the data aims to find themes. The cross-case analysis across the two schools was done to understand the context of leadership between the two areas and where the data is presented in the form of tables in the findings section.

## Result

From data collection, our analysis found the following themes: (1) adaptation and innovation in facing the development of times in the digital era; (2) Islamic values applied to leadership dynamAA in schools; (3) leadership-management patterns in Islamic schools; (4) leadership based Islamic-values that internalised in principals' self: interaction of Islamic-values personally and organizationally on leadership practices in schools. The main issues that emerged from the interviews with the principal, vice principal, and education staff are mentioned below.

### *Educational Management in Islamic School*

In their leadership, both school principals in MAN-AA and MAN-BB extensively cooperated with their teams. In MAN-AA, for example, staff said that the deputy's head is already like an accomplice of the principal school, whereas the vice-principal handles management and teaching. In MAN-BB, in the interview session, the principal also entrusted the process of deliberations to his vice, as well as, entrusting the vice to preside over meetings and forums during the preparatory meeting of national competition, resulting in a mutually agreed decision regarding national race with the consent of principal considering of students' psychological and physical health, the principal said:

*"For example, there is a thought, and something must be like this... so yes, we appreciated it, accepted it, and said it's good, but the important thing is that our students are not too tired". "On the other hand, we appreciate it; we respect, yes, then provide innovations."*

In terms of evaluation and reflection by teachers, the administrative head of MAN-BB revealed:

*"Head of the madrasa evaluates and develops programs that have been prepared. He supervises them directly or indirectly. For example, the discipline of students through a team of deputy heads of student affairs."*

In facing changing times, vision-mission in MAN-AA has not changed yet since 1996 and is still relevant to current and future needs. This vision-mission has been the hallmark of MAN-AA since its inception. What makes the difference between madrasah[s] in Indonesia (exceedingly equivalent ones) is a concern in science-technology (science-tech) and religious understanding/IMTAQ (an acronym of faith and taqwa, which is loaded with values, behaviour, understanding, and attitudes according to Islamic-teachings):

*"Science-technology is one hundred percent, IMTAQ is one hundred percent, so that's balance. So, if you are asked what definition is, for example, there. One, how to prepare graduates, alumni can have two abilities in balance so, in the future, they are as future leaders of this nation are stable and strong."*

The balance of science-tech and IMTAQ is a way to prepare graduates (alums) to have two abilities in balance. In practice, the school curriculum sharpens in science-technology, and the dormitory (boarding-school/pesantren) curriculum points to IMTAQ. However, students' foreign-language skills had not become the focus in the past. Different from madrasahs in Indonesia that apply bilingual Arabic and English, nowadays, the ability to speak foreign languages is getting attention from school principals. In terms of HR, the principal put higher standards for teachers:

*"Yes, top-down is the same because it means general subjects, religious subjects. But in terms of content*

*and mastery, our teachers, especially those about assabiqunal awwalun, have already been drilled, umm... material being taught is far beyond the standard curriculum."*

It has its peculiarities in technology and top-down curriculum from MORA for general subjects and religious subjects, so to balance science-technology and IMTAQ, there are additional skills of teachers (especially those who are more senior). Curriculum, especially for mathematic, physic, and chemistry. For sharia-curriculum, teachers are apprenticed at Islamic boarding schools to study religious knowledge. MAN-BB principal also urges educators and teachers to develop behaviours following Islamic teachings to be examples/tauladan for students, as stated by the administrative head:

*"What principles do is by providing motivation/coaching and direct exemplary examples, for example, praying in congregation at the mosque, providing best service, being friendly and working hard or studying."*

The sub-theme in the table below contains strategies done to be able to lead by placing themselves as leaders while also respecting the regulations that have been in effect from the center, especially the leading sector state Islamic schools which are under the Ministry of Religious Affairs and how the principal deals with the vision and mission that they are not allowed to change, therefore they strengthen the vision and mission so that they can accommodate the needs of this era with all its challenges so that Islamic schools can keep abreast of the times. The educational management in Islamic schools between two MAN[s] to understand how they lead the schools and how to accommodate the mandate from their upper positions are written down in the table 1 below.

**Table 1**  
*Patterns of Leadership Management in Leading Islamic-Schools*

Sub-theme	MAN-AA	MAN-BB
1. Following the directions and regulations of MORA by strengthening and adding the usefulness of the existing vision and mission	<p>The leading sectors of all MAN-AA are in MORA:</p> <p>a) Follow the program and authority from the centre (MORA) according to their respective posts.</p> <p>b) Top-down curriculum from MORA; but provide input and realise new students according to developments in Indonesia.</p> <p>c) MORA held the National Selection of New Students (SNPDB) for MAN-PK and a selection at the same time as SNPDB** MAN-AA and MAK.</p> <p>** SNPDB: national selection process for new students is carried out online</p>	<p>MAN-BB is an institution under vertical leadership, namely religious leaders of Surakarta, regional MORA offices of Central Java, and the District of Education Office MORA.</p> <p>a) Selection of religious program students is recruited by the centre (director general of Islamic education) with the SNPDB** system (68 in ministerial ideology posts and 80 in science ideologies), two focus areas of study in one boarding school.</p> <p>b) The carry-out mandate from the directorate general regarding the division of expertise of MAN-BB students (regular programs, MAN-PK, MAK, and MAN-Science)</p>
2. Maintaining school culture from predecessors	<p>a) Maintaining MAN-AA culture in terms of deliberation from above/from predecessors</p> <p>b) Consult with experts; make decisions based on deliberation; listen to expert experience; bring the discussion to the highest court, namely the leadership forum</p>	<p>a) Following the example of some of the school's predecessors in carrying out the leadership of deliberation</p> <p>b) Giving reward words of praise for teachers and students who excel. Regarding rewards in the form of certificates of appreciation and coaching funds, it has been around for a long time and will continue</p>
3. Trust and cooperate with the people they lead	<p>a) Vice-principal becomes the principal's accomplice; trusted to handle significant events with guests from government officials (national scale)</p> <p>b) From the results of consultations with seniors, principals formed several teams to help principals' duties</p>	<p>a) Entrusting his representative to lead the meeting forum</p> <p>b) Have a team of supervisory consultants and a planning team for the implementation of building construction and procurement of teaching and school facilities</p>

**Tabel 1 (Continued)***Patterns of Leadership Management in Leading Islamic-Schools*

4. <i>Nasihat</i> (good advice) to develop professionalism and improve performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Programs for deepening religious material and implementation for apprentice teachers at Islamic boarding schools to explore spiritual knowledge and understand the management of Islamic boarding schools</li> <li>b) Support teacher competency program from directorate-GTK MORA</li> <li>c) Evaluation with teacher</li> <li>d) Principals of schools immediately goes-around school calling for neatness and cleanliness in the school environment</li> <li>e) Teachers are encouraged to greet each other and say hello</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Provide support and opportunities for teachers to improve professionalism continually</li> <li>b) Make activities that aim to enhance professionalism and send participants in training/workshops/training etc.</li> <li>c) We are supporting teachers to study further, such as master's degrees.</li> <li>d) Supporting teachers to apply their knowledge, act innovatively and creatively, and keep up with times.</li> <li>e) Encouraging the creation of organisational piety</li> </ul>
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Muslim leaders practising *nasihat* require good knowledge and information about the problems that require solving, and find the best strategy, all while considering the position of the problematic person. The second practice of values is sincerity. The decisions made by a Muslim leader are based on sincerity to achieve the best results for everyone. The foundation is principles and morals (Brooks & Mutohar, 2018). Next, when practising *shura* (consultation), Muslim leaders need to consult with people who have been appropriately informed to obtain an agreement or agreement, resulting in a resolution and a balance between individual needs and the audience. This practises the principles of democracy and justice because *shura* encourages engagement and facilitates dissent (*ikhtilaf*). When there is *ikhtilaf*, the Muslim leader needs to be flexible in making decisions and trying to make the *ummah* finally agree. All those efforts were intended for *maslaha*. *Maslaha* is oriented towards the public interest. In the Islamic concept, a Muslim leader is required to produce decisions aimed at the common good for all members, not just beneficial for a particular group or group. In school practice, school leaders must apply, for example, democratic leadership to meet needs, which is for the common good (Brooks & Mutohar, 2018).

Leading with knowledge and understanding: adaptation and innovation in facing times in digital Islamic leadership are claimed to be appropriate in the context of Muslim communities or organisations (Egel & Fry, 2016). Primary sources of knowledge that Muslims use as a guide are the Quran and Sunnah of Rasulullah SAW (Almoharby & Neal, 2013). Both apply Islamic values in leading their schools, and both struggle to face changing times and move forward while still using Islamic

values in their learning aspects. The results of our data analysis are summarised in the following table 2 which reflects the Islamic-schools' leaders on adaptations and innovations in responding to the digital era.

**Table 2**  
*Adaptations and Innovations done by Islamic Schools in Responding to Current Development*

No.	Sub-theme	MAN-AA	MAN-BB
1.	Innovation to adapt and face challenges of times	<p>How to lead to condition Human Resources (HR) in schools and students be able to adapt to the current situation, social conditions, and education:</p> <p>a) Strive for a Religious-Moderation ToT program* for IC circles (in collaboration with the director of Teachers and Madrasah education of MORA)</p> <p>b) A learning system that prepares students to study at the best and most famous universities also explores the field of science-technology (according to school culture), a preparation program for entering an international university.</p> <p>c) Initiating the tagline "MAN-AA for Indonesia" by cooperating with all MAN-AA throughout Indonesia, MORA, and the Directorate General of Islamic-education (GTK)</p>	<p>a) Applying transformational leadership</p> <p>b) Innovation in the field of science in religion-based schools: establishing and utilising astronomy laboratory units; for students to learn and religious communities use for <i>ruqyatul-hilal</i> (Islamic calendar)</p> <p>c) <i>Madrasa</i> transformation has an astronomy laboratory with sky binoculars; Islamic calendar determination/ lunar-calendar</p> <p>d) MAN-PK has alumni links to the Middle East and student exchange to the U.S.</p> <p>e) Coordinate and strengthen alumni of SNPTN graduates</p>

**Tabel 2 (Continued)**

*Adaptations and Innovations done by Islamic Schools in Responding to Current Development*

<p>2. Today's trend: adapting to needs and progress in the digital era</p>	<p>a) Digital-based e-business/business program: school makes an e-business syllabus (3 years of high school) to meet the need to provide essential capital related to current economic speed.</p> <p>b) Sharia economics subjects: following developments in Indonesia, there is a national sharia economic commission</p> <p>c) Collaborating with developers for MAN-AA application in one app [google-playstore]; Android-based and website, can be run on smartphones and laptops.</p> <p>d) Digital transformation: every class has a smart classroom and uses android-TV, assisted by the infrastructure and curriculum development team and supported by MORA</p>	<p>a) Creating product-selling and technology literacy programs for students</p> <p>b) Program for students to recognize halal products through scientific testing: product halal-testing (allowed food based on Islamic laws)</p> <p>c) Religion-based school program/ MAN that has expertise in science (previously, they only had religious programs)</p> <p>d) An embodiment of the digital-class team and information and technology team at MAN-BB</p> <p>e) Applicable thematic learning</p>
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**Tabel 2 (Continued)**

*Adaptations and Innovations done by Islamic Schools in Responding to Current Development*

<p>3. How principals/leaders deal with existing vision – mission created in school by formers</p>	<p>a) Learn initial concepts, discuss with and listen to seniors regarding the vision and mission of pioneers of MAN-AA</p> <p>b) Understand and study the history of the journey and development of the school that is currently led (educational management and human resources in the previous period)</p> <p>c) Maintain vision and mission related to the history of the founding of MAN-AA: a balance between science and religion, according to the founder’s ideals. Respect and hold the lofty ideals of former founders.</p> <p>d) Despite the top-down curriculum from MORA, MAN-AA selects teachers with the criteria above standards and experts in their subject areas.</p> <p>e) Concoct what is already strong in school</p>	<p>a) Not changing existing visions and missions at school; continuing; changing but trying to have a substantial effect from the vision side (for example, humanitarian issues) so that there is no gap between the world’s today and the vision made several years ago.</p> <p>b) Helping the school to be honoured (like a house that is visited), feel compelled to know himself, maintain the attitude, and accept, doesn’t change that already good mission but adds usefulness to the task.</p> <p>c) Vision is shared and agreed upon, and the image is not forced to belong to one leader’s</p>
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**Tabel 2 (Continued)**

*Adaptations and Innovations done by Islamic Schools in Responding to Current Development*

4. Appreciation of science colours leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Leading based on previous experience, scientific background, and applying knowledge gained from S1 to S3</li> <li>b) Together with the school's academic community (discussions and briefings), produce technical guidelines for operational standards and alums profiles in terms of targets to achieve vision and mission</li> <li>c) Compile and reformulate the learning process, compiling the SKS guide</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Activeness in organisations and scientific background in physical science colour pattern of leadership</li> <li>b) Considering energy-saving/ saving electrical-energy</li> <li>c) Understand intricacies of building construction architects, selection of interiors that support aesthetics of school building, and procurement of astronomical towers (sky/space binoculars)</li> <li>d) His love for teaching and his study experience at educational universities made principal close to students</li> <li>e) Dissertation on OSIBI of organisation, so that term organisational piety appears which is applied</li> </ul>
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\*Religious moderation is one of three main foundations to support MORA's policy in realising inter-religious harmony in Indonesia. Why does Indonesia needs a religious moderation program at school? For more, see (Hikmah & Chudzaifah, 2022), entitled "Religious Moderation: Urgency and Condition of Religion in Indonesia"; (Arif, 2021), entitled "Concept and Implementation of Religious Moderation in Indonesia."

By the system, the vision-mission of all MAN-AA and MAN throughout Indonesia are locked by technical instructions for managing Madrasah-IC education obtained from the Director General of Islamic-Education MORA. However, even though they only could follow the rules, the authority of school principals to transform according to nowadays is trying to be realised to prepare students for facing the digital era, including dealing with vision-mission since time immemorial which must be enriched with the newest era. MAN-AA, for example:

*"Where is the innovation?... Well, innovation by the principal is more to ummm... deepen or ensure the process to achieve that vision. So, it doesn't depend on wanting to change the vision, but how innovations that every MAN-leader can achieve that vision."*

The principal of MAN-BB also stated the same thing:

*"So, I didn't change (the vision). I give a strong effect from the side of vision, vision for example"*

*"We as transformations also promote everything involved which we will often transform in future"..."*

Although visions-missions have been locked from MORA, the principal and team still have visions-missions that reflect more on values in their school. One of them was the procurement of an astronomy laboratory where MAN-BB became the first MAN-PK to have *ru'yatul-hilal* laboratory:

*"We have an astronomy-laboratory unit, and we are there to see ru'yatul-hilal; we can see from our side that a manager has never been there and where there is a Madrasah that an astronomy-laboratory which can be used at the beginning of Zulhijjah, every pre-post Ramadhan, 1 Syawwal is used to see new-moon, it has been used for about seven times, even yesterday it was inaugurated.".. "That includes the transformation of the school because there has never been a Madrasah, what is the name of it, has astronomy-lab" "76 points (of astronomy-lab/ru'yatul-hilal in Indonesia) are the last ones is in MAN-BB, if there are many on campus, yes, because of campus."*

There are things transformed to face the challenges of times by applying Islamic teachings in science; in addition to astronomy laboratories, school principals also make product-selling programs, where the program is usually only available on campuses, Islamic boarding schools, and institutions that specialise in observation. Moreover, principals have an idea that students of the Religious Program (PK), when they graduate, hope not only to have a set of religious knowledge regarding the study of fiqh and its law but also to be technologically literate, to know and understand how to check if the material is halal, toyib, and mubarakah (allowed food and beverages based on Islamic-rules). This is inseparable from the primary source of knowledge used by Muslims as a guide is the Quran and Sunnah of Rasulullah SAW (Almoharby & Neal, 2013).

Vice-principal of MAN-1-S said:

*"Head of the madrasa is very supportive of the progress of teachers/staff/students to adapt to today's challenging situations. This is related to the use of digital-learning tools or media. Digital-Class and Information and Technology Team Formation is an embodiment of the madrasa-principal's role in preparing teachers/staff/students to adapt to today's challenging situation."*

Alums are expected to be able to build a nation with their science-technology plus be wise with their religious understanding:

*"In my opinion, in the end, when asked about the philosophy of education, how did this MORA prepare human resources who have an understanding of religion and are experts in science-technology."*

Hopes about the future for students are also expressed by MAN-AA apart from science-technology and IMTAQ knowledge already mentioned. This is also the embodiment of the Islamic-education leadership framework, namely *tafakkur*, the way of self-reflection about Allah's creation and improving knowledge and faith in Allah Almighty. This value can stimulate teachers and students to think creatively, out of the box, towards a higher level of thinking (Jamil et al., 2018). Therefore, in implementing subjects, principals tried to find out the ins and outs of the program and be careful in applying the academic rule.

*"Economy-based-sharia (in Indonesia) is already a trend now, right? There is a national sharia-economy commission, which means we are trying to answer that. At least equip our students with those two things. So our students have been prepared for those two things when today's era is based on technology."*

Transformation carried out by MAN-BB, for example, procuring falaq/astronomy-laboratory that must be at a certain height, is not without obstacles.

Although there was opposition regarding the budget for building an elevator, by the firm and acceptable argument, the elevator was intended to make it easier for older people (for example, senior

kyai/religious leaders above 65-ages) to access laboratories in the tower. Finally, the struggle of the principal paid off:

*"... "... a human like us, that's a way of serving Kyai(s), if we ask kyai to walk to the fifth floor? So we couldn't do that."*

In this case, in two MANs, Islamic leadership not only accepts from the upper but also voices the desire for transformation and has arguments that can be defended, for example, in the form of facilities for the benefit of the ummah (society/community), not only for school. S. J. A. Shah (2006) states that the leader is the top giver of instructions, resulting from the link between knowledge, education, and religion. This linkage has led to a leadership model of Islamic teaching.

*Commitment to care and responsibility: dynamic interaction of Islamic values personally and organizationally on leadership practices in schools*

Based on the result, we found several sub-themes into categorizations of the dynamic interaction of Islamic values personally and organisationally in leadership practices in schools, which are summarised in the following table 3:

**Table 3**

*Islamic Principals in Leading Organisations Applied by Islamic-School Leaders*

No.	Sub-theme	MAN-AA	MAN-BB
1.	Deliberations with leadership-led staff; parents, guardians, and students	<p>a) Forming teams directly under the principal (the result of consultation for three months with MAN-AA seniors)</p> <p>b) Discussion and briefing on curriculum guidelines</p> <p>c) Routine leadership meeting (school principal, vice-school-principal, administrative head) once a week to discuss any problems</p> <p>d) Regular meetings with teachers and staff: once every month</p> <p>e) Accommodating direct criticism suggestions from students via Whatsapp and email; sitting discussions with students; Student guardians can submit directly via Whatsapp [although actual rules are through a committee], and school principals still receive inputs and respond to them.</p>	<p>a) Decide everything through deliberation by looking for the highest scale (e.g., polls)</p> <p>b) Deliberative leadership</p> <p>c) Definition of deliberation in the sense of not seeking most votes and then deliberation: following example of Prophebehavioriour when he had a problem inviting friends</p> <p>d) Speed of communication: impromptu meetings if urgent matters to be discussed immediately with anyone related to related activities.</p> <p>e) School-principal ideas to get a response from staff school-principSchool-principal ideas to get a response from staff</p>

**Tabel 3 (Continued)**

*Islamic Principals in Leading Organisations Applied by Islamic-School Leaders*

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<p>2. <i>Maslaha</i> (public/community interest)</p>	<p>a) Collective-decision b) Principle of serving and greeting all, regardless of position strata c) Direct discussion with students: making regulations on conveying argumentative aspiration in the form of articles and further discussing in leadership and teacher forums. d) Direct discussions with parents both through committee forum [parents] and via phone [whatsapp]; full involvement of parents in the management of school committees and student consumption funds e) Maintaining mandate as a public madrasah for the flow of regulations that apply in Islamic public schools (which have different rules from private ones) f) Listening to complaints and complaints from various parties and groups in the madrasa and looking for solutions to problems complained of g) Prioritising collaboration between human resources in schools</p>	<p>a) In servant leadership, the direction is service b) Supporting teachers and students to excel, think creatively, and develop their ideas for the advancement of the madrasa. c) Routine social service activities from students for the community; use of mosques in schools for the general public; d) Conducting environmental development e) Distribution of <i>qurban</i> and distribution of zakat to residents around madrasa f) Carry out a mandate from the government which is appointed to be a madrasa for implicit development g) Devoted to <i>kyai</i>/religious figure who is a central figure in an Islamic boarding school h) Politeness is the basis for leadership i) Homeroom mentoring for good bridging (school needs related to parents)</p>
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**Tabel 3 (Continued)**

*Islamic Principals in Leading Organisations Applied by Islamic-School Leaders*

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3.	Consultation (Al-shura')	Consultation with experts, ministries, and school founders: a) Addressing the Ministry of Religion and Directorate General, conveying aspirations (support for digital transformation; redesign of the curriculum; development of educational buildings/facilities) b) Consulting with MAN-AA seniors: education concept of seniors (Agency for Assessment and Application of Technology) who initiated MAN-AA c) Asking the Regional-MORA office for consideration regarding a complicated problem in the dormitory d) In cases of severe violations by students, discussions are carried out at the highest court/leadership level	a) We are collaborating and consulting with a team of experts from state universities to develop the abilities of students and teachers. b) Collaborating with religious leaders and MORA scholars in utilising the ruqyatul hilal laboratory c) Asking for advice and criticism from anyone (guests, principals, researchers; government officials, etc.) d) Principals as KPA (Budget-User-Power)** have a team and consultants for supervisors, planners, and implementers, who are asked for reports by school-principal
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**Tabel 3 (Continued)**

*Islamic Principals in Leading Organisations Applied by Islamic-School Leaders*

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<p>4. Principals are like parents to students: they are responsible for nurturing students with love and knowledge for future</p>	<p>a) Facilities for counselling guidance meeting formats with students and counselling guidance materials</p> <p>b) Pay attention to the psychological condition of students; Understand problems</p> <p>c) experienced by students; find solutions for situations that hinder the performance of students</p> <p>d) Students who are going to the science olympiad must be discussed and accompanied by counselling guidance responsibility of the school is to guide students to the next level of education (college)</p> <p>Madrasa discipline movement (GDM) is not a punishment warning/reprimand through an educational task</p>	<p>a) Principals hold NLP (neuro language program) activities for students</p> <p>b) Doing exercises at school is with the blessing</p> <p>c) Politeness ideology</p> <p>d) Pay attention to the goodness of snacks in the canteen (halal or not; avoiding preservatives, etc.) consumed by students</p> <p>e) Taking into account the physical and psychological conditions of students (e.g., when there is a competition)</p> <p>f) Be relaxed with students and do not burden them with excessive targets but motivating</p>
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The principal of MAN-BB makes sure that activities carried out by students at school are activities with blessings: The existence of adequate facilities related to science at MAN-BB cannot be separated from how to build relationships with stakeholders (e.g., MORA) or experts in the implementation of Islamic education in Madrasah-Aliyah. MORA continues to improve the quality of madrasa education infrastructure through State Sharia Securities (SBSN/*Surat-Berharga-Syariah-Negara*) financing scheme. The character of the principal when he led at AA was also formed from culture when he led MAN-AA Sulawesi. At the beginning of his tenure at AA, to understand the school, he sought to find out, consulted with AA seniors, and listened to them until finally, teams were formed whose controlling modelling was directly under the principal, among his teams are groups focusing on: (1) curriculum development, (2) student affairs, (3) dormitory/boarding-school, (4) infrastructure team: supporting learning according to curriculum, (5) administration: related to management and administration.

## Discussion

Dimensions of Islamic education leadership, including parents (showing the commitment of caring and responsibility), educators (teaching with knowledge and understanding), and prophetic values / leaders (guiding with values and virtues), are seen in both school principals. This is in how they lead Islamic-State-High-Schools. Not only paying attention to technical matters of school management, the principal along with his deputy and the guidance and counselling section also pay attention to the mental condition of their students, such as finding out the root cause of the problem if a student experiences decreased achievement, stress, and mental strengthening when students will take part in the competition.

In terms of making decisions, MAN-AA and MAN-BB both prioritise deliberation. Deliberations are aimed at humanising every person, not only with internal schools but also with all those involved and related, namely senior predecessors, senior teachers, the government, in this case, MORA, parents who are also fully engaged in committee, and students. Deliberation also resulted in bottom-up policies. For example, the principal's idea when asking about technical guidelines for the curriculum that did not yet exist, results of their deliberation resulted in technical instructions. In line with (Brooks & Mutohar, 2018; Fozia et al., 2016), leadership principles from an Islamic perspective include *Al-Shūrā*, which is the Islamic term for "consult before the decision." Leaders must consult with their subordinates in formulating any strategy or policy. In making a decision, teams are involved in reaching a shared decision. Under this leadership, teams are tasked with formulating what will be made or done then they work together alongside other teams.

The two leaders imitated several of their predecessors. Principals of MAN-BB acknowledged that deliberation to reach a consensus is the basis for decision-making in schools, which is very closely related to the presence of the staff they lead. Meanwhile, at MAN-AA, principals deliberate in a bottom-up democracy by asking academAA for their views before principals make decisions. For example, at a leadership meeting, participants can give their considerations. Decisions taken are then sent to the forum for reflection. Finally, the decision becomes a collective decision. Principals are also open to receiving and responding to discussions with parents and students' guardians. However, it is acknowledged that the principal of MAN-BB wants to go-ahead fast. He encourages his staff to go hand in hand with the rhythm of the principal in terms of balancing speed, challenging evolution, and things that are often unexpected occur in this fast-paced era. The school principle acknowledged that the problem is that he must maintain the dignity of those who lead, considering those who work with him have had many extraordinary achievements. However, on the other hand, the school principal is also aware that his fast movement makes his staff nervous due to the acceleration that's carrying out. The vice-principal also recognizes that the principal's communication with subordinates requires art management. If the MAN-BB principal provides motivation, moral support, and comfort to teachers and teaching staff, the vice-principal of academic affairs said that principals greatly support teachers who excel. Still, there are things they feel uncomfortable with when conveying; then, in this case, a more egalitarian art of communication is needed from leadership to staff. The Javanese culture where

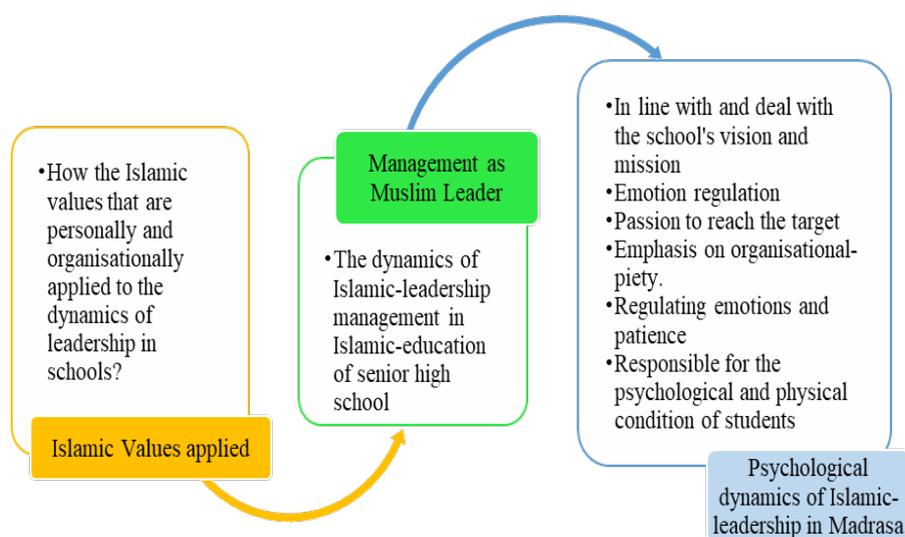
the school is located must be considered in interpreting leading. (S. J. A. Shah, 2006) states that culture and society and community contribute to different interpretations of educational leadership.

The application of the Qur'an and Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad, which integrated with science and the current global era, has not been officially stated. This is because the textbooks and ability measurement tests have not referred to the integration of general science and religion. Besides that, the MAN-BB principal wants to create organisational piety so that human resources in school are not only good in worship rituals but also in terms of social interaction and on the process of educating students to have *akhlakul-karimah*. This is done with the belief that technological advances that make life easier and more comfortable must inevitably be followed by better (piety) behavior. As known, this responsibility is one implementation of the advice, good advice to fellow Muslims, as one of eight outer circles of the Islamic-educational framework (Brooks & Mutohar, 2018).

However, *akhlakul-karimah* (good attitude derived from Islamic teachings) in both schools emphasised that students are taught to demonstrate high levels of politeness. The value of *al-amr bi al-marufwa'l-nahy an al-munkar* means to command the right thing and forbid the wrong things. This concept, affirmed in the Quran, refers to the collective obligation of Muslims to strengthen and encourage correct behaviors and prevent immorality. The value arises in applying the Islamic legal and moral system, upholding justice, and preventing unjust oppression. The value is used in everyday life's moral, social, political, and economic activity. Ideally, this trait distinguishes the Muslim nation from other nations (Brooks & Mutohar, 2018). At MAN-AA, for example, students always greet and salute their elders. This was experienced by researchers while at school. The teacher develops the ideology of politeness by providing role-modelling to students regarding politeness. This can be seen from the devotion of teachers to their superiors, students with teachers, teachers, and *kyai(s)*, which is evident in students of the religious programs, which is felt differently by MAN-BB principals when teaching at state-high-school/public schools which are more normative. Both at MAN-AA and MAN-BB, exemplary politeness is encouraged for the future of students when they are later involved in the wider community. The guidance of *akhlakul-karimah* is directly exemplified to students through the behavior of school principals and teachers. This includes school-principals conducting social service programs in the community.

Furthermore, school principals also intervene in overcoming problems that occurred to students, understanding the problem to its roots. In addition, the MAN-AA librarian acknowledged that the school principal's attention to detail is not only about the neatness of the work desk but also the library interior, colourful-gardens and other school facilities so students would feel cheerful. In addition, the road direction for male and female students also has their separate path to pass. The application of Islamic teachings about men and women, where there is a particular road to male and female dormitories where male students are not allowed to pass through female students' roads. In terms of *maslaha* (public interest) and caring for students, in table 2, numbers 3 and 4, it can be explained that based on the Quran, the Islamic philosophy of education emphasises the role of education not only oriented individually but for society, to achieve happiness and blessings afterlife. Such education

**Figure 1**  
Psychological Dynamics of Islamic-leadership in Madrasa



includes three kinds of aspects such as nurturing, learning, and goodness (S. J. A. Shah, 2017).

Among psychological dynamic of a leader in leading an Islamic school include conditioning thoughts, feelings, and behaviours in line with the school's vision and mission & dealing with it; emotional regulation, especially when dealing with complicated cases and staff disobedience, is eager to achieve the target: high enthusiasm in moving all internal human resources of the school to move forward together and emphasis on organisational piety. Our research finding has said that *shura* (mutual consultation) (like was written by Abbas and Tan (2019)) becomes essential in decision-making, principals as the leader engage the predecessors, senior, and staff, and they have several teams for each responsibility.

## Conclusion

The study found the efforts of Islamic-school principals in leading Islamic schools to exist and compete in the modern era. They must continue to manage excellence with a good reputation in Indonesia to be more successful. As a school with the leading sectors in the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MORA), the Islamic-schools principals did maintain school culture from predecessors: being trust and cooperating with the people they lead, applying *nasiha* (good advice) to develop professionalism and improve performance, doing innovation to adapt and face challenges of times and to adaptation and innovation done by school leaders in facing times in the digital era by following today's trend. This is done by adapting to needs and progress in the digital age, so the principals/leaders have to deal with existing vision –mission created in school by formers, trying to create a substantial effect from the vision side. Both have efforts to balance the religion and science curriculum for students.

Principals, as Muslim leaders, have dynamic interaction of Islamic values personally and organizationally in leadership practices in schools, like deliberations with leadership, led staff, parents, guardians, and students, *maslaha* (public/community interest), consultation (*al-shura'*). The feeling of responsibility of principals is like parents to students. They are responsible for nurturing students with love and thinking about the future, such as their studies at college/university, their careers, and the cooperation of school and alums. Research limitations/implications, this research only focuses on selected top State Islamic schools, namely Madrasah-Aliyah-Negeri (MAN), in two provinces, on Java Island, Indonesia. The originality/value of the implementation of leadership in excellent (top-rated) MANs in Indonesia has inspired other Islamic education institutions. The efforts, views, beliefs, cooperation, and perspectives of the principals and their staff could be beneficial in building an Islamic school that is more open and international. Applying the Islamic leadership model to its principles gives information based on the context that is hoped to be one of the references for Muslim leaders' competencies, mainly in this modern and digital era, and the applied Islamic laws in interaction with communities around schools.

#### *Recommendation*

Based on the data found and discussed in this study, the researcher proposes to find out how educational leadership applied in Islamic schools has changed from time to time following the times and demands of globalisation. Another thing to note is the type of education which in this study are both state schools, and it can be considered for private schools and the data source in the research. Different types of schools can provide a richer picture of Islamic leadership from the point of view of state and private schools because they have different regulations and power relations between the government and the schools' leaders. This research needs to be continued using the grounded-theory approach, to produce Islamic leadership constituency buildings based on the context of Islam and Indonesia. Leadership constructs need to be based on beliefs and contextual situations. The educational leadership constructs in the west emphasise the effectiveness of schools that are the basis of the criteria. In this research, Islamic school leadership explores the internalisation of Islamic values, leadership management, Islamic-based education, adaptation, and innovation. The central theme needs to be further tested to confirm the construct of Islamic leadership.

## **Declarations**

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*Author's Contributions*

ESK and HLM contribute to scriptwriting, reference finding, data retrieval using interviews, focus group discussions, documentation, data processing, and analysis. EIH, contributes to data retrieval (interviews) and documentation.

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