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## Navigating Modernization in Traditional Islamic Education: An Application of the ADKAR Model at Pondok Pesantren Tegalrejo

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### Abstrak

This research explores the utilization of the ADKAR model in managing organizational change within Pondok Pesantren Tegalrejo, an Islamic educational institution facing the complexities of modernization. Employing a qualitative field research methodology, the study is designed in five phases: background identification, inductive data collection, direct field observations, perception extraction, and gap analysis. Findings reveal that the institution effectively employs the ADKAR framework—Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability, and Reinforcement—to reconcile its foundational religious and educational values with modern societal demands. These adaptations range from curriculum alignments to national standards to expanding services beyond religious education. The study concludes that Pondok Pesantren Tegalrejo is a critical example of traditional religious institutions successfully navigating modern challenges without compromising core values. It also confirms the applicability of the ADKAR model in diverse organizational settings. Limitations include focusing on a single institution, suggesting the need for future comparative and longitudinal studies for broader applicability and enduring efficacy.

**Kata Kunci:** ADKAR Model, Islamic Education, Pondok Pesantren Tegalrejo, Modernization, Change Management

### Introduction

Given the rapidly evolving landscape of education, change management in educational institutions is an imperative subject of study (Vlachopoulos, 2021). This evolution is propelled by technological advances, policy reforms, and shifts in societal needs (Korinek et al., 2021). Focusing specifically on religious educational institutions, like Pondok Pesantren in Indonesia, reveals a unique set of challenges (Syafe'i, 2017). These institutions must modernize their educational approaches while preserving core religious and traditional values (Munardji et al., 2020). Consequently, an urgent need is to explore effective change management models tailored to these specialized settings.

In English primary schools, strategic approaches to change management are particularly effective (Gear & Sood, 2021). Middle school leaders benefit from

employing systems that allow them to operate from a metaphorical "balcony," overseeing immediate tasks and long-term strategies (Gear & Sood, 2021). This approach provides a holistic view of change management processes (Phillips & Klein, 2023). It enables leaders to make decisions better aligned with the institution's objectives. Therefore, the importance of a strategic perspective in educational change management cannot be overstated.

Similarly, a structured change management model has been deemed essential for successful technological adoption in Indonesian schools (Ali et al., 2018). The study emphasized the importance of involving school management and teachers in the change process (Ali et al., 2018). A comprehensive strategy based on the Prosci ADKAR Model was recommended for its effectiveness in facilitating this multi-stakeholder involvement. This insight underscores the potential value of structured change management models in educational settings (Gayef, 2014). Hence, adapting proven models may benefit educational institutions in various contexts.

Further studies have identified barriers and facilitators to effective change management in educational settings (Khokhar & Akhlaq, 2022). For instance, resistance to change hurts Vocational High Schools in West Java, Indonesia (Sutarni et al., 2022). On the other hand, a positive institutional culture promoting adaptability facilitates successful change management (Sutarni et al., 2022). The role of institutional culture in aiding or impeding change thus becomes evident (Barragan et al., 2023). Accordingly, understanding the cultural variables within an institution is paramount for effective change management.

Beyond the school level, broader educational systems have also been studied for their change management strategies (Herold et al., 2007). For example, District Education Offices in Malaysia effectively employ change management indicators such as stakeholder roles and performance metrics (Hamzah et al., 2021). Similarly, teachers' implicit change leadership schemas in Philippine secondary schools significantly impact their perceptions of effective change management (Guerrero et al., 2018). These studies suggest that effective change management relies on a multi-level, multi-stakeholder approach (Phillips & Klein, 2023). As a result, attention to these broader system variables can provide valuable insights for localized change management efforts.

However, existing research has limitations, including a lack of focus on religious educational institutions like Pondok Pesantren (Fitri & Ondeng, 2022). These institutions have unique challenges, given their need to balance modernization with preserving core religious and educational values (Taufikin, 2021). Furthermore, there is an ongoing debate regarding the applicability of change management models developed in Western contexts to non-Western educational settings (Finlay et al., 2013). Hence, a significant gap in the literature needs to be addressed to provide more comprehensive and context-specific insights (Miles, 2017).

In light of these gaps and considerations, the current research aims to investigate the application of the ADKAR model in change management at Pondok Pesantren Tegal Rejo. This study will examine how the institution navigates the complex terrain of modernization while adhering to its foundational religious and educational tenets. The ultimate objective is to contribute to the academic discourse on effective change management strategies in specialized educational settings. By doing so, this research seeks to offer actionable insights that could inform both policy and practice. Thus, the study aims to serve as a valuable addition to the existing literature on educational change management.

### **Methods**

The present study employs a qualitative field research methodology to directly understand the innovation in change management within the educational system at Pondok Pesantren Salaf API Tegalrejo Magelang. The research design comprises five phases, beginning with identifying the background of change management innovation, then collecting inductive data on actual cases, direct field observations, extracting perceptions and understanding from subjects, and concluding with a gap analysis of the findings (Cohen et al., 2017). The procedure involves a multi-step approach encompassing the identification of change management background, inductive data collection, direct observations, interviews, and finally, data review and gap analysis. No specialized tools were used; however, semi-structured interview guides and observational checklists were qualitative data collection tools. Data collection integrated primary and secondary sources, utilizing interviews with specialized informants, direct observations, document analysis, and focused group discussions (FGDs) for a comprehensive data set. To ensure reliability and validity, the study employed multiple data collection techniques and conducted triangulation by cross-referencing data gathered from diverse sources, substantiating the findings and interpretations.

### **Findings and Discussions**

#### **1. Awareness (Kesadaran)**

By the ADKAR model for change management, Pondok Pesantren Tegalrejo has shown awareness of the necessity for modernization. KH founded the institution. Chudori navigates its journey grounded in religious devotion rather than profit-making, garnering extensive local and national support. This community and institutional support enables the pesantren to adapt to modern challenges sustainably.

The primary aim of the pesantren is to foster Islamic virtues in the community, not limiting itself to educational services but also extending into healthcare and social services. Innovation in pesantren management has been responsive to societal demands, as they offer various new forms of education to meet community needs. These innovations are driven by multiple objectives,

including economic gains, social status improvement, and community satisfaction, facilitating the rapid dissemination of these innovations.

As outlined by various scholars, the pesantren system has distinct values shaping its educational approach. Among these values are ethnocentrism, wisdom, simplicity, and collective action. These values are intertwined with the activities in the pesantren, which are marked by a Sufistic approach involving the practice of "riyadhah." This practice targets multiple aspects of life, including spirituality, social relations, and environmental interactions.

The pesantren's modernization has been a strategic response to societal needs. It has incorporated the national curriculum since the 1970s, making it a sub-system of the national education system. The management of Pondok Pesantren Tegalrejo, led by ahlul bait or religious leaders, has expanded its services to meet essential community needs, including education, health, and human resource development. This holistic approach highlights the pesantren's role as a dynamic institution capable of adapting to modern demands while staying true to its religious and educational objectives.

## **2. Desire (Keinginan)**

The study elucidates that Pondok Pesantren Tegalrejo aims to serve community needs by offering diverse services such as education, healthcare, human resources, and economic aid. It employs a blend of traditional and modern Islamic educational methods, signifying a flexible approach to serving the complex demands of contemporary society. The "Salaf" values are infused into the pedagogical methods through practices like Mujahadah, Tirakat ngrowot, and varied forms of fasting. These activities serve dual purposes: meeting societal needs while instilling core values in the students.

Character development emerges as a cornerstone in the educational philosophy of Pondok Pesantren Tegalrejo. A range of activities, from fasting to intensive religious study, is designed to foster resilience, humility, and discipline among the students. According to Izudin's statement dated 2/2/2023, the focus on moral education precedes academic instruction, as it is believed that virtuous character is foundational to acquiring and applying knowledge effectively.

Lastly, the study points out that the institution is responsive to the challenges posed by technological advancement and modernization. Although traditionally focused on religious teachings, the pesantren has adapted to offer general education courses. This reflects an effort to produce graduates who are morally upright and capable of engaging with modern society's complex, ever-changing demands. This adaptability substantiates the institution's relevance and resilience in a contemporary context.

## **3. Knowledge (Pengetahuan)**

The Pondok Pesantren API Tegalrejo educational setting emphasizes the value of knowledge, rooted in a tradition that respects the teachings of elder Kiai (religious scholars). The students, or 'Santri,' are trained to become community leaders by serving as administrators within the institution. The ethos of the

Pesantren values humility and respect towards the teaching family and guests, a code of conduct rigorously maintained by the Santri, exemplifying the cultural and social principles of the institution.

The pedagogical approach at Pesantren encompasses a blend of traditional and innovative leadership models. While it adheres to established religious teachings, there is a drive for innovation in creating ideas, products, and services. This amalgamation aims to fulfill the community's needs and ensure the organization's longevity. Innovative leadership is crucial in this setup, merging different leadership styles to encourage creativity and adaptation to changing circumstances.

The institution also emphasizes discipline and ethical conduct for teachers and students. Monitoring and reporting on the behavior and performance of the Santri is an integral part of maintaining discipline within the Pesantren. Furthermore, despite its traditional leanings, the institution shows adaptability by incorporating modern educational features such as multimedia and computer skills, a move to stay relevant and competitive in the broader educational landscape. This reflects Pesantren's dynamic approach in balancing traditional religious teaching with contemporary educational methods.



**Figure 1. Scheme of the change management innovation model in the API Tegalrejo Magelang Islamic boarding school education system in the modernization era**

#### 4. Ability (Kemampuan)

The study indicates that Pondok Pesantren Tegalrejo can integrate innovative service products to meet societal needs. It emphasizes the development of educational systems by gradually implementing a "compulsory madrasah" curriculum. This approach aligns with the community's needs and involves improving teacher quality and updating infrastructure.

The institution undertakes various measures to strengthen its Salaf-based educational practices. For instance, it runs formal educational institutions under the umbrella of the Yayasan Syubanal Wathon, such as junior and senior high schools. The Pesantren seeks to balance modern educational demands with its Salaf identity to maintain public trust. This involves offering diverse educational and religious programs, adapting to modern needs without compromising its original identity.

Pesantren API Tegalrejo also focuses on the equitable distribution of education across various demographic groups, including different education levels and geographic locations. It collaborates with various entities, including non-Muslim institutions, to broaden its religious reach. These partnerships foster understanding between different religious communities and dispel misconceptions about Islam, promoting peace and interfaith dialogue.

##### **5. Reinforcement (Penguatan)**

The study focuses on Pondok Pesantren Tegalrejo, an Islamic educational institution, and its multifaceted roles in the community, notably in education and religious outreach. The institution adapts to modern societal demands while retaining traditional elements, such as religious teachings based on historical texts. One of the key functions is forming individuals who embody 'amar ma'ruf nahī munkar,' highlighting the spiritual and ethical principles within the society. Furthermore, the alum network and relationship with the pesantren's caregivers are crucial in its ongoing development and contributions to national education.

The pesantren's curriculum is shaped by the dual goals of religious and general education, meeting national standards while also preserving Islamic teachings. It offers an alternative model of education that can be incorporated into the national educational framework. The pesantren also has an open enrollment policy, allowing anyone interested in joining to be admitted anytime as part of its community service mission. This exemplifies its adaptability and commitment to community needs and national education policy.

Management and tradition at the pesantren are closely intertwined, with current caregivers upholding the teachings and values imparted by the institution's founders. These values emphasize selflessness, diligence, and pursuing divine grace rather than material gain. Such values are reflected in the institution's management and instilled in the students, fostering a sense of purpose and dedication. The pesantren is positioned as a field for spiritual and societal struggle instead of a commercial enterprise.

Lastly, Pondok Pesantren Tegalrejo also employs unique approaches to ensure its sustainability and impact, such as sending students to various regions for teaching assignments and supporting entrepreneurial activities among students. These methods distribute Islamic knowledge more widely and provide students with practical experience. The strategies are part of a broader commitment to service, manifesting as a holistic educational model that incorporates academic, spiritual, and practical dimensions.

This research aimed to investigate the application of the ADKAR model in change management at Pondok Pesantren Tegalrejo. This study specifically aimed to understand how the institution adapts to the challenges of modernization while preserving its core religious and educational values. The ADKAR model provides a framework for understanding organizational change across five dimensions: Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability, and Reinforcement. In this context, it offers insights into how Pondok Pesantren Tegalrejo navigates complex demands from both traditional religious practices and contemporary societal needs (Maryono, 2022)

The main findings reveal that Pondok Pesantren Tegalrejo has successfully implemented various facets of the ADKAR model. The institution shows an acute awareness of the need for modernization, demonstrating adaptability in educational offerings and service provisions. Interestingly, while the pesantren remains anchored in its religious values, it has exhibited a flexibility that allows for incorporating modern educational practices and societal service offerings. This juxtaposition between tradition and modernity forms the crux of the institution's successful change management strategy.

Comparing these results with previous studies, it is noteworthy that Pondok Pesantren Tegalrejo appears to align closely with successful global change management strategies observed in educational settings. For example, emphasizing strategic approach and adaptability echoes findings in English primary schools and Malaysian District Education Offices (Gear & Sood, 2021; Hamzah et al., 2021). However, unlike some vocational high schools in West Java, which faced challenges due to resistance to change, Pondok Pesantren Tegalrejo manifests positive adaptability (Sutarni et al., 2022). This supports the notion that adaptability is critical in successfully managing change in educational institutions.

An explanation for these findings may lie in the institution's dual focus on religious and general education. Pondok Pesantren Tegalrejo has managed to balance maintaining traditional religious teachings and adapting to the necessities of a modern educational framework. This equilibrium allows the institution to maintain cultural and religious significance while staying relevant and responsive to societal demands. Consequently, it appears to have created a change management model that is both effective and culturally sensitive.

Another aspect worth considering is the institution's commitment to community needs, encompassing educational services, healthcare, and human resources. The holistic approach, guided by a combination of economic, social, and community satisfaction objectives, lends weight to the effectiveness of its change management strategy. This appears to align with the ADKAR model's recommendations for a well-rounded approach to change management involving various stakeholders and considerations (Angtyan, 2019).

It is crucial to approach these findings with caution, however. The specific cultural, religious, and societal context of Pondok Pesantren Tegalrejo may limit the generalizability of these results to other educational institutions. While the

institution provides an exemplary model of effective change management, its unique environment and circumstances could represent specific enabling factors that are not universally applicable.

The implications of these findings are manifold. Firstly, Pondok Pesantren Tegalrejo is a case study of how traditional religious institutions can modernize effectively while maintaining their core values. The institution's successful navigation through the complexities of modernization offers a roadmap for other similar organizations. Secondly, the study highlights the versatility and applicability of the ADKAR model in varied organizational settings, suggesting that it may be a useful tool for other educational and religious institutions facing the challenges of modernization.

### Conclusions

This research examined how Pondok Pesantren Tegalrejo applies the ADKAR model to manage organizational change, particularly reconciling modernization demands with its foundational religious and educational values. The study finds that the institution has effectively leveraged the ADKAR framework, comprising Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability, and Reinforcement, to address various societal demands ranging from curriculum alignment with national standards to service expansion beyond religious education. These findings offer two major implications: first, the case of Pondok Pesantren Tegalrejo serves as a critical example demonstrating that traditional religious institutions can successfully adapt to modern requirements without compromising their essential values; and second, the research confirms the ADKAR model's versatility as an effective change management tool in diverse organizational settings beyond the corporate sector. However, the study has limitations, including its focus on a single institution, which may impede its broader applicability, and its lack of examination of the long-term sustainability of such modernization initiatives. Accordingly, future research could benefit from comparative and longitudinal studies to verify the broad utility and enduring efficacy of the ADKAR model in religious educational institutions navigating complex modernization challenges.

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