

DEVELOPING ADAPTIVE EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS: THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE, AND HUMAN RESOURCES AT TK TERPADU AN NISA' TUBAN EAST JAVA

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Abstract

Educational institutions operate in an increasingly dynamic environment that requires organizational flexibility, continuous learning, and the capacity to respond to change. This study examines the role of leadership, organizational culture, and human resources in developing an adaptive educational organization at TK Terpadu An Nisa' Tuban, East Java. A qualitative case study approach was employed, involving interviews, observations, and document analysis. Data were analyzed thematically to identify patterns related to adaptive leadership, organizational culture, human resource development, and organizational adaptability. The findings indicate that adaptive organizational capacity is shaped by the interaction of responsive and participatory leadership, a collaborative and learning-oriented organizational culture, and continuous human resource development. Leadership provides direction and creates opportunities for participation and innovation, while organizational culture facilitates collaboration, knowledge sharing, and collective learning. Human resource development strengthens teachers' capacity to respond to changes in curriculum, technology, and educational practices. The study concludes that organizational adaptability is not determined by a single factor but emerges through an interconnected process of leadership support, collaborative culture, professional learning, and continuous improvement. The findings highlight the importance of developing educational organizations that are capable of learning and adapting collectively to changing educational demands.

Keywords: *adaptive organization; educational leadership; organizational culture; human resources; early childhood education*

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I. INTRODUCTION

The contemporary educational environment is characterized by rapid technological development, changing societal expectations, curriculum transformation, and increasing demands for educational quality. These changes require educational institutions to develop organizational capacities that enable them to learn, respond, and continuously improve their practices. Rather than functioning only as administrative units, educational institutions increasingly need to become adaptive organizations capable of responding to changing internal and external environments. Adaptive organizations are characterized by their capacity to recognize emerging challenges, mobilize resources, adjust organizational practices, and develop collective responses to uncertainty and change (Fitriani, 2023). In educational settings, this adaptability is particularly important because institutional quality depends not only on formal policies but also on the capacity of leaders, teachers, and staff to respond collectively to changing educational demands.

Digital transformation has further intensified the need for organizational adaptability in education. The increasing use of information and communication technologies has changed the ways educational institutions manage information, communicate with stakeholders, organize learning activities, and develop professional competencies. However, digital transformation should not be understood merely as the adoption of technological tools. It also involves changes in organizational practices, leadership strategies, knowledge management, and institutional culture. Haryanto et al. (2024) found that educational leaders play an important role in responding to digital transformation by developing organizational strategies and facilitating changes in organizational culture. Their findings suggest that technological transformation requires educational institutions to develop an organizational environment that is sufficiently open and flexible to accommodate emerging changes.

Within this context, leadership represents a fundamental component of organizational adaptability. Adaptive educational leadership involves the capacity of leaders to identify contextual challenges, formulate relevant responses, prepare human resources, promote teamwork, and evaluate organizational responses continuously (Fitriani, 2023). Unlike leadership approaches that primarily emphasize administrative control, adaptive leadership places greater emphasis on organizational learning, flexibility, collaboration, and responsiveness. Educational leaders therefore need to create conditions in which teachers and staff

can participate in decision-making, exchange knowledge, experiment with new practices, and collectively respond to emerging challenges.

The importance of leadership is closely connected to the development of organizational culture. Organizational culture consists of shared values, beliefs, norms, and behavioral patterns that influence how organizational members understand their roles and respond to change. A supportive culture can facilitate organizational learning by encouraging communication, collaboration, reflection, and knowledge sharing. Conversely, rigid organizational norms may limit innovation and reduce an institution's capacity to respond effectively to environmental changes. Recent research by Kareem et al. (2024) demonstrates that organizational culture has an important role in the development of learning organizations in school education and can function as an organizational mechanism linking leadership and individual commitment with organizational learning.

The relationship between leadership and organizational culture is particularly significant because leadership practices do not operate independently of the organizational environment. Leaders may introduce new policies or encourage innovation, but the sustainability of such initiatives depends partly on whether organizational members perceive the institutional culture as supportive of change. Haryanto et al. (2024) similarly demonstrate that leadership and organizational culture are closely related in the process of educational digital transformation. Their study indicates that organizational culture needs to accommodate technological developments while maintaining institutional resilience. Thus, developing an adaptive educational organization requires not only capable leaders but also a culture that supports learning, collaboration, innovation, and continuous improvement.

In addition to leadership and organizational culture, human resources constitute another essential dimension of organizational adaptability. Teachers and educational staff are the actors who translate organizational policies and institutional strategies into everyday educational practices. Their competencies, motivation, willingness to learn, and capacity to adopt new practices directly influence an institution's ability to respond to changing educational demands. Consequently, human resource development should be understood as an ongoing organizational process involving professional development, mentoring, collaboration, knowledge sharing, and opportunities for teachers to develop new competencies.

This issue is particularly relevant in early childhood education (ECE), where teachers are expected to respond to increasingly diverse pedagogical, technological, and social demands. Recent research on ECE teacher development in Indonesia indicates a shift from an emphasis on basic pedagogical competencies toward digital literacy and innovative pedagogical approaches, particularly in relation to the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka (Istiana, 2024). The study also identifies disparities in access to professional development across geographical regions, highlighting the importance of strengthening the capacity of the ECE teaching workforce through systematic and sustainable professional development.

Human resource development, therefore, should not be separated from organizational processes. Training and professional development are more likely to contribute to institutional improvement when they are supported by leadership, collaborative organizational cultures, and opportunities for teachers to apply and share newly acquired knowledge. From this perspective, human resources are not simply recipients of organizational policies but active participants in organizational adaptation. An educational institution becomes adaptive when its members are able to learn collectively, respond to new challenges, and transform individual learning into organizational improvement (Kareem et al., 2024).

The need for such an integrated approach is especially important in early childhood institutions. Early childhood education involves complex interactions among school leaders, teachers, educational staff, children, parents, and the broader community. Consequently, organizational effectiveness cannot be understood solely through individual teacher performance. Instead, it should also be examined through the institutional mechanisms that enable teachers and staff to collaborate, learn, innovate, and respond to change. The development of adaptive educational organizations thus requires the interaction of leadership, organizational culture, and human resource capabilities rather than the isolated improvement of any single dimension.

The Indonesian ECE context provides an important setting for examining these relationships. The implementation of curriculum reform, increasing expectations regarding teacher professionalism, digital transformation, and the growing need for quality educational services have created new organizational demands for early childhood institutions. Studies of Indonesian ECE have documented the importance of teacher competency development and adaptation to new pedagogical and technological requirements (Istiana, 2024). At the same

time, research on educational organizations indicates that leadership and organizational culture are important mechanisms through which institutions develop their capacity for learning and adaptation (Fitriani, 2023; Haryanto et al., 2024; Kareem et al., 2024).

Nevertheless, much of the existing literature tends to examine leadership, organizational culture, teacher development, or organizational learning as relatively separate dimensions. There remains a need for contextual research that examines how these dimensions interact in developing adaptive organizations, particularly at the early childhood education level and within specific local educational settings in Indonesia. The concept of organizational adaptability provides a broader analytical perspective because it allows leadership, organizational culture, and human resources to be understood as interconnected organizational mechanisms rather than merely as independent factors influencing teacher performance.

In this regard, TK Terpadu An Nisa' Tuban, East Java, provides a relevant context for examining the development of an adaptive educational organization. As an early childhood educational institution operating within a changing educational environment, the institution provides an opportunity to examine how leadership practices, organizational culture, and human resource development contribute to organizational responsiveness. The focus is not merely on whether the institution adopts new educational policies or technologies, but on how organizational actors collectively interpret change, develop new competencies, collaborate, and adjust institutional practices.

Therefore, this study aims to examine the role of leadership, organizational culture, and human resources in developing an adaptive educational organization at TK Terpadu An Nisa' Tuban, East Java. By bringing these three dimensions into an integrated framework, the study seeks to contribute to the growing discussion on adaptive educational organizations while providing contextual insights into organizational development in Indonesian early childhood education. The findings are expected to contribute both theoretically, by strengthening the understanding of organizational adaptability in ECE, and practically, by providing insights for educational leaders and managers seeking to develop institutions that are responsive, collaborative, innovative, and capable of continuous learning.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Adaptive Educational Organizations

The concept of an adaptive educational organization emerges from the need for educational institutions to respond effectively to increasingly complex and unpredictable environments. Educational organizations operate within dynamic contexts shaped by curriculum changes, technological development, changing stakeholder expectations, policy reforms, and evolving professional standards. In such environments, organizational effectiveness is not determined solely by the ability to maintain existing routines but also by the capacity to learn, adjust, innovate, and continuously improve. Adaptive organizations can therefore be understood as institutions that are capable of interpreting environmental changes, mobilizing internal resources, modifying organizational practices, and developing collective responses to emerging challenges.

Within educational settings, organizational adaptability is closely associated with the concept of the learning organization. A learning organization encourages its members to continuously acquire knowledge, reflect on organizational practices, share experiences, and use learning to improve institutional performance. Kareem et al. (2024) demonstrate that leadership, personal commitment, and organizational culture are important components in developing learning organizations in school education. Their study involving 750 teachers found that organizational culture significantly mediates the relationship between leadership styles and the development of a learning organization. This finding reinforces the view that educational adaptability should be understood as a systemic process rather than as an individual characteristic of school leaders or teachers alone.

Recent research also indicates that adaptive leadership has become an increasingly important theme in educational management research. A systematic mapping of adaptive leadership research identified its growing relevance to educational transformation, particularly in relation to organizational change, leadership development, and institutional responsiveness (Mujari et al., 2026). Thus, an adaptive educational organization can be conceptualized through several interconnected characteristics: responsiveness to change, organizational learning, collaborative decision-making, innovation, flexibility, continuous professional development, and the capacity to transform external challenges into opportunities for institutional improvement.

Adaptive Leadership in Educational Organizations

Leadership is a central mechanism in the development of adaptive organizations because leaders influence how organizational members interpret change and determine appropriate responses. In traditional administrative approaches, educational leadership may emphasize planning, supervision, compliance, and operational control. Adaptive leadership, in contrast, emphasizes responsiveness, contextual analysis, collaboration, learning, and the capacity to mobilize organizational members in addressing complex challenges.

Fitriani (2023) conceptualizes adaptive educational leadership as leadership capable of responding quickly, appropriately, and contextually to organizational challenges. The implementation of adaptive leadership includes analyzing the institutional context, determining relevant strategies, preparing human resources, prioritizing teamwork, establishing appropriate policies, and conducting continuous monitoring and evaluation. These characteristics indicate that adaptive leadership is particularly relevant to educational institutions because schools and early childhood institutions face problems that cannot always be addressed through predetermined procedures.

Adaptive leadership also emphasizes participation and shared responsibility. Educational change is rarely sustainable when it depends entirely on the school principal or institutional leader. Instead, teachers and staff need to become active participants in identifying problems, generating solutions, implementing innovations, and evaluating outcomes. Sari and Agustini (2025) found that adaptive leadership supports open communication, collaboration among educational stakeholders, reflective practices, and continuous learning.

The relationship between adaptive leadership and organizational learning is further supported by Kareem et al. (2024). Their findings indicate that leadership styles contribute to the development of learning organizations and that organizational culture mediates this relationship. Similarly, research on schools in Thailand found a relationship between adaptive leadership, constructive organizational culture, and learning organization, positioning organizational culture as an important mechanism through which leadership can contribute to organizational learning (Prachai et al., 2025).

In the context of early childhood education, leadership is particularly significant because institutional leaders must coordinate multiple stakeholders while simultaneously supporting teachers' professional development. A recent systematic review of principal leadership and early childhood teacher competency

found that school leaders contribute to teacher development through academic supervision, motivation, facilitation, empowerment, professional development, learning communities, and collaborative work climates. This suggests that adaptive leadership should be understood not merely as a leadership style but as an organizational process that creates conditions for collective adaptation.

Organizational Culture and Educational Adaptability

Organizational culture refers to the shared values, norms, beliefs, assumptions, and behavioral patterns that influence how organizational members perceive and respond to organizational situations. In educational institutions, organizational culture shapes patterns of communication, collaboration, decision-making, professional interaction, innovation, and responses to change. Consequently, organizational culture can either facilitate or constrain organizational adaptability.

Torres (2022) emphasizes that organizational culture and leadership are closely interconnected in understanding school organizational processes. School culture provides a framework within which leadership practices are interpreted and enacted, while leadership can simultaneously influence the development and transformation of organizational culture. This reciprocal relationship is important because introducing organizational change does not necessarily guarantee adaptation. Change becomes sustainable when organizational members develop shared values and behavioral norms that support the change.

Kareem et al. (2024) provide empirical evidence for this relationship by demonstrating that organizational culture significantly mediates the relationship between leadership and learning organization. Their findings suggest that leaders may influence organizational learning more effectively when institutional values, norms, structures, and workflows support continuous learning.

Recent literature specifically addressing educational organizations further emphasizes the importance of adaptive organizational culture. Abidin and Prihatin (2026) argue that organizational culture functions as a non-structural foundation through which members of educational organizations interpret change, make decisions, and act collectively. Their review identifies adaptive leadership, cultural transformation, change management, and organizational agility as interconnected mechanisms for cultivating adaptive organizational cultures. A systematic review of organizational culture in primary and secondary educational institutions similarly identifies instructional leadership, teacher professional

development, readiness for organizational change, and collective learning as important dimensions associated with strengthening educational organizational culture (Rodríguez Beltrán & Dworaczek Conde, 2025). Based on these studies, an adaptive organizational culture in education can be characterized by openness to change, collaboration, trust, collective learning, innovation, reflective practice, communication, and shared responsibility. These characteristics provide the cultural infrastructure necessary for leadership initiatives and human resource development to become institutionalized rather than remaining isolated individual activities.

Human Resources and Organizational Adaptability

Human resources represent the operational core of an educational organization because organizational strategies and policies ultimately depend on the competencies and actions of teachers and staff. In adaptive organizations, human resources are not simply viewed as organizational inputs but as active agents of organizational learning and change. Their knowledge, skills, motivation, professional commitment, creativity, and willingness to learn determine how effectively an institution can respond to new challenges.

The relationship between human resources and organizational adaptation is particularly important in early childhood education. Teachers must respond to developments in curriculum, digital technology, child-centered pedagogy, assessment, inclusive education, and increasingly diverse expectations from parents and communities. Consequently, professional development needs to move beyond occasional training toward continuous learning and organizational support.

Istiana (2024), through a systematic review of 51 Indonesian studies published between 2020 and 2023, identified a shift in ECE teacher development from basic pedagogical competencies toward digital literacy and innovative pedagogical approaches associated with the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka. The study also identified geographical disparities in access to teacher professional development. These findings indicate that human resource adaptability is not merely an individual issue but is strongly influenced by institutional opportunities and support. More recent evidence reinforces this argument. Zaida et al. (2026) found that ECE teacher development in Indonesia is shaped by policy, institutional support, and professional learning. Their systematic review emphasizes sustained mentoring, professional learning

communities, digital inclusion, welfare support, and impact-based evaluation as important elements in strengthening teacher development. Similarly, Aprilia et al. (2025) identify duration, content, assignments, practice, and mentoring as important dimensions of professional development for ECE educators.

These findings suggest that human resource development should be integrated into organizational processes. Training alone does not necessarily create organizational adaptability. Instead, teachers need opportunities to apply new knowledge, collaborate with colleagues, reflect on practices, receive feedback, and participate in institutional decision-making. Therefore, human resource capability can be understood as an organizational capacity that connects individual professional learning with collective institutional adaptation.

Adaptive Organizations in Early Childhood Education

Early childhood education requires particular attention because organizational adaptation occurs within a context in which children's developmental needs, teacher competencies, family expectations, and educational policies intersect. Unlike organizations that focus primarily on standardized outputs, ECE institutions must accommodate developmental diversity and maintain a strong emphasis on relationships, care, learning, and child-centered practice.

The changing Indonesian ECE environment further increases the importance of organizational adaptability. Curriculum transformation, digitalization, professionalization of teachers, and demands for improved educational quality require ECE institutions to continuously adjust their practices. Recent studies show that teacher development in Indonesia increasingly emphasizes digital literacy, innovative pedagogies, curriculum flexibility, and contextual learning (Istiana, 2024; Zaida et al., 2026). Consequently, adaptation at the ECE level cannot depend exclusively on individual teacher initiative. Institutions need organizational systems that facilitate professional learning, communication, mentoring, collaborative planning, and innovation. Leadership must create supportive conditions, organizational culture must normalize learning and change, and human resource systems must provide opportunities for continuous professional development. This perspective is particularly relevant to the study of TK Terpadu An Nisa' Tuban, East Java, because the institution can be examined not simply as a place where teachers perform educational tasks, but as an

organizational system in which leadership, culture, and human resources interact in responding to educational changes.

III. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative case study design to examine how leadership, organizational culture, and human resources contribute to organizational adaptability at TK Terpadu An Nisa' Tuban, East Java, Indonesia. The institution was purposively selected as a relevant context for understanding organizational responses to changes in educational practices, technology, professional development, and stakeholder expectations. Participants were selected through purposive sampling and included the principal, teachers, and relevant educational staff who were actively involved in institutional activities and organizational development.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, non-participant observations, and document analysis. Interviews explored leadership practices, organizational culture, human resource development, and institutional adaptability. Observations focused on leadership interactions, collaboration, communication, problem-solving, and daily organizational practices, while relevant institutional documents, including work programs, curriculum documents, teacher development records, meeting documentation, and standard operating procedures, were analyzed to complement the primary data. The researcher served as the main instrument, supported by interview guides, observation guidelines, and document-analysis checklists developed from the study framework.

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis through data familiarization, initial coding, categorization, theme development, and interpretation. The analysis examined patterns and relationships among leadership, organizational culture, human resources, and organizational adaptability. Data from interviews, observations, and documents were compared to strengthen the interpretation and identify consistencies across sources. Trustworthiness was enhanced through source triangulation, member checking, and an audit trail, while ethical principles were maintained through informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality, and protection of participant identities.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The findings indicate that the development of an adaptive educational organization at TK Terpadu An Nisa’ Tuban is shaped by the interaction of adaptive leadership, collaborative organizational culture, and human resource development. Rather than operating as separate organizational components, these three dimensions were found to reinforce one another in responding to changes in curriculum, educational technology, teaching practices, and stakeholder expectations. The analysis of interview, observation, and institutional document data generated four major themes: (1) responsive and participatory leadership, (2) collaborative and learning-oriented organizational culture, (3) continuous human resource development, and (4) organizational adaptability through collective learning and innovation.

Table 1. Main Themes and Key Findings

Main Theme	Key Findings	Contribution to Organizational Adaptability
Adaptive leadership	Open communication, participatory decisions, problem-solving, support for innovation	Provides direction and mobilizes organizational change
Organizational culture	Collaboration, mutual support, openness, collective learning	Creates an environment that facilitates adaptation
Human resources	Training, mentoring, knowledge sharing, competency development	Provides individual and collective capacity for change
Organizational adaptability	Curriculum adjustment, technological adaptation, innovation, reflection	Enables the institution to respond continuously to environmental changes

These findings suggest that organizational adaptability at TK Terpadu An Nisa’ is not primarily generated by a single leadership intervention or individual teacher competence. Rather, it emerges through a collective organizational process

involving leadership direction, supportive cultural practices, and continuous development of human resources.

Responsive and Participatory Leadership

The first major theme concerns the role of institutional leadership in creating conditions for organizational adaptation. The findings indicate that leadership at TK Terpadu An Nisa' is characterized by responsiveness, communication, participation, and facilitation of change. The school leadership was found to regularly communicate institutional priorities to teachers and staff and provide opportunities for discussion before implementing important changes. Rather than relying exclusively on top-down instructions, organizational problems were generally discussed collectively, particularly when they involved teaching practices, curriculum implementation, school activities, or the use of digital technologies. One participant described this process as follows:

"When there is a new policy or a new program, we discuss it together first. Teachers are given an opportunity to explain the difficulties they face, and then we look for a solution that can be implemented together."

This finding indicates that leadership functions not only as a mechanism of control but also as a facilitator of collective problem-solving. Teachers are positioned as participants in organizational change rather than merely as recipients of institutional decisions.

The findings also indicate that the leadership provides space for teachers to experiment with new educational practices. Teachers who develop new learning activities, digital materials, or classroom strategies are encouraged to share their experiences with colleagues. This practice creates a feedback mechanism through which individual experimentation can become collective organizational learning. Another important characteristic was the leadership's response to problems. Instead of treating difficulties as individual teacher failures, problems were frequently approached as organizational issues requiring discussion and support. This approach was particularly visible in relation to teachers' technological competencies and the implementation of new educational practices.

The results can therefore be summarized into four leadership characteristics:

1. Open communication between leadership and teachers;

- 2. Participatory decision-making in matters affecting teaching and organizational activities;
- 3. Facilitation of innovation through opportunities for teachers to experiment;
- 4. Supportive problem-solving, particularly when teachers encounter difficulties in adapting to new requirements.

These practices demonstrate that leadership contributes to organizational adaptability by creating direction, psychological space, and organizational support for change.

Collaborative and Learning-Oriented Organizational Culture

The second major finding concerns the organizational culture developed within the institution. The data suggest that TK Terpadu An Nisa’ demonstrates characteristics of a collaborative and learning-oriented culture. Teachers were found to communicate regularly about classroom experiences, student development, teaching difficulties, and institutional activities. Collaboration was particularly visible when teachers faced problems that could not be resolved individually. Teachers tended to seek assistance from colleagues and exchange practical solutions based on their previous experiences. Observation data also indicated that collaboration extended beyond formal meetings. Informal discussions among teachers served as an important mechanism for sharing knowledge and solving day-to-day educational problems. This suggests that organizational learning does not occur exclusively through formal professional development programs but also through everyday interactions.

The findings identified several cultural practices that support adaptation:

Table 2. Cultural Practices

Cultural Practice	Observed Organizational Function
Teacher collaboration	Facilitates collective problem-solving
Open communication	Enables rapid exchange of information
Peer assistance	Supports teachers facing new challenges
Knowledge sharing	Converts individual experience into collective knowledge

Reflection	Encourages evaluation of existing practices
Openness to new ideas	Facilitates innovation
Collective responsibility	Reduces dependence on individual actors

A teacher participant explained:

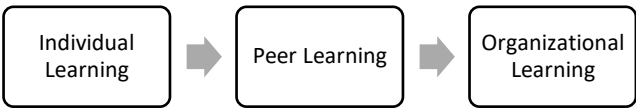
“Sometimes a teacher finds a way that works well in the classroom. We usually share it with other teachers so that it can also be adapted for other classes.”

This practice demonstrates the transformation of individual knowledge into organizational knowledge. Such knowledge sharing is important for organizational adaptability because institutional learning becomes less dependent on particular individuals. The findings also suggest that organizational culture supports teachers in dealing with change. When new programs or requirements are introduced, teachers tend to discuss the implications collectively rather than responding independently. Consequently, organizational culture functions as a social mechanism that reduces resistance and facilitates adjustment.

Human Resource Development and Professional Learning

The third theme concerns human resources as a central component of organizational adaptability. The findings demonstrate that teacher development at TK Terpadu An Nisa’ is supported through a combination of formal training, informal peer learning, mentoring, and practical experience. Teachers participate in professional development activities related to pedagogy, curriculum implementation, technology, classroom management, and other educational requirements. However, the findings indicate that formal training is only one component of professional learning.

An important mechanism identified in the data was peer-to-peer learning. Teachers who possess greater experience or specific competencies provide informal assistance to colleagues who encounter difficulties. This is particularly relevant when teachers need to use new digital tools or implement new instructional strategies. The findings also reveal three levels of human resource development:



At the individual level, teachers acquire new knowledge and skills. At the peer level, knowledge is exchanged and discussed among teachers. At the organizational level, successful practices can subsequently be incorporated into institutional routines. The following table summarizes the findings:

Table 3. Human Resource Dimension

Human Resource Dimension	Evidence Identified	Organizational Implication
Professional training	Participation in training/workshops	Development of new competencies
Digital competence	Learning and using digital tools	Improved technological adaptability
Peer mentoring	Teachers assisting colleagues	Increased knowledge sharing
Reflection	Discussion of teaching experiences	Continuous improvement
Motivation	Willingness to learn and try new practices	Greater readiness for change
Knowledge sharing	Dissemination of successful practices	Development of collective capacity

The findings suggest that human resource development contributes to adaptability when professional learning is continuous and socially embedded. Teachers do not simply acquire competencies individually; they share and reproduce these competencies within the organization.

Organizational Response to Change

The fourth theme concerns how the institution translates leadership, organizational culture, and human resource capabilities into concrete adaptive practices. Several forms of organizational adaptation emerged from the analysis. First, the institution demonstrated the capacity to adjust educational practices in response to curriculum developments. Teachers were involved in discussing changes and adapting lesson planning and classroom activities to new requirements. Second, the institution demonstrated increasing technological adaptation. Digital tools were used to support communication, administration, learning preparation, documentation, and interaction among educational stakeholders. Importantly, technology adoption was accompanied by informal learning among teachers, suggesting that technological adaptation was connected to human resource development. Third, teachers demonstrated pedagogical innovation by modifying learning activities according to children's needs and classroom conditions. The findings indicate that innovation was not necessarily associated with sophisticated technological solutions. In several cases, adaptation involved relatively simple modifications to learning activities, classroom organization, instructional materials, and communication strategies. Fourth, organizational reflection contributed to adaptation. After activities or programs were completed, teachers and leaders discussed what worked effectively and what needed improvement. This reflective process created opportunities for organizational learning.

Interaction Among Leadership, Organizational Culture, and Human Resources

A central finding of the study is that leadership, organizational culture, and human resources operate interdependently rather than independently. The findings suggest that leadership creates the initial conditions for adaptation by establishing communication channels, encouraging participation, and providing institutional support. These leadership practices contribute to a culture characterized by collaboration and openness. In turn, the collaborative culture enables teachers to share knowledge, support one another, and develop their competencies. Improved human resource capacity then strengthens the institution's ability to implement and sustain organizational changes.

Evidence of an Emerging Adaptive Educational Organization

Based on the combined interview, observation, and document data, TK Terpadu An Nisa' demonstrates several characteristics associated with an adaptive educational organization.

Table 4. Adaptive Characteristics

Adaptive Characteristic	Evidence from the Findings
Responsiveness to change	Institutional responses to curriculum and educational developments
Collaborative decision-making	Teacher participation in discussions and problem-solving
Organizational learning	Reflection, knowledge sharing, and peer learning
Professional development	Training, mentoring, and informal learning
Innovation	Experimentation with teaching strategies and learning resources
Flexibility	Adjustment of practices according to institutional needs
Knowledge sharing	Dissemination of teacher experiences and successful practices
Continuous improvement	Evaluation and modification of programs

The findings therefore indicate that adaptability is not represented by a single program but by a pattern of organizational behavior. The institution's adaptive capacity emerges from repeated practices of communication, collaboration, reflection, learning, and adjustment.

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that the development of an adaptive educational organization at TK Terpadu An Nisa' Tuban is shaped by the interaction of adaptive leadership, collaborative organizational culture, and human resource development. Rather than functioning as independent organizational elements, these dimensions form a mutually reinforcing system

through which the institution responds to curriculum changes, technological developments, professional demands, and changing stakeholder expectations. This finding supports the broader understanding that organizational adaptability in education depends on the capacity of institutions to learn collectively, mobilize people, and continuously adjust organizational practices.

Adaptive Leadership as a Driver of Organizational Adaptation

The findings demonstrate that leadership plays an important role in creating the conditions necessary for organizational adaptation. The leadership practices identified in this study—open communication, participatory decision-making, problem-solving, and support for teacher innovation—indicate that institutional leadership extends beyond administrative coordination. Leaders function as facilitators of organizational learning by encouraging teachers to participate in identifying problems and developing solutions. This finding is consistent with Fitriani (2023), who argues that adaptive leadership in educational institutions involves contextual analysis, human resource preparation, teamwork, appropriate policy development, and continuous monitoring and evaluation. Adaptive leadership is therefore characterized not simply by the speed with which leaders respond to change, but by their capacity to mobilize organizational members to collectively address complex challenges. The present findings extend this perspective by demonstrating how such leadership practices operate within an early childhood education setting, where organizational adaptation depends heavily on teacher collaboration and day-to-day professional interaction.

The findings are also consistent with Kareem et al. (2024), who found that leadership is associated with the development of learning organizations in school education. Their research suggests that leadership contributes to organizational learning through mechanisms that include organizational culture and individual commitment. The present study provides a complementary qualitative perspective by showing how leadership is translated into everyday practices: leaders communicate changes, invite teacher input, provide assistance when teachers experience difficulties, and encourage the sharing of successful practices. Importantly, the findings suggest that adaptive leadership should not be interpreted as leadership that independently solves every organizational problem. Instead, its principal function is to create organizational capacity for collective problem-solving. This distinction is important in educational institutions because

teachers possess substantial contextual knowledge about classroom practices and children's needs. When leadership creates opportunities for teachers to contribute their knowledge, organizational responses can become more contextually grounded.

Organizational Culture as the Social Infrastructure of Adaptation

The second important finding concerns the role of organizational culture. The study identified collaboration, openness, mutual assistance, knowledge sharing, and collective reflection as important cultural practices at TK Terpadu An Nisa'. These practices appear to provide the social infrastructure through which organizational adaptation becomes possible. This finding supports Torres's (2022) argument that organizational culture and leadership are closely interconnected in school organizations. Organizational culture influences how members interpret leadership practices and organizational changes, while leaders can simultaneously contribute to the formation and transformation of organizational culture. Thus, the effectiveness of adaptive leadership is partly dependent on whether organizational norms support participation, communication, and learning.

The present findings are particularly consistent with Kareem et al. (2024), who found that organizational culture plays a mediating role between leadership and learning organization. In the context of TK Terpadu An Nisa', this relationship can be observed through the movement from leadership initiatives to collaborative teacher practices. Leadership creates opportunities for discussion, while organizational culture determines whether teachers actually use those opportunities to exchange knowledge and solve problems collectively.

The findings also reinforce the argument that organizational culture should not be reduced to formally stated institutional values. Culture is expressed through everyday behavior. Teacher assistance, informal discussions, shared problem-solving, and willingness to exchange successful teaching practices represent concrete manifestations of a learning-oriented culture. Consequently, organizational adaptability may be more sustainable when adaptive behaviors become embedded in routine interactions rather than depending exclusively on formal programs.

Human Resources as the Enacting Capacity of Adaptation

The third major finding demonstrates that human resources constitute the enacting capacity of organizational adaptability. Leadership may establish

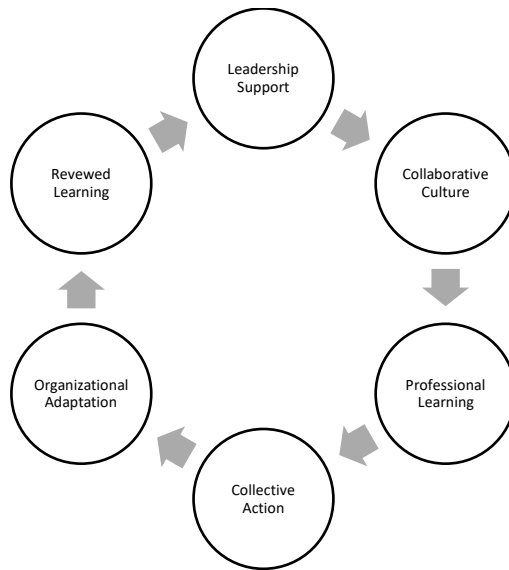
strategic direction and culture may create a supportive environment, but adaptation ultimately occurs through the actions and competencies of teachers and staff. This finding is particularly relevant to early childhood education. Teachers operate directly at the point where organizational policies are transformed into educational practices. Consequently, changes in curriculum, technology, pedagogy, and assessment require teachers to continuously develop their professional capabilities.

The findings are consistent with Istiana (2024), whose review of Indonesian early childhood education research identified an increasing emphasis on digital literacy and innovative pedagogical competencies alongside conventional pedagogical competencies. This development reflects the changing competency requirements facing early childhood educators in Indonesia. The present study further suggests that human resource development is most effective when it extends beyond formal training. Training provides opportunities for individual competency development, but peer mentoring, knowledge sharing, reflection, and opportunities to apply new knowledge enable individual learning to become organizational learning. In this respect, the findings support recent literature emphasizing sustained professional learning and institutional support in early childhood teacher development. This is important because professional development can have limited organizational impact if newly acquired knowledge remains at the individual level. At TK Terpadu An Nisa', the process of sharing experiences among teachers appears to facilitate the movement from individual competence to collective organizational capability. A teacher who learns a new digital tool or instructional strategy can subsequently share that knowledge with colleagues, thereby expanding the organization's overall capacity.

The Interdependence of Leadership, Culture, and Human Resources

One of the most significant findings is that leadership, organizational culture, and human resources should not be understood as isolated factors. The evidence suggests a dynamic relationship among the three dimensions. Leadership provides direction and enabling conditions. Organizational culture provides social norms and relational conditions. Human resources provide knowledge, skills, and action. Organizational adaptability emerges from their interaction.

This interpretation is compatible with Kareem et al. (2024), whose findings indicate that organizational culture mediates the relationship between leadership and learning organization. It also corresponds with research emphasizing the connection between adaptive leadership, constructive organizational culture, and organizational learning in educational institutions. The present study adds an important contextual dimension by showing that this interaction can be understood as a continuous organizational cycle:



This cycle suggests that adaptation is not a one-time response to external change. Instead, it is a continuing organizational process. Once teachers develop new competencies and practices, these practices can influence organizational culture. Similarly, successful collective adaptation can reinforce leadership approaches that emphasize participation and learning.

Organizational Learning and Innovation

The findings also indicate that organizational adaptability is strongly associated with organizational learning. The institution does not simply respond to change by implementing external requirements; teachers and leaders appear to learn from implementation experiences and modify practices accordingly. This distinction is theoretically important. Adaptation based only on compliance may allow an institution to meet immediate external requirements, but it does not necessarily create long-term adaptive capacity. Organizational learning, by

contrast, allows institutions to develop internal knowledge that can be used to address future challenges.

Kareem et al. (2024) similarly position learning organization as an important outcome of leadership, culture, and individual commitment. In the present study, organizational learning is visible through teacher discussions, reflection, knowledge sharing, and experimentation with educational practices. Innovation in this context should also be interpreted broadly. It does not necessarily require sophisticated technology or major organizational restructuring. Small adjustments in classroom activities, communication practices, learning resources, or coordination mechanisms may represent meaningful forms of organizational innovation when they emerge from reflection and improve the institution's ability to respond to changing needs.

Implications for Early Childhood Education

The findings have particular implications for the management of early childhood education institutions. ECE organizations operate in a context where educational quality depends heavily on relationships, teacher competence, collaboration, and responsiveness to children's developmental needs. Therefore, organizational adaptability should not be pursued exclusively through technological modernization or administrative restructuring. Instead, institutional leaders need to develop a balanced adaptive capacity consisting of three elements. First, leaders need to establish clear direction while maintaining opportunities for participation. Second, institutions need to cultivate organizational cultures that normalize collaboration, reflection, and learning. Third, human resource development needs to be continuous and connected to actual organizational challenges.

This interpretation is particularly relevant to Indonesia, where early childhood teacher development continues to face challenges related to professional development opportunities, digital competencies, and differences in institutional support (Istiana, 2024). Strengthening adaptive organizational capacity may therefore provide a broader institutional response than focusing exclusively on individual teacher training.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the literature by positioning adaptive educational organization as an emergent organizational capability rather than simply an outcome of individual leadership. The findings indicate that

adaptability develops through the interaction of leadership, organizational culture, and human resources.

The findings provide several practical implications for TK Terpadu An Nisa' and similar early childhood institutions. Leadership development should emphasize not only administrative competence but also communication, facilitation, collaborative decision-making, and change management. Professional development should be designed as a continuous process that combines formal training with mentoring, peer learning, and reflection. Furthermore, institutions should create regular spaces for teachers to exchange experiences and evaluate educational practices. Simple mechanisms such as reflective meetings, peer-sharing sessions, collaborative lesson planning, and documentation of successful practices can help transform individual experiences into institutional knowledge. Finally, organizational adaptability should be evaluated continuously. Rather than assessing adaptation solely through the implementation of new programs, institutions can examine whether teachers are increasingly able to learn collectively, respond to problems, experiment with new approaches, share knowledge, and modify practices based on evidence and experience.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study concludes that organizational adaptability at TK Terpadu An Nisa' Tuban is shaped by the interaction of adaptive leadership, collaborative organizational culture, and human resource development. Responsive and participatory leadership creates conditions for collaboration and innovation, while a supportive organizational culture encourages knowledge sharing and collective learning. At the same time, continuous human resource development strengthens teachers' capacity to respond to educational changes. Thus, organizational adaptability emerges as a continuous process of learning, collaboration, innovation, and improvement rather than as a single organizational intervention. The institution should strengthen participatory leadership, collaborative learning, and continuous professional development. Regular peer-learning, mentoring, reflective meetings, and documentation of good practices can help institutionalize organizational learning and innovation. Future research should examine these relationships across a broader range of early childhood education institutions using comparative or mixed-method approaches.

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