

## The Conflict Management Strategies in Improving Madrasah Organizational Culture: A Case Study

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**ABSTRACT.** This study aims to analyze how the characteristics and organizational culture, types of conflict, and conflict management are used. The research method uses a qualitative method with a phenomenological approach. The research subjects included school principals and teachers at Madrasah Aliyah Ibrahimy Wali Songo Situbondo. Data collection techniques through interviews and observations, while data analysis techniques use triangulation. The results showed that the characteristics and organizational culture at Madrasah Aliyah Ibrahimy Wali Songo Situbondo were divided into communication, behavioural standards, and efforts to improve organizational climate. The types of conflicts are influenced by the corporate culture of the Madrasah Aliyah Ibrahimy Walisongo, which then causes conflicts within themselves, disputes between individuals, and conflicts between groups. The management of conflict handling is resolved through three strategies, namely collaboration, accommodation, and compromise. This research can provide recommendations on the management of conflict management that often occurs in the organizational culture of *Madrasahs*.

**Keywords:** *Conflict management, management strategies, organizational culture*

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### INTRODUCTION

Conflicts often occur anywhere and anytime, including in educational institutions (Lukens-Bull, 2013; Setiawan, 2018; Puspita, 2018; Zolkin, 2020; Kurbonalievna & Adxamovna, 2021). Even though education is the most critical part of humans, as a way of life that makes humans able to determine what is good or not, conflicts continue to colour the educational process from time to time. Therefore, conflict cannot be viewed as a negative phenomenon but as a positive phenomenon. In some kinds of literature, conflicts sometimes have to be created to improve the quality of education, which previously only ran monotonously because the institution's leadership did not want to innovate or change to keep up with the times. It is interesting to explore more comprehensively because conflict informal educational institutions such as Madrasah Aliyah (MA) depend on the strategies applied to anticipate harmful conflicts. MA Ibrahimy Wali Songo Situbondo is one of the formal educational institutions that implement a sustainable conflict management system to improve the organizational culture of madrasahs amid increasing demands for work.

It is widely known that the purpose of the National Education of the Republic of Indonesia is to educate the nation's life and develop the Indonesian people as a whole, namely humans who believe and are devoted to God Almighty and have a noble character, have

knowledge and skills, physical and spiritual health, wonderful personality. Moreover, have a sense of social and national responsibility (Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003). This goal cannot run as expected if a sound school system and organization do not accompany it to avoid various future obstacles, such as internal and external conflicts. However, in some schools, conflicts were found, which ultimately hampered the process and running of the organization (Farhan, & Hadisaputra, 2021; Bashori et al., 2022). As a result, the stated goals are hampered.

According to Malayu (2009), the organization is a formal, structured and coordinated system of associations of a group of people who work together to achieve specific goals. Organizations are only tools and containers (Hasibuan et al., 2018; Ibrohum, 2018; Apud, 2020; Citraningsih, 2021). If viewed in terms, the organization is a collaboration of people or groups of people who work together to achieve the desired goals. In terms of its form, the organization is dynamic and bound. Therefore, each organization generally has a personality that distinguishes it from other organizations. Of course, a distinctive personality does not automatically form when an organization is established, but it takes time as the organization grows and develops well. In each of these developments, it can be said that the organization will find its own unique identity.

One factor that distinguishes an organization from other organizations is its culture (Hendra, 2020). It is essential to understand and recognize. However, universal things must be applied to management through an approach and carefully consider the factors of the situation, conditions, conflict, time and space. In other words, it is applied under the prevailing culture and adopted in the organization concerned. Everyone who initially comes to an organization with a unique culture must immediately study the organization's concerns to see what adjustments need to be made and minimize misunderstandings between new and old members. Therefore, conflict management strategies in developing an organizational culture in schools are needed.

Sweeney and McFarlin (2002) suggest that culture ideally communicates clear messages about how we do things or act and behave. From this thought, it can be interpreted that culture provides direction on how a person should behave, behave, and act in a community; the word 'around here in this sense refers to a particular community, whether it is in the form of an organization, company, or society. Meanwhile, according to Owens (2001), culture is seen as values or norms, which refer to statements about what can or can not be done by organisation members as assumptions, which refer to what things are considered right or wrong. Culture, as a result of human work, is formed to be able to form written rules, and over time they will not be written again, as a result of a strong commitment from community members, which in the end are called norms and ethics. The more deeply pervasive norms in society until the norms are no longer written, while ethics is what wraps the behaviour of community members to act according to the criteria of norms, which in the end the process of deepening these norms is called culture.

In general, culture is below the conscious threshold because it involves how a person sees, thinks, acts feels and reacts (Kinicki, & Kreitner, 2012; Kreitner & Cassidy, 2012; Belias & Koustelios, 2014). This theory states that organizational culture is the basic pattern of assumptions for creating, finding, or developing groups by learning to adapt from the outside and integrate them into the organization, what will be done well and consistently and validly, and also as a reference for new organizational members to correcting as acceptance, thought, and feeling concerning all problems in detail and detail. Organizational culture is marked by sharing or sharing the same values and beliefs with all organization members, for example, sharing the same values and beliefs through uniforms. However, accepting and wearing the uniform is not enough. The use of uniforms should bring a sense of pride, be a tool of control and form the organization's image.

According to Mulyasa (2013), conflict can be likened to a "double-edged sword" on the one hand, it can be helpful if it is used to carry out a job; on the other hand, it can be detrimental and wreak havoc if it is used to fight or flight. In the context of education management, there are four

types of conflicts that often occur in organizations, namely: role conflicts that occur in individuals, conflicts between existing roles, conflicts in one's self due to efforts to fulfil the wishes of others, conflicts as a result of information (messages and messages) which causes differences of opinion, and conflict can have positive and negative impacts on an organization (Kamande, 2016). Conflict management aims to improve work performance and repair unhealthy organizational relationships. Owens (2001) suggests that the primary goal of any approach to conflict management is to eliminate or reduce and remedy the hostility that arises from conflict. Several factors influence conflict management, namely the general characteristics of the conflicting parties, the relationship between the conflicting parties before the conflict occurs, the nature of the problem that causes the conflict, the social environment in which the conflict occurs, the interests of the conflicting parties, the usual strategies—used by the conflicting parties, and the consequences of the conflict on the conflicting parties and other parties (Soetopo, 2010).

MA Ibrahimy Wali Songo Situbondo is an organization consisting of principals, teachers and students. Like other organizations, madrasas will often have conflicts. The existence of warmth, structure, and dimensions of responsibility affect conflict management. Therefore, it can be seen that each individual in the madrasa has their respective duties and responsibilities. In carrying out these duties and responsibilities, there will be challenges that cause conflict because managing conflict requires a mature mentality and strategy.

For this reason, individuals in madrasas need to have skills in conflict management. Based on these problems, the study of this conflict becomes significant. Therefore, this study aims to analyze how the characteristics and culture of the organization, the types of conflicts that affect organizational culture, and conflict handling management in MA Ibrahimy Wali Songo Situbondo.

## **METHOD**

The research method uses a qualitative method with a phenomenological approach. The research subjects included the principal and teacher of MA Ibrahimy Wali Songo Situbondo. Data collection techniques use interviews and observations, while data analysis uses triangulation. In addition, to measure the level of organizational culture and characteristics using a descriptive description that contains an overview of the effectiveness of conflict management and organizational culture to provide an overview of conflict management strategies in improving the organizational culture at MA Ibrahimy Wali Songo Situbondo. The procedures or steps taken in making the questionnaire include: determining the indicators that form the basis for the preparation of statement items, making a grid of research instruments, and compiling a questionnaire design. The questionnaires used included a questionnaire on conflict management strategies and organizational culture. Before being distributed to respondents, the questionnaire's level of validity and reliability was measured.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Result**

The results of this study reveal the characteristics and culture of the organization, the types of conflicts that affect organizational culture, and the management of conflict resolution at the Ibrahimy Wali Songo Islamic Court, Situbondo. The three research results are described below.

The first characteristic of organizational culture at MA Ibrahimy Wali Songo Situbondo is the communication pattern between school principals, teachers, staff, and students due to the daily communication process between school members who have different cultural backgrounds. The communication process is carried out by the residents of this school directly through a face-to-face process without going through other supporting media. The communication process carried out can be found through the efforts of the environmental adaptation process in the

organization. In this adaptation process, there is a process of verbal communication and non-verbal communication that they use as support when interacting. The second organizational culture at the MA Ibrahimy Wali Songo Situbondo school is also marked by norms that contain standards of behaviour from school members, both students and teachers. These standards of behaviour can be based on the school's internal policies or local and central government policies.

Verbal communication used to adapt to this environment includes language as a means of communication. Besides Madurese (Phesa), they also use Indonesian as an alternative language. Indonesian is used when each of the communicating parties cannot understand the language, which is done to form an intimacy between each other. Verbal communication is carried out using the Madurese language (Phesa), which all school members must use and Indonesian as a unifying language. In contrast, non-verbal communications are symbols and symbols that support the communication process carried out and attitudes and behaviour when communicating also indicate a process. This non-verbal communication is like an attitude of attention when communicating by looking at the other person's eyes and listening carefully to what the other person.

The first type of conflict in MA Ibrahimy Wali Songo comes from communication. Conflicts originating from communication between principals, teachers, staff and students are caused by misunderstandings and sceptical or incomplete information, such as when a teacher is not allowed to fill in the subjects in class because of family matters, the class will be empty. It is sometimes often used by students by sleeping in class, and not infrequently; some students go home first, but what often happens from the conflict is that it can encourage students to go out to rest earlier than other students. It often causes jealousy and is very disturbing to students who focus on studying in the next class. Meanwhile, the school sometimes does not provide a substitute teacher in a class, is no teacher, and is motivated by the many interests of the teacher so that many teachers in schools have permission.

The second type of conflict that exists at MA Ibrahimy Wali Songo namely conflicts between individuals; this conflict often occurs in the division of class hours, especially the type of productive hours caused by delays in changing lesson sessions; many occur when a teacher is teaching in class at 01.00 WIB which should have ended at 02.00 WIB. However, the large number of materials discussed by the teacher in the classroom caused the teacher to be unaware that his teaching time was over. It often causes individual conflicts between one teacher and another.

The third type of conflict in MA Ibrahimy Wali Songo is inter-group conflict. The conflict between groups occurs because of the interdependence of differences in perceptions, differences in goals and increasing goals for expertise. The background of the conflict is the emergence of gangs between students carrying the names of their respective regions. The emergence of gangs in schools is commonly known as negative connotations. It is improbable that their existence will be expected; moreover, most of these gangs often create conflicts both in the school environment and in the surrounding environment, thus indirectly creating new conflicts for other students who carry out activities—learning in a class that should be quiet, so that it interferes in the teaching and learning process.

Based on observations, the principal of MA Ibrahimy Wali Songo always looks for good conditions and situations in resolving conflicts, such as during meetings with the teacher council to discuss conflicts that occur and find the best solution and settlement. There the principal sat down with the parties involved in the conflict and offered a fair solution for them. Once an agreement is reached, both parties must accept and implement the decision. For example, decisions taken in meetings, teachers, staff, and employees agree on permits three times a month. From the decision results, the principal emphasized that they had been made together to suppress the presence of teachers who often skipped school.

The first conflict management in MA Ibrahimy Wali Songo is to use a collaborative strategy. This conflict management strategy accommodates the results of ideas or ideas set by many people. The goal is to find creative solutions that all school members can accept, and the results of conflict management using collaborative methods can build a strong mutual commitment so that all parties can accept it. Based on the results of an interview with one of Rehawi's teachers, he explained that in order to manage the conflicts of each teacher, which is seen from his characteristics and character, if he has a temperamental character, then the teacher tends to take physical action in overcoming conflicts, rather than choosing a persuasive/approach individuals in conflict resolution.

The second conflict handling in the Wali Songo Supreme Court is to use an accommodation strategy. Based on observations at the Ibrahimy Wali Songo Supreme Court, each individual's personality in the Ibrahimy Wali Songo Supreme Court is very diverse, including the parties involved in the conflict. As a school leader, the principal tries to understand each personality of his subordinates, thereby making it easier for the principal to overcome conflicts so that conflicts that occur can be immediately handled by the principal properly and do not cause new conflicts.

The third conflict handling in the Supreme Court of Ibrahimy Wali Songo uses a Compromise Strategy. Based on the results of interviews with Mr Moh. Fadil explained that the issue is information that is not certain the truth and tends to lead to slander; therefore, the issue of conflict from both parties affects the principal's strategy in conflict management because the principal cannot conclude whether the conflict exists or not. The principal does not respond to a problem whose truth is not certain; every time there is a problem in the school, the principal always investigates the truth first, and the principal always looks for several sources of information, and it is not uncommon for the principal to go directly to see the truth of the conflict.

## **Discussion**

### **Organizational Characteristics and Culture**

One of the standards of student behaviour is mainly related to the achievement of student learning outcomes, which will determine whether a student can be declared graduated, promoted to grade, or not. Standards of student behaviour are not only related to cognitive or academic aspects but also involve all aspects of personality. Regarding the strengthening of organizational culture, it includes the value of love for the creator (Hablun min Allah), the value of love for His fellow-creatures, especially fellow humans (Hablun min al-Naas), the value of love for nature (Hablun min al-'Aalam). In the school culture at MA Ibrahimy Wali Songo, there are daily activities carried out at school to obtain a total strengthening of organizational culture, which is also good, including the habits that are carried out, namely at every entry and exit from school getting used to reading prayers together and *Sholawat Nariyah* and applying 3S (Senyum, Salam, and Sapa). Culture has been designed by the school to be strengthened as a school identity. The implementation of 3S (Smile, Greet, and Greeting) has changed the school culture for the better (Amal, 2020; Masaong & Tipuwo, 2019).

The norms developed at the Supreme Court of Ibrahimy Wali Songo consist of religious norms, norms of decency and legal norms. The existing norms are included in the rules at MA Ibrahimy Wali Songo as a form of rule that binds all residents in this school, while the existing rules at this school include two binding rules, some rules regulate students or students, and there are also binding rules for staff and teachers in schools. The difference between students and staff and teachers at MA Ibrahimy Wali Songo is that students must follow all the rules in the school without any differences from children who are able or underprivileged. In contrast, there are additional points against staff and school employees instead of only following all the rules. However, they have to keep the confidential information owned by the school against the

information they get, so it is hoped that the confidentiality of the school will be adequately maintained, which cannot be used by other parties who are not responsible, as well as the obligation to memorize Juz 30 (*Juz 'Amma*) for students, teachers and staff.

The third organizational culture at MA Ibrahimy Wali Songo is the organizational climate itself. As said by Hay (2003) that "organizational climate is the perception of how it feels to work in a particular environment. It is the "atmosphere of the workplace" and people's perceptions of the way we do things here". The occurrence of interactions that influence each other between individuals and their environment, both the physical and social environment. This environment was created by the school so that it is hoped that all school members will touch and feel it directly. Structuring the school environment aims to support student learning activities, including the physical environment, room arrangements, and utilization of learning resources. Therefore, it can be further emphasized that physically the learning environment must be attractive and able to arouse students' enthusiasm and provide comfort for all school members in their activities.

One of them is to create a conducive environment; a reasonable and appropriate classroom arrangement is needed. Organizing classrooms is a shared task between students and their respective homeroom teachers, but MA Ibrahimy Wali Songo also contributes to creating a conducive environment by holding regular class cleaning competitions. Based on the results of an interview with Mr Rehawi, as part of Facilities and Infrastructure, arranging classrooms is arranging chairs and tables orderly and completing class administration, such as lesson schedules, picket schedules, and class structure. Additional accessories on the classroom walls are also added to create a pleasant atmosphere, such as attaching verses of the Koran, photos of scholars, photos of heroes and mottos that can motivate student learning.

### **Types of conflict**

The emergence of conflicts in organizations that impact the organizational culture in schools is usually motivated by individual interests, differences of opinion, and individual and group gaps. Communication can be divided into three types: upward communication, downward communication and horizontal or horizontal communication. It agrees with research from Iordanides and Mitsara (2014); the study results show that the adverse effects of conflict on school units include impaired interpersonal relationships, resulting in a decrease in the quality of communication and lack of coordination. The meaning that can be obtained in the organization is the critical role of communication, especially in forming an effective and efficient organization; the better their communication, the better their cooperation will be. This conflict occurs when there are differences in specific issues, actions and goals where the expected outcome is decisive. Nuryati (2012), the study results show that conflict has positive and negative impacts. The positive impact that appears is that all personnel are increasingly willing to work together in advancing their school. The negative impacts arising from the conflict include structuring and fulfilling teaching hours of at least 24 hours, so some teachers do not get total hours. The meaning that can be obtained in overcoming organizational structure must make a positive contribution and effectiveness, and organizations need assumptions about the abilities and motivations of those who have the power to design them.

The interview explained that in addition to conflicts that occur in general, there are also conflicts between individuals, such as giving multiple assignments to the school's organizational structure. The dual-task is seen as more efficient for the common good. The background of this conflict is due to the lack of staff and teachers at MA Ibrahimy Wali Songo, so it can affect the teaching and learning process activities and affect the achievement of the school's vision and mission, conflicts between individuals, are substantive, emotional or both. The reason behind the emergence of gangs among students at MA Ibrahimy Wali Songo is usually due to their identity and ethnicity because they cannot be separated from their home environment and often bring identity, race and culture from their respective regions, such as students from as morngok,

conspiracy, gasak emerge, they adopt the behaviour that exists in their area and then apply it to schools, from that, groups that are very vulnerable to conflict occur and several group names emerge such as as morngok, conspiracy, gasak emerge. Not infrequently, serious conflicts such as fights between students and the division of unity in school organizations are caused by the existence of several of these groups. The study results also agree with the research conducted by Nuryati (2012). The study results indicate that the conflict is reviewed according to the group, including functional conflict. Functional conflict means conflict that occurs between two groups to obtain organizational performance. The meaning that can be obtained is that conflicts between groups occur because of the interdependence of differences in perceptions, differences in goals and increasing goals for expertise.

### **Conflict Management**

Situational factors affect the principal's strategy in managing conflicts in the MA Ibrahimy Wali Songo, and in making decisions, the principal must be in the right conditions and situations so that the decisions taken are sagacious and firm. They were solving together, looking for solutions, not for mere profit but the best results. It agrees with the research conducted by Shamoradi et al. (2014). The results showed that emotional intelligence as one of the qualifications to get a managerial post fosters a spirit of tolerance and coordination of benefits and cooperation in organizations and workgroups. The interview results explained that the interaction factor and dispositional approach could be used to seek an understanding of social behaviour that was considered to have limited benefits; The interaction also affects the resolution of conflicts. By interacting directly with the parties involved in the conflict, the school will get information and the main form of the problem.

Based on observations, the principal often interacts directly with the teacher in the teacher's room; the principal sits in the teacher's room more often than in the principal's office. Teachers are professional educators with the main task of educating, teaching, guiding, directing, training, assessing, and evaluating students (Baharun, 2017). It can be seen that the principal interacts directly with subordinates; by interacting directly with the principal's subordinates, it is easy to see and know the conflicts that occur. Interaction is a relationship that influences each other between individuals and individuals, individuals with groups and groups with groups that can influence each other, which results in dynamic reciprocity. Therefore, the interaction factor is very influential on the principal's strategy in conflict management; the interaction is a process of understanding the occurrence of conflict and experiencing reciprocity so that the conflict can be known. The accommodation strategy implemented by MA Ibrahimy Wali Songo is if there is a delay in teaching hours in class, the principal and teacher are late in completing it amicably, such as "Sorry sir, I don't know if my teaching time is up, so for next week I will leave early to replace your father's class hours that I used before". This strategy is appropriate when we know that the opposing party has the right solution to the problem at hand. This strategy can also be used if the conflict is not too important for us. In other words, an accommodative strategy is an "I lose, you win" or "I lose you win" strategy.

MA Ibrahimy Wali Songo uses conflict management with an accommodation strategy to make subordinates more proactive so that the school atmosphere is active. In dealing with conflicts, an accommodation strategy is applied for the common interest, namely the progress of school institutions. This study also agrees with the research conducted by Fathoni et al. (2013) that conflict handling uses an accommodation strategy through fostering parties related to conflicts, communication to solve problems, and a joint active role. MA Ibrahimy Wali Songo uses conflict management with a compromise strategy because this strategy is the most effective and efficient of several other strategies, the principle of a win-win solution with all parties so that the conflict parties accept decisions happily and no other party feels harmed. For example, when groups of student's conflict with other groups of students, the way the principal manages is by calling one chairman or founder of each group and giving direction and responsibility, how in the

future, the conflicting group will not make a second mistake. However, if the same conflict occurs twice, the first sanction will be given to each group's group leader or the founder. It encourages group leaders to provide direction and understanding to their members so that a second conflict does not recur.

In addition, the school also provides suspensions in several stages, such as the existence of the first, second and third summons for students involved in conflicts. In the first summoning of students, the school only reprimanded and gave directions so that the student would not repeat his mistake; if the student were involved in a conflict again, the school would give a second summons, which was to call the student and their parents to find a solution together. Furthermore, if the student is involved in a third-time conflict, the school will act decisively by not raising or graduating the student concerned. In resolving conflicts, the Supreme Court uses a middle ground or compromise strategy acceptable to all parties. This strategy divides the differences between the two positions and provides concessions to find a middle point so that if there is a mutual agreement, then a decision is made that can be accepted by all parties gracefully. The study results also agree with the research conducted by Shamoradi et al. (2014). Furthermore, to improve the application of conflict management must be with emotional intelligence and the application of the best management style. So, conflict handling with this compromise strategy can reduce or avoid the possibility of a social explosion in the school environment and its surroundings.

Based on the results of the description and discussion, the research can be simplified as follows: the characteristics and organizational culture of the MA Wali Songo Situbondo are motivated by the following factors; communication, norms and standards of behaviour and efforts to improve organizational climate, while the types of conflicts that affect organizational culture include; conflict within oneself, a conflict between individuals, and conflict between groups. The conflict management culture is overcome by using collaboration, accommodation, and compromise strategies.

## CONCLUSION

The occurrence of conflicts within oneself, between individuals, and between groups is caused by differences in cultural backgrounds to form different individuals and interdependence of different perceptions, differences in goals, and increasing goals for expertise. To deal with this conflict, all parties need to build a culture such as communication, norms and standards of behaviour that can improve the organizational climate. Besides that, handling the conflict requires a strategy of collaboration, accommodation, and compromise; MA Wali Songo Situbondo is expected to have the ability to manage conflict or avoid the possibility of an enormous conflict explosion that will never end. Moreover, MA Wali Songo Situbondo is again able to improve its organizational culture so that it becomes a quality school that deserves to be used as a reference at the national level.

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