Internalization of Caregiver Istikharah in Cultural Management of Islamic Education Organizations

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Abstract
This research aims to find out how the istikharah of Islamic boarding school caregivers influences the organizational culture in Islamic boarding schools.

Qualitative descriptive research methods were used with a case study approach at the Nurul Abror Al-Robbaniyin Banyuwangi Islamic Boarding School. Subjects were taken from leaders, staff, teachers and students. Data collection uses interview techniques, observation and document analysis. Data analysis uses theme analysis and content analysis. The results of data analysis show that istikharah plays an essential role in shaping policy, with caregivers as the highest authority. With a long history, these cultural organisations have made significant contributions to the advancement of Islamic education in these institutions. The internalization of Istikharah among caregivers is a substantial process that combines spiritual values with daily school operations. This process begins with istikharah prayer, followed by reflection and interpretation of the results, which become the basis for decision-making. This institution’s steadfast commitment to aligning its operations with Islamic principles through Istikharah is visible in its organizational culture and overall function in Islamic education.

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui bagaimana istikharah pengasuh pondok pesantren berpengaruh pada budaya organisasi di Pesantren.

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I. PENDAHULUAN

Islamic education, including Islamic boarding schools, plays a crucial role in developing society and the country and shapes students' character to produce a quality generation. Islamic education organisations must have a solid organisational culture in a competitive environment (Saada, 2023). Cultural management in Islamic educational institutions is critical, with caregivers playing a role in making decisions based on istikharah. Corporate culture, especially in the context of Islamic boarding schools, provides adaptability, resilience and flexibility. Integrating this culture with religious principles can approach perfection, requiring improvements in Islamic boarding school management, which is essential in maintaining cultural and structural balance (Ikhwan et al., 2020; Suud et al., 2024).

Boarding schools Islamic educational institutions create a culture of quality that is unique and closely related to Indonesian history. They have a value system
that supports continuous quality improvement. Currently, Islamic boarding schools face complex organisational structures, with many institutions having to manage their operations (Prasetyo et al., 2021). In Islamic boarding school culture, policies are set by a few people, which some may consider impossible because Islamic boarding school caregivers have full authority over decisions and policies (Wahyudin et al., 2021).

Islamic boarding school culture emphasises the principle of *ushul fiqh almuhaafadzotu 'alal qodiimish shoolih wal akhdu bil jad idil asilah* (Rohmatun et al., 2021), which is the driving force for students' fundamental beliefs in facing changing times. Santri must have morals, ethics, competencies and skills to meet the demands of today's times. Islamic boarding schools increasingly focus on science and technology while maintaining religious knowledge and forming solid moral character in response to contemporary needs (Wibowo & Udayani, 2021).

Istikharah is the practice of praying and asking for guidance from Allah SWT when making decisions, and it is an integral part of Islamic boarding school organisational culture. Caregivers have a crucial role in making administrative policies and decisions through istikharah. Internalisation of istikharah by caregivers is the main factor in the cultural management of Islamic educational organisations in the Islamic boarding school environment, where caregivers are the highest authority in decision-making and policy determination in various aspects of Islamic boarding school activities and progress (Safebriyansyah & Munir, 2021).

The Nurul Abror Al-Robbaniyin Banyuwangi Islamic Boarding School, which combines traditional and modern systems, upholds the culture of istikharah in its operations. Decisions and policies taken by caregivers through istikharah are still followed by Islamic boarding school administrators and leaders of educational institutions at the Islamic boarding school. Istikharah has proven to be an efficient tool for Islamic boarding school administrators and institutional managers with minimal problems. Academic institution managers, Islamic boarding school administrators, and istikharah practitioners as part of organisational culture have a
strong connection because of similar values. With a solid corporate culture foundation, institutions can achieve their stated goals.

This research will discuss the concept of Istikharah, the role of the caregiver, and its impact on the cultural management of Islamic educational organisations. The internalisation of Istikharah in organisational decision-making, especially in Islamic education, is essential in ensuring that religious values, policies and organisational goals are aligned with Islamic principles. Through this study, we can better understand how the practice of Istikharah influences corporate culture and contributes to the development of quality Islamic education organisations based on religious values.

II. METODE PENELITIAN

This research uses qualitative methods to understand istikharah of caregiver and organisational culture in Islamic education. This research will adopt a field-based approach, which includes field investigations where researchers engage directly with participants and collect data in actual situations where istikharah caretakers and organisational culture are practised. Participants may be leaders, personnel, educators, students, or other relevant individuals connected to Islamic educational institutions who practice istikharah or impact organisational culture (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

Data will be collected using three main approaches. First, in-depth interviews will be conducted with participants to gain insight into their perspectives regarding istikharah of caregivers and their impact on organisational culture. Second, direct observation will be undertaken to witness the actual practices istikharah of caregivers and corporate culture in the educational context. Finally, documents related to istikharah of caregiver practices and organisational culture will be analysed, such as guidelines, policies, or internal records. A combination of thematic and content analysis will be used for data analysis. This involves identifying thematic patterns in the data collected, particularly relating to istikharah caregivers and organisational culture. The contents of interviews, observations and documents will be explored to understand the relationship between istikharah caregivers and corporate culture.
Using qualitative methods and a field-based approach, this research comprehensively explains the collaborative dynamics between internal Istikharah of caregivers and organisational culture in Islamic education. Through this, this research seeks to explain the operational procedures and fundamental principles that impact the Islamic educational environment, thereby providing valuable insight into the practices and values of that environment.

III. TEMUAN DAN PEMBAHASAN

Several decades have passed since the author began his journey as a student at the Nurul Abror Al-Robbaniyin Islamic Boarding School from 1995 to 2021. Then, in 2008, the author switched to becoming an educator, and this role continues. However, long before this historic milestone, the practice of istikharah had become an inseparable part of the Nurul Abror Al-Robbaniyin Islamic Boarding School culture. This tradition of istikharah is widespread, not only important in education and development but also includes personal matters such as seeking guidance from caregivers for decisions about a partner's life, career choices, and other aspects of daily life.

The author became familiar with the practice of istikharah as a caregiver around 2009. At that time, the Nurul Abror Al-Robbaniyin Islamic Boarding School was starting its journey to establish a foundation. This includes the decision-making process, from choosing the foundation's name to determining the management structure, all carried out through an Istikharah process guided by the caregiver. The same thing happened when they established a Junior High School (SMP) in 2011, a Vocational High School (SMK) in 2012, and the establishment of a College in 2021, all through an istikharah process guided by caregivers. The strong relationship between istikharah of caregiver and the development of Islamic education at the Nurul Abror Al-Robbaniyin Islamic Boarding School attracted the author's attention.

Internalisation Istikharah of Caregivers

The internalisation of istikharah by caregivers reflects a deep commitment to running Islamic educational institutions by religious principles. This emphasises the importance of acting and making decisions with full awareness of God's will,
which influences the direction and management of educational institutions. This is an integral aspect of the cultural management of Islamic educational organisations, which was discussed previously.

Why does kyai or ulama, most of whom are caregivers in Islamic boarding schools, need to do istikharah? Kyai play an essential role in the development of Islamic boarding schools and are critical figures in upholding the traditions of these institutions. Karel A. Steenbrink, as quoted by Samsul Nizar, describes the role of kyai as an indispensable element in Islamic boarding schools because of their deep religious knowledge, piety, and exemplary character (Assiroji, 2020; Steenbrink, 2014). Often, kyai are the founders and owners of Islamic boarding schools, who dedicate their lives to matters of faith and community welfare (Arifin, 2015). Kyai are endowed with magnetic attraction, authority, and influence that stem from their profound knowledge. As boarding school caregivers, they have a particular position in the eyes of Allah and His servants (Fadhilah, 2011). This privilege is not solely due to their role as caregivers but is rooted in their closeness to Allah Swt, fostered through their devotion and worship. This devotion strengthens their faith and piety because they wholeheartedly serve Allah alone so that Allah grants them privileges that not all of His servants have (Assiroji, 2020). With this divine distinction, their prayers were more accessible to answer. Therefore, many people believe and accept the results of istikharah carried out by kyai or Islamic boarding school clerics, realising that these results come from Allah Swt (Sidiq, 2018).

Istikharah prayer is commonly used when Muslims face uncertainty in making decisions or choices. Its primary function is to dispel doubts in a variety of diverse situations. In a complex life, a person is often faced with various choices that can confuse him about the best steps to take, so istikharah prayer is an effective solution. Even though it can be done at any time, it is believed that its implementation is more effective if it is done in the third part of the night, such as during the tahajjud prayer, because praying and seeking guidance in the silence of the night will increase the solemnity of worship.
There are several different types of istikharah. *First,* istikharah with the advice of pious people, which involves seeking guidance from people of faith, such as scholars who are respected for their knowledge and belief. *Second,* istikharah with the Al-Qur'an, where the Al-Qur'an is used to eliminate doubts by asking Allah to give the best. Istikharah for caregivers or leaders of Islamic educational institutions is a prayer practice carried out to ask for guidance from Allah in facing certain decisions or problems related to institutional management, academic policies, or other matters that influence the control and direction of the institution. Through this istikharah prayer, caregivers or leaders seek guidance from Allah SWT to make wise decisions by His will. This is an integral part of Islamic educational organisations' culture that prioritises spiritual values in decision-making.

After carrying out istikharah, the caregiver or leader of the Islamic educational institution reflects on the actions to be taken. They observe the results of the istikharah and try to understand the instructions that Allah gives through the prayer. This process involves deep reflection and meditation about the options available. Apart from that, if after performing istikharah prayers, praying, and asking for advice from pious scholars, their hearts are still turbulent and doubtful, they can perform istikharah using the Qur'an. It is hoped that the Qur'an can eliminate doubts by asking Allah to give the best, by the words of the Prophet Muhammad Saw, who said that happiness for the descendants of the Prophet Adam Alaihisalam is if they do istikharah by asking Allah Swt for the best and hope for His pleasure. Him for what Allah has ordained (Anwar, 2021).

Based on the instructions obtained through istikharah, caregivers or leaders of educational institutions make decisions or policies that are deemed to be by the will of Allah Swt (Afrivina, 2023). They choose the path they consider to be the best based on the instructions they receive. Decisions taken in the istikharah process are then implemented in educational institutions. This policy can cover various aspects, such as setting the curriculum, improving the quality of education, or other actions that influence the institution's management. Once the policy is implemented, caregivers continue to monitor the results and evaluate the

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impact of the policy on the institution and students. If necessary, corrective action can be taken based on monitoring results. The internalisation istikharah of caregivers reflects a commitment to running Islamic educational institutions in accordance with religious principles and instructions. This also emphasises the importance of thinking and acting with full awareness of Allah's will in making decisions that influence the direction and management of educational institutions, which is an essential aspect of the cultural management of Islamic educational organisations.

All residents of the Nurul Abror Al-Robbaniyin Islamic Boarding School follow this practice. From leaders of Islamic boarding schools to managers of educational institutions, all matters relating to policies, decisions and developments in each institution or other issues require incorporating spiritual values in the decision-making process. Therefore, apart from routine communication and coordination within the organisation, Istikharah carried out by kyai or Islamic boarding school caregivers has a critical position. This indicates that caregiver istikharah is an essential component in all policies and decisions that need to be taken.

**Cultural Management of Islamic Education Organizations**

In an organisation, the core element is its organisational culture. Corporate culture is a battery, so that the organisational climate can be likened to a flashlight. An organisational environment will function optimally if supported by a solid corporate culture. Consequently, organisational culture plays a vital role in shaping organisational climate, ultimately leading to organisational effectiveness. Organisational culture is not a static entity; it must be actively built, preserved, and strengthened. It can even evolve to align with the internal and external needs of the organisation.

The components of organisational culture come from three primary sources (Sutrisno, 2019): (1) The initial source is the founder of the organisation, who usually has a dynamic personality, firm values, and a clear organisational vision (2) The second source of organisational culture begins with the organisation's interaction with the external environment. An organisation's encounter with specific actions, policies, and products results in attitudes and values; (3) The
third source is work relationships between employees who introduce their own set of expectations, values and perspectives into the organisation. This working relationship reflects the main activities of the organisation, which shape prevailing attitudes and values (Sulaksono, 2015). As a result, organisational culture is usually shaped by a combination of factors: the organisation's founders, the external context in which the organisation operates, and its management and inherent traits.

The development of organisational culture, as outlined by Brown, is triggered by various factors. This includes the impact of prominent leaders, historical background and traditions, technological advances, product and service offerings, industry and competitive landscape, customer dynamics, company objectives, information and management systems, legal and regulatory requirements of the company, established procedures and policies, as well as performance assessment and incentive structures (Yusuf, 2017).

Culture comes from Sanskrit, specifically buddhayah, the plural of buddhi, which includes things related to human reason and reason. On the other hand, organisational culture is connected to all aspects of life in an organisation. Stoner et al. emphasise that culture is a complex combination of assumptions, behaviour, narratives, legends, metaphors and various other concepts that collectively form an identity as a member of a particular community (Wahyudi, 2021). Organisational culture includes essential components, including norms, values, attitudes and beliefs held collectively by organisational members (Fauzi, 2016).

The organisational culture must be aligned with implementing other organisational elements, including management functions such as planning, organising, leading, and controlling, as well as organisational attributes such as behaviour, structure, and processes. When corporate culture is not aligned with these aspects, the organisation may face challenges in functioning effectively to achieve its goals (Badarwan & Rustang, 2021; Fauzan Wakila, 2021).

Organisational culture consists of three fundamental components. An artefact is an element that coexists to characterise and demonstrate organisational culture. Artefacts include products, services, and behaviour patterns of their members. The
values espoused are the justification an organisation provides to support its practices. Basic assumptions are beliefs that are taken for granted by organisational members (Sanhaji et al., 2016).

Islamic boarding school is an educational institution based on the Islamic religion. Muslim boarding schools also have a particular quality culture. From the understanding of culture and quality, it can be constructed that the quality culture of Islamic boarding schools/educational institutions is an organisational value system that creates an environment that is conducive to continuous improvement and continuity of continuous quality improvement (Nasution, 2020; Zuhriy, 2011).

The Nurul Abror Al-Robbaniyin Islamic Boarding School is at the top of the organisational hierarchy. All decisions and policies must receive final approval at a foundation meeting because this institution is the highest governing body at the Nurul Abror Al-Robbaniyin Islamic Boarding School. However, many decisions and policies discussed at the foundation level still need to be considered final. Because the highest authority is responsible for making absolute decisions and policies, namely the Islamic boarding school administrator, caregivers in this role make decisions and policies based on the results of the Istikharah they carry out regarding ongoing problems or future activities within the institution.

Nurul Abror Al-Robbaniyin Islamic Boarding School is actively involved in the advancement of education. This is clear through the presence of formal institutions, covering from early education to higher level education, within the Nurul Abror Al-Robbaniyin Islamic Boarding School. However, it is essential for these legal education institutions to continuously adapt and uphold Islamic principles, as the foundation of these boarding schools is rooted in the development of Islamic education.

Cultural management in the context of Islamic educational organisations involves several key elements that form the core of this approach. First, Islamic values are the primary basis for managing the culture of Islamic educational organisations. It covers aspects of morals, ethics, and spirituality, which are integral to the Islamic education system. Values such as justice, integrity, hard work and concern for others are the main foundation that guides every action.
The application of religious values is also the main focus of cultural management. Islamic educational organisations must actualise religious values in every aspect of daily life. This includes managing interactions between students and staff, teaching and learning processes, and the actions taken in school management. Religious principles must be reflected in authentic activities and organisational culture (Fahham, 2020; Prasetyo et al., 2021).

Second, policy implementation is an essential aspect of cultural management. Policies and procedures must be in line with Islamic teachings. It covers various factors, including curriculum, discipline, ethics, and education-related. Decisions and policies consider Islamic religious values, ensuring alignment with the underlying principles of the religion (Fadhilah, 2011; Rohmatun et al., 2021).

Lastly, cultural management in Islamic educational organisations aims to create a superior educational environment not only in academic aspects but also in developing students' character and morals through the teachings of the Islamic religion. Quality education in this context includes teaching religious, ethical and moral values that guide better personal development.

To achieve educational goals that align with Islamic values, cultural management involves joint efforts from all academic community members, including founders, administrators, staff, teachers and students. The aim is to create an educational environment consistent with the principles of the Islamic religion, contributing to the formation of a generation with noble and ethical morals through religious teachings. Thus, cultural management becomes an essential pillar in ensuring quality Islamic education's continuity.

Internalisation Istikharah of Caregivers in the Cultural Management of Islamic Education Organizations

In policy-making and decision-making, istikharah is a critical element of the Nurul Abror Al-Robbaniyin Islamic Boarding School. Caregivers in these institutions have a significant role in guiding policies and decisions affecting the school environment. As the highest authority in the school boarding house, the caregiver considerably influences the development of education in this school environment.
Istikharah is an essential step in the decision-making process based on Islamic values.

The cultural organisation related to istikharah practised by caregivers at the Nurul Abror Al-Robbiyin Islamic Boarding School is not new; it has been embedded in this institution for decades. Even though it has a long history, this cultural organisation remains a crucial element that must be addressed. The extraordinary success achieved by this cultural organisation in advancing Islamic education at the Nurul Abror Al-Robbaniyin Islamic Boarding School is clear evidence of the importance of istikharah caregivers who have become an integral part of this cultural organisation.

The internalisation of istikharah caretakers in the cultural management of Islamic education organizations is a significant process in establishing a relationship between spiritual values and institutional operations. This process begins with implementing the istikharah prayer by the caregiver or leader of the Islamic educational institution. This prayer is intended to ask for guidance from Allah in dealing with decisions or problems that affect the institution. After the istikharah prayer is performed, the next step is reflection and interpretation of the results of the prayer. Caregivers reflect and try to understand the instructions given by Allah through istikharah prayer.

Then, the results of the istikharah become the basis for decision-making. Caregivers or institutional leaders believe that the decisions taken are the best in accordance with God's will. This decision, along with the values underlying it, is then communicated to the entire educational institution community. In this communication, it is essential to understand that this decision comes from spiritual guidance. The next step is the integration of the values and instructions from istikharah into organisational policies and practices. This includes changes in curriculum, management and learning approaches. Thus, the values of istikharah are expressed and realised in the institution's operations. The importance of awareness and adherence to the values of istikharah should be addressed. All members of the educational institution community must understand that these values guide every aspect of life and decision-making at the institution.
Finally, regular evaluation and correction are essential to ensure alignment with God's will and the institution's goals. If discrepancies are found, corrective action is taken to maintain harmony with Islamic religious values. The internalisation istikharah of caregiver in the cultural management of Islamic Education organizations reflects the institution's commitment to carrying out its operations with full awareness of the will of Allah and the principles of the Islamic religion. This process creates a conducive environment for the development of students' character, morality and spirituality, makes Islamic values a guide in decision-making, and influences Islamic educational institutions' organisational culture and operations.

IV. KESIMPULAN

In the Nurul Abror Al-Robbaniyin Islamic Boarding School, istikharah is an essential element in policy making and the influence of caregivers as the highest authority. Cultural organisations that integrate istikharah have existed for decades and contributed significantly to institutions' success in advancing Islamic education. The internalisation of istikharah caregivers is a significant process that connects spiritual values with institutional operations. This begins with istikharah prayer, reflection, and interpretation of the results of the prayer, which become the basis for decision making. These values are communicated to the institutional community and integrated into organisational policies and practices. Awareness of and adherence to istikharah values is essential, and regular evaluation is necessary to maintain harmony with Islamic religious values. This process reflects the institution's commitment to carrying out its operations by the principles of the Islamic religion and contributes to the organisational culture and operations of Islamic educational institutions.

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