



Phenomenology of Islamic Education Management amid Complexity and Ambiguity in the Digital Disruption Era

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Abstract:

This study explores how Islamic education managers experience and manage complexity and ambiguity in the era of digital disruption through reflective, value-based practices. Digital transformation has intensified tensions between technological adaptation and the preservation of Islamic ethical and spiritual foundations within educational governance. These tensions often manifest as policy uncertainty, generational gaps, and challenges in aligning technology with institutional identity. This research adopts a qualitative phenomenological design and is conducted in selected Islamic boarding schools, using in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis. Data were analysed through iterative processes of data condensation, thematic display, and verification to capture the essence of managerial lived experiences. The findings reveal that value-based management grounded in tauhid, amanah, justice, and masalah provides a stable framework for navigating uncertainty. Curriculum integration and human resource management emerge as ongoing epistemological and axiological negotiations rather than fixed administrative procedures. Musyawarah and philosophical reflection function as central adaptive mechanisms, enabling collective sense-making, ethical deliberation, and contextual responses to digital challenges. Technology is positioned as a supportive means for education and da'wah, not as a determinant of institutional direction. This study contributes by reconceptualising Islamic education management as an interpretive and ethical practice and recommends strengthening reflective leadership and dialogical governance to sustain adaptive capacity.

Key Words: *Islamic education management, phenomenology, digital disruption, value-based leadership, musyawarah*

Abstrak:

Studi ini mengeksplorasi bagaimana pengelola pendidikan Islam mengalami dan mengelola kompleksitas dan ambiguitas di era disrupsi digital melalui praktik reflektif berbasis nilai. Transformasi digital telah mengintensifkan ketegangan antara adaptasi teknologi dan pelestarian fondasi etika dan spiritual Islam dalam tata kelola pendidikan. Ketegangan ini sering bermanifestasi sebagai ketidakpastian kebijakan, kesenjangan generasi, dan tantangan dalam menyelaraskan teknologi dengan identitas kelembagaan. Penelitian ini mengadopsi desain fenomenologis kualitatif dan dilakukan di pesantren terpilih, dengan menggunakan wawancara mendalam, observasi, dan analisis dokumen. Data dianalisis melalui proses berulang kondensasi data, tampilan tematik, dan verifikasi untuk menangkap esensi pengalaman hidup

manajerial. Temuan ini mengungkapkan bahwa manajemen berbasis nilai yang didasarkan pada tauhid, amanah, keadilan, dan masalah memberikan kerangka kerja yang stabil untuk menavigasi ketidakpastian. Integrasi kurikulum dan manajemen sumber daya manusia muncul sebagai negosiasi epistemologis dan aksiologis yang sedang berlangsung daripada prosedur administrasi tetap. Musyawarah dan refleksi filosofis berfungsi sebagai mekanisme adaptif pusat, memungkinkan pembuatan akal kolektif, musyawarah etis, dan respons kontekstual terhadap tantangan digital. Teknologi diposisikan sebagai sarana pendukung pendidikan dan dakwah, bukan sebagai penentu arah kelembagaan. Studi ini berkontribusi dengan mengkonseptualisasikan ulang pengelolaan pendidikan Islam sebagai praktik interpretatif dan etis dan merekomendasikan penguatan kepemimpinan reflektif dan tata kelola dialogis untuk mempertahankan kapasitas adaptif.

Kata Kunci: *Manajemen pendidikan Islam, fenomenologi, disrupsi digital, kepemimpinan berbasis nilai, musyawarah*

INTRODUCTION

The governance of Islamic education has become a critical societal issue in the era of digital disruption, as educational institutions are increasingly required to navigate rapid technological change while preserving the ethical and spiritual foundations of Islamic education. Education is no longer confined to classrooms but embedded within digital ecosystems that shape cognition, behavior, and values across generations. For Muslim societies, this transformation raises profound questions about how Islamic educational institutions can remain relevant, competitive, and morally grounded amid accelerating uncertainty. Scholars argue that education systems are unable to respond adaptively to complexity and risk losing both social legitimacy and formative influence (Diehl et al., 2023; Montefusco et al., 2025). Evidence from global educational reforms indicates that digitalisation, if treated merely as a technical innovation, often deepens value disorientation rather than improving educational quality (Shehaj, A. 2022; Wang et al., 2024). Consequently, the management of Islamic education demands more than administrative competence; it requires philosophical reflection capable of integrating technological adaptation with enduring Islamic values. This study is therefore socially significant because it examines how Islamic educational institutions can sustain ethical coherence while meaningfully responding to complex and ambiguous digital realities.

Despite the strategic importance of Islamic education, many institutions struggle to manage the growing tension between modernisation and the preservation of values. Policymakers often emphasise efficiency, standardisation, and digital performance indicators, while communities expect Islamic schools and boarding institutions to function as guardians of moral character and religious identity. This dual pressure generates systemic problems, including managerial overload, policy ambiguity, and value fragmentation within institutions. Research indicates that educational leaders frequently experience confusion when translating abstract Islamic principles into concrete managerial decisions amid rapid change (Arar et al., 2022; Setiawan, A., 2024). Furthermore, digital transformation has intensified generational disparities among educators,

creating misalignment in pedagogical orientations, work ethics, and communication styles (Kaplia et al., 2024; Jain et al., 2025). These conditions reveal a broader societal problem: the absence of a coherent managerial framework that integrates Islamic philosophical values with adaptive governance strategies. Without such integration, Islamic education risks becoming either technologically advanced but ethically hollow or morally rich but administratively stagnant.

Empirical realities in Islamic educational institutions illustrate how complexity and ambiguity manifest in everyday managerial practice. Administrators are confronted with simultaneous demands to integrate national curricula with religious studies, implement digital learning platforms, satisfy accreditation standards, and respond to parental expectations shaped by globalised educational discourses. At the classroom level, teachers encounter students whose identities are increasingly shaped by social media cultures that often conflict with traditional norms of adab and discipline. Field-based studies show that decision-making processes in Islamic schools frequently involve moral dilemmas, such as balancing technological openness with spiritual safeguarding, or performance targets with holistic character development (Zulfa et al., 2021; Afriani et al., 2023). These phenomena suggest that management is not merely procedural but deeply interpretive, requiring continuous negotiation of meaning. However, such interpretive labor remains largely invisible within dominant managerial frameworks, which prioritise measurable outputs over lived experiences. This gap underscores the need for research that foregrounds the subjective meanings through which educational managers navigate complexity and ambiguity.

Existing scholarship on Islamic education management has provided valuable insights into leadership models, strategic planning, and quality assurance mechanisms grounded in Islamic ethics. Studies emphasise principles such as *shura*, *amanah*, justice, and professionalism as normative foundations for Islamic governance (Irawan et al., 2023; Ansari et al., 2025). Parallel research on digital education highlights opportunities for innovation, blended learning, and expanded access to knowledge within Islamic contexts (Feriansyah, F. 2023; Ahmad, N., & Khalid, M. U., 2024). However, much of this literature remains prescriptive, focusing on what Islamic education should do rather than how managers experience and interpret complex realities. Moreover, managerial studies often adopt positivist or functionalist approaches that underplay ambiguity, emotional burden, and ethical tension. As a result, Islamic values are frequently treated as static ideals rather than dynamic resources actively negotiated in practice. This limitation suggests that existing research has not fully captured the lived dimension of Islamic educational management in disruptive contexts.

Philosophical studies of Islamic education, by contrast, have extensively examined epistemological foundations, the integration of revelation and reason, and the moral aims of education. While these works offer rich conceptual

frameworks, they rarely engage directly with managerial decision-making under contemporary pressures (Findi Alexsandy et al., 2025; Roslaeni et al., 2025). Phenomenological research in Islamic studies has explored religious experience and pedagogical meaning but has seldom focused on institutional leadership and governance (Akhyar et al., 2024; Islamiyah, U. H. 2025). Consequently, a significant research gap emerges at the intersection of phenomenology and Islamic education management. There is limited empirical research that systematically examines how educational managers interpret, reflect on, and operationalise Islamic philosophical values amid uncertainty and contradiction. Addressing this gap is crucial, as unresolved ambiguity can lead to inconsistent policies, value erosion, and managerial burnout. This study positions itself precisely within this uncharted space.

The novelty of this research lies in its integration of phenomenological inquiry with the philosophy of Islamic educational management to analyse the complexity and ambiguity of the digital era. Rather than treating management as a technical function, this study conceptualises it as a reflective practice shaped by lived experience, moral reasoning, and contextual interpretation. By focusing on Islamic boarding and formal educational institutions that actively engage with digital transformation, this research advances the state of the art by revealing how Islamic values function as epistemic and ethical guides in real decision-making processes. This approach moves beyond normative discourse and contributes an empirically grounded philosophical perspective. Such integration remains rare in contemporary literature, particularly within Southeast Asian Islamic education contexts. Therefore, this study offers both conceptual innovation and contextual relevance, making it a timely contribution to international discussions on value-based educational leadership.

Based on the foregoing discussion, this study addresses the following research problem: how do Islamic education managers experience, interpret, and manage complexity and ambiguity in the era of digital disruption, and how do Islamic philosophical values inform their managerial practices? The central argument advanced here is that Islamic education management operates as a continuous process of intellectual reflection, in which values such as tauhid, *maslahah*, and *shura* are dynamically negotiated rather than mechanically applied. This study hypothesises that managerial resilience and coherence emerge not from rigid control systems but from reflective meaning-making practices embedded in institutional culture. By articulating this argument, the research contributes theoretically by reconceptualising Islamic management as an interpretive practice, and practically by offering insights for leaders seeking value-sensitive strategies in uncertain environments.

This study contributes to scholarly and practical discourses by demonstrating that phenomenological analysis can bridge the gap between Islamic educational philosophy and managerial practice. The findings are expected to enrich theoretical debates by portraying management as a lived

ethical activity rather than a purely instrumental process. Practically, the study offers a reflective framework for Islamic educational leaders navigating digital transformation without compromising institutional identity. In a broader sense, this research positions Islamic education management as a meaningful response to global educational challenges, showing how faith-based values can inform adaptive and humane governance. As digital disruption continues to reshape education worldwide, understanding how values are lived, contested, and reaffirmed in management practices has become increasingly urgent. This study thus affirms the relevance of Islamic educational institutions as active contributors to contemporary educational thought rather than passive recipients of external models.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative phenomenological research design to explore the lived experiences and meaning-making processes of Islamic education managers as they navigate complexity and ambiguity in the era of digital disruption. Phenomenology is employed because the research focuses not merely on observable managerial structures or outcomes, but also on how educational leaders interpret, experience, and philosophically reflect on their organisational practices within uncertain, rapidly changing contexts. In line with contemporary qualitative scholarship, phenomenology enables researchers to uncover the essence of a phenomenon as experienced by individuals situated within specific socio-cultural and institutional realities (Alhazmi et al., 2022; Cheeli, B. P., 2024). This approach is particularly appropriate for Islamic education management, where decision-making is deeply intertwined with ethical considerations, religious values, and contextual interpretation. By prioritising subjective experience, this design allows the study to illuminate how Islamic philosophical principles such as *tauhid*, *shura*, *amanah*, and *maslahah* are operationalised in real managerial situations rather than treated as abstract norms.

The research was conducted in Islamic educational institutions that implement formal, integrative education systems, such as modern Islamic boarding schools and madrasas that combine national curricula with religious instruction. The research sites were selected purposively based on several criteria: (1) intensive engagement with digital technologies in learning and management processes; (2) organisational complexity involving multiple managerial layers and stakeholder interests; and (3) continuous exposure to policy changes and quality assurance demands. These characteristics position the institutions as critical sites for examining how complexity and ambiguity are experienced and managed. The selected institutions represent contemporary Islamic educational settings in which traditional values intersect with modern administrative and technological demands, making them particularly suitable for phenomenological inquiry. Purposeful site selection aligns with qualitative

methodological standards that emphasise information-rich contexts capable of revealing deep insights into the studied phenomenon (Gautam, V.K., 2023; Dahal et al., 2024).

Data were collected using multiple qualitative methods to capture rich, contextualised accounts of managerial experience. First, in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants, including institutional leaders (principals, *kiai*, or equivalent), academic managers, teachers, and selected education staff. The interviews explored participants' perceptions of complexity, ambiguity, ethical dilemmas, and philosophical reflection in managerial decision-making. Second, both participatory and non-participatory observations were carried out during meetings, routine managerial activities, and the implementation of institutional policies to document actual practices beyond verbal narratives. Third, a document analysis was conducted of institutional records, including vision and mission statements, organisational structures, standard operating procedures, strategic plans, meeting minutes, and relevant digital archives. Data collection was conducted iteratively until theoretical saturation was achieved, indicated by the repetition of themes and the absence of new significant insights (Alordiah et al., 2024; Naeem et al., 2024).

Data analysis followed an interpretive phenomenological process integrated with Miles, Huberman, and Saldana's interactive model of qualitative analysis. First, data condensation was conducted through transcription, repeated reading, coding, and thematic reduction to identify significant statements related to complexity, ambiguity, and philosophical reflection in management practices. Second, data display involved organising themes into matrices, narrative descriptions, and conceptual maps to facilitate pattern recognition and depth of interpretation. Third, data verification and conclusion were conducted through continuous cross-source comparison, theme refinement, and understanding of the phenomenon's essential meanings. This process culminated in the development of textural descriptions (what is experienced) and structural descriptions (how it is experienced), thereby articulating the essence of Islamic education management in the era of digital disruption (Azman et al., 2024; Halimah et al., 2024).

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, this study employed multiple strategies aligned with qualitative rigor. Credibility was enhanced through triangulation of sources and methods, combining interviews, observations, and document analysis. Member checking was conducted by returning preliminary interpretations to selected informants for confirmation and clarification. Dependability and confirmability were strengthened through prolonged field engagement and the maintenance of an audit trail documenting analytical decisions. Transferability was supported by providing thick descriptions of the research context and participants' experiences. Ethical considerations were rigorously upheld through informed consent, participant confidentiality, and sensitivity to Islamic ethical norms, including respect for

gender boundaries and institutional etiquette. These procedures align with established qualitative research standards (May et al., 2022; Braun, V., & Clarke, V., 2025).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The results of this study present an in-depth phenomenological portrayal of how Islamic education management is practiced and experienced amid complexity and ambiguity in the era of digital disruption. Rather than reducing management to technical procedures, the findings illuminate the lived realities, reflections, and value-based considerations of institutional actors as they navigate policy uncertainty, technological change, and generational dynamics. The results are organised around three interrelated themes: value-based management as a foundational response to complexity; curriculum and human resource integration as arenas of epistemological and axiological negotiation; and *musyawarah*, coupled with philosophical reflection, as adaptive mechanisms in digital contexts. Together, these themes reveal how Islamic educational institutions sustain their identity and coherence by grounding managerial decisions in shared values, collective deliberation, and reflective meaning-making, thereby demonstrating that complexity and ambiguity are not merely managerial obstacles but integral conditions that shape adaptive and principled governance.

Value-Based Management as a Foundational Response to Complexity and Ambiguity

Empirical findings indicate that value-based management at As-Syifa Boarding School and As-Syifa Sagalaherang Islamic Boarding School is operationally understood as a reflective managerial practice grounded in institutional culture and core Islamic values. Rather than relying solely on formal administrative procedures, management practices are continuously interpreted and enacted through values such as *tauhid* (divine orientation), *amanah* (trustworthiness), justice, and *maslahah* (public benefit). These values function as ontological foundations that shape how complexity, uncertainty, and ambiguity are perceived and addressed within daily institutional governance.

The principal emphasised that managerial decisions are never separated from moral accountability before God and the educational community. He stated, "Every policy we take must be accountable not only administratively but also spiritually. When situations are unclear, we return to our core values to determine what is most beneficial for students and the institution." This statement reflects a value-oriented rationality, framing decision-making as an ethical and spiritual responsibility rather than a purely technical act. The researcher interprets this as an intentional shift from instrumental management toward reflective leadership rooted in Islamic ethical consciousness.

Similarly, a senior teacher described how values guide responses to policy uncertainty and external pressures, noting, “Sometimes regulations change quickly, and not all of them fit our context. In those moments, we discuss what aligns with our values and what truly benefits our students.” This perspective illustrates that ambiguity is not eliminated but navigated through collective moral reasoning. The researcher interprets this practice as an adaptive mechanism in which Islamic values provide a stable reference point amid fluctuating regulatory and social demands.

Observational data further corroborate these interview findings. Daily school routines such as congregational prayers, reflective meetings, and value-oriented discussions are consistently integrated into managerial activities. Leadership meetings often begin with brief spiritual reflections, setting an ethical tone before addressing strategic or operational issues. From the researcher’s interpretation, these practices demonstrate how institutional culture embodies values not as abstract ideals but as lived managerial principles that shape organisational behavior and decision-making processes.

Taken together, the data reveal that value-based management at As-Syifa functions as a guiding framework for navigating complexity and ambiguity. Islamic values do not merely complement managerial practices; they constitute the primary lens through which challenges are interpreted, priorities are set, and decisions are justified. This restatement clarifies that complexity is managed not by rigid control but through reflective alignment with shared moral commitments.

A clear pattern emerges from the data: when faced with uncertainty, institutional actors consistently return to shared values as a stabilising force. Decision-making tends to prioritise long-term moral and educational outcomes over short-term efficiency. This pattern indicates that value-based management operates as an internal compass, enabling the institution to remain coherent and resilient despite external volatility and internal ambiguity.

Table 1. Ideal Influence of Value-Based Management on Decision-Making

Informant Position	Interview Excerpt	Indicator
School Principal	“Every policy must be accountable spiritually and ethically, not only administratively.”	Tauhid-oriented leadership
Senior Teacher	“When regulations change, we reflect on what truly benefits students.”	Maslahah-based reasoning
Curriculum Coordinator	“Values help us decide priorities when everything feels urgent.”	Ethical prioritisation
Boarding Supervisor	“Discipline is enforced with justice and compassion, not punishment alone.”	Justice-based management

The table illustrates that value-based management exerts a pervasive influence across hierarchical roles within the institution. From top leadership to operational staff, Islamic values function as shared indicators that inform

managerial judgments. The recurrence of concepts such as tauhid, maslahah, and justice across different positions suggests that values are internalised institutionally rather than imposed structurally. This internalisation enables consistent responses to complexity despite differing responsibilities and perspectives.

Furthermore, the data indicate that values serve as mediating principles between ideals and practice. Rather than prescribing fixed solutions, values provide ethical direction that allows flexibility and contextual adaptation. This explains why ambiguity is not perceived as a managerial failure but rather as an inherent condition that requires reflective engagement. Consequently, value-based management becomes a strategic resource that sustains institutional identity while enabling adaptive governance.

Overall, the data reveal a coherent pattern in which Islamic values operate as the central organising logic of management. Complexity triggers reflection rather than reaction, and ambiguity invites collective moral deliberation rather than unilateral authority. This pattern confirms that value-based management at As-Syifa is not symbolic but constitutive, shaping how reality is understood, decisions are made, and the institution remains resilient in the era of digital disruption.

Curriculum Integration and Human Resource Management as Arenas of Epistemological and Axiological Negotiation

In operational terms, curriculum integration and human resource management at As-Syifa Boarding School and As-Syifa Sagalaherang Islamic Boarding School are understood as continuous processes of negotiation rather than fixed administrative arrangements. Curriculum integration refers to the deliberate alignment of the national curriculum with pesantren-based religious education, while human resource management encompasses the development of teachers and staff across generational divides. Together, these processes function as epistemological negotiations between revealed knowledge and empirical learning, and as axiological negotiations aimed at balancing academic excellence, character formation, and responsiveness to digital transformation.

A curriculum coordinator explained, "Our challenge is not simply combining two curricula, but ensuring that each subject carries meaning and values. We ask whether what we teach strengthens students' faith while also preparing them academically." This statement indicates that curriculum integration is guided by epistemic reflection rather than technical compliance. The researcher interprets this as evidence that knowledge is evaluated not only by its cognitive outcomes but also by its moral and spiritual implications, positioning curriculum design as a value-laden process.

A young teacher highlighted the human resource dimension, stating, "Technology helps us teach more creatively, but we still need guidance from senior teachers to maintain discipline and depth of understanding." This reflects an axiological tension between innovation and continuity. The researcher

interprets this dynamic as a generational negotiation in which technological agility and pedagogical tradition are mutually dependent. Rather than replacing established practices, digital competence is integrated within an ethical and spiritual framework shaped by senior educators.

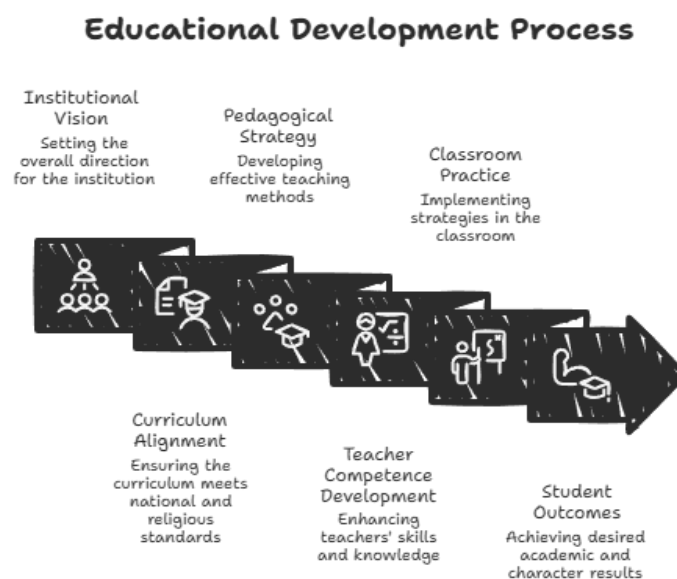


Figure 1. Flow of Curriculum and HR Integration and Its Interpretation

This flow illustrates that curriculum integration and HR management are not linear processes but cyclical and reflective. Institutional vision acts as the epistemic anchor, ensuring coherence between knowledge sources. Teacher development serves as the mediating mechanism through which values and competencies are translated into practice. The cyclical nature of this flow indicates continuous adjustment in response to student needs, technological change, and evaluative feedback.

Observational findings reveal that curriculum planning meetings often involve extended discussions on time allocation, learning outcomes, and moral coherence across subjects. Teachers were observed collaboratively redesigning lesson plans to integrate religious values into project-based learning and digital assignments. From the researcher's perspective, these practices demonstrate that integration is enacted through collective deliberation rather than imposed standardisation, reinforcing the view of curriculum and HR management as negotiated and adaptive processes.

Overall, the data show that curriculum integration and human resource development at As-Syifa are perceived as intertwined challenges that require epistemological clarity and axiological consistency. Teachers and staff are not treated as passive implementers but as reflective agents who actively interpret educational goals. This restatement emphasises that integration is sustained through shared understanding and moral alignment rather than procedural enforcement.

A dominant pattern emerging from the data is the prioritisation of coherence over uniformity. Rather than forcing equivalence between national and religious curricula, the institution emphasises meaningful alignment grounded in values. Similarly, HR management prioritises mentorship and knowledge transmission alongside technical upskilling, indicating a patterned approach in which knowledge integration and human development evolve together.

Table 2. Table: Ideal Influence of Curriculum and HR Integration on Educational Practice

Informant Position	Interview Excerpt	Indicator
Curriculum Coordinator	“Each subject must strengthen faith and academic readiness.”	Epistemological coherence
Senior Teacher	“Values guide how knowledge is delivered, not just what is taught.”	Value-based pedagogy
Young Teacher	“Technology is effective when guided by strong discipline and ethics.”	Axiological balance
HR Manager	“Training focuses on competence and character, not skills alone.”	Integrated HR development

The table demonstrates that curriculum and HR integration influence educational practice across institutional roles. Indicators such as epistemological coherence and axiological balance appear consistently, suggesting that integration is embedded within everyday professional reasoning. This consistency indicates a shared interpretive framework that transcends individual roles, reinforcing institutional alignment.

Moreover, the table reveals that ideal influence operates through relational and dialogical mechanisms. Knowledge, values, and competencies are transmitted through mentorship, collaborative planning, and reflective training rather than hierarchical enforcement. This confirms that curriculum integration and HR management function as dynamic arenas of negotiation, enabling the institution to sustain identity while adapting to evolving educational demands.

The data reveal a recurring pattern in which integration is achieved through dialogue, reflection, and gradual alignment rather than abrupt reform. Epistemological and axiological considerations consistently precede technical decisions, indicating that meaning-making guides managerial action. This pattern underscores the role of Islamic educational philosophy in shaping adaptive yet principled governance amid contemporary complexity.

Musyawah and Philosophical Reflection as Adaptive Mechanisms in the Era of Digital Disruption

Operationally, musyawarah and philosophical reflection at As-Syifa Boarding School and As-Syifa Sagalaherang Islamic Boarding School are enacted as structured yet dialogical practices through which institutional actors

collectively interpret challenges arising from digitalisation, generational change, and managerial complexity. Rather than functioning merely as formal decision-making forums, musyawarah is understood as a reflective learning process grounded in the Islamic principle of shura, where experiential knowledge, professional judgment, and moral values are continuously integrated to guide adaptive governance.

Table 3. Interview Data

Interview Excerpt	Indicator	Informant
"Musyawarah helps us slow down and reflect before making decisions in uncertain situations."	Reflective decision-making	School Principal
"Through discussion, we align technology use with our educational and da'wah values."	Value-oriented digital adaptation	Curriculum Coordinator
"In musyawarah, everyone's experience matters, not only official positions."	Collective epistemology	Senior Teacher
"Reflection forums help us understand students' digital behavior more wisely."	Contextual pedagogical reflection	Boarding Supervisor

The table illustrates that musyawarah functions as an epistemic space in which decision-making is intentionally slowed to allow ethical and contextual reflection. Indicators such as reflective decision-making and collective epistemology suggest that institutional actors do not treat uncertainty as a problem to be eliminated, but rather as a condition to be thoughtfully engaged with. This reflects a post-technocratic orientation to management, where judgment is formed through dialogue rather than algorithmic efficiency.

From a philosophical perspective, the data indicate that shura operates simultaneously as an ethical principle and an epistemological method. Knowledge is generated relationally through shared reflection, rather than hierarchically imposed. The integration of technology within musyawarah further demonstrates an axiological stance in which digital tools are subordinated to educational meaning and moral purpose, reinforcing institutional identity amid digital disruption.

Observational data strengthen these interpretations. Regular musyawarah sessions were observed to include reflective pauses, spiritual reminders, and open-ended dialogue before strategic decisions were made. Meetings addressing digital learning platforms or student behavior on social media often included discussions of adab, intention (niyyah), and long-term character formation. The researcher interprets these practices as evidence that philosophical reflection is embedded within routine management, enabling adaptive responses without compromising core values.

In summary, the findings show that musyawarah and philosophical reflection constitute a central adaptive mechanism in managing digital disruption. Decision-making is framed as a collective moral endeavor rather than a technical response, allowing the institution to interpret complexity through

shared values and lived experience. This restatement clarifies that adaptation at As-Syifa is achieved through reflective coherence rather than reactive change.

Table 4. Ideal Influence of Musyawarah on Adaptive Educational Management

Informant Position	Interview Excerpt	Indicator
School Principal	“Musyawarah ensures our decisions remain ethical in uncertain contexts.”	Ethical governance
Curriculum Coordinator	“Technology must serve our mission, not redefine it.”	Value-based digital control
Senior Teacher	“Dialogue helps us learn from one another’s experiences.”	Collective learning
Boarding Supervisor	“Reflection forums strengthen our response to students’ digital lives.”	Contextual adaptation

The table demonstrates that musyawarah exerts an ideal influence by embedding ethical reasoning and collective learning within managerial practice. Across roles, musyawarah is consistently associated with indicators that emphasise moral coherence, dialogue, and contextual awareness. This consistency suggests that reflective governance is not confined to leadership but diffused throughout the organisational structure.

Moreover, the table reveals that musyawarah mediates the relationship between tradition and change. By positioning technology as a means rather than an end, institutional actors preserve educational purpose while remaining adaptive. This dynamic affirms that philosophical reflection functions as a stabilising force that enables innovation without disorientation.

A clear pattern emerges in which complexity and digital disruption are addressed through dialogical reflection rather than unilateral control. Musyawarah consistently precedes major decisions, serving as a space for ethical calibration and shared understanding. This pattern confirms that shura operates as a living managerial philosophy, sustaining institutional identity while enabling adaptive, context-sensitive governance in the digital era.

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that value-based management at As-Syifa functions as a foundational response to complexity and ambiguity, aligning with and extending existing scholarship on Islamic educational leadership. Previous studies emphasise that Islamic education management cannot be reduced to technical efficiency but must be grounded in transcendent values that shape organisational meaning (Norman et al., 2025; Kurniawan, S., 2025). The present findings corroborate this view by showing that values such as tauhid, amanah, justice, and maslahah are not mere symbolic add-ons but serve as ontological anchors that guide sense-making in uncertain contexts. However, this study advances the literature by empirically demonstrating how value-based

management actively mediates ambiguity. In contrast, much of the existing research treats values as normative ideals rather than lived managerial practices (Marshall, M. 2023; Hanisch, M., 2024). Thus, the findings contribute to the literature by repositioning Islamic values as constitutive elements of adaptive governance rather than static ethical prescriptions.

The second major finding concerning curriculum integration and human resource management resonates with studies on the epistemological integration of knowledge in Islamic education (Ciptadi, T., & Tobroni, T. 2024; Rifai et al., 2025). As prior research indicates, this study confirms that integrating national curricula with religious education entails ongoing negotiation between revealed knowledge and empirical learning (Skrefsrud, T. A., 2022; Lewin et al., 2023). However, the present findings diverge from more instrumental approaches by showing that integration is sustained by axiological coherence rather than by administrative alignment alone. The role of teachers as reflective agents contrasts with technocratic models of curriculum reform that prioritise standardisation and performance metrics (Aydarova, E., 2024). This suggests a theoretical implication: curriculum integration in Islamic education should be conceptualised as an epistemic–axiological process, in which human resource development serves as a central mediator of knowledge integration.

The third finding, which highlights musyawarah and philosophical reflection as adaptive mechanisms, aligns closely with the literature on deliberative leadership and collective sense-making in complex organisations (Nugraha, E., 2024; Hakim et al., 2025). Within Islamic scholarship, shura has long been recognised as a foundational principle of ethical governance (Arodha, D., 2025; Abdul Rahim, A., 2025). This study empirically extends these insights by demonstrating that musyawarah operates not merely as a decision-making tool but as an epistemological method through which uncertainty is embraced, and meaning is co-constructed. Unlike hierarchical or algorithmic decision-making models often promoted in digital transformation discourse (Kim et al., 2022; Bodrožić et al., 2022), the findings show that reflective dialogue enables institutions to integrate technology without surrendering moral agency. This contributes theoretically by framing shura as a dynamic governance philosophy compatible with the complexity of the digital era.

Taken together, these findings have important theoretical implications for the management of Islamic education. First, they suggest a shift from procedural rationality to reflective–value-based rationality, in which management is understood as an ongoing moral and epistemic practice. Second, the study proposes an integrative framework in which ontology (values and culture), epistemology (knowledge integration), and axiology (ethical action) are inseparable dimensions of governance. This challenges dominant managerial theories that treat values, knowledge, and action as distinct domains (Bruton et al., 2022; Chin et al., 2024). Practically, the findings imply that Islamic educational institutions should invest not only in digital infrastructure and technical training

but also in cultivating reflective leadership, dialogical forums, and value-based professional development to sustain coherence amid rapid change.

Finally, this study contributes to broader debates on educational leadership in the era of digital disruption by offering an alternative model rooted in Islamic philosophy yet relevant beyond its immediate context. While many studies emphasise agility, innovation, and data-driven decision-making as responses to complexity (Medeiros et al., 2022; ZareRavasan, A., 2023), the findings here suggest that resilience and adaptability emerge from ethical coherence and collective reflection. This does not reject innovation but reframes it within a moral horizon. Consequently, Islamic education management can be positioned as a critical interlocutor in global discussions on post-technocratic leadership, demonstrating how faith-based values can inform adaptive, humane, and context-sensitive governance in an increasingly uncertain world.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that the management of Islamic education in the era of digital disruption is fundamentally a reflective, value-oriented practice rather than a purely technical or procedural endeavour. The most important insight gained from this research is that complexity and ambiguity are not merely managerial obstacles but intrinsic conditions that shape contemporary educational governance. At As-Syifa, Islamic values such as *tauhid*, *amanah*, justice, and *maslahah* serve as ontological anchors that guide decision-making amid uncertainty. At the same time, curriculum integration and human resource management constitute continuous epistemological and axiological negotiations. Musyawarah and philosophical reflection emerge as central adaptive mechanisms through which institutional actors collectively interpret challenges, align technology with educational purpose, and preserve Islamic identity. The key lesson of this study is that resilience and adaptability in Islamic education management are cultivated through ethical coherence, collective deliberation, and sustained reflection, enabling institutions to respond to rapid change without losing their moral and spiritual orientation.

From a scholarly perspective, this study advances Islamic educational management by empirically bridging phenomenology and the philosophy of management. It moves beyond normative discourse by demonstrating how Islamic management principles are lived and enacted in everyday managerial practices, offering an integrative framework that connects values, knowledge, and ethical action. At the same time, this research has limitations, as it is situated within a specific institutional context and primarily reflects the perspectives of managers and educators. Future research could expand this inquiry through comparative, multi-contextual, or longitudinal designs, and by incorporating the voices of students and parents, to further explore how value-based and reflective governance evolves across diverse Islamic educational settings amid ongoing digital and societal transformations.

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