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## The Transformative Leadership Strategy: Efforts to Improve the Positive Image of School

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### Abstrak

Masyarakat saat ini berfikir lebih realistis serta kritis dalam memilih lembaga pendidikan untuk keluarganya. Maka dari itu, lembaga pendidikan melalui kepala sekolah sebagai manajer harus menjalankan tugasnya dengan gaya kepemimpinan transformatif agar citra positif sekolah meningkat sehingga menjadi pilihan utama masyarakat untuk menyekolahkan keluarganya. Penelitian ini menyajikan tentang strategi kepemimpinan transformatif dalam meningkatkan citra sekolah sehingga eksis di tengah persaingan antara institusi pendidikan. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif jenis studi kasus. Metode pengumpulan data menggunakan observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Objek penelitian ini adalah MA Nurul Jadid. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa: Kepemimpinan transformatif mampu menciptakan dan meningkatkan citra positif sekolah dimana citra positif MA Nurul Jadid dapat dilihat dari prestasi yang diraih dibidang akademik dan non akademik; Strategi yang digunakan kepala sekolah dalam meningkatkan citra positif MA Nurul Jadid adalah dengan memberdayakan dan meningkatkan kedisiplinan semua warga sekolah yang dalam pelaksanaannya dipengaruhi oleh faktor pendukung yaitu prestasi akademik, kepribadian yang baik, serta sosialisasi yang tinggi sedangkan faktor penghambat yaitu kurangnya kesadaran guru baru dalam mendidik siswa.

**Kata Kunci:** kepemimpinan transformatif, citra positif sekolah, kepala sekolah

### Abstract

*Today's society thinks more realistically and critically in choosing educational institutions for their families. Therefore, educational institutions, through the principal as a manager, must carry out their duties with a transformative leadership style so that the positive image of the school increases so that it becomes the community's first choice to send their families to the school. This study presents a transformative leadership strategy for improving the school's image so that it exists amid competition between educational institutions. This research uses a qualitative case study approach. Methods of data collection using observation, interviews, and documentation. The object of this research is Islamic Senior High School of Nurul Jadid. The results showed that: Transformative leadership can create and enhance a positive image of the school where the positive image of Islamic Senior High School of Nurul Jadid can be seen from the achievements in academic and non-academic fields; The strategy used by the principal in improving the positive image of Islamic Senior High School of Nurul Jadid is by empowering and increasing the discipline of all school members which in its implementation is influenced by supporting factors, namely academic achievement, pleasing personality, and high socialization while the inhibiting factor is the lack of awareness of new teachers in educating students.*

**Keywords:** transformative leadership, positive image of school, principal

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## INTRODUCTION

Education is something that is needed for every human being because with human education; it will be better if it has received a good education as well. To achieve quality education, of course, it must be supported by the existence of services and the provision of good facilities in each school, but in all schools, the facilities and services are not necessarily good (Saepudin & Irawaty, 2020). However, this is always used to minimize public perception by way of the school principal optimally carrying out his role in increasing the positive image of the school (Abrori & Muali, 2020). People today think more realistically and critically in choosing educational institutions for their families. Therefore, educational institutions should always innovate in providing professional services to the academic community (Triani, 2021). Educational institutions are expected to make continuous quality improvements through innovative and creative steps. Not only that, educational institutions are expected to produce outputs that have competitive character and advantages to face the future.

Along with the development of the times, many educational institutions from various levels have grown in the community. Each institution shows a superior program that is the hallmark of the institution to compete to attract the attention of the community. This is related to the community, where they have many options for the best educational institutions for their family members (Triani, 2021). One of the factors that influence society in determining educational institutions is the existence of a positive image of an educational institution. Here is the urgency of the principal's role in building and enhancing a positive image in the institution so that it can attract the attention of the community. Leadership is a science that seeks to direct, motivate, and inspire a group to achieve common goals (Muallidin, 2016). Meanwhile, according to Robbin and Coulter, leadership is the role of a leader to achieve a goal and can influence others, and has managerial authority (Robbins & Coulter, 2012).

In addition, leadership is an essential factor in dealing with various changes, including organization, responding to problems, mobilizing all members who have organizational potential to encourage growth, and creating strong beliefs about the ideals of an organization (Syahrul, 2015). A leader has obligations from all aspects, both physically and spiritually, which have an impact on the success of all the activities he leads, so it can be said that being a leader is not easy and will not be the same for every leader in carrying out his leadership duties. Leadership is a person's ability to influence or manage others (Bashori, 2019a).

The image of an institution will be formed by the presence of 4 elements, namely: (1) personality, personality is the entire character of the institution that is known by the public, such as an institution that has responsibility and can be trusted. (2) reputation, reputation is the public's perception of the past actions of an institution and the views of an institution in the future. The reputation carried out by the institution and what the community believes is obtained based on own experience or from other parties. (3) Value, Value is a positive value possessed by an institution, such as the attitude of an institution that cares for the community, educators, and education staff who serve quickly and respond to requests or complaints from the community. (4) institutional identity, institutional identity is a factor that facilitates the introduction of institutions to the public, such as logos, slogans, and colors (Triani, 2021).

The image of each institution is considered one of the benchmarks. This is because the image is a positive value to the community of the institution (Eliba & Zulkarnain, 2017). Image has a very important role in making an institution have more value than other institutions (Louisrianda & Tabrani, 2017). This shows that the institution is very important to build an image in the eyes of the public because as a provider of educational services, the institution is obliged to provide professional services. In addition, education must continue to be improved from time to time to maintain and improve the quality of education and improve school services for student satisfaction. It aims to evaluate the performance of the institution to establish the seriousness of service in educational institutions. The image of the school also affects the perceptions of parents. The quality of the school's image is very important and becomes a consideration for parents in deciding school choices. Several

researchers have conducted research on the positive image of schools. The image in an institution cannot be created directly, but the image must be formed and maintained by carrying out strategies through various appropriate activities to build a positive image of the institution (Triani, 2021).

Islamic Senior High School of Nurul Jadid is one of the private Islamic Senior High Schools under the auspices of the Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School, which has a good image in the community. Based on initial observations, this institution has implemented several methods that have succeeded in making the image of the institution more visible, namely the increasing public interest in entrusting their children to the institution. Another indicator that supports the better image of Nurul Jadid Islamic Senior High School is the many achievements achieved by her students in academic and non-academic fields, including winning the Two Horseshoe Albanjari Festival in 2020, the Two Horseshoe Story Telling Champion, the second winner of the Horseshoe Story Telling General in Madaris week, First Winner of Khitobah organized by Malang State Islamic University, Favorite Arabic Poster Champion, 1st and 2nd Place in the Musabaqah Fahmil Qur'an branch held by the Probolinggo Regency Government in 2020.

Based on the problems above, a leadership style is needed that can be used to improve the positive image of the school. The application of transformative leadership can improve the school's positive appearance because it can positively affect the surrounding environment. Besides that, it can also encourage subordinates to be creative and innovative in making changes and have a good impact on transforming into future leaders. Therefore, researchers are interested in researching "Transformative Leadership Strategy: Efforts to Improve Positive Image of School."

## **METHOD**

The research method used is qualitative with a case study approach. This research was carried out at Islamic Senior High School of Nurul Jadid since the researchers made initial observations to determine the focus of the study, starting from September 20 to November 10, 2021. The techniques used to obtain valid and accountable data in this study, researchers conducted observations and in-depth interviews with informants, namely principals and teachers. Researchers try to provide a structured description, based on existing and measurable facts related to the situation in the field, both in the form of the object under study and points about these conditions. Data analysis in this study was carried out by reducing data, displaying data, and drawing conclusions.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Islamic Senior High School of Nurul Jadid is an Islamic Senior High School under the Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School in Paiton Probolinggo, which has a positive image. In addition to having a positive school image, the Islamic Senior High School of Nurul Jadid was chosen by the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia as one of 4 Islamic Senior High Schools throughout Indonesia, which was developed into an International Standard Islamic Senior High School Pioneer. This is intended so that the Islamic Senior High School of Nurul Jadid continues to exist during global competition so that the output produced can continue studies at quality universities both at home and abroad. Islamic Senior High School of Nurul Jadid has also been Accredited A with a score of 97. In addition, the effective programs held at Islamic Senior High School of Nurul Jadid consist of regular and excellent programs. The flagship programs include Religion, Natural Sciences, and Tahfidz Superior, for Regular programs including Science Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, and Languages. Islamic Senior High School of Nurul Jadid is one of the superior madrasas because it has a good positive image, among the positive images it has, namely: quality output, excellent programs, and outstanding extracurriculars such as multimedia sports and hadrah arts. In taking action to serve and introduce himself to the community, Islamic Senior High School of Nurul Jadid uses online media such as Youtube, Website, Facebook, Telegram,

etc. So with that, the public knows more about new information and introduces to the public more that this institution has many achievements.

### **Transformative Leadership in Improving Schools' Positive Image**

Understanding the concept of leadership is always related to knowledge of the characteristics and models of each individual who is entrusted with leading an institution (Bustamante & Combs, 2011). Although the implementation is different for each individual, the goal is the same, and this is related to the location where the institution was founded. Apart from that leading model, and location, an institution needs someone to lead the institution. The word lead also has the meaning of guiding, guiding, regulating, and being able to influence or show. A leader can lead by understanding the character of the community through an approach or giving direction and by supervising community efforts based on the results of performance, position, or authority (Bashori, 2019, Rofiki & Munawaroh, 2021). Based on the above understanding, it can be concluded that leadership theory is a study of someone who has physical and psychological characteristics and a position that is considered superior to others in the group so that the person concerned can influence others to take action toward achievement objective.

Leadership is the effort of a leader to influence his subordinates to achieve the goals that have been set. The principal is a leader who has a vital role in the world of education (Diana, Sunnah, & Khoiriyah, 2021). Mr. Lukman Al Hakim has served as the head of Nurul Jadid Islamic Senior High School for four years running since January 2018. In his leadership, the head of the Madrasah has an important role to play in enhancing the positive image of his institution. The head of Islamic Senior High School of Nurul Jadid in addition to acting as a Manager in Madrasahs is also a Top Leader because of his position as a good school leader and manager through making decisions and decisions.

In carrying out his role as a manager, the principal is expected to have skills in seeking and maximizing interrelated activities for the goals to be achieved. Meanwhile, the principal must have managerial knowledge, which is, of course, very necessary to keep the institution running effectively and efficiently and to prove that all educational regulations run in an orderly and good manner (Suharsaputra, 2016, Duryat, 2016, Rofiki, Diana, & Amin, 2022). the head of Nurul Jadid Islamic Senior High School is a leader who has high commitment and firm character, so with this commitment, the character can succeed in advancing the school for the better. This can be seen from the achievements achieved during his tenure in both Academic and Non-Academic fields.

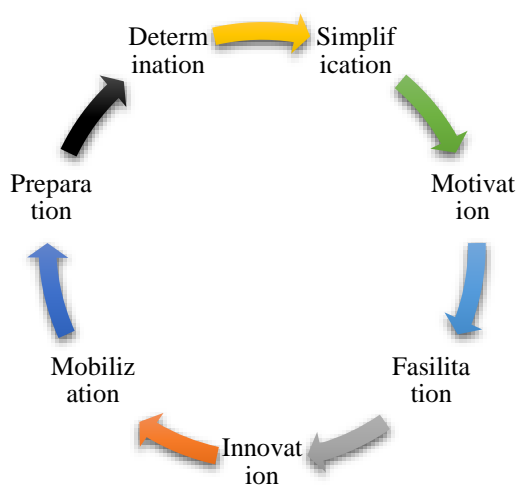
Transformative leadership is defined as a modern leadership model that is considered more effective and efficient in increasing innovation, especially in terms of situations and conditions in a traditional place. Transformative leadership is also a leadership competency when carrying out performance with subordinate members in order to create maximum changes regarding the ability of the institution to achieve the goals that have been set. These resources or capabilities include internal and external factors of an institution. Internal factors include facilities (facilities and infrastructure, funds, and human resources for institutional members (Hidayat & Machali, 2012).

Initially, transformative leadership referred to three characteristics, namely intellectual stimulation, charisma, and individual consideration. However, as time progressed, an appeal was translated into two, namely inspirational motivation and influence idealization. According to objective evidence in practice, there is no apparent difference between idealization and emotional motivation but only seen from the concept of the two, which is used as a factor of difference. Therefore, in the development of Furthermore, transformative leadership is further detailed in four characteristics: intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, individual consideration, and idealization of influence (Avolio, Bass, & Jung, 1999). The detailed definitions of each of these characters are as follows:

1. Intellectual Stimulation. Intellectual stimulation is the process of increasing understanding and stimulating the emergence of new perspectives in looking at problems, thinking, and imagining, as well as setting belief values.

2. Inspirational Motivation. Inspirational motivation is an attitude that always raises challenges, can achieve high expectations, arouse enthusiasm and motivation in others, and encourages intuition and kindness in others.
3. Individual Consideration. Individual consideration is behavior that always listens with care and gives special attention, support, enthusiasm, and effort to its members' achievement and growth needs.
4. Idealization of Influence. Influence idealization is behavior that results in high standards of conduct, provides insight and awareness of the vision, demonstrates confidence, generates respect, pride, and trust, fosters commitment and performance beyond expectations, and enforces ethical and moral behavior (Komsiyah, 2016).

Furthermore, in its application, transformative leadership must adhere to the principles of transformative leadership that synergize, namely: simplification, motivation, facilitation, innovation, mobilization, preparation, and determination. These principles can be described as follows.



**Figure 1. Principles of Transformative Leadership (Bashori, 2019b)**

Based on the results of observations that researchers have done, it is known that the role of the principal and his subordinates is very influential in creating a positive image of a good school. After the researchers met with Mr. Lukman Al Hakim (2021) as the head of Nurul Jadid Islamic Senior High School, the researchers carried out socialization about efforts to improve the positive image of the school by increasing discipline from both educators and students. By the principles of development and operational reference for preparing the curriculum at the education unit level, the Islamic Senior High School of Nurul Jadid curriculum is structured to adjust education programs to the needs and potentials of Islamic Senior High School. In addition to the curriculum, Islamic Senior High School of Nurul Jadid, as a unit of modern education providers, must pay attention to challenges and future developments. Challenges and developments that must be faced include: (1) the high-speed flow of change due to globalization which causes mobility across sectors and places, (2) the impact of globalization that affects changes in human morals and behavior, and (3) the rapid development of technology and science, (4) declining public and parents awareness of the importance of education, (5) free trade period, (6) and the information age.

In addition, transformative leadership will positively influence the relationship between superiors and subordinates. In this case, teachers and education staff feel happiness, trust, loyalty, and respect for the principal. Furthermore, as well as being motivated to do work with results that exceed the targets that have been determined together. The transformative leadership applied by the principal will increase the awareness of his followers by attracting the ideals and values so that it will cause changes towards improvement for the institution. In other words, these positive changes will occur in their subordinates. For example, their

subsidiaries or employees are always ready to accept the tasks given by the leader without being burdened, happy, and satisfied in doing their work which will increase productivity and work performance. Of course, the changes that occur to their subordinates will also make it easier for the educational institution to improve its positive image and will also be able to compete with other institutions (Komsiyah, 2016, Rofiki, Sholeh, & Akbar, 2021).

### **The Principal's Strategy in Improving the Positive Image of Nurul Jadid Islamic Senior High School**

Efforts to plan or provide maximum service at Islamic Senior High School of Nurul Jadid can be applied through activity programs. These program activities will become a reference that must be fulfilled not only by all school members but also by the general public. Islamic Senior High School of Nurul Jadid uses online media such as Youtube, Website, Facebook, Telegram, etc. So with that, the public knows more about new information and introduces to the public more that this institution has many achievements.

Mr. Lukman Al Hakim (2021) the Head of Nurul Jadid Islamic Senior High School said that in Improving the Positive Image of the school there needs to be a Strategy, namely by Increasing Discipline, both in terms of Educators and Students, so the meaning of discipline here is that they carry out their duties according to the rules for the role of each function. This strategy was developed at Islamic Senior High School of Nurul Jadid so that it was able to achieve various proud achievements and program activities carried out. It can be concluded that increasing the discipline of educators and students and providing good and maximum service will provide satisfactory results and also make the community have a good assessment of the school's image.

The image of the madrasa as a dignified institution is certainly not with ordinary work but must be with the passion and sincerity of a madrasa head who is given the additional task of organizing and motivating the components of education in the madrasa environment to work in one goal to create and improve image The madrasa. The strategy of the principal of Islamic Senior High School of Nurul Jadid in building and improving the positive image of the school has certainly gone through stages so that it can remain consistent until now, as it is known that maintaining something that has been obtained will be more difficult than the process of getting it. To achieve everything, there must be a strategy that has been carried out by the principal of Nurul Jadid Islamic Senior High School in overcoming this, so that Islamic Senior High School of Nurul Jadid can survive as a high school that has a positive image. The school's strategy to improve the image is by empowering all school members to take part in developing the school because the school's image will be formed based on several elements and many factors in the form of components. Of all the components in this study, including factors that greatly affect the school's image, namely extracurricular, superior program, and discipline of teachers and students.

Furthermore, the strategy that has been carried out by the principal of the Islamic Senior High School of Nurul Jadid in building and improving the image of the school can be used as a reference for other schools so that it can improve the image of the school and have competitiveness with excellent schools around it even though it cannot be denied that several factors are Supporting and Inhibiting the process. Some of the supporting factors in increasing the positive image of the school are (1) In improving and developing the Positive Image of the School, Academic achievement is one of the Supporting Factors at Islamic Senior High School of Nurul Jadid, and (2) Having a good personality in terms of morals inside and outside school, (3) Having high socialization in society or school, while the inhibiting factors are (1) Lack of freedom to improve the image because it is under the auspices of the foundation, (2) Lack of awareness of new teachers in educating students.

Educational institutions that are increasingly advanced and modern, of course, really need a good and character leadership model, so they can optimize the institution according to the basis of the education management that has been set (Syadzili, 2019). The success of an educational institution is not only seen from the results of sound output in productivity but also sees the achievements of all elements that are actively involved in institutions managed by a leader-use of strategy by implementing Transformative Leadership Strategy in Improving the School's Positive Image. Transformative leadership is very influential on changes in



educational institutions because it can have great potential to form high-level commitments in responding to natural or inherited difficulties that have become a habit of educational change plans (Bashori, 2019b, Bashori, 2019a). In addition, transformative leadership is leadership that prioritizes the task of a leader to motivate subordinates to carry out their responsibilities and create more change than they want.

The principal must also pay attention to his subordinate members so that all provisions made have been carefully considered. From this explanation, the principal has also included a leader who has a transformative leadership model. This is, as stated by Rahayu (2018), among the characteristics of Transformative Leadership, namely being able to be a good role model and being able to create a sense of pride in the school community. Furthermore, the principal must also provide motivation and attention and foster the trust of the school community. Likewise, the statement from Manktelow & Carlson explains that Transformative Leadership is a leadership model that has forward-thinking and takes the initiative to create new values that can affect the institution. This model of leadership will be firm but not arbitrary in making decisions (Mustingsih, 2013).

This is in line with what Asmani (2012) stated, that the right and good decisions certainly cannot be made arbitrarily. Therefore, there are several ways to make good and appropriate decisions, namely: (1) the method of deliberation, (2) input and suggestions, and (3) feelings. Meanwhile, according to Wahab (2011), making decisions in an institution must go through deliberation by all related parties. Decision-making can be carried out by the leader himself or by involving the participation of all subordinates to maintain communication.

In leading an institution or organization, there must be obstacles and problems that must be faced. The problem Islamic Senior High School of Nurul Jadid faces is how the image of the school created can be maintained and developed because this is part of the management of school image management. The image will have a good impact if the school keeps and designs to achieve better innovation renewal. In addition, there needs to be motivation for some teachers to create higher self-commitment. As stated by Mustingsih (2013), explaining how to overcome problems, a leader must have individual expertise and suitable communication methods to motivate subordinate members. To overcome school issues, the head of Islamic Senior High School of Nurul Jadid took strategic steps to build a positive image.

## CONCLUSION

In terms of increasing the Positive Image of the School, a Transformative leadership strategy can be applied because this strategy can increase the positive image, especially at Islamic Senior High School of Nurul Jadid to transform into future leaders. The strategy of the head of Nurul Jadid Islamic Senior High School in building and improving the appearance of the school has undoubtedly gone through stages so that it can be like this now; several factors become obstacles in the process as it is known that maintaining something that has been obtained will be more complex than the process of getting it. To achieve everything, there must be a strategy that has been carried out by the principal of the Nurul Jadid Islamic Senior High School to overcome this so that Islamic Senior High School of Nurul Jadid can survive as an upper secondary Madrasah that has a positive image. The strategy carried out by the head of Nurul Jadid Islamic Senior High School in building and improving the school's appearance can be used as a reference for other schools so that it can enhance the image of the Islamic Senior High School and have competitiveness with excellent schools in the vicinity.

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