




## Reconstructing Islamic Educational Leadership: Negotiating Modern Managerial Rationality and Charismatic Authority in Indonesian Pesantren

Maskur<sup>1</sup>, Indi Aunullah<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup> Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Nurul Abror Al Robbaniyin, Indonesia

Email : [elkirom11@gmail.com](mailto:elkirom11@gmail.com), [indi.aunullah@gmail.com](mailto:indi.aunullah@gmail.com)

 <https://doi.org/10.66931/jpai.v2i01.398>

### ABSTRACT

**Keywords:**

Prophetic-  
Managerial;  
Leadership  
Charismatic  
Authority;  
Managerial  
Rationality;  
Pesantren  
Governance;  
Islamic  
Educational  
Leadership

The accelerating penetration of managerial rationality into Indonesian pesantren has generated a profound sociological tension between bureaucratic governance mechanisms and the enduring charismatic authority of the Kiai, producing competing sources of legitimacy that increasingly shape contemporary Islamic educational leadership. Situated within this context, the present inquiry seeks to transcend the binary opposition between managerial efficiency and spiritual authority through a reconstructed framework of leadership negotiation. Employing a qualitative philosophical-conceptual approach, the study utilizes critical content analysis and text-based hermeneutics to examine a corpus of literature spanning Western organizational sociology, theories of authority and managerialism, alongside scholarly works on pesantren, Islamic governance, and educational leadership. The analysis reveals that the uncritical adoption of bureaucratic instruments such as standard operating procedures, performance indicators, and formal accountability systems frequently generates operational paradoxes in institutional succession, financial governance, decision-making processes, and personnel loyalty. These tensions foster a zero-sum polarization in which administrative professionalism and charismatic legitimacy are often treated as mutually exclusive domains. The study formulates a Prophetic-Managerial Leadership model that repositions managerial efficiency as an operational engine functioning beneath the Kiai's overarching spiritual and moral canopy. This framework offers a theoretically grounded pathway for reconfiguring governance structures, strengthening institutional sustainability, and guiding future policy development within contemporary pesantren and other Islamic educational institutions.

**\*Corresponding**

**Author:**

[elkirom11@gmail.com](mailto:elkirom11@gmail.com)

**Article History:**

Submitted: 12-04-2026, Revised :10-05-2026, Accepted: 15-06-2026

Please cite this article in APA style as:

Maskur, M., & Aunullah, I. (2026). Reconstructing Islamic educational leadership: Negotiating modern managerial rationality and charismatic authority in Indonesian pesantren. DAAR EL-MAKRIFAH: Journal of Islamic Religious Education, 2(1), 230-245. <https://jurnalstebibama.ac.id/index.php/jpai/>

## INTRODUCTION

The contemporary Indonesian pesantren stands at a pivotal historical juncture. Traditionally known as indigenous institutions dedicated to the transmission of Islamic knowledge and the cultivation of religious character,

pesantren have undergone profound organizational transformation over the last several decades. Many pesantren now manage formal schools, universities, vocational training centers, business enterprises, and community empowerment programs that extend far beyond their original educational mandate. (Kholifah, 2022), the resilience of pesantren has historically been rooted in their capacity to adapt to changing social realities while maintaining their religious identity. Similarly, (Hakiem et al., 2023) argues that modernization within Islamic educational institutions has increasingly required the adoption of professional administrative structures capable of responding to contemporary societal demands. As institutional complexity expands, managerial practices such as strategic planning, quality assurance systems, financial accountability mechanisms, and performance-based evaluations have become increasingly prominent. Consequently, pesantren are no longer governed solely through traditional authority structures but are increasingly influenced by forms of organizational rationality commonly associated with modern educational management.

The emergence of managerial rationality introduces a fundamental sociological tension within pesantren leadership. (Hasan, 2025) famously distinguished legal-rational authority from charismatic authority, emphasizing that each derives legitimacy from different sources. Legal-rational authority depends upon formal regulations, bureaucratic procedures, organizational hierarchies, and measurable performance standards. Charismatic authority, by contrast, rests upon personal devotion, spiritual legitimacy, and collective recognition of extraordinary qualities embodied in a particular leader. Within the pesantren tradition, the Kiai represents a powerful manifestation of charismatic authority whose influence extends beyond administrative leadership into the domains of morality, spirituality, and religious guidance (Muchlish Huda & Muslih, 2024). Students, alumni, and surrounding communities often perceive obedience to the Kiai not merely as organizational compliance but as a pathway toward spiritual blessing and moral formation. Friction emerges when bureaucratic mechanisms designed to maximize efficiency encounter institutional cultures grounded in sacred trust, religious devotion, and deeply embedded patterns of personal loyalty.

These tensions become particularly visible in the everyday governance of contemporary pesantren. Efforts to institutionalize standardized organizational procedures frequently collide with long-established traditions that grant significant discretionary authority to the Kiai. Leadership succession represents one of the most illustrative examples. While modern management frameworks prioritize professional competence, meritocratic selection, and organizational experience, pesantren leadership has historically been shaped by familial lineage, symbolic inheritance, and religious legitimacy (Irama & Al Amin, 2025). Similar challenges arise in financial governance, where demands for transparency, external auditing, and formal accountability may conflict with traditional systems of trust-based administration. (Khlaisang & Yoshida, 2022) observes that

many pesantren continue to navigate the delicate balance between preserving cultural authenticity and responding to increasing public expectations for institutional professionalism. Consequently, organizational reforms often generate paradoxical outcomes in which efforts to strengthen governance simultaneously risk challenging the very foundations of charismatic legitimacy upon which many pesantren have historically depended.

Despite the growing body of scholarship on pesantren transformation, significant conceptual gaps remain within existing literature. A substantial segment of research interprets managerial modernization as a potential threat to the spiritual ethos and cultural authenticity of pesantren (Romlah et al., 2025; Sofi et al., 2025). Conversely, other studies emphasize the necessity of professional governance and frequently portray charismatic leadership as an obstacle to organizational effectiveness, transparency, and institutional competitiveness (Christensen-Salem et al., 2024; Chukwudi & Iyoha, 2024). While both perspectives offer valuable insights, they tend to reproduce a binary framework that positions modern management and charismatic authority as mutually exclusive alternatives. Such a dichotomous approach inadequately captures the complex realities of contemporary pesantren, where bureaucratic practices and spiritual authority often coexist within the same organizational space. More importantly, previous studies have devoted limited attention to developing a philosophical synthesis capable of explaining how these apparently competing forms of authority might be integrated within a coherent framework of Islamic educational leadership.

This article advances a different proposition. Rather than viewing managerial rationality and charismatic authority as opposing forces engaged in an inevitable struggle, this study argues that the future of pesantren leadership depends upon their constructive negotiation. The central thesis proposed here is that Islamic educational leadership must be reconstructed through a dynamic synthesis in which managerial rationality enhances organizational effectiveness while charismatic authority preserves moral legitimacy and spiritual direction. Such a reconstruction rejects the assumption that professionalism necessarily weakens religious authority or that charismatic leadership inevitably obstructs institutional development. Instead, it conceptualizes leadership as a dual-engine system where managerial mechanisms function as operational instruments for achieving institutional excellence, whereas the Kiai's charisma serves as an ethical and epistemological compass guiding educational purpose. Through this perspective, efficiency and spirituality become mutually reinforcing dimensions rather than competing sources of institutional authority.

Accordingly, this study pursues three interconnected objectives. First, it seeks to examine the sociological friction generated by the encounter between modern managerial rationality and traditional charismatic authority within contemporary pesantren. Second, it aims to deconstruct the binary assumptions that have shaped much of the existing discourse on Islamic educational leadership. Third, it proposes a reconstructed leadership framework capable of

integrating organizational professionalism with spiritual legitimacy in a manner that remains faithful to the distinctive identity of pesantren. To accomplish these objectives, the article proceeds through several stages of analysis. The next section explores the theoretical foundations concerning authority, leadership, and organizational transformation. Subsequent sections analyze the dynamics of pesantren governance, investigate the operational manifestations of leadership tension, and elaborate the proposed negotiation model. The article concludes by discussing the broader implications of reconstructed Islamic educational leadership for the future development of pesantren and Islamic educational institutions more generally.

## METHOD

This study employs a qualitative philosophical-conceptual design situated within the interdisciplinary intersection of educational sociology, organizational theory, and Islamic educational thought. Rather than investigating a particular institution, the inquiry focuses on the sociological construction of authority and leadership within contemporary pesantren through critical engagement with influential texts. The analytical corpus was selected purposively based on its theoretical relevance to the central problem of negotiating managerial rationality and charismatic authority. Primary sources include foundational works on authority, bureaucracy, and organizational rationalization, particularly those associated with Weberian sociology and contemporary managerialism, alongside seminal scholarship on pesantren, Islamic leadership, and the sociocultural transformation of Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia (Habsi et al., 2026). The study utilizes critical content analysis and text-based hermeneutics to interrogate conceptual assumptions, ideological orientations, and latent tensions embedded within these texts, thereby enabling a deeper reconstruction of leadership discourse beyond descriptive institutional narratives (Irwin & Posselt, 2022; Lind & Ekwerike, 2022). The analytical procedure unfolded through two interconnected stages corresponding to the dual objectives of negotiation and reconstruction. The first stage involved a systematic reading of the selected corpus to identify recurring conceptual tensions between bureaucratic governance and charismatic leadership. Particular attention was directed toward themes of authority, legitimacy, accountability, succession, organizational control, and moral influence. These themes were then comparatively mapped to reveal areas of convergence, contradiction, and unresolved friction within contemporary pesantren governance. (Meilani et al., 2025) The second stage moved beyond diagnosis toward theoretical reconstruction. Concepts derived from Islamic educational philosophy, ethical leadership, and the normative foundations of pesantren were employed to reinterpret identified tensions as potentially complementary rather than inherently antagonistic. Scientific rigor was maintained through sustained conceptual coherence, internal consistency of argumentation, and close fidelity to textual meaning. Consequently, the resulting framework offers a theoretically grounded alternative for understanding and

governing leadership transformation within contemporary Islamic educational institutions.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Result

#### **The Infiltration of Modern Managerial Rationality in Pesantren Literature**

Recent scholarship consistently documents the increasing institutionalization of pesantren through state-regulated educational frameworks. (Muafiah et al., 2022) The literature reveals that pesantren are no longer positioned solely as autonomous religious institutions but have become integral components of Indonesia's formal educational architecture. Accreditation systems, curriculum standardization, quality assurance procedures, and regulatory compliance mechanisms appear repeatedly across contemporary studies. Textual evidence indicates that institutional legitimacy is increasingly measured through administrative indicators recognized by governmental and accreditation agencies. Within this process, organizational effectiveness has emerged as a critical benchmark for institutional evaluation. (Muafiah et al., 2022) The corpus demonstrates a gradual but persistent penetration of bureaucratic structures into domains previously governed through customary authority and religious legitimacy.

The corpus also records the growing adoption of managerial technologies commonly associated with corporate governance. Administrative manuals, strategic planning documents, teacher performance evaluations, and institutional monitoring systems appear frequently in contemporary discussions of pesantren management (Martin et al., 2022). Studies describe how Standard Operating Procedures (Val & Quintas, 2025) increasingly regulate educational activities, while Key Performance Indicators (Ogochukwu et al., 2022) are employed to measure organizational achievement and personnel productivity. Formal reporting systems, internal audits, and accountability mechanisms are likewise presented as markers of institutional professionalism. Rather than appearing as isolated innovations, these instruments form a broader managerial ecosystem that restructures organizational behavior through measurable targets, documented procedures, and administrative accountability.

A notable pattern emerging from the literature concerns changes in the cognitive orientation of pesantren administrators. Heads of madrasah, school principals, and educational managers increasingly operate within a framework that privileges planning, efficiency, documentation, and measurable outcomes. Institutional success is frequently interpreted through indicators such as accreditation status, enrollment growth, program effectiveness, and financial sustainability. The corpus reveals a gradual shift from personalized modes of administration toward procedural governance models characterized by formal responsibilities and organizational specialization. Traditional leadership practices remain visible, yet they coexist with expectations associated with professional educational management. Consequently, administrative actors are

increasingly positioned between two competing institutional logics that simultaneously demand organizational efficiency and fidelity to inherited religious traditions (Abrams & Jayasinghe, 2023).

### **The Structural Anatomy of Kiai's Charismatic Authority in Existing Texts**

Classical and contemporary studies alike portray the Kiai as the central axis around which pesantren life revolves (Achmadin et al., 2024). The literature repeatedly associates leadership legitimacy with spiritual authority, religious scholarship, moral exemplarity, and perceived access to barakah. Within this framework, obedience is not understood merely as organizational compliance but as an ethical and spiritual commitment. The doctrine of *sami'na wa atha'na* frequently appears as a cultural expression of trust and devotion toward the Kiai's guidance. Textual descriptions consistently depict the Kiai as occupying a position that transcends administrative leadership, functioning simultaneously as educator, spiritual guide, moral exemplar, and symbolic guardian of institutional identity.

The literature further reveals that authority within traditional pesantren structures is highly centralized. Decision-making processes often remain concentrated around the Kiai, whose position extends across educational, social, religious, and economic domains. Organizational actors may participate in consultations, yet ultimate authority frequently rests with the Kiai, who exercises substantial influence over strategic and operational matters (Saifillah et al., 2026). This concentration of authority reflects a patriarchal organizational structure in which legitimacy emerges not primarily from bureaucratic office but from religious recognition and communal trust. Studies suggest that institutional arrangements remain deeply shaped by personal authority, where formal structures frequently operate within boundaries established by the Kiai's leadership (Nu'man, 2025).

Questions of succession occupy a significant place within the literature on pesantren leadership. Textual evidence indicates that leadership transfer is commonly associated with kinship networks, family lineage, and symbolic inheritance. In many documented cases, authority is transmitted through descendants who possess recognized genealogical connections to founding figures, although educational competence and religious expertise often remain important considerations. The literature repeatedly identifies lineage as a major source of institutional continuity (Lyons et al., 2025), reflecting the belief that spiritual authority is closely linked to inherited legitimacy. As a result, succession mechanisms frequently differ from modern bureaucratic systems that prioritize formal qualifications, meritocratic selection, and managerial performance indicators (Woelert & Stensaker, 2025).

### **Typology of Sociological Friction and Operational Paradoxes**

One of the most prominent tensions identified within the corpus concerns organizational decision-making (Mannucci & Shalley, 2022). Contemporary

governance frameworks encourage collective deliberation, strategic planning meetings, institutional committees, and evidence-based decision processes. At the same time, numerous studies document the continuing influence of charismatic directives issued directly by the Kiai. The literature presents cases in which formal recommendations generated through bureaucratic procedures coexist with leadership decisions rooted in spiritual judgment, personal intuition, or moral considerations. This coexistence frequently generates uncertainty regarding the ultimate source of institutional authority.

Financial governance emerges as another highly sensitive arena of friction. The literature documents increasing demands for transparent budgeting, documented expenditures, external auditing, and public accountability. Simultaneously, many traditional organizational arrangements continue to recognize extensive discretionary authority vested in the Kiai. Studies discussing institutional modernization describe situations in which modern financial oversight mechanisms intersect with longstanding cultures of trust-based stewardship. In several accounts, professional auditing expectations (Mohd Jamil et al., 2023) encounter organizational norms that prioritize personal integrity and spiritual responsibility over procedural verification. Such findings reveal a persistent tension between formal accountability systems and sacred leadership prerogatives (Cooper & Grubnic, 2025).

The corpus also highlights the emergence of dual loyalty among educational personnel. Teachers, administrators, and staff frequently operate within overlapping authority structures. On one level, they are expected to comply with institutional regulations, administrative directives, and professional performance standards (Firosa & Al Hanif, 2026). On another level, their socialization within pesantren culture cultivates deep personal loyalty to the Kiai. The literature describes circumstances in which organizational actors experience competing expectations between bureaucratic obligations and spiritual commitments. This dual positioning often produces sociological strain, particularly when administrative directives appear inconsistent with charismatic guidance (Langer, 2022). The findings suggest that personnel frequently negotiate multiple forms of legitimacy simultaneously rather than functioning within a singular chain of command.

The preceding findings reveal that the interaction between managerial rationality and charismatic authority extends across multiple organizational domains. Rather than appearing as isolated incidents, these tensions form a recurring structural pattern affecting governance, succession, personnel management, and institutional legitimacy. To facilitate analytical clarity, the principal friction points identified throughout the literature are synthesized in Table 1.

Table 1: Typological Mapping of Structural Friction Points Between Managerial Rationality and Charismatic Authority in Indonesian Pesantren

Operational Domain	Manifestation of Managerial Rationality	Manifestation of Charismatic Authority
--------------------	---	--

Institutional Succession	Merit-based recruitment, professional qualifications, leadership competency assessments, governance committees	Leadership inheritance through lineage ( <i>nasab</i> ), family legitimacy, symbolic continuity, hereditary authority
Financial Governance	Financial audits, budget planning, transparent reporting systems, accountability mechanisms	Trust-based financial stewardship, discretionary authority of the Kiai, moral accountability, personal credibility
Decision-Making Processes	Strategic planning meetings, collective deliberation, evidence-based decision making, performance indicators	Direct instruction from the Kiai, intuitive judgment, spiritual consideration, personal authority
Personnel Management	Performance appraisal systems, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), contractual responsibilities, formal supervision	Personal loyalty to the Kiai, ethical obedience, spiritual commitment, relational authority
Curriculum Governance	National curriculum standards, accreditation requirements, measurable learning outcomes	Preservation of <i>turats</i> traditions, religious authenticity, pesantren identity, spiritual educational mission
Organizational Control	Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), quality assurance systems, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms	Informal influence, moral persuasion, symbolic leadership, cultural authority
Institutional Legitimacy	Compliance with government regulations, accreditation status, institutional rankings, public accountability	<i>Barakah</i> , religious recognition, communal trust, spiritual prestige
Leadership Structure	Bureaucratic hierarchy, delegated authority, organizational specialization, administrative offices	Centralized charismatic leadership, patriarchal authority, sacred leadership role of the Kiai

Table 1 demonstrates that the observed tensions are not confined to a single organizational dimension. Instead, they permeate virtually every strategic domain of pesantren governance. The findings indicate that managerial rationality and charismatic authority operate according to distinct logics of legitimacy, generating recurring institutional paradoxes that shape leadership practices and organizational behavior.

Taken collectively, the corpus reveals a structural landscape characterized by persistent interaction between two contrasting systems of authority. Managerial rationality introduces procedural governance, measurable accountability, institutional specialization, and bureaucratic control. Charismatic authority continues to provide moral legitimacy, symbolic cohesion, spiritual orientation, and cultural continuity. Across domains of governance, succession, finance, and personnel management, neither system completely displaces the other. Instead, both operate simultaneously within the organizational architecture of contemporary pesantren. The resulting picture is not one of institutional collapse but of enduring tension, where competing principles of legitimacy continually shape leadership practices and organizational behavior.

The literature consistently portrays this condition as a field of unresolved negotiation marked by the coexistence of rationalized administration and sacred authority.

## Discussion

The structural tensions identified throughout the literature invite a reconsideration of one of the most enduring assumptions within classical organizational sociology. Weber's formulation of authority has long been interpreted as positioning legal-rational bureaucracy and charismatic authority within separate and often competing spheres of institutional legitimacy (Kökerer, 2025). Such a formulation offers valuable explanatory power within modern Western bureaucratic systems, yet its applicability becomes less convincing when examined within the sociocultural ecology of pesantren (Suyono et al., 2026). The friction documented in the findings does not emerge because bureaucracy and charisma are inherently incompatible. Rather, it emerges because contemporary governance reforms frequently import administrative categories developed within secular organizational contexts without adequately recognizing the relational, spiritual, and communal foundations of Islamic institutions. The resulting deadlock therefore reflects a false dichotomy generated by epistemological transplantation rather than an unavoidable contradiction embedded within the nature of authority itself.

A closer examination of modern managerial discourse reveals assumptions that often remain concealed beneath the language of efficiency and professionalism. Within dominant managerial paradigms, organizational success is frequently measured through productivity, measurable outputs, financial performance, and institutional competitiveness (Keathley-Herring et al., 2024). Such indicators undoubtedly possess practical value, yet they are grounded in an understanding of organizational life that tends to separate performance from metaphysical purpose. The pesantren tradition operates according to a different epistemological horizon in which work acquires meaning through *niyyah*, ethical responsibility, and divine orientation. Institutional achievement is therefore not solely evaluated through quantitative accomplishments but also through the cultivation of moral character, social benefit, and *barakah* (Sharmelly & Tomczyk, 2023). Consequently, the challenge facing contemporary pesantren is not whether management should be accepted or rejected, but how managerial rationality can be liberated from its secular assumptions and reoriented toward an Islamic ontology of leadership.

The conceptual contribution of this study is articulated through what may be termed the Prophetic-Managerial Leadership Framework. This model rejects the assumption that effective governance requires the displacement of charismatic authority by bureaucratic administration. Instead, it redefines the Kiai's role as a Meta-Governance Canopy responsible for safeguarding the ontological foundations, moral vision, and spiritual direction of the institution. Within this architecture, the Kiai does not function as an operational manager

concerned with every procedural detail. Administrative responsibility is delegated to professional educational leaders who oversee planning, quality assurance, budgeting systems, performance evaluation, and institutional development. Charisma and management therefore occupy different but complementary levels of governance. The former provides ultimate meaning, ethical orientation, and cultural continuity, while the latter supplies the organizational mechanisms necessary for institutional effectiveness. Through this arrangement, spiritual authority ceases to be perceived as an administrative obstacle and becomes the normative compass guiding managerial practice.

The conceptual argument developed in this study culminates in a reconstructed leadership architecture that transcends the conventional opposition between bureaucratic rationality and charismatic authority. Rather than positioning these dimensions as competing sources of legitimacy, the proposed framework conceptualizes them as complementary pillars operating within a unified governance system. The structural configuration of this Prophetic-Managerial Leadership Framework is illustrated in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Prophetic-Managerial Leadership Framework for Contemporary Pesantren Governance

As presented in Figure 1, charismatic authority and managerial rationality converge within a shared leadership ecosystem rather than functioning as isolated domains. Charismatic authority provides spiritual legitimacy, moral direction, and cultural continuity through the leadership of the Kiai, whereas managerial rationality contributes organizational discipline, accountability, strategic planning, and institutional sustainability. The point of convergence represents the operational integration of these dimensions within contemporary pesantren governance. The figure therefore visualizes the central argument of this study: effective Islamic educational leadership emerges not through the domination of one authority structure over another, but through their continuous interaction and mutual reinforcement.

The decision-making tensions identified in the findings similarly require conceptual reconstruction. The cultural expression of *sami'na wa atha'na* has

often been interpreted as legitimizing unquestioning obedience to charismatic authority. Such an interpretation risks reducing Islamic leadership to a purely hierarchical relationship. Classical Islamic governance, however, developed through the principle of *shura*, which emphasizes consultation, collective deliberation, and intellectual participation in public decision-making (Muafiah et al., 2022). Within this perspective, professional recommendations generated through institutional meetings, strategic evaluations, and evidence-based assessments do not diminish the Kiai's authority. They expand the informational resources available to leadership. The final decision remains anchored in the Kiai's moral responsibility, yet it emerges through a process enriched by collective expertise. Consultation therefore becomes not a challenge to charisma but a mechanism through which charismatic leadership acquires greater intellectual depth and organizational precision.

The governance paradoxes surrounding financial accountability and leadership succession can also be reconsidered through an Islamic conceptual lens. Financial transparency should not be framed as an imported bureaucratic demand imposed upon religious institutions. Rather, transparent reporting systems, internal audits, and accountable budgeting procedures represent contemporary instruments through which the Islamic principle of *amanah* may be operationalized. Sacred trust requires structures capable of protecting institutional integrity and preventing the misuse of authority. A similar logic applies to succession planning. Reliance upon lineage alone may preserve symbolic continuity, yet institutional sustainability increasingly requires mechanisms that recognize competence, vision, and organizational capability. Meritocratic preparation does not negate inherited legitimacy. Instead, it strengthens the institution's ability to fulfill its educational mission. The central challenge therefore lies not in choosing between tradition and professionalism, but in embedding professional systems within a framework of religious responsibility and ethical stewardship.

The findings concerning dual loyalty among teachers and staff reveal a deeper issue of organizational identity. Many educational personnel experience tension because bureaucratic obligations and spiritual commitments are perceived as belonging to separate domains. The Prophetic-Managerial Leadership Framework resolves this fragmentation by integrating both dimensions within a unified conception of service. Compliance with administrative procedures, professional standards, and institutional regulations is no longer understood as a secular obligation detached from religious meaning. It becomes an expression of disciplined stewardship performed under the broader spiritual guidance of the Kiai. Within this framework, professional excellence is interpreted as a form of *ibadah*, while organizational responsibility becomes a manifestation of *jihad* in the service of educational transformation. Such a reorientation eliminates the psychological division between institutional duty and religious devotion, enabling personnel to experience both as interconnected expressions of a shared vocational calling.

The implications of this framework extend beyond individual pesantren and speak directly to the future of Islamic educational governance in Indonesia. Policymakers should move beyond regulatory approaches that equate institutional modernization solely with bureaucratic expansion. Governance frameworks designed for pesantren must recognize the continuing significance of spiritual authority as a source of institutional cohesion and legitimacy. Foundations and governing boards should therefore construct organizational systems that protect charismatic leadership while simultaneously strengthening professional administration. Equally important is a transformation in the mindset of contemporary Kiais themselves. Sustaining the hybrid identity of the modern pesantren requires a willingness to view managerial expertise not as a threat to religious authority but as a strategic instrument for realizing educational aspirations. The future vitality of pesantren may ultimately depend upon their capacity to cultivate leaders who are spiritually grounded, organizationally literate, and capable of navigating the increasingly complex realities of contemporary educational life.

## CONCLUSION

The contemporary pesantren occupies a complex organizational space where managerial rationality and charismatic authority continuously intersect, overlap, and occasionally collide. The findings revealed that modern administrative instruments—including standard operating procedures, performance indicators, accountability mechanisms, and formal auditing systems—have increasingly penetrated the governance structure of pesantren, generating significant tensions with long-established patterns of charismatic leadership centered on the authority of the Kiai. These tensions became particularly visible in decision-making processes, financial governance, institutional succession, and personnel loyalty. Yet the analysis demonstrated that such friction should not be interpreted as evidence of an unavoidable conflict between bureaucracy and spirituality. The sustainability of the pesantren depends neither on the bureaucratization of charisma nor on the rejection of managerial innovation. Rather, it requires the adoption of a Prophetic-Managerial Leadership framework in which modern administrative instruments are de-secularized and repositioned beneath the Kiai's overarching spiritual, moral, and educational vision, allowing organizational effectiveness and religious legitimacy to function as mutually reinforcing dimensions of institutional leadership.

The practical significance of this framework lies in its capacity to transform recurring governance paradoxes into coherent organizational principles rooted within the Islamic intellectual tradition itself. Financial transparency becomes an institutional expression of amanah rather than a foreign administrative imposition, while structured consultation and professional participation emerge as contemporary manifestations of shura that strengthen rather than weaken religious leadership. Likewise, institutional

succession can be guided through a synthesis of symbolic continuity and demonstrated competence, ensuring both organizational stability and educational quality. Through this reconstruction, accountability is redefined as a sacred responsibility and governance as an ethical endeavor directed toward the fulfillment of educational and spiritual objectives. The study therefore advances a decisive shift in the discourse of Islamic educational leadership, moving beyond the uncritical transplantation of Western managerial paradigms toward a rigorous model of hybrid governance capable of preserving the distinctive identity of pesantren while enabling their continued relevance within increasingly complex educational environments.

## REFERENCES

- Abras, A., & Jayasinghe, K. (2023). Competing institutional logics and power dynamics in Islamic financial reporting standardisation projects. *Accounting, Auditing and Accountability Journal*, 36(1), 238–266. <https://doi.org/10.1108/AAAJ-03-2020-4487>
- Achmadin, B. Z., Asrori, M., Barizi, A., Amrullah, A. M. K., & Nafis, M. M. (2024). Deconstructing the Kiai and Santri Relationship: A Critical Review of Power and Cultural Dynamics. *El Harakah: Jurnal Budaya Islam*, 26(2), 367–392. <https://doi.org/10.18860/eh.v26i2.29573>
- Christensen-Salem, A., Hartnell, C. A., Walumbwa, F. O., Chiang, F. F. T., & Birtch, T. (2024). When Charismatic Leadership Loses its Luster: Examining the Interactive Effect of Charismatic Leadership and Abusive Supervision on Follower Prosocial Motivation and Citizenship Behavior. *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies*, 31(3), 304–318. <https://doi.org/10.1177/15480518241263913>
- Chukwudi, O. A., & Iyoha, A. E. (2024). Leadership and Motivation As Essential Tools for Organizational Growth: a Study of Catholic Diocese of Nsukka. *International Journal of Law, Politics & Humanities Research*, 6(4), 148–171. <https://doi.org/10.2244/jwe/239>
- Cooper, S., & Grubnic, S. (2025). Exploring dynamic duality between formal and non-formal accountability processes in a public services context. *Accounting, Auditing and Accountability Journal*, 38(2), 674–699. <https://doi.org/10.1108/AAAJ-12-2021-5567>
- Firosa, H., & Al Hanif, M. N. (2026). Tauhid Learning Innovation: Implementing Active Methods to Enhance Student Motivation and Understanding in Junior High School. *EDUNOVATION: Journal of Education and Innovation*, 1(1), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1108/Edunovation.9734>
- Habsi, M., Affan, M., & Nasution, N. R. (2026). Inner Development as a Transformative Paradigm for Educational Development: A Qualitative Literature Study on Consciousness and Character Formation. *Chalim Journal of Teaching and Learning*, 6(1), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1198723/jhas/497>
- Hakim, H., Devi, A., Mulyadi, N., Islahudin, I., & Atika, N. (2023). Islamic

- scholar thought on intrapreneurial leadership characteristic framework for islamic education institutions. *Educational Administration: Theory and Practice*, 29(3), 216–237. <https://doi.org/10.52152/kuey.v29i3.728>
- Hasan, M. F. (2025). Educational authority and regulatory legitimacy: comparing normative systems in pesantren and public schools in Indonesia. *Legal Pluralism and Critical Social Analysis*, 57(2–3), 182–206. <https://doi.org/10.1080/27706869.2025.2556586>
- Irama, Y., & Al Amin, A. R. (2025). Religious Authority Between Lineage and Merit: An Ethnographic Study of Habaib's Identity Negotiation in Pesantren. *Journal of Islamic Thought and Philosophy*, 4(1), 161–179. <https://doi.org/10.15642/jitp.2025.4.1.161-179>
- Irwin, L. N., & Posselt, J. R. (2022). a Critical Discourse Analysis of Mainstream College Student Leadership Development Models. *Journal of Leadership Education*, 21(4), 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.12806/v21/i4/r1>
- Keathley-Herring, H., Van Aken, E., & Letens, G. (2024). Implementing organizational performance measurement systems: measures and success strategies. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*, 73(9), 2972–3007. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJPPM-05-2023-0266>
- Khlaisang, J., & Yoshida, M. (2022). Empowering Global Citizens with Digital Literacy: Modeling the Factor Structure. *International Journal of Instruction*, 15(4), 577–594. <https://doi.org/10.29333/iji.2022.15431a>
- Kholifah, S. (2022). The Dynamics of the Pesantren Adaptation Patterns Amid the Covid-19 Pandemic. *Religious: Jurnal Studi Agama-Agama Dan Lintas Budaya*, 6(1), 25–38. <https://doi.org/10.15575/rjsalb.v6i1.15113>
- Kökerer, C. M. (2025). Max Weber and Carl Schmitt on Legitimate Domination: Belief in Legitimacy or Acknowledgement of Legitimacy? *Critical Sociology*, 51(6), 1209–1224. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08969205241276797>
- Langer, J. (2022). Bureaucracy and the Imaginal Realm: Max Weber, Rationality and the Substantive Basis of Public Administration. *Perspectives on Public Management and Governance*, 5(2), 122–134. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ppmgov/gvab033>
- Lind, C. J., & Ekwerike, O. (2022). Orientations toward community leadership. *Leadership*, 18(4), 520–538. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17427150221085134>
- Lyons, J., Konara, P., & Shirodkar, V. (2025). Family business legitimacy and foreign subsidiary establishment mode choice: An institutional and mixed gamble approach. *International Business Review*, 34(2). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ibusrev.2024.102360>
- Mannucci, P. V., & Shalley, C. E. (2022). Embracing multicultural tensions: How team members' multicultural paradox mindsets foster team information elaboration and creativity. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 173. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2022.104191>
- Martin, A., Vyshnivska, N., Shkurenko, O., Sukhopara, I., Vashchenko, O., Romanenko, L., & Romanenko, K. (2022). The Influence of Natural Objects on the Emergence and Overcoming of the Child's Anxiety During

- Interaction with Others at the Beginning of Children's Teaching at School. *Pegem Egitim ve Ogretim Dergisi*, 12(3), 12-19. <https://doi.org/10.47750/pegegog.12.03.02>
- Meilani, S. D. I., Suyono, S., & Abnisa, A. P. (2025). Interpersonal Communication Patterns In Developing Excellent Character Through Student Discipline In Islamic Boarding Schools. *El-Fatih: Jurnal Dakwah Dan Penyuluhan Islam*, 4(01), 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.1108/El-Fatih.89273>
- Mohd Jamil, M., Zainal Abidin, N. H., & Mohd Alwi, N. (2023). the Internal Auditors' Responses in Environmental Auditing Practices: Problem Solvers Vs Checker. *Corporate Governance and Organizational Behavior Review*, 7(3), 177-187. <https://doi.org/10.22495/cgobrv7i3p14>
- Muafiah, E., Sofiana, N. E., & Khasanah, U. (2022). PESANTREN EDUCATION IN INDONESIA: Efforts to Create Child-Friendly Pesantren. *Ulumuna*, 26(2), 447-471. <https://doi.org/10.20414/ujis.v26i2.558>
- Muchlish Huda, M., & Muslih, M. (2024). The Instant Mastery of Kitab Kuning with the Al-Bidayah Method: Between Kiai Fractured Authority and Pesantren Tradition Preservation. *At-Ta'dib*, 19(2), 193-212. <https://doi.org/10.21111/attadib.v19i2.11795>
- Nu'man, A. (2025). From Authority To Institutional Trust; a Study of Kyai Modalities in Pesantren Communities. *PEDAGOGIK: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 12(1), 74-88. <https://doi.org/10.33650/pjp.v12i1.11063>
- Ogochukwu, O. E., Amah, A., Edwinah, E., Okocha, O., & Friday, B. (2022). Management by Objective and Organizational Productivity: A Literature Review. *South Asian Research Journal of Business and Management*, 4(3), 99-113. <https://doi.org/10.36346/sarjbm.2022.v04i03.003>
- Romlah, R., Warisno, A., Muslim, A. B., & Harun, A. (2025). Navigating tradition and modernity in the strategic management and transformation of Madrasah Aliyah in multicultural Indonesia. *International Journal of Management in Education*, 19(3), 284-310. <https://doi.org/10.3697/jnasd.7356>
- Saifillah, M., Habsi, M., Baitussalam, M. I., Zainullah, M., & Rahmanda, R. W. (2026). Digitalization of Islamic Education and Hajj-Umrah Manasik Governance at KBIHU in Probolinggo. *TADIB: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 4(1), 258-271. <https://doi.org/10.36346/sarjbm.2022.v04i03.003>
- Sharmelly, R., & Tomczyk, D. (2023). Integrating competing institutional logics by benefit corporations: Challenges and practices. *Journal of General Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/03063070231206533>
- Sofi, M. J., Manaf, S., & Ali, J. (2025). PESANTREN IN DYNAMIC TRANSFORMATION: Harmonizing Classical Roots and Modern Practices. *Miqot: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman*, 49(2), 333-353. <https://doi.org/10.30821/miqot.v49i2.1459>
- Suyono, S., Fathurrohman, F., Fuady, A. S., & Huda, M. (2026). Reconstructing the philosophy of islamic eco-social entrepreneurship: pesantren-based coastal development as a paradigm of ethical transformation. *Jurnal Al-Ijtima'iyyah*, 12(1), 65-101. <https://doi.org/10.36346/sarjbm.2022.v04i03.003>

- Val, S., & Quintas, A. (2025). Key performance indicators for optimizing academic performance and course design in online educational platforms. *Cogent Education*, 12(1), 2529420. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2025.2529420>
- Woelert, P., & Stensaker, B. (2025). Strategic bureaucracy: The convergence of bureaucratic and strategic management logics in the organizational restructuring of universities. *Minerva*, 63(1), 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.36346/jaks/98327>