A Role of E-Leadership to Maintain Quality Culture in Islamic Boarding School in Post Covid-19 Pandemic Era

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif yang bertujuan untuk menganalisis probabilitas diterapkannya kepemimpinan virtual pada lembaga pondok pesantren di Indonesia sebagai salah satu alternatif mempertahankan budaya mutu di masa normalitas baru pandemi Covid-19. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kepustakaan dengan menganalisis sumber-sumber dari penelitian-penelitian terdahulu tentang kepemimpinan virtual dan kaitannya dengan masa pandemi Covid-19. Setelah data berupa dokumen-dokumen yang dimaksud terkumpul lalu dilakukan analisis data dengan memberikan interpretasi sehingga dapat ditarik kesimpulan tentang masalah yang dikaji. Hasil dari penelitian ini terbagi menjadi beberapa bagian, antara lain: 1) kepemimpinan yang efektif pada masa dan pasca pandemi Covid-19, 2) kyai dan potensinya memimpin lingkungan virtual, 3) keadaan dan mutu pondok pesantren pasca pandemi Covid-19.

Kata Kunci: Kepemimpinan Virtual, Budaya Mutu, Pondok Pesantren, Covid-19.

Abstract

This research is a qualitative study that aims to analyze the application of virtual leadership to boarding schools in Indonesia in an effort to maintain a quality culture in the new normality of the Covid-19 pandemic. This study is a literature study that analyzes sources from previous studies on virtual leadership and its relationship to the Covid-19 pandemic. The method of data collection is done in several stages, namely sorting, organizing, and editing. After the data in the form of the documents in question collected then done data analysis by providing interpretation. The results of this study is divided into several section that include: 1) effective leadership in the period and post-Covid-19 pandemic, 2) kyai and its potential to lead a virtual environment, 3) the state and quality of boarding schools after the Covid-19 pandemic.

Keywords: E-Leadership, Quality Culture, Islamic Boarding School, Covid-19.

Introduction

All lines of human life have drastically changed due to the presence of the Covid-19 virus. Several core sectors of life have experienced a crisis, especially the education sector, many countries around the world have closed schools and universities for fear of being infected with the Covid-19 virus. According to data from more than 500 million affected students, 87 million of whom are students, that number when calculated worldwide reaches 1.5 billion students (Abidah et al., 2020). And at this time the world of education is moving in a new normality, which was originally known in the field of business economics (El-Erian, 2010).

Current educational trends still emphasize the safety of school residents, especially students (Upoalkpajor & Upoalkpajor, 2020). The Indonesian government has massively campaigned for the Distance Learning policy as a solution so that the education process can continue. According to the established theory of crisis management, there are 3 stages to go through, namely pre-crisis, crisis and post-crisis (Murfi et al., 2020). Education as a core sector in human life must not stop even in the midst of the anxiety of the Covid-19 pandemic. All education providers must be prepared to anticipate what will happen by capitalizing on the quality awareness of education providers, especially education leaders.

Quality comes from the English "quality" which means quality or the extent to which something is good or bad. In terminology, quality is an inherent ability or characteristic of a product or service that can respond to customer expectations (Fatah, 2017). Quality is something that is very important to be considered by organizations, especially educational organizations. People still rely on educational institutions because they are considered as a means to improve the quality of human resources. This is the reason why quality is something that must be made a priority to be improved from time to time (Lian, 2020). Quality is not something that is fixed because the needs and expectations of customers are not always fixed and tend to change dynamically. There is a need for quality assurance in order to ensure that all activities of educational organizations continue to run on the quality path, namely by getting used to quality itself and cultivating quality in the midst of the organization.

Culture is a term that describes the totality of patterns of behavior, arts, beliefs, institutions and all the results of works, ideas, ideas, and thoughts that characterize the

condition of a particular society or population. According to Purnama, quality culture is a value system within the organization that produces a conducive environment for the sustainability and sustainability of quality improvement, which consists of values, traditions, procedures and expectations as well as quality promotion. (Abrori, 2018). Quality assurance can be carried out in 2 forms, namely: *first*, by making continuous quality improvement and development designs and *secondly* by cultivating the quality to all members of the organization (Fatah, 2017). Cultivating quality means familiarizing that quality is reflected through the totality of the behavior of organizational actors in the education sector. According to Midun in Iryanto (2008) five ideas to ensure a culture of quality and excellence in schools, namely: 1) think and act to produce the best, 2) be future-oriented, 3) be open and adaptive to change, 4) make continuous improvements, and 5) change the perspective on something (Midun, 2017).

Reviving a culture of quality during the Covid-19 pandemic in all sectors of school management is essential. Quality that has been entrenched does not easily fade, let alone falter in any situation and condition. The members of the organization are expected to put aside personal desires and provide total performance for the benefit of the organization. In addition, quality that is made into a culture will make commitment easier to build because members consider that quality to be an identity for the institution and for themselves. (Said, 2018). Quality culture is very useful for organizations as capital in dealing with obstacles caused by the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Many factors can affect the quality of educational institutions, but all of them are not as big as the influence of school leadership (Hooge & Honingh, 2014). Hafiduddin in Mohammady (2018) mentions that it is the leader who acts as the creator of the culture itself considering its strategic position in the formation of a quality culture and has the authority to make decisions (Mohammady, 2018). It will be very difficult for schools to improve their quality if they are not accompanied by quality literate leaders. Here it can be concluded that quality leadership is a prerequisite in improving quality (Herawan, 2018).

Today, the virtual leadership theory (e-leadership) was born as a response to the rapid advancement of digital technology that has spread to the world of education. The presence of digital technology has changed the rules of the game, boundaries, and the way people interact in an organization (Li et al., 2016). Virtual leadership is defined as an influence process mediated by information and communication technology so as to produce the

performance, behavior, and attitudes of organizational members (Van Wart et al., 2019). Traditionally, a leader in influencing subordinates relies heavily on physical distance. But the need for distance is no longer a problem in virtual leadership. This is in line with Hambleya, O'Neil, and Kline who stated that this new leadership paradigm can be profitable because it can be done anytime and anywhere (Garcia, 2014).

Difficult times in the world of education due to the Covid-19 pandemic caused the movement of educational leaders to be limited. Meetings that had previously been scheduled to build social relations among school residents could not be carried out as a mitigation measure so that the virus would not spread further. The existence of distance between leaders, teachers and also students indicates that this is a formidable challenge that requires special strategies. So far there are no guidelines and instructions on how to lead a school during a pandemic which is illustrated as walking on a rope without a safety net (Harris & Jones, 2020). Policies and decisions issued, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic, are expected to be full of consideration and prudence because they involve the entire institution. It is often found that the failure of an educational institution is caused by defects and imbalances in policies and steps taken by school leaders (Murfi et al., 2020).

The concept of virtual leadership is considered a suitable method to be implemented during the Covid-19 pandemic and even continues until the new normal period and until the post-pandemic period later. The convenience offered in virtual leadership provides flexibility for educational leaders in carrying out their duties even though they are in the midst of a critical period. Leaders are obliged to ensure that employee performance and performance are not disturbed even though they only interact in a virtual environment and still prioritize quality (Bartsch et al., 2020).

The highest leader in a school is the principal but it is different from a boarding school whose highest leader is a kyai because it is usually the kyai who establishes the boarding school (Kasful, 2015). An Islamic Boarding School Foundation usually houses several formal schools, each of which is led by a principal. Even so, a kyai is still a central figure who is asked for his opinions and advice every time a decision is made because the kyai's obligation is not only limited to compiling a curriculum, organizing and evaluatinginstitutions but is also responsible for character building both internally at the Islamic boarding school or the wider community who live in the area around the boarding school (Dacholfany, 2015).

A kyai is very synonymous with charismatic in his leadership style. Kyai positions himself as uswatun hasanah, namely individual role models, examples, and the center of attention both to the students and even to all members of the pesantren (learning by doing). Anything that a kyai does is considered a manifestation of the actions of the Prophet Muhammad and manifests it in everyday life (Musaropah, 2018). The belief of the pesantren residents and even the community towards the values that exist within the kyai is what makes the kyai figure as a one man show and the image of the pesantren is pinned on the good name of the kyai who nurtures him.

In addition to the great public belief in the kyai, in terms of decision making, a kyai is known to be authoritarian. All authorities concerning Islamic boarding schools are under the control of the kyai (Noor, 2019). There is not a single decision or policy unless it has received the blessing of the guardian kyai. Although in practice it is very rare for decisions that are against the will of the kyai, the management of the pesantren still respects the kyai by asking for his blessing and opinion before the decision is implemented. This makes the management at the Islamic boarding school neat (Fithriah, 2018) and is believed to bring blessings because it is always based on the wisdom of the kyai.

Researches on how effective leadership is during the Covid-19 pandemic, especially with regard to virtual leadership, are currently being loved. Working solely on virtual media becomes a worrying experience if leaders stick to traditional methods. This will cause problems in completing tasks and employee performance (Lagowska et al., 2020). This statement is reinforced by research by Wolor et al (2020) that during the Covid-19 pandemic virtual leadership had a significant effect on employee performance with a significance of 0.21 and an effect on work motivation of 0.20 (Wolor et al., 2020).

This study fills the gap to analyze how educational leaders, especially kyai as the highest leader in Islamic boarding schools maintain a culture of quality during the Covid-19 pandemic. Quality is a non-negotiable price, especially when in the midst of a pandemic. The virtual practices that have been running so far must also be adopted by kyai in order to keep Islamic boarding schools from being eroded by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The use of virtual media in school leadership is intended as support for the Work From Home (WFH) program as well as being a valuable asset for the leadership of Islamic boarding schools during the new normality and post-Covid-19 pandemic.

Research Method

This research is a qualitative research with the aim of providing a theoretical view of the extent to which virtual leadership (e-leadership) can be implemented in the leadership of Islamic boarding schools in order to maintain a culture of quality, especially in the face of the new normality of the Covid-19 pandemic. The source of this research data is obtained from documents and journal articles related to the research theme. The research theme is divided into 3 parts: 1) Effective Leadership during and after the Covid-19 pandemic, 2) Kyai and their potential to lead the virtual environment, and 3) The state and quality of Islamic boarding schools after the pandemic. The data collection method was carried out in several stages, namely sorting, organizing, and editing. After the data in the form of the documents in question are collected, then data analysis is carried out by providing interpretations in order to describe the pre-determined sub-sections.

Research Finding

Effective Leadership During and After the Covid-19 Pandemic

The presence of the Covid-19 pandemic has drastically changed human behavior in all lines of life. Not only a person's personal life, but the impact of this pandemic is changing the life of organizations, both for-profit organizations or non-profit organizations such as schools. All resources owned by the organization must be empowered to the maximum extent possible, especially human resources in order to achieve effectiveness and efficiency in times of crisis. Leaders must build strong teamwork by opening the widest possible discussion space and involving all members (Halawi et al., 2020). Building a relationship between leaders and subordinates in the midst of a crisis is not easy, but being more open, humble, and sensitive to what the subordinates need will lead to their empathetic attitude which in the end the leader can get full support in going through a crisis (Fernandez & Shaw, 2020).

Circumstances must continue to change where school leaders are faced with school conditions and learning that are very unnatural and different from what usually happens.

This critical condition requires the leader to be responsive to everything that may happen to the organization. Effective communication is considered to be a determining factor in this regard (Al Saidi et al., 2020). The leader must carry out regular checks and reviews of the tasks and performance of subordinates so that nothing is missed. The role of the leader as a determinant of direction is needed in the current critical condition. After all, it will definitely affect the good name of the organization in the future.

Although the leader is expected to be dominant due to unpredictable conditions, the existence and contribution of subordinates must still be accommodated. Between the leader and the led are like two coins that cannot work separately. Circumstances require everything to be compact. This approach makes subordinates feel valued as individuals which can ultimately foster initiative. Giving work autonomy given will increase the confidence of subordinates and can make them better prepared to deal with difficult situations (Bartsch et al., 2020).

Fernandez & Shaw (2020) mapped out effective leadership during the Covid-19 pandemic crisis. *First*, servant leadership with participation, cooperation, and individual characteristics of the leader such as being emotionally stable and placing the needs of many people above their personal needs. *Second*, the quality of decisions made by dividing responsibilities among all personnel, and *third*, the intensity and effectiveness of communication both within the institution and to related stakeholders (Fernandez & Shaw, 2020). This is also supported by Harris & Jonnes (2020) who say that an effective leader to minimize the impact of a crisis is a responsive leader with careful calculations because it is impossible to predict the side effects that will arise from a policy (Harris & Jones, 2020).

Effective educational leaders always have a broad and visionary mindset about what is happening in the future. Many things have definitely changed in the world of education during the post-covid-19 pandemic compared to the period before the pandemic. Korkmaz & Toraman (2020) said there are at least 14 things that will shift in the world of education in the post-pandemic period starting from the concept of teacher competence to be reviewed, the need for an online learning environment will increase, education will be forced to get used to changes, the allocation of education will prioritize on online learning needs, the ability of teachers to organize online learning will be honed, so that fewer education personnel will be appointed (Korkmaz & Toraman, 2020). Teräs et al (2020) say that the world in post-pandemic times will urge educational practices to produce creative and exploratory learning that is open that can be accessed by people at large (Teräs et al., 2020).

These limitations and challenges afflict the world of education in all parts of the world. The post-pandemic period or it can also be called the new normal period is a much different period from the pre-pandemic period. This moment is the right moment for leaders to reflect back on the past to start facing a better future. The questions that must be answered by leaders in dealing with the post-pandemic period are 1) What things have a positive impact that can be taken to deal with the post-pandemic period, and 2) What things might have a negative impact to leave behind in order to face a bright post-pandemic period? (Netolicky, 2020). Technical skills in seeing opportunities are very valuable for a leader, especially in the midst of a crisis. Every situation always contains hidden values which, when utilized as well as possible, especially when combined with the strengths of an institution, become extraordinary strengths and strategic steps.

Kyai and His Potential to Lead a Virtual Environment

The progress of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) which seems to be mushrooming has a positive impact on human life. This is evidenced by the number of sectors ranging from social, political, and even education sectors that have begun to be digitized. One of the new ones is virtual leadership (e-leadership). In simple terms, virtual leadership is defined as giving influence from someone to someone mediated by digital-based media (Li et al., 2016). This mode of leadership is of course a new breakthrough that brings many positive impacts for leaders, especially educational leaders in schools.

Since Covid-19 was declared a pandemic, many schools were closed not only in Indonesia but globally (Upoalkpajor & Upoalkpajor, 2020). The decision to temporarily close schools forced school leaders to rack their brains so that the teaching and learning process was not disrupted and one of them was to create a virtual school. Virtual schools have actually become a trend in the early 1900s in America because they are considered to be in favor of families living in rural areas who want to take courses but are hindered by distance (Toppin & Toppin, 2015). The necessity of using virtual media in school activities during the pandemic is the starting point for school leaders to explore what and how virtual leadership is.

The effectiveness of virtual leadership refers to the way the leader manages the conflicts that occur. Managing conflict only by relying on virtual communication is certainly more difficult than traditional communication which requires face-to-face meetings (Liao, 2017). Conflicts that occur can come from various directions such as tendencies between

individuals, misconceptions about tasks and even lack of coordination when carrying out tasks. These conflicts if left unchecked can have a bad impact on the performance of the institution so that it must be of special concern to the leaders.

Kyai with all the characteristics and leadership styles benefit from the application of virtual media. *First*, leadership is very dependent on how the leader can generate trust in subordinates (Ford et al., 2017). With a strong charisma proclaimed by Musaropah (2018) like the projection of *Nur Ilahi* (Musaropah, 2018) the trust of subordinates will be maintained even if they do not meet in person. *Second*, there is a tendency for miscommunication and the need for a 24/7 leader's presence (Van Wart et al., 2019). This can be solved because usually the house where the kyai lives is in the Islamic boarding school itself so that if subordinates feel they need the kyai, they can easily meet him at his residence (Noor, 2019).

Third, the low security system during virtual meetings (Van Wart et al., 2019). Sometimes there are messages conveyed by leaders that are confidential which should not be known by parties outside the institution. The message could be related to institutional funding, strategic steps, or other things that are the privacy of the institution. In this case, Islamic boarding schools are superior with a clear coordination system and an organized organizational structure. Kyai as the highest leader has different ranks under him such as the field of education in charge of formal schools, the field of ta'lim assemblies, the field of mosques, the field of cooperatives, and others (Faruq Tri Fauzi, 2013). Existing areas must be utilized as efficiently as possible because the key to virtual leadership is how leadership is shared and respect for subordinates (Hoegl & Muethel, 2008).

The application of digital media within the scope of Islamic boarding schools, especially in the leadership of kyai, can be a big leap in the post-Covid-19 era. What becomes the future homework is how to develop the leadership of the kyai in using the virtual media, especially for the kyai who are already elderly. The social climate built via virtual must be balanced with intense communication and adequate skills from a leader. Garcia (2014) said that there are at least 6 strategies that must be mastered by a virtual leader, namely:

1) Manage virtual team (e-team) effectively.
2) Build virtual charisma (e-charisma).
3) Develop virtual decision making skills (e-decision making skills).
4) Develop virtual culture and virtual communication skills (e-culture and e-communication).

5) Develop virtual trust (e-trust) which includes empathy and empowerment.

6) Implement a quality culture to ensure that groups and teams within the organization operate with high integrity and are oriented towards ethical values (Garcia, 2014).

The State and Quality of Post-Pandemic Islamic Boarding Schools

The spread of Covid-19 in various parts of the country is considered like a storm that changes the world of education, especially the implementation of learning in schools for good. The transition from school-based learning to distance learning is not easy not only for teachers and principals but for parents. For parents, it seems that learning from home is very difficult, time consuming, and even frustrating (Sahlberg, 2020). Although many schools have reopened, the use of online media is still the main choice rather than worrying about being exposed to the virus.

Pesantren must be open and adaptive to change. We predict Islamic boarding schools will move to use the online system both in formal learning and classical book learning in the post-pandemic era. Islamic boarding school learning is very synonymous with face-to-face such as the *sorogan* method when students read books one by one in front of the kyai or the *wethonan* method, the procedure is almost the same as halaqoh and assemblies but the Covid-19 pandemic has forced it all to move to a digital platform. The paradigm of traditional methods and methods commonly used in Islamic boarding schools will gradually shift to digital platforms. Likewise with the technique of memorizing the Koran, the students no longer need to queue for a long time just to be heard by the kyai (Hidayati & Khumaira, 2020). Thanks to the convenience and flexibility offered, it can make the operations of Islamic boarding schools more effective and efficient.

Future-oriented adaptation is one of the transformations of Islamic boarding schools from traditional learning to distance learning supported by the digitization of classical books. Classical Islamic books, also known as the yellow book, used to be synonymous with Islamic boarding schools, but are now available on social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. (Risdiana et al., 2020). With the capital of the same book, the students can get a more comprehensive explanation and book syarah from different kyai and clerics. Online studies that are widely circulated on social media open the horizons of the students more broadly while at the same time improving the academic atmosphere and quality of the Islamic boarding school itself.

A tough challenge for Islamic boarding schools awaits when the pandemic is over. The pandemic has made schools adapt and get used to digital platforms. Islamic boarding schools that cannot adapt will be eroded and lose the market not only from public schools but also from modern Islamic boarding schools that have been around for a long time. For this reason, Islamic boarding schools seem to have to consider changing their perspective. Teachers, kyai, ustadz and clerics as well as other education personnel who are spearheading the pesantren have the right to receive training to support quality learning. They are expected to have knowledge, competence, and ethics in applying online learning (Zhu & Liu, 2020).

The big step in the transformation of Islamic boarding schools must be accompanied by the real contribution of the kyai who care for them. The commitment of the leader, in this case the kyai, is very much needed for the cultivation of quality in Islamic boarding schools. Leaders are the main drivers of developing a quality culture through their expertise in allocating resources, making clear job descriptions and responsibilities, building relationships and optimizing teams and staff (Bendermacher et al., 2017). The limitation of movement due to the Covid-19 pandemic has caused the kyai to have a lot of time to take care of his cottage. Influence distributed via virtual is more helpful for leaders in time and energy efficiency.

Online learning is indeed considered very new, especially for Islamic boarding school learning. The routine of the Islamic boarding school which is very identical to face-to-face seems to indicate that the transition is very difficult to do. However, this may not be as difficult as we imagine because Islamic boarding schools have a long-held philosophy that they will maintain something that is considered good and will accept new things that are useful (Ulum & Mun`im, 2019). Moreover, with the high value of religiosity and the great charisma of the kyai, the position of Islamic boarding schools in the post-pandemic period will be even stronger. This is because charismatic leaders can communicate goals well creating a strong emotional connection to their subordinates (Ozgenel, 2020).

Quality culture cannot stand alone because it is a synergy of all elements in the organization (Said, 2018). The members of the organization need to be aware that it is not quality that needs them, but they need quality. Kyai must understand these key points and apply them to get through the crisis. Often the traditional leadership style only provides limited scope for movement in their respective fields. Virtual leadership opens up great opportunities for teams to help each other in doing tasks (Hoegl & Muethel, 2008). Orientation regarding the task is a necessity but forgetting the emotional connection between

the team is the beginning of destruction. Leaders need to make subordinates aware that they understand, respect, and take advantage of plurality in order to achieve collaboration and mutual trust (Liao, 2017). Therefore, in the post-pandemic period, leadership will no longer be understood as a power hierarchy but will become networked leadership (Luksha & Kinsner, 2020).

Virtual leadership is very important to support the creation of a quality culture in an institution or organization, especially Islamic boarding schools. Islamic boarding schools that tend to apply the traditional system must be able to transition and follow the flow of modernization without neglecting the noble values in the tradition of the Islamic boarding school itself in order to be able to follow the demands and challenges faced in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic crisis even into the post-pandemic period or the new normal that will be faced in the future (Ichsan et al., 2020).

Quality is absolute and must always be maintained, preserved, improved and cultured, especially within the scope of educational organizations. Quality culture is a set of values that must be upheld and used as guidelines for behavior and solving problems being faced in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic (Said, 2018). Here the role of a kyai as a leader with charisma and a virtual leadership pattern is very influential in responding to the urgent need for education in Islamic boarding schools not to be eroded and lose competitiveness with other educational institutions out there which are racing to keep up with the progress and developments of modernization. The actualism of modernization of educational institutions, especially Islamic boarding schools, is an important necessity to consider in order to answer the challenges of the times so that Islamic boarding schools can continue to survive and develop in any situation (Shofiyyah et al., 2019).

The role of leaders in maintaining a quality culture is very important. The transfer of an online-based system that requires all forms of communication and coordination to run through virtual. From here, leaders are challenged to be able to master adequate skills, especially in terms of effective communication to manage the organization they lead so that there are no misconceptions, equipped with skills in the use of information technology that is relevant to the times, especially in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic crisis (MUSTAJAB et al., 2020). The steps taken in virtual leadership must be addressed in order to be able to adapt to changes so that they can meet the needs of the community in an educational organization (SERİNİKLİ, 2020).

The culture of quality in the life of Islamic boarding schools can be carried out properly if the kyai as a leader is able to master and accept changes that come from outside and continue to try to upgrade themselves massively. The application of a virtual leadership pattern in Islamic boarding schools is not difficult with the charisma of the kyai's figure and the submission of the boarding school residents to all forms of autonomy granted by the kyai. Therefore, the task of the kyai as a leader is just to fix and hone and see what the needs of all the residents of the Islamic boarding school are.

Kyai as leaders must be capable and willing to be open to changes and developments in society. Maintaining a traditional leadership style is good but following progress for the development and benefit of the people is also very important so that it is hoped that Islamic boarding schools as an Islamic educational institution can produce cadres who are not only experts in the religious field or spiritual aspects but are also capable and sensitive to the needs of the community by still relying on Islamic values and being able to be present in the midst of the people to jointly build a superior and leading civilization.

Leaders must be able to create significant change with the organization rather than just maintaining the status quo. In addition, the changes brought must be aimed not only for the interests desired by the leader, but must be in accordance with the expectations and goals that are the main motivation in realizing the vision and mission of an organization. If the kyai as the leader is exclusive or closes himself to changes in the midst of global challenges, this will result in intellectual shut down (Mukodi, 2015). However, it is also important to remain vigilant. Leaders must be selective in every policy or step taken by considering the benefits and disadvantages for all members of the organization.

The motivation grown by a kyai as a leader figure has a major influence on the awareness of the quality of all elements of the Islamic boarding school. Leaders must actively provide support and establish intense communication even though they are virtual. With effective communication, any problems that arise can be quickly resolved easily. Communication must be carried out continuously and constantly. Leaders must be more attentive and observant in observing phenomena in the midst of a crisis. Thus the relationship between the leader and the led will be better established. In addition, the level of obedience and respect from subordinates towards the leader will also increase and can guarantee the creation of a quality culture as self-identity in the lives of residents of Islamic boarding schools.

Conclusion

The crisis period due to the pandemic caused leaders to only be able to distribute their influence through virtual platforms as a measure to mitigate the spread of the virus. The challenges that are getting tougher in the future require leaders to collaborate and utilize their members as much as possible. Kyai with a strong charismatic has an advantage in virtual leadership because of his sharp appeal that can be firmly embedded in subordinates even though they only interact via virtual. The weaknesses in the concept of virtual leadership can be covered by the advantages of the kyai such as the possibility of misconceptions that can be overcome because the kyai can be easily found in their homes in the boarding school environment. A quality culture is created when there is trust and mutual understanding between subordinates and leaders, this is the key to virtual leadership. Kyai must make his subordinates aware of quality by providing more space for them to develop their creativity and foster a sense of belonging to the boarding school where he works.

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