

Improving the Quality of Islamic Education through Pesantren-Based Management in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Islamic education in Indonesia faces a significant challenge in maintaining quality and relevance amid globalization and technological disruption. Although pesantren plays a central role in shaping Islamic character, there is still limited study of the effectiveness of pesantren-based management in improving the quality of education. This study aims to examine how pesantren-based management models integrate Islamic values into the governance of educational institutions to strengthen the quality of Islamic education. This study uses a qualitative approach based on a literature study, by examining relevant scientific and policy literature to analyze the contribution of pesantren-based management to improving the quality of Islamic education. The findings suggest that this model focuses on three main aspects: (1) Islamic leadership; (2) integrative curriculum management; and (3) community-based collective participation. The three encourage technology-based learning innovation, establishing autonomous business units, and strengthening teacher capacity. However, significant challenges such as limited human resources, unequal access to technology, and resistance to change remain significant obstacles. This study concludes that pesantren-based management remains relevant as a strategy to improve the quality of Islamic education, which is rooted in traditional values but adaptive to change. The implication is that strategic partnerships between Islamic boarding schools, the government, and external partners are needed to support the sustainability and expansion of the impact of this transformation.

Keywords: *islamic education, pesantren-based management, islamic value, literature study.*

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INTRODUCTION

Islamic education in Indonesia, primarily through Islamic boarding schools, plays a strategic role in shaping individuals who not only master religious knowledge in depth but can also answer global challenges. According to Data from the Ministry of Religion for the odd semester of 2023/2024, there are more than 39,000 pesantren with more than 5 million students.¹ This confirms the fundamental position of pesantren in the national education system. However, the pressure to transform curriculum, management, and learning methods is urgent in an era of technological disruption and globalization. Modernization of the curriculum that leads to strategies for planning, implementation, and integrative evaluation between modern and traditional methods is crucial so that pesantren can survive and be relevant.²

Globalization brings challenges and opportunities for Islamic boarding schools; the rapid flow of information, digital technology, and 21st-century skills demand a more professional managerial approach. Constraints such as legacy management systems, resource limitations, and resistance to change require implementing adaptive transformation strategies, such as digitizing learning and external partnerships. However, the literature on pesantren-based management, a management model rooted in traditional values, kiai leadership, and dormitory culture, is still limited.³

As a typical approach, pesantren-based management needs to be defined operationally. This model integrates pesantren's spiritual and cultural principles—such as charismatic kiai leadership, the value of independence, and the dormitory system—with modern educational practices, including strategic planning, quality evaluation, and human resource development. The role of kiai as a value leader is vital in the change management process involving all pesantren stakeholders.⁴

The theoretical framework of this research departs from the theory of Educational Change Management, which emphasizes visionary leadership, collective participation, and the cultivation of local values in transforming educational institutions, combined with the concept of Islamization of Knowledge to enrich Islamic education management.⁵ The cultural

¹ Saiful Maarif, "Seeing the Ecosystem of Islamic Boarding School Independence," <https://kemenag.go.id/>, 2024, <https://kemenag.go.id/kolom/melihat-ekosistem-kemandirian-pesantren-mPgBg>.

² Abd. Muis Zaini, Hepni, and Titiek Rohanah Hidayati, "Islamic Boarding School's Curriculum Management Modernization," *JIEMAN: Journal of Islamic Educational Management* 4, no. 1 (2022): 61–82, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.35719/jieman.v4i1.97>.

³ Mochamad Arif Faizin, "Islamic Boarding Education Management Reform: Transformation Strategies to Improve Competitiveness and Relevance," *AL-ISHLAH: Journal of Education* 16, no. 2 (2024): 2497–2506, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v16i2.4462>.

⁴ Abdurrahman, Baharuddin, and Samsul Hady, "Change Management Strategies for Enhancing Education Quality at Islamic Boarding School," *Al-Ishlah: Educational Journal* 17, no. 1 (2025): 930–41, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v17i1.6009>.

⁵ Betsurmath CG and Prashanth Sadashiva Murthy, "Change Management in Education," *International Journal of Health and Allied Sciences* 11, no. 3 (2023): 282–89, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.55691/2278-344X.1040>.

dynamics of pesantren organizations demand change management strategies sensitive to spiritual values and relevant to modern administrative practices.⁶

This research follows the following format: first, a literature review that discusses efforts to adapt management modernization in pesantren and identify research gaps; second, mapping specific challenges such as limited infrastructure, weaknesses of digital infrastructure, and human resource development; and third, formulation of research objectives which include: (1) analyzing the challenges of pesantren management in the era of globalization, (2) describing pesantren-based management models, and (3) formulate an institutional strengthening strategy that maintains Islamic traditions. This approach is expected to bridge the need between modernity and religious identity and enrich the literature on Islamic education management.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with *the library research* method, which aims to understand in depth and conceptually how the pesantren-based management model can be a strategic framework in developing the quality of Islamic education in the contemporary era. The literature review was chosen because it allows researchers to explore theoretical thinking, cutting-edge trends, and policy dynamics related to the central theme of the research. The data collection process was carried out systematically on relevant literature, focusing on three main areas: (1) Islamic education management, (2) the role and transformation of Islamic boarding schools in modern education, and (3) the integration of Islamic values in the governance of educational institutions.

The literature was collected by considering the publication time between 2010 and 2024 to include the latest developments in the issue under study. Sources are accessed through various reputable academic databases such as Scopus, Google Scholar, Web of Science, DOAJ, and national databases such as SINTA and Garuda. The inclusion criteria used are: journal articles that have gone through the peer-review process, academic books, institutional research reports, and official government documents that directly discuss research topics. On the other hand, literature that is not accompanied by a transparent methodology, does not have a credible reference source, or is a narrative opinion without an academic basis, is excluded from the review (*exclusion criteria*).

The literature analysis was carried out thematically by examining managerial approaches to the principles of pesantren and their contribution to Islamic education reform. This study seeks to build a critical and valuable conceptual synthesis as a theoretical foundation for more empirical follow-up research.

⁶ Abdul Jalil et al., "The Process of Organizing and Developing Pesantren (Islamic Boarding Schools) Into Modern Institutions: A Multi-Cases Study in Indonesia," *International Journal of Membrane Science and Technology* 10, no. 3 (2023): 1674–97, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.15379/ijmst.v10i3.1776>.

DISCUSSION

Result

Pesantren-based management is an educational institution management system that is rooted in Islamic values, emphasizes collectivity, and encourages independence.⁷ This approach seeks to incorporate Islamic values into every aspect of education management, including leadership, curriculum, and community participation. As an institution that combines the role of religious and social education, pesantren develops a unique management to maintain its characteristics while facing the demands of modernization.⁸

1. Islamic Leadership

Leadership in Islam is not just a structural authority, but a mandate and worship with spiritual, moral, and social dimensions. In the context of pesantren, leadership is generally centered on the figure of kiai or ustaz, which is central in policy-making and forming pesantren culture. This holistic leadership covers aspects of teaching, moral development, and civilization formation.

Islamic leadership is the core of the success of the implementation of education in Islamic boarding schools. It regulates the institutional structure and becomes the heart of the spiritual and moral life of all Islamic boarding school residents. In the tradition of Islamic boarding schools, the figure of the kiai or ustaz becomes a center that is respected not because of administrative power alone, but because of the example of life that emanates from his closeness to Allah SWT. Islamic leadership strongly emphasizes the aspect of spirituality, where a leader acts as a murabbi who maintains night prayers, multiplies dhikr and recitation, and makes worship a source of inspiration in fostering the ummah. The spiritual leadership of a kiai is a strong basis in policy making and problem solving in Islamic boarding schools, including in students' inner development.⁹

More than that, the example (*uswah hasanah*) is the main strength of Islamic leadership. Kiai is a role model respected for his noble morals, piety, and consistency in practicing Islamic values. In Nurcholish Madjid's view, the kiai plays the role of a *symbolic father figure*—a spiritual father figure who transfers knowledge and instills character.¹⁰ The example of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari at the Tebuireng Islamic Boarding School is a real example of how the discipline and honesty of a leader are inherited from generation to generation and become part of the institutional culture.¹¹ The students imitate not only what the kiai says, but also how he lives, walks, and behaves.

⁷ (Andari et al., 2024)

⁸ Balya Ziaulhaq et al., "The Future of Islamic Boarding Schools: Reconciling Tradition with Global Education Trends," *Journal of Islamic Religious Education (Journal of Islamic Education Studies)* 12, no. 2 (2024): 197–222, <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.15642/jpai.2024.12.2.197-2226>.

⁹ Moh Ikhsani and Anis Zunaidah, "Kiai's Spiritual Leadership in Improving the Character of Students at the Darul Huda Blitar Islamic Boarding School," *El-Mujtama: Journal of Community Service* 4, no. 2 (2024): 486–93, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.47467/elmujtama.v4i5.5262>.

¹⁰ Nurcholis Madjid, *Islamic Boarding School Rooms* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 2000).

¹¹ Suhada, Anis Fauzi, and Rijal Firdaos, "Exemplary Model of Islamic Education Management K.H. Hasyim Asy'ari," *LITERATURE: Journal of Cultural Sciences* 24, no. 2 (2024): 121–33, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.24843/PJIB.2024.v24.i02.p02>.

No less important, Islamic leadership bears a great moral responsibility. A leader is responsible for the worldly work program and will be held accountable before Allah SWT. He must maintain the dignity of the Islamic boarding school, maintain the purity of teachings, and ensure that the institution is not dragged by extreme ideological currents or modern pragmatism that undermine integrity. Kiai serves as an ideological guardian who ensures that the pesantren remains on the path of moderation and Islam that is rahmatan lil 'alamin.¹²

The leadership of Islamic boarding schools also has a transformational character, which encourages positive changes in students as a whole, including mental, spiritual, and social.¹³ Leaders lead structurally and become inspirers who instill prophetic visions in all students and teachers. Just as the Prophet Muhammad PBUH educated his companions through closeness, motivation, and example, so the kiai nurtured their students with living values.¹⁴

The impact of strong leadership can be felt directly in the learning environment of the Islamic boarding school. The active involvement of kiai in students' daily lives, such as attending congregational prayers, book recitations, and informal interactions, creates an atmosphere that supports the growth of learning motivation and character building.¹⁵ An environment colored by spirituality and emotional closeness between leaders and students has created a healthy and effective educational atmosphere.

However, the challenges of Islamic leadership in the modern era are not light. The changing times, which are marked by digitalization, globalization flows, and the emergence of contemporary issues such as radicalism and economic challenges of the ummah, require pesantren leaders to be more adaptive. Today's Islamic boarding schools must be able to respond to the demands of the times without losing their identity.¹⁶ Therefore, leaders who are spiritually strong, capable of education management, technologically literate, and diplomatic in social diversity are needed.

This entire description shows that Islamic leadership in Islamic boarding schools is a manifestation of prophetic values that are united between spiritual strength, moral exemplariness, and scientific excellence. A kiai is not only the institution's manager, but also a spiritual guide and guardian of values. With istiqamah leadership, Islamic boarding schools can produce students who are academically superior and have the firmness of faith, moral nobility, and readiness to face the challenges of the times with solid Islamic values.

¹² Agung Agus Setiawan and Benny Prasetya, "Kiai's Leadership in Strengthening the Moderation Attitude of Students of the Raudlatul Muta 'Alimi Wonoasih Probolinggo Islamic Boarding School," *IMTIYAZ: Journal of Islamic Sciences* 7, no. 1 (2023): 93–107, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.46773/imtiyaz.v7i1.991>.

¹³ Bambang Wahrudin, "Transformational Leadership in Islamic Boarding Schools," *Southeast Asian Journal of Islamic Education Management* 4, no. 2 (2023): 131–48, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.21154/sajiem.v4i2.211>.

¹⁴ Shofiah Nurul Huda and Fira Afrina, "The Prophet as a Role Model for Educators (Study of the Qur'an Surah Al-Ahzab Verse 21)," *Fitrah: Journal of Islamic Education* 1, no. 1 (2020): 72–88, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.53802/fitrah.v1i1.9>.

¹⁵ Moch. Zainul Hasan and Ahmad Barizi, "Kyai's Leadership in Shaping the Civility of Students at the Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School," *Darussalam Journal: Journal of Education, Communication and Islamic Legal Thought* 15, no. 2 (2024): 243–52, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.30739/darussalam.v15i2.3112>.

¹⁶ Azyumardi Azra, *Islamic Education: Tradition and Modernization Towards the New Millennium*. Cet. IV (Jakarta: Logos Discourse of Science, 2012).

2. Curriculum Management

Curriculum management in modern Islamic boarding schools is a systematic effort to integrate religious and general education in a balanced and harmonious manner. This model is known as the curriculum dualism approach, which aims not only to produce students with a deep understanding of Islam but also to compete in an increasingly complex contemporary world. The religious curriculum includes lessons on the Yellow Book, interpretation of the Qur'an, hadith, fiqh, and other Islamic sciences, while the general curriculum includes science, mathematics, technology, and foreign languages.¹⁷ This integration allows the formation of a profile of graduates with spiritual, intellectual, and professional skills simultaneously. The integration of the curriculum in Islamic boarding schools is oriented to Islamic textual knowledge and to the applicability in the social and professional lives of students, for example, how Islamic values are applied in the digital economy and information technology field.¹⁸

This curriculum management requires careful planning, proper implementation, and continuous evaluation. In practice, curriculum management in pesantren is carried out by compiling structured academic documents, designing a balanced learning schedule between religious and general subjects, and establishing a supervision strategy to ensure the effective implementation of the curriculum.¹⁹ One of the strengths of this model is the integration of Islamic values in the entire learning process, which is accompanied by the use of technology and modern learning models such as blended learning. The success of pesantren in managing the curriculum is primarily determined by the ability of pesantren to connect theoretical learning with Islamic real-life practices.²⁰

Furthermore, the positive impact of managing this integrative curriculum can be seen in forming the character of religious students who are ready to face the challenges of the 21st century. Studies in various modern Islamic boarding schools show that this model can improve critical thinking skills, problem-solving, and collaborative skills, which are important in educational globalization.²¹ In addition, curriculum strengthening is also carried out through vocational programs and cooperation with the industrial world, especially in vocational school-based pesantren to provide relevant work skills with sharia value.²² Other strategies

¹⁷ Abdul Hakim and N. Hani Herlina, "Integrated Curriculum Management at the Daarul Huda Banjar Modern Islamic Boarding School," *Journal of Islamic Education Research* 6, no. 1 (2018): 111, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.36667/jppi.v6i1.157>.

¹⁸ Wahyudi Widodo, "Modern Islamic Boarding School Curriculum Management in Integrating Islamic and Science Values at the Anwarul Huda Islamic Boarding School Malang," *MASALIQ: Journal of Education and Science* 5, no. 2 (2025): 531–46, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.58578/masaliq.v5i2.4886>.

¹⁹ Muslih and Layliya Zahrotus Sa'ada, "Management of Pesantren-Based Curriculum Development to Improve the Quality of Education at SMP Negeri 2 Paciran Lamongan," *MUDIR: Journal of Educational Management* 2, no. 1 (2020): 1–10, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.55352/mudir.v2i1.16>.

²⁰ Yoseph Salmon Yusuf and Nur Ali, "Integrative Learning Strategies in Islamic Boarding Schools by Combining Tradition and Modernity," *JIES (Journal of Islamic Education Studies)* 3, no. 2 (2025): 173–80, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.58569/jies.v3i2.1164>.

²¹ Ayu Cahyaningsih et al., "Curriculum Transformation in Facing the Challenges of 21st Century Education," *Nakula Journal: Center for Education, Language and Social Sciences* 3, no. 3 (2025): 352–67, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.61132/nakula.v3i3.1845>.

²² Imam Shafi'i, Abd. Muis, and St. Rodliyah, "Integration of Vocational Education and Islamic Education Curriculum in Islamic Boarding School-Based Madrasah Aliyah," *MUMTAZ: Journal of Islamic Religious Education* 5, no. 1 (2025): 19–43, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.69552/mumtaz.v5i1.3040>.

include regular teacher training, integrating digital-based learning systems, and collaborating with formal and non-formal educational institutions.²³

However, integrative curriculum management also faces challenges such as limited human resources, inequality in the distribution of materials, and adaptation to changes in the national curriculum. For this reason, strategic solutions need to be carried out, including renewal of competency-based curriculum, strengthening the capacity of teachers in modern pedagogy, and using educational technology as the main support. With an adaptive and innovative approach, modern pesantren not only become a center for Islamic education, but also an educational institution that can produce a superior generation who are religious, intellectual, and professional in a balanced manner.

3. Collective Participation

Pesantren-based management prioritizes sustainability through collective participation involving all stakeholders: teachers, students, parents, the community, and external partners such as the government or other educational institutions. This concept emphasizes the value of cooperation and togetherness in taking roles and responsibilities openly and inclusively. As conveyed by Nurfathatul Alfina et al. (2024), at the organizing stage, pesantren actively involve the community in the managerial structure, so that decisions are not only from above, but are directly influenced by the aspirations of pesantren residents.²⁴

The role of teachers here is twofold: they not only become teachers, but also act as field managers. From designing the curriculum to evaluating the program, teachers contribute through practical experience and field insights. Discourses on participatory leadership involving members in decision-making increase motivation and generate innovation in the learning process. This is by the practice of pesantren, where the kyai/teacher performs the moderator function while opening a vast dialogue space with students and the committee.²⁵

Students themselves play an active role as subjects and agents of change, not just objects of educators. They are given responsibilities in intra-pesantren organizations, administrative management, social activities, and training. Programs such as economic independence through micro waqf banks or independence-based waste management are often carried out collaboratively by students, staff, and elements of the surrounding community.²⁶ This approach fosters leadership and environmental awareness from a young age and reinforces an experience-based culture in the cottage.

²³ Ammalia Tulili et al., "Human Resources Development Plan (HR) of Educators and Education Personnel of Islamic Boarding Schools," *DIRASAH: Journal of Studying Islamic Education and Management* 8, no. 1 (2025): 309–22, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.58401/dirasah.v8i1.1593>.

²⁴ Nurfathatul Alfina, Mirhabun Nadir Halimy, and Muhammad Bisri Ihwan, "Management of Participation in the Management of Islamic Educational Institutions," *EDUTECH: Journal of Education And Technology* 7, no. 4 (2024): 485–97, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.29062/edu.v7i4.832>.

²⁵ Muhammad Anggung Manumanoso Prasetyo, "Effective Islamic Boarding School: A Study of Participatory Leadership Styles," *Munaddhomah: Journal of Islamic Education Management* 3, no. 1 (2022): 1–12, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.31538/munaddhomah.v3i1.159>.

²⁶ Muhamad Fauzi et al., "Enhancing Business Skills of Micro Waqf Bank Clients Through Pesantren Community Vocational Training Centres in Indonesia," *Diponegoro Journal of Islamic Economics and Business* 5, no. 1 (2025): 49–71, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.14710/djieb.27319>.

The role of parents and society is also crucial. They are directly involved through pesantren village deliberations, the provision of funds or resources, and voluntary activities such as facility construction and event assistance. A study in Bengkulu, for example, found that community participation in material and non-material contributions strengthens the institution of pesantren and increases the sense of belonging to the institution.²⁷

Furthermore, Islamic boarding schools are now increasingly open to external partnerships with the government, NGOs, and other educational institutions. This partnership opens up opportunities for knowledge transfer and access to technology, expanding the scope of educational, social, and economic programs. For example, the integration of Islamic boarding schools in the Climate Village program shows how cross-sectoral collaboration with local governments encourages adaptation to climate change mitigation in the surrounding community. Effective two-way communication is also the foundation of this collective management success. A public relations management strategy that combines oral, written, and concrete communication ("uswa hasanah") and the use of social media as a catalyst for increasing public participation.²⁸

Collective participation in pesantren management includes five interconnected key aspects. First, there is an inclusive organization where various elements, such as teachers, students, parents, and the community, are actively involved in the structure and managerial decision-making. Second, teachers in Islamic boarding schools carry out dual roles, not only as educators but also as managers who are directly involved in the planning, implementing, and evaluating programs based on their experience in the field. Third, students are positioned not only as educational objects but also as active subjects who play a role in organization, entrepreneurship, and leadership development through various practical activities in the pesantren environment. Fourth, the participation of parents and the community is realized through deliberation, financial support, and involvement in collective activities that strengthen the sense of ownership and solidarity with the Islamic boarding school. Finally, external partnerships with governments, educational institutions, and community organizations allow for knowledge transfer, access to resources, and the implementation of socio-ecological innovations that broadly support the sustainability and development of Islamic boarding schools.

This approach ensures the sustainability of Islamic boarding schools. Implementing participatory management is not just a theory, but a real practice that supports innovation, strengthens institutional resilience, and creates a contextual and adaptive learning environment in the modern era.

²⁷ Qolbi Khoiri, "INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING OF ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOLS IN BENGKULU PROVINCE (Analysis of Community Participation and Contribution)," *Portrait of Thought* 24, no. 1 (2020): 1–11, <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.30984/pp.v24i1.1041>.

²⁸ Fathan Zaini, "Public Relations Management Strategy to Increase Community Participation in Educational Institutions," *MANAGER: Indonesian Journal of Educational Management* 6, no. 1 (2024): 1–12, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.52627/managere.v6i1.410>.

Discussion

1. Islamic Education in the Era of Globalization and Pesantren-Based Management

Islamic education plays a central role in the formation of a generation with an Islamic character that can face global pressures. In Indonesia, pesantren have long been educational institutions that produce individuals who deeply understand religious teachings and are in the midst of social life. However, in the era of rapid technological advancement and globalization, Islamic boarding schools are forced to face pressure to remain relevant and flexible in modern society's needs.

Pesantren-based management offers a contextual and unique approach to managing Islamic educational institutions. This approach integrates Islamic values in all management aspects, from leadership to human resource management, curriculum planning, and implementation. By applying the principles of Islamic management, Islamic boarding schools can maintain their religious identity and succeed in increasing their operational efficiency and effectiveness.

A vital component of pesantren-based management is integrating religious and general education. Modern Islamic boarding schools combine an in-depth religious curriculum with general subjects such as math, science, language, and technology. The integration is intended to produce students who are competent in religion and have the skills needed in modern times. The application of this management is in line with an adaptive leadership model that emphasizes the importance of an institution's ability to adapt to changing contexts without losing core values.²⁹

Islamic boarding schools such as Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor (PMDG) are a real example of the success of implementing pesantren-based management. PMDG balances religious and general curriculum, emphasizing mastery of foreign languages, information technology, and leadership skills. This model allows students to have adequate multidimensional competencies to face global challenges.³⁰

In addition, the quality management of education in Islamic boarding schools, such as those at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, has contributed to the social change revolution in Indonesia. Islamic boarding schools, as Islamic educational institutions, continue to develop, ranging from salaf pesantren to contemporary pesantren. This remarkable development is the result of a well-designed educational process and curriculum. An ideal and appropriate curriculum is essential to achieve educational goals and objectives.³¹

However, it is not easy to carry out pesantren-based management. Some of the main problems Islamic boarding schools face in implementing pesantren-based management are the narrowness of human resources trained in cutting-edge management, limited access to technology, and resistance to change from several parties. To overcome these problems,

²⁹ Ronald A. Heifetz, *Leadership Without Easy Answers, Leadership Without Easy Answers* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1994), <https://doi.org/10.4159/9780674038479>.

³⁰ Afiful Ikhwan et al., "Trimurti Leadership as Central Figure in Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor," *Al-Hayat: Journal of Islamic Education* 7, no. 1 (2023): 1, <https://doi.org/10.35723/ajie.v6i1.312>.

³¹ M Kharis Fadillah, "Quality Management of Islamic Education in Islamic Boarding Schools: A Study at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor," *At-Ta'dib* 10, no. 1 (2015): 115–34, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.21111/at-tadib.v10i1.333>.

strategic steps are needed to improve the quality of human resources, curriculum development, technology utilization, and management improvement. Improving the quality of human resources in Islamic boarding schools can be achieved through training for ustadz and administrative subordinates, especially regarding them, to become more professional when carrying out their duties. Educators must use Islamic boarding schools with religious science competencies and general and adventurous knowledge, based on the conditions of the developing times.³²

Curriculum reform is also something that must be done in the face of the threat of globalization. Islamic boarding schools need to update the curriculum to not only look at religious science but also add general education relevant to the modern world's needs. The curriculum must balance religious education, science, and skills needed in the workplace. More effective fund management is needed to overcome limited funds by developing independent business units to provide additional income. In addition, Islamic boarding schools can also collaborate with the government or private institutions in terms of funding, especially for the procurement of educational facilities and infrastructure.³³

The use of technology must also be a significant concern. Islamic boarding schools must be more open to media use in the learning and management process. Using computer devices, the internet, and other digital devices can improve management effectiveness and learning quality. In addition, integrating technology into the curriculum can help students be better prepared to face challenges in the digital era.³⁴

Thus, pesantren-based management that combines Islamic and general education in a balanced manner is a strategic solution to maintain the quality of Islamic education in the era of globalization. Through this approach, pesantren can produce graduates who have a deep understanding of religion and are competent to contribute to the global society.

2. Learning Innovation in Islamic Education: Application of Digital Technology and Online Platforms

Developing digital technology has significantly impacted the world of education, both in Islamic education and general education as a whole. As an old Islamic educational institution, Pesantren began applying digital technology to improve the quality of teaching and learning and overcome globalization's challenges.³⁵

The use of online learning platforms such as Moodle, Google Classroom, and AI applications is one of the innovations that have been made. The platform allows teachers to

³² Choeroni and Khoiril Anwar, "Transformation of Islamic Boarding Schools in Facing The Development of Education in The Society 5.0 Era," *Ta'dibuna: Journal of Islamic Studies and Education* 7, no. 2 (2024): 127–36, <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.30659/jpai.7.2.127-136>.

³³ Moh. Ferdi Hasan, "The Role of Islamic Boarding School in Improving the Quality of Islamic Education in Schools," *Millah: Journal of Religious Studies* 20, no. 1 (2020): 173–97, <https://doi.org/10.20885/millah.vol20.iss1.art7>.

³⁴ Dickson Mdhlalose and Gloria Mlambo, "Integration of Technology in Education and Its Impact on Learning and Teaching," *Asian Journal of Education and Social Studies* 47, no. 2 (2023): 54–63, <https://doi.org/10.9734/ajess/2023/v47i21021>.

³⁵ Irwansyah Suwahyu, "THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION IN TRANSFORMATION," *ISLAMIC REFERENCE: Journal of Islamic Studies* 2, no. 2 (2024): 28–41, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.61220/ri.v2i2.003>.

deliver lessons systematically and interactively, and allows students to access lessons whenever they want. It helps students understand the concept of Islam easily.³⁶

Documentary or animated learning videos about Islamic history, worship practices, and prophetic stories enhance the learning experience. Because they have direct examples of effective worship, students can easily understand the material being studied. Interactive videos that encourage students to answer questions after watching improve students' memory and understanding of the material.

Technology-based learning applications also have positive value. Students can learn the Qur'an further through the digital app. Directly, they can learn how to read it according to the rules of tajwid, as well as learn tafsir without having to rely on the teacher's direct guidance.³⁷

However, using digital technology in the learning process also has challenges. The main obstacle is the limited access to technology in some Islamic boarding schools, especially in rural areas. Not all students have the appropriate device to open online learning materials. In addition, the lack of teacher training in the use of technology is also an obstacle to implementing this innovation.

To answer these challenges, concrete strategies are needed, such as developing a gradual roadmap for the digitization of Islamic boarding schools, routine training for teachers, and partnerships with technology institutions or universities. This strategy aligns with the institutional capacity-building approach, emphasizing the importance of systematically improving internal competencies.

3. Effective Resource Management in Islamic Boarding Schools: A Collectivity and Independence Approach

Effective resource management is one of the keys to the success of Islamic boarding schools in facing the challenges of the times, especially in the context of ongoing globalization. One of the approaches adopted by most Islamic boarding schools to improve efficiency is the managerial collectivity and independence approach. The collectivity approach emphasizes the importance of cooperation among all elements in the pesantren, such as caregivers, administrators, educators, students, and the surrounding community. With collectivity, pesantren can maximize good coordination and communication among all stakeholders, maximizing the organization's ability to manage human and financial resources more effectively.

Economic independence is an equally important factor in managing Islamic boarding schools. Thus, many Islamic boarding schools have begun to develop independent business units that can help reduce dependence on external resources. This business unit, such as cooperatives, agricultural businesses, or even service businesses, is not only a source of income, but also provides practical learning about entrepreneurship for its students. Through

³⁶ N. I. Rohmah, N., & Sari, "The Utilization of Digital Technology in Islamic Religious Education Learning," *Journal on Education* 7, no. 2 (2025): 12756–64, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.31004/joe.v7i2.8423>.

³⁷ Kholid Junaidi, Munzir Hitami, and Zaitun Zaitun, "The Impact of Digital Transformation on Teaching Methods in Islamic Boarding Schools in Kampar Regency: Opportunities and Challenges," *Instructional Development Journal* 7, no. 1 (2024): 173–84, <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.24014/idj.v7i1.31426>.

direct involvement in business activities, students can acquire managerial and business skills that will be useful after graduation. For example, the Al-Ittifaq Islamic Boarding School in Bandung runs cooperatives and other businesses that have succeeded in increasing the economic independence of Islamic boarding schools while providing benefits to the surrounding community. The success of this pesantren shows how business units can support pesantren business operations and increase their competitiveness.³⁸

Effectiveness is also influenced by transparent and accountable financial management. Some Islamic boarding schools have begun to adopt technology-based financial management systems that facilitate financial planning, reporting, and supervision. This allows the pesantren to use existing funds for educational operations and independent business development. At the Isti'Dadul Mu'Allimien Jambi Islamic Boarding School, financial management is carried out systematically, where every transaction is recorded in detail and strictly applied to avoid closing funds. This approach allows pesantren to allocate resources efficiently and ensures that each program run supports Islamic education's primary goals.³⁹

However, managerial applications based on collectivity and independence in Islamic boarding schools are also limited. One of the main obstacles is limited access to technology and limited training for pesantren managers in managerial fields. So, it is necessary to hold training for administrators and students regarding information technology and financial management so that they look more professional in carrying out their functions. Strengthening self-reliance also requires cooperation with external institutions, both from the government and the private sector, which can provide support in terms of technology, training, and funding. With these strategic steps, pesantren can further strengthen their independence and reduce their dependence on external resources, while playing a significant role in developing quality Islamic education.⁴⁰

4. Sustainability and Competitiveness of Islamic Boarding Schools

The sustainability of pesantren operations is highly dependent on the institution's ability to adapt to the challenges of globalization without losing its Islamic identity. Research reveals that collective-based management and economic independence through independent business units can strengthen the competitiveness of Islamic boarding schools amid global education competition.

For example, the Al Kautsar Islamic Boarding School 561 Tasikmalaya developed an entrepreneurship program based on tilapia biofloc and melon hydroponics. This program provides additional income for operations and scholarships and empowers students with practical skills in the agribusiness and aquaculture sectors. In addition, through job creation,

³⁸ Maya Silvana and Deni Lubis, "Factors Affecting the Economic Independence of Islamic Boarding Schools (Study of Al-Ittifaq Islamic Boarding School Bandung)," *Al-Muzara'Ah* 9, no. 2 (2021): 129–46, <https://doi.org/10.29244/jam.9.2.129-146>.

³⁹ Ahmad Syahrizal and Efni Anita, "Analysis of Financial Management of Islamic Boarding Schools (Study on Isti'Dadul Mu'Allimien Jambi Islamic Boarding School)," *Finance: Journal of Sharia Financial Management* 2, no. 1 (2021): 26–37, <https://doi.org/10.15575/fjsfm.v2i1.12777>.

⁴⁰ Basnang Said, "Acceleration of Islamic Boarding School Human Resources: Superior and Global Students," Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, 2024, <https://kemenag.go.id/kolom/akselerasi-sdm-pesantren-santri-unggul-dan-mendunia-YntGe>.

increasing local economic resilience, and community-based economic collaboration, the program strengthens the relationship between pesantren and the community.⁴¹

However, resource limitations and the inability to access technology remain. Digital marketing training and strategic partnerships with external parties can support the program's sustainability. As a result, Islamic boarding schools that can manage resources and innovate in facing the challenges of globalization will have high competitiveness and contribute significantly to the development of society and the state.

CONCLUSION

This research shows that pesantren-based management is a strategic approach rooted in traditional Islamic values and relevant to improving the quality of Islamic education in Indonesia. Based on the results of various academic and policy literature reviews, this model is built on three main pillars: transformative kiai leadership, integration of religious and public curriculum, and collective participation from all elements of the pesantren. The three showed coherence in responding to the challenges of education globalization while maintaining Islamic identity.

This study contributes conceptually by developing a pesantren-based management framework as an alternative to the modern educational management model that is technocratic. However, the main limitation of this study lies in the absence of field data or empirical tests on the analyzed model, so the results are exploratory and require further verification.

For this reason, follow-up research is highly recommended to apply a field approach through case studies, in-depth interviews, and longitudinal evaluation of the impact of this model in various Islamic boarding school networks. This effort will strengthen the empirical basis and ensure that the pesantren-based management model can be widely adopted in national Islamic education policies. With cross-sectoral support, pesantren have the potential to become the strategic axis of Islamic education that is adaptive, inclusive, and globally competitive.

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⁴¹ Apdan Pebriana, Dudung, and Yadi Heryadi, "Development of Islamic Boarding Schools through Entrepreneurship Programs for Islamic Boarding School Independence," *Microbes: Journal of Plant Science, Agricultural Science and Technology* 1, no. 3 (2024): 21–28, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.62951/mikroba.v1i3.149>.

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