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The Influence of Spiritual and Adaptive Leadership in Increasing the Competitiveness of Islamic Educational Institutions: A Quantitative Study at the Nurul Ilmi Integrated Educational Institution, Banyuasin Regency

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the influence of spiritual leadership and adaptive leadership on the competitiveness of Islamic Educational Institutions at the Nurul Ilmi Integrated Educational Institution in Banyuasin Regency. The study used a quantitative approach with an associative survey design and an ex post facto method. The research sample consisted of 88 respondents through a total sampling technique. Data were collected using a Likert scale questionnaire and analyzed using multiple linear regression using IBM SPSS Statistics through the t-test, F-test, and coefficient of determination. The results showed that spiritual leadership and adaptive leadership each had a positive and significant effect on the competitiveness of institutions. Simultaneously, both variables also had a significant effect with a contribution of 54.3 percent. This finding confirms that the integration of spiritual values and adaptive capabilities in leadership is an important factor in increasing the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions through strengthening quality, innovation, and sustainable organizational competitiveness.

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INTRODUCTION

The transformation of education in the era of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 and Society 5.0 requires Islamic educational institutions to improve their quality, innovation, and competitiveness to maintain public trust. Educational institutions are not only required to produce graduates who excel academically, but also possess adaptive skills, digital literacy, and strong spiritual character. In this context, leadership is a crucial factor in determining the success of educational institutions in facing increasingly fierce change and competition (Elmanisar et al., 2024; Safitri et al., 2025). Spiritual leadership is considered capable of building a work culture based on religious values such as trustworthiness, exemplary behavior, and honesty, while adaptive leadership plays a role in encouraging innovation and organizational capacity to face change.

This phenomenon also occurred at the Nurul Ilmi Integrated Educational Institution (LPT) in Banyuasin Regency. Based on initial observations, this institution has implemented a religious culture through habitual worship and exemplary leadership. However, the internalization of spiritual values in the work behavior of educators has not been optimal. Furthermore, adaptation to curriculum changes and the use of learning technology still face challenges due to uneven distribution of teachers' digital skills. This situation indicates that the integration of spiritual leadership and adaptive leadership does not fully support the increased competitiveness of educational institutions.

Previous research has shown that spiritual leadership influences organizational culture and work motivation (Tobroni, 2015; Sarnoto & Sholihin, 2017), while adaptive leadership contributes to educational innovation and teacher performance (Elmanisar et al., 2024; Safitri et al., 2025). However, most studies still examine these two variables separately and have not examined their simultaneous influence on the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions. Furthermore, previous research predominantly uses conceptual and qualitative approaches, resulting in limited empirical evidence regarding the relationship between these three variables. This situation indicates a research gap regarding the integration of spiritual leadership and adaptive leadership in improving the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions.

Based on this research gap, this study offers a novel approach in integrating spiritual leadership and adaptive leadership into one empirical model to explain the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions through a quantitative approach. This study aims to analyze the

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influence of spiritual leadership and adaptive leadership on the competitiveness of the Nurul Ilmi Integrated Educational Institution in Banyuasin Regency. The results are expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of Islamic educational management studies and provide practical considerations for educational institution managers in formulating innovative, adaptive, and spiritually-based leadership strategies.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach with an associative research type to analyze the influence of spiritual leadership and adaptive leadership on the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions at the Nurul Ilmi Integrated Educational Institution in Banyuasin Regency. The quantitative approach was used because it is able to measure the relationship between variables objectively through statistical analysis, resulting in systematic and measurable data (Sugiyono, 2022; Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The research design used a correlational survey with an ex post facto method because the research variables have occurred naturally without direct treatment from the researcher (Emzir, 2020). The independent variables in this study consist of spiritual leadership (X1) and adaptive leadership (X2), while the dependent variable is the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions (Y).

The study population consisted of all 88 teaching and administrative staff at the Nurul Ilmi Integrated Educational Institution in Banyuasin Regency. The sampling technique used saturated sampling or total sampling, so that all members of the population were used as research samples (Arikunto, 2020). Data collection was conducted using a closed questionnaire with a five-level Likert scale, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree (Sudaryono, 2021). The research instrument was compiled based on theoretical indicators of each variable, namely spiritual leadership which includes ṣiddiq, amanah, tabligh, and fathanah (Tobroni, 2015); adaptive leadership which includes responsiveness to change, innovation, collaboration, problem-solving, and decision-making flexibility (Heifetz, 1994); and educational institution competitiveness which includes service quality, public trust, achievement, program innovation, and institutional competitiveness (Porter, 1998; Zubairi et al., 2022).

Instrument validity was tested using Pearson Product Moment correlation, while reliability was tested using Cronbach's Alpha with an alpha value of ≥ 0.70 (Ghozali, 2021). Data analysis was performed using descriptive and inferential statistics with the help of IBM SPSS Statistics. Prior to hypothesis testing, prerequisite analysis tests were conducted, including normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity tests. Hypothesis testing used multiple linear regression

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analysis to determine the effect of spiritual leadership and adaptive leadership on the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions, both partially through the t-test and simultaneously through the F-test. In addition, the coefficient of determination (R^2) was used to determine the contribution of the independent variables to the dependent variable (Sugiyono, 2022; Ghozali, 2021).

RESULT

Descriptive Data

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Spiritual Leadership	88	40.00	58.00	50.2159	4.11459
Adaptive Leadership	88	30.00	50.00	41.7955	4.07448
Competitiveness of Islamic Educational Institutions	88	32.00	50.00	41.6932	3.86067
Valid N (listwise)	88				

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the number of respondents in the study was 88. The data was then analyzed descriptively to obtain a general overview of each research variable.

Analysis Condition Test

Table 2 Normality Test Results

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		
		Unstandardized Residual
N		88
Normal Parametersa,b	Mean	.0000000
	Standard Deviation	2.61027645
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.069
	Positive	.060

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	Negative	-.069
Test Statistics		.069
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.200c,d
a. Test distribution is Normal.		
b. Calculated from data.		
c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.		
d. This is a lower bound of the true significance.		

Table 3 Multicollinearity Test Results

Coefficientsa			
Model		Collinearity Statistics	
		Tolerance	VIF
1	Spiritual Leadership	.930	1,075
	Adaptive Leadership	.930	1,075
a. Dependent Variable: Competitiveness of Islamic Educational Institutions			

shows that the Tolerance value of the spiritual leadership variable (X1) and the adaptive leadership variable (X2) have the same value, namely 0.930, this value is > 0.10. Meanwhile, the VIF value for the spiritual leadership variable (X1) and the adaptive leadership variable (X2) also has the same value, namely 1.075, this value is < 10.00. So it can be concluded that in this analysis there are no symptoms of multicollinearity between the independent variables in the regression model.

Table 4 Heteroscedasticity Test Results

Coefficientsa						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3,382	2,581		1,310	.194
	Spiritual Leadership	-.023	.046	-.056	-.497	.621
	Adaptive Leadership	-.006	.046	-.015	-.130	.897
a. Dependent Variable: ABS_RES						

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Based on the results of the heteroscedasticity test using the Glejser test in the table above, it can be seen that the sig. value for each variable, including the spiritual leadership variable (X1), is 0.621 and the adaptive leadership variable (X2) is 0.897. The values obtained are greater than 0.05. Therefore, it can be said that this analysis shows no heteroscedasticity in the regression model.

Hypothesis Testing

Table 5 Results of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Coefficientsa						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1,302	4,034		.323	.748
	Spiritual Leadership	.472	.071	.503	6,609	.000
	Adaptive Leadership	.400	.072	.422	5,549	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Competitiveness of Islamic Educational Institutions						

The equation shows that spiritual leadership and adaptive leadership have a positive effect on the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions. A constant value of 1.302 indicates that when both independent variables are held constant, the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions is at 1.302. The spiritual leadership regression coefficient of 0.472 indicates that increasing spiritual leadership will increase the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions by 0.472. Meanwhile, the adaptive leadership regression coefficient of 0.400 indicates that increasing adaptive leadership will also increase the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions by 0.400. Thus, the better the spiritual leadership and adaptive leadership implemented, the higher the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions.

Table 5 t-Test Analysis Results

Coefficientsa						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1,302	4,034		.323	.748
	Spiritual Leadership	.472	.071	.503	6,609	.000

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	Adaptive Leadership	.400	.072	.422	5,549	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Competitiveness of Islamic Educational Institutions						

Based on the results of the partial test (t-test), the spiritual leadership variable obtained a t-count value of 6.609 greater than the t-table of 1.988 with a significance value of 0.000 <0.05. These results indicate that Ha1 is accepted and H01 is rejected, so it can be concluded that spiritual leadership partially has a positive and significant effect on the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions. In addition, the adaptive leadership variable obtained a t-count value of 5.549 greater than the t-table of 1.988 with a significance value of 0.000 <0.05. Thus, Ha2 is accepted and H02 is rejected, which means that adaptive leadership partially also has a positive and significant effect on the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions.

Table 6 F Test Results

ANOVA						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	703,938	2	351,969	50,470	.000b
	Residual	592,778	85	6,974		
	Total	1296,716	87			
a. Dependent Variable: Competitiveness of Islamic Educational Institutions						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Adaptive Leadership, Spiritual Leadership						

can be known with df (n1) = 1, df (n2) = 86, then the Ftable is 3.952. So the results of the simultaneous test or F test obtained an Fcount value of 50.470 and an Ftable value of 3.952. Then the value shows that Fcount > Ftable with a significance level of 0.000 < α 0.05. Based on the hypothesis, it can be interpreted that H03 is rejected and Ha3 is accepted, so that overall the independent variables, namely the spiritual leadership and adaptive leadership variables, have an influence on the competitiveness variable of Islamic educational institutions as the dependent variable.

Table 7 Coefficient of Determination

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Standard Error of the Estimate
1	.737a	.543	.532	2.64081

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a. Predictors: (Constant), Adaptive Leadership, Spiritual Leadership
b. Dependent Variable: Competitiveness of Islamic Educational Institutions

Table 8 shows the coefficient of determination (R2) value, which is 0.543, in the R Square column. This value explains that the influence of spiritual leadership and adaptive leadership variables on the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions is 0.543 (54.3%), while 45.7% is influenced by other variables outside the research model.

DISCUSSION

1. The Influence of Spiritual Leadership on the Competitiveness of Islamic Educational Institutions

   The results of the study indicate that spiritual leadership has a positive and significant effect on the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions. A significance value of 0.000 < 0.05 with a positive regression coefficient of 0.472 indicates that the better the implementation of spiritual leadership, the higher the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions. This finding confirms that the success of Islamic educational institutions is not only determined by administrative and academic aspects, but also influenced by the leader's ability to build religious values, morals, and organizational culture.

   In this study, spiritual leadership is reflected through the indicators of siddiq, amanah, fathanah, and tabligh. The value of siddiq is evident in the honesty and openness of leaders in decision-making, thereby increasing the trust of educators and the community in the institution. Amanah is reflected in the responsibility and integrity of leaders in carrying out organizational duties professionally. Meanwhile, fathanah demonstrates the ability to think strategically and innovatively in facing educational challenges, while tabligh is seen through the leadership's communication skills, motivation, and exemplary behavior in building harmonious working relationships (Tobroni, 2015; Yukl, 2013).

   Theoretically, the results of this study support Fry's spiritual leadership theory, which emphasizes that spiritual values in leadership can build intrinsic motivation, work meaning, and organizational commitment (Fry, 2003). In the context of Islamic education, spiritual leadership holds a more strategic position because Islamic educational institutions are not only oriented towards academic achievement, but also character formation and the internalization of religious values in students (Muhaimin, 2015; Nata, 2017). Therefore, spiritual leadership is an important foundation in creating an organizational culture that supports the improvement

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of the quality and competitiveness of educational institutions.

Research findings also indicate that spiritual leadership can create a more conducive work environment and increase the loyalty of educators. Leaders who are able to serve as role models are more likely to gain the trust of their subordinates, resulting in increased work enthusiasm, discipline, and the quality of educational services. This situation demonstrates that the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions is built not only through superior facilities and programs, but also through a strong organizational culture based on spiritual values. This analysis reinforces the views of Mulyasa (2013) and Wahjosumidjo (2018) that leadership quality is a key factor in creating effective educational organizations.

However, the results of this study also indicate that spiritual leadership cannot stand alone in enhancing the competitiveness of educational institutions. Strong spiritual values need to be balanced with managerial and innovative capabilities to enable institutions to face the dynamics of modern education. This is crucial because Islamic educational institutions currently face the challenges of globalization, digitalization of learning, and increasingly intense competition between institutions. Therefore, spiritual leadership needs to be implemented not only in moral and religious aspects, but also in strategic decision-making and the continuous development of educational quality.

The results of this study align with those of Saripudin and Wijaya (2021) and Mulyati (2020), which found that spiritual leadership positively influences work culture, motivation, and the quality of educational organizations. However, this study provides further confirmation that spiritual leadership also directly contributes to the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions. Therefore, this research expands on previous studies that generally only emphasized the influence of spiritual leadership on work motivation and organizational culture.

2. The Influence of Adaptive Leadership on the Competitiveness of Educational Institutions

The results of the study indicate that adaptive leadership has a positive and significant effect on the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions. A significance value of 0.000 < 0.05 with a regression coefficient of 0.400 indicates that the higher the leader's adaptive ability, the higher the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions. This finding demonstrates that a leader's ability to respond to change is a crucial factor in maintaining the sustainability and progress of educational institutions amidst dynamic environmental changes.

Adaptive leadership relates to a leader's ability to navigate change, solve problems,

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innovate, and make decisions flexibly in response to evolving organizational situations. In the era of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 and Society 5.0, educational institutions face demands for curriculum change, digitalization of learning, and increasing public expectations for the quality of educational services. Therefore, educational leaders are required not only to maintain organizational stability but also to create innovations relevant to the needs of the times (Mulyasa, 2019; Wahjosumidjo, 2018).

The findings of this study support Heifetz's (1994) theory of adaptive leadership, which states that leaders must be able to mobilize organizations to face complex challenges and changes. In the context of Islamic education, adaptive skills are crucial because educational institutions must be able to maintain their Islamic identity and values while adapting to technological developments and the needs of modern society (Muhaimin, 2015; Nata, 2017). The results of this study indicate that institutional leaders have attempted to innovate learning, utilize educational technology, and build organizational collaboration as part of a strategy to increase institutional competitiveness.

Critically, the results of this study demonstrate that adaptive leadership plays a strategic role in creating flexibility in educational organizations. Adaptive leaders tend to be more open to criticism and change, thus enabling them to create a democratic and innovative work culture. This condition impacts the organization's ability to face external challenges, including competition between educational institutions. This analysis reinforces Yukl's (2013) view that effective leadership must be able to adapt the organization's style and strategy to environmental changes.

On the other hand, research findings also indicate that adaptive capacity without the support of spiritual values can potentially lead organizations to become more focused on technical change and neglect the moral aspects and identity of Islamic educational institutions. Therefore, adaptive capacity needs to be integrated with spiritual values to ensure that innovations and changes remain grounded in ethical values and the goals of Islamic education. This demonstrates that the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions cannot be built solely through technological innovation and modern management; it also requires strengthening religious values as the institution's primary character.

The results of this study support the research of Uhl-Bien and Arena (2018), which asserted that adaptive leadership plays a role in increasing organizational flexibility and sustainable innovation. This research also aligns with the findings of Elmanisar et al. (2024) and Safitri et al. (2025), which show that a leader's adaptive abilities influence improvements in educational

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quality and performance. Therefore, this study strengthens the argument that a leader's ability to deal with change is a key factor in increasing the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions in the modern era.

3. The Influence of Adaptive Leadership on the Competitiveness of Educational Institutions

The results of the study indicate that spiritual leadership and adaptive leadership simultaneously have a significant effect on the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions. This is evidenced by a significance value of 0.000 < 0.05 and an F-count value of 50.470 which is greater than the F-table of 3.952. In addition, the coefficient of determination (R Square) value of 0.543 indicates that spiritual leadership and adaptive leadership contribute 54.3% to the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions, while the rest is influenced by other factors outside the study such as organizational culture, quality of human resources, infrastructure, and institutional management systems.

These findings indicate that the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions is influenced not only by managerial skills but also by the leadership's ability to integrate spiritual values and organizational adaptability. Spiritual leadership serves as the foundation of organizational morality and culture, while adaptive leadership serves as a strategic instrument in facing change and competition in modern education. The integration of these two leadership models is a crucial force in improving the quality of educational services and maintaining the institution's existence amidst increasingly fierce educational competition.

Theoretically, the results of this study support Porter's (1990) theory, which states that organizational competitiveness is determined by the ability to create competitive advantage and adapt to environmental changes. In the context of Islamic educational institutions, competitive advantage encompasses not only academic quality and educational facilities, but also religious image, organizational culture, and leadership quality. This study also supports Sallis' (2012) theory, which asserts that improving educational quality requires quality management and continuous improvement. Thus, spiritual leadership and adaptive leadership are two complementary elements in creating excellence in Islamic educational institutions.

The results of this study demonstrate that spiritual leaders are able to build trust, loyalty, and organizational commitment by exemplifying the values of siddiq, amanah, fathanah, and tabligh. Meanwhile, adaptive leaders are able to create learning innovations, utilize educational technology, and respond quickly and appropriately to community needs. The combination of these two forms of leadership produces educational organizations that

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are not only morally strong but also flexible and competitive in facing changes in the educational environment.

Critically, this research demonstrates that the weakness of many Islamic educational institutions lies in the imbalance between strengthening spiritual values and organizational adaptability. Some institutions possess a strong religious culture but lack innovation in addressing technological developments and learning changes. Conversely, some institutions are able to adapt to modern trends but are less able to maintain their spiritual identity and values. Therefore, the integration of spiritual and adaptive leadership is a relevant leadership model for enhancing the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions in the modern era.

The results of this study also support previous research that suggests that leadership quality influences the quality and competitiveness of educational organizations (Sallis, 2012; Elmanisar et al., 2024). However, this study offers a novel contribution by integrating spiritual leadership and adaptive leadership into a single empirical model to explain the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions. Thus, this study provides theoretical support that the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions will increase if spiritual values and organizational adaptability are implemented in a balanced and sustainable manner.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study indicate that spiritual leadership and adaptive leadership have a positive and significant influence, both partially and simultaneously, on the competitiveness of the Nurul Ilmi Integrated Educational Institution in Banyuasin Regency. Spiritual leadership plays a role in building an organizational culture based on religious values through the implementation of the characteristics of siddiq, amanah, fathanah, and tabligh, which have an impact on increasing trust, loyalty, and work commitment. Meanwhile, adaptive leadership contributes to improving the institution's ability to innovate, respond to change, and adapt to technological developments and the demands of modern education. The combination of these two variables is proven to contribute 54.3 percent to the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions, which indicates that the integration of spiritual values and adaptive abilities is an important factor in improving the quality and excellence of Islamic educational institutions in today's competitive era.

This study is limited by its scope, which covers only one educational institution, so the generalizability of the results is still limited to similar contexts. Furthermore, the study variables did not include other factors that could potentially influence institutional competitiveness, such

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as organizational culture, human resource competency, and infrastructure. Future research is recommended to expand the scope of the research location and add other variables to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the factors influencing the competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions. Practically, the results of this study provide implications that strengthening spiritual-based leadership needs to be balanced with increasing the adaptive capacity of leaders in managing innovation and change, so that Islamic educational institutions can survive and compete sustainably amidst the dynamics of educational transformation.

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