

Institutional Analysis and Leadership in the Development of Islamic Boarding Schools

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Keywords: leadership management religious traditional leadership</p> <p>DOI: https://doi.org/10.22437/jssh.v9i1.38501</p> <p>Received: November 18, 2024</p> <p>Reviewed: Maret 19, 2025</p> <p>Accepted: April 19, 2025</p>	<p><i>This study examines the leadership and organizational challenges of Pesantren Nurul Syipa, a non-formal religious institution in Bogor, Indonesia, founded in 2020. The research aims to explore the effectiveness of the pesantren's operations, leadership strategies, and organizational management in addressing key issues, such as resource optimization, conflict management, and alignment with the institution's vision and mission. Utilizing a qualitative approach, data was collected through in-depth interviews and field observations, with purposive sampling targeting the pesantren's founder and community leaders. Findings reveal that Pesantren Nurul Syipa fulfills core elements of effective institutional planning—vision, management, resource utilization, and program implementation—yet struggles with technical management skills and limited human resources, placing it in a state of organizational ambiguity. The leadership, rooted in traditional values, reflects a mix of charismatic and managerial approaches, ensuring operational continuity despite constraints. However, further development in structural organization and resource management is essential for long-term sustainability. This study highlights the interplay between traditional leadership and modern management practices in enhancing the operational efficiency of religious institutions.</i></p>

1. Introduction

Institutions, organizations, and leadership have an important role in the success of an institution, including religious institutions. Leadership in religious institutions, such as Islamic boarding schools, mosques, or other religious institutions, faces quite complex challenges (Sidiq, 2020). The main problems in the leadership of religious institutions are often related to human resource management, organizational efficiency, and difficulties in achieving the vision and mission that have been set (Hakiem et al., 2023; Karim et al., 2022; Mardiyati, 2014; Rohman et al., 2022; Syahid et al., 2022). This is due to the special characteristics of religious institutions that aim not only to achieve material results, but also to foster the spirituality and morality of their members (Karim et al., 2022).

The relationship between the general problems faced by religious institutions and leadership can be seen from the leader's ability to face change and manage conflicts in the institutional environment. Less effective leaders often have difficulty in creating alignment of vision and mission, thus hindering the achievement of institutional goals (Nur'aini et al., 2020; Orogun, 2023; Wulandari et al., 2023). In addition, management problems also often arise in the form of unclear roles and tasks, suboptimal management of resources, and lack of transparency in decision-making. This results in dissatisfaction with the members of the institution and a decrease in the quality of services to the community.

The Nurul Syipa Islamic Boarding School is one of the organizations in a non-formal religious institution that was established in 2020 with the help and support of the local community. This pesantren is included in one of the forms of organization that uses planning principles in community development. Planning is a systematic arrangement of steps regarding future steps, based on careful considerations of potential, external factors and interested parties in order to achieve a specific goal (Alexander, 2005b; Andrade Domínguez et al., 2024; Reimer, 2013; Tambovtsev & Rozhdestvenskaya, 2020; Van Den Broeck, 2013). Planning, especially in organizational development for community development, can also be interpreted as a decision-making process based on facts, regarding activities that must be carried out in order to achieve the expected or desired goals together (Alexander, 2005a; Ayorekire et al., 2020; Taylor et al., 2008).

Based on conditions in the field, this research focuses on some of the main problems faced by Islamic Boarding Schools as religious institutions. These problems include the level of effectiveness and operational efficiency of pesantren in carrying out their functions as non-formal institutions that serve the spiritual and social development of the community. In addition, this study also highlights the leadership and management system applied in Islamic Boarding Schools, especially in managing the organization and human resources owned.

The role of leadership in facing various challenges faced by religious institutions is also the focus of an unforgettable study. These challenges include efforts to overcome internal conflicts, manage change, and maintain the alignment of the institution's vision and mission. Thus, this study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between leadership, management, and operational effectiveness of Islamic Boarding Schools in achieving their goals.

1. Literature Review

2.1 Institutional Theory

In realizing an efficient and effective institution, it is necessary to design a plan for the future. The development of an institutional plan for the future requires several main factors, namely vision, management technical skills, intensive, resources, and action plans (de Almeida & Galvão, 2021; Lima et al., 2020; Rise et al., 2011). These factors are analyses that can be used to see the shortcomings of a certain institution.

Table 1. Institutional planning

Institutional analysis planned for the future effectively-efficiently					
Vision		Vision	Vision	Vision	Vision
Management engineering skills	Management engineering skills		Management engineering skills	Management engineering skills	Management engineering skills
Intensive	Intensive	Intensive		Intensive	Intensive
Resources	Resources	Resources	Resources		Resources
Action plan	Action plan	Action plan	Action plan	Action plan	
Impact					
Continuous change	Confusion	Unrest	Gradual change	Frustrating	False steps

Institutional analysis planned for the future effectively and efficiently can have an impact on the shortcomings of one of the factors (Bontempo et al., 2015; Junges et al., 2023). (1) Institutions that fall under the category of sustainable change are institutions that already have all planning factors. (2) Institutions in the category of confusion are institutions that do not have a vision that results in the direction and purpose of the institution running that is not directed. (3) Institutions in the category of unrest are institutions that do not have management technical skills so that it is difficult to achieve goals due to poor management and management. (4) Institutions in the category of gradual change are institutions that do not have consistent intensity so that they result in gradual institutional development. (5) Institutions in the frustrated category are institutions that do not have resources that result in a lack of materials to support the sustainability of an institution. (6) Institutions in the category of false steps are institutions that do not have an action plan to realize the design that has been made so that the institution is only in the form of goals and achievements but there is no management to achieve them (Roldan, 2022).

2.2 Leadership and Management Theory

Leadership is "leaders do the right things" and management is "managers do things right" (Kotter, 1990; Santora, 1991). Both quotes describe leadership that is an actor of change in managing the organization and management who is an agent of change in managing change by directing the pace of social movements. Leaders and managers have complementary roles but have different focuses and approaches in achieving organizational goals (Cannedy et al., 2022; Rehbock et al., 2023; Toor, 2011; Yunita et al., 2023). In the context of leadership and management theory, a leader is defined as an individual who inspires and motivates team members to achieve a broader vision (Amber, 2017; Northhouse, 2019; Pillai, 2000).

Leaders act as agents of change that drive innovation and help organizations adapt to the dynamics of an ever-changing environment (Cuthbert et al., 2023; Espinoza-Tenorio et al.,

2022; Haruna, 2022; Karacay et al., 2019; Lee et al., 2022; Sakinah & Aslami, 2022). They build strong relationships with the team, prioritize empathy, and focus on developing human resources so that individuals within the organization can grow and develop optimally. This approach allows leaders to encourage active participation and foster commitment from team members in achieving common goals (Gary, 2010; Walvoord et al., 2008; Yukl, 2013).

On the other hand, managers focus more on the organization and control of day-to-day operational activities to ensure that processes run efficiently and in accordance with preset targets (Blenkinsop, 1979; Drucker, 2012; Tarragó & Wilson, 2010). Managers implement existing structures, procedures, and policies to achieve concrete and measurable results. They are responsible for maintaining operational stability through strict oversight of resource use and enforcement of performance standards. Despite having differences in approach, the roles of leaders and managers complement each other in achieving the balance that organizations need. Leaders play a role in providing long-term vision and direction, while managers execute technical planning and maintain regularity in day-to-day implementation. In an effective organization, leaders and managers work together to create optimal synergy between vision, innovation, and efficiency. This combination of roles allows the organization to not only achieve short-term goals efficiently, but also build a strong foundation for long-term growth and development (Kolzow et al., 2021; Kotter, 1990; Rupperecht et al., 2013; Santora, 1991).

Being a leader is one of the great responsibilities for a human being. It can be sourced from, (1) A person's traits are leadership that comes from personal traits such as courage, intelligence, and one's abilities. (2) Tradition is a culture that is part of a leader's identity such as birth, descent, seniority, or experience can be the basis for a person to be considered a leader. (3) Magical power is a culture related to supernatural powers or abilities considered as a source of leadership legitimacy. (4) Special skills are skills or expertise that are unique to a person, which is a specialty in his group. (5) Conditional needs are certain environments or situations that demand the specific abilities of a leader who are considered able to meet the needs of the group (Castellanos & George, 2020; Chipunza & Matsumunyane, 2018; Ford et al., 2021; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999).

A good leader is a leader who is able to bring his institution or organization to be better in every waktu. There are several types of leadership that include various approaches to power in leadership. According to Thorne, Henderson, and Parsons (1948) and Weintraub *et al.* (1948) Leadership is divided based on the type of power, namely (1) Charismatic leadership, which is leadership based on the leader's personal attractiveness or charisma, where followers trust the leader's emotional abilities. Charismatic leaders usually have great influence because of the trust and admiration given by their followers. (2) Traditional leadership is leadership that comes from cultural values or norms that have been rooted in society. This type usually occurs in hereditary structures, such as leadership within the royal family or indigenous groups, where power is conferred due to a specific position or inheritance. (3) Rational-legal leadership is leadership based on legitimate rules and regulations, where leaders gain authority through formal positions in organizational structures (Arshad et al., 2021; Azman & Mansor, 2013).

Each type has its drawbacks and successes in its implementation. Charismatic leadership, for example, only inspires followers as long as the leader has a passion for a common goal (Eman et al., 2023; Hazzam & Wilkins, 2023; Le Blanc et al., 2021). Followers develop a kind of dependence on their leader that can pose a risk if the idealized figure is incapable of maintaining integrity and conscious decision-making standards. Tradition-based leadership can provide resilience to maintain the stability and sustainability of cultural values. Up to a certain point in

time, it happens if the leadership is not too static and takes part in the dynamic nature of the contemporary order (Andriani et al., 2024; Cohen, 2018; Leonard, 2019; Ringson, 2020; Singh, 2021). Meanwhile, rational-legal leadership has few benefits associated with professionalism and transparency because it is a type of leadership that is based on clear rules (Arshad et al., 2021; Azman & Mansor, 2013).

There is more objectivity in the factorization of possible decisions than ever before. The biggest problem is rigid bureaucracy and the accompanying effects that make it difficult to innovate and respond quickly to change. Thus, a synthesis of the best aspects of the three leadership styles above situational, transformational, and transactional will be most appropriate for leaders in these conditions and challenges in this organization. Legitimacy and power are maintained, they will also remain flexible in the face of changing environmental dynamics. Rational-legal power is considered legitimate because it is limited and protected by laws or regulations that apply in society or organizations

In addition, there are five types of power that are socially used by leaders, including. (1) Reward power is a leader who can provide rewards for achieving obedience. (2) Coercive power is a leader who uses threats or punishments to control behavior. (3) Legitimate power is the power given by a social structure or formal position. (4) Expert power is leadership based on the specific competencies or expertise of leaders in certain fields. (5) Referent power is a power that comes from the leader's personal attraction that makes followers want to identify with him (Dahl & Cartwright, 1960; Lyngstad, 2017; Rucker & Galinsky, 2017; Sam, 2007).

3. Research Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach with data collection methods in the form of in-depth interviews and field observations. The in-depth interview method was chosen because it allows researchers to delve deeper into the informant's understanding and knowledge of the research topic through direct conversations. Data collection was carried out by researchers going directly to the field and interacting with the community at the research site. In determining informants, the researcher uses the purposive sampling technique, which is to deliberately select informants based on relevance to the research objectives. The researcher chose the owner of the pesantren as the main informant because he is the founder of the Nurul Syifa Islamic boarding school, who has a deep understanding of the process, goals, and challenges in the operation of the pesantren. In addition, there are village officials who are supporting informants in data collection. Thus, it is hoped that he can provide in-depth answers to the research questions asked. Data analysis follows a qualitative research design (Creswell, 2014).

4. Result

4.1. Effective-Efficiency of Islamic Boarding Schools as Religious Institutions

Infoman 1 as the leader and builder of Islamic Boarding Schools has the dream of building majlis and Islamic boarding schools. This motivation is built by the environment and family. The two informants 1 are ustadz and ustazah as well as their relatives and relatives who also have a majlis or Islamic boarding school. Informant 1's hope is that the pesantren he leads can develop the abilities of its students both academically and academically by developing various educational activity programs. In addition, he hopes that the pesantren can collaborate and continue to receive support from residents. This hope is also the vision of the leader to create a majlis and pesantren that can spread religious teachings well.

The pesantren management is the wife, brother, and relative of informant 1. The management consists of the head of the pesantren and teachers. In terms of management, the Nurul Syipa Islamic Boarding School does not have a structural management such as secretary, treasurer, etc. In addition, in carrying out its educational and non-educational programs, the Nurul Syipa Islamic Boarding School holds meetings and has a learning system. The meeting is divided into two, namely the annual meeting and the situational meeting. Annual meetings will be held every year to plan what programs and activities will be carried out within a period of one year of the learning period. A situational meeting is a meeting held to prepare for major activities such as the commemoration of Islamic holidays, Islamic boarding schools in the month of Ramadan, etc. In carrying out learning activities, the Nurul Syipa Islamic Boarding School carries out a shift system, this shift is in the form of a learning schedule within one week and a teaching schedule to fill the classes per day. In the event that the teacher is not in class, the teacher will ask for the availability of another teacher to replace him.

The Nurul Syipa Islamic Boarding School has two learning programs, namely the pesantren program for male students and the afternoon learning program. The pesantren program is a special boarding school program for male students to deepen Islamic religious knowledge and formal education. The afternoon learning program is a recital learning activity for children and adults. The pesantren program is a dormitory program for men where every day they will learn Islam. This dormitory activity requires students to live in the pesantren, then will study from morning to evening. The learning of the pesantren and ngaji programs is coordinated by the teacher. In one day, the teacher will fill several shifts, where each shift will discuss different material such as in the morning will discuss aqidah, in the afternoon will discuss tahfidz, and in the afternoon to study in the afternoon to discuss BTQ (Read and Write Quran). This shift has been coordinated as a fixed learning system.

In discussing human resources, the management of the Nurul Syipa Islamic Boarding School is the family, relatives, and relatives of the leader of the institution. In its management structure, the Nurul Syipa Islamic Boarding School has two structures, namely leaders and teachers. They act as a planning team as well as implementers of all programs in the pesantren. In addition, the existing learning system helps their roles as leaders, management, and members stay ongoing and sustainable. In its development, the Nurul Syipa Islamic Boarding School operates centrally in one of the public mosques. Over time, Islamic boarding schools can develop to have their own buildings both to support the learning process and the cottage. Inside the building, there are classrooms that function as a learning hall, gathering room, and rooms for students.

At the beginning of the year, the Nurul Syipa Islamic Boarding School held an annual meeting to plan programs and activities that would be carried out in a period of one year. This design is a design of activities in the learning process, both religious and formal education. In carrying out religious programs, the boarding school works as a focus center for students to deepen Islam and the Qur'an as well as afternoon learning as a forum for Islamic da'wah to children and adults. In addition, the Nurul Syipa Islamic Boarding School also makes activities to commemorate the day or month and recitation to preach Islam as a commemoration and forum for community involvement in the pesantren program. In the education program, the Nurul Syipa Islamic Boarding School collaborates with schools to provide its students with formal education and diplomas.

The Nurul Syipa Islamic Boarding School has and meets the five institutional effective factors planned for the future. However, if you look at the management technique skill factor, the Nurul Syipa Islamic Boarding School does not have good management engineering skills. This is because in the structure there are only leaders and teachers. In addition, the human resources possessed can still be said to be limited. Therefore, the management structure is still inadequate, so that the Nurul Syipa Islamic Boarding School is not yet established.

4.2. Pesantren Leadership

The leadership in the Nurul Syipa Islamic Boarding School comes from traditions in the form of culture that are part of the leader's identity such as birth, descent, or experience. In this case, informant 1 became the leader of the Nurul Syipa Islamic Boarding School thanks to his strong background in religious education. Since childhood, informant 1 grew up in a family environment that understood religious values very well and provided a religious-focused education. This experience fostered his determination to establish a pesantren, which he has now succeeded in building and leading with dedication. In addition, in general, the established pesantren will be led by a direct descendant of the founder. This also applies to the Nurul Syipa Islamic Boarding School, where later the leadership of informant 1 will be continued by his son. This type of leadership belongs to traditional leadership, which is based on cultural values and norms that have long been ingrained in society (Singh, 2021). This kind of traditional leadership usually occurs in hereditary structures, such as in royal families or indigenous communities, where authority and power are conferred based on specific family positions or inheritances (Leonard, 2019).

In addition to playing the role of the founder of the Nurul Syipa Islamic Boarding School, informant 1 also acts as the main leader and manager at this Islamic boarding school. In carrying out his duties, he ensures that the teachers are present according to the schedule that has been set and use teaching methods that are in line with the principles and vision of the Nurul Syipa Islamic Boarding School. In addition, informant 1 has the authority to review and, if necessary, change the policies or regulations that apply in the pesantren, in order to improve the quality of education and existing management.

Currently, the Nurul Syipa Islamic Boarding School is assisted by several staff. As a new Islamic boarding school, Informant 1 holds various important responsibilities to ensure the sustainability and development of the Islamic boarding school. In addition to serving as chairman, Informant 1 also carries out duties as an administrator and teacher. Due to the limited number of teaching staff, he is directly involved in the teaching and learning process and is fully ready to replace other teachers who are unable to attend. Thus, learning activities at the pesantren can still take place smoothly without obstacles.

The leadership role of Informant 1 in achieving organizational goals and directing the members of the Nurul Syipa Islamic Boarding School is reflected in the holding of regular meetings. In these meetings, leaders and teachers evaluate the development of students every year and plan various activities to be carried out, including annual art performances that have become a tradition. Through these meetings and activities, pesantren leaders ensure that the education and development targets of students can be achieved, while strengthening togetherness and increasing the participation of all members in every pesantren activity.

In addition, in the context of educational development, the Nurul Syipa Islamic Boarding School collaborates with package schools. This provides an opportunity for students who have not completed formal education to continue it and obtain an official diploma. With this

collaboration, pesantren helps students in meeting their formal education needs, so that they can continue their education according to applicable standards. When there is a conflict between the students, the pesantren takes steps to reconcile the two parties amicably. They tried to find the root of the problem and reach an agreement that was acceptable to the two dissenting students. In addition, if there are students who have been inactive for a long time or rarely attend, the pesantren visits the student's house to confirm their condition and see if there are problems faced that hinder their attendance.

As a leader, Informant 1 has an approach to handling internal conflicts. If there is tension or disagreement among the staff, Informant 1 tends to choose a yielding attitude to defuse the situation. This is done by taking into account existing kinship or kinship relationships, as many of the staff he works with are family or close relatives of Informant 1. This shows the character of leadership, namely *Selfless* or sincere who is in the spiritual dimension and *Empathy* or understanding in the emotional dimension (Masruroh et al., 2022; Rahtikawatie et al., 2021). It is appropriate that leaders have five leadership characters in three dimensions, namely *Selfless* (sincerity) and *Honesty* (honesty) in the spiritual dimension, *Respect* (appreciation) and *Empathy* (understanding) in the emotional dimension, and *the pursuit of excellence* (mental attitude to achieve the best results) in the rational dimension (Dacholfany et al., 2024; Masruroh et al., 2022; Rahtikawatie et al., 2021; Soeprayitno, 2020).

5. Discussion

The results of this study prove that the leadership style in pesantren takes the form of traditional leadership that comes from the culture and social perspective of the community. Islamic boarding schools are traditionally recognized as the oldest Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia and their organization and management are passed down from one generation to the next in respected families or community leaders, also known as kiai (Fanani & Amrullah, 2018; Indana & Nurvita, 2020; Lusviyanti et al., 2022). Such traditional management not only treats the kiai character with great respect as spiritual leaders, but also creates categorical channels through which institutional policies are established (Indana & Nurvita, 2020; Lusviyanti et al., 2022; Zahraini et al., 2022). This was well received by the kiai position because the inheritance of religious knowledge, pious activities, and a good bloodline was strong and substantial. This tradition will strengthen the loyalty of the students and the surrounding community in general, seeing it as a role model in religion and society.

The inheritance of pesantren governance from generation to generation only strengthens the conservative pattern in pesantren leadership (Muhammad Ikhsan, 2020; Putro et al., 2022). Through the inheritance system, the yellow leaf book can control the deeply preserved values and customs that also articulate the patterns of respected interaction initiated by the students towards their caregivers. The majority of the people around the pesantren can be made this way because they obey the disputed decisions and are respected by the kiai, believing that he has greater wisdom and knowledge. The concept of leadership by the more advanced kiai especially applies to pesantren because it is a concept that they can include both the continuity of teaching and changes in a structure that is often less reactive to the dynamics and modernity of the times.

The leadership style in pesantren is very strong in tradition and social legitimacy. However, this leadership style faces challenges in the dynamics of modern society due to its reliance on family inheritance patterns. Some pesantren have broken through the boundaries of modification regarding formal education and openness to technology, but many are also very resistant and maintain the old ways. Therefore, the expected future of pesantren leadership is to maintain

tradition and, at the same time, be open to renewal so that it is relevant in increasingly complex social conditions.

6. Conclusion

The leadership style in this Islamic Boarding School reflects traditional leadership formed within the framework of cultural and social dynamics in society. This leadership runs through generations in the family, where the leader bases his official work on religious values and customs. If we consider the family members and relatives who run the Islamic boarding school, we will begin to appreciate the strong influence of this system of heredity. In addition, the leadership of these pesantren is characterized by service and devotion, which in turn reflects sincerity, honesty, respect, and understanding, key aspects in traditional leadership. Although there are many obstacles in building the basic structure, the simple Nurul Syipa Islamic Boarding School can maintain sustainable learning and da'wah activities well through a system of annual and situational meetings and well-coordinated educational programs.

The sustainability of traditional leadership in Islamic Boarding Schools faces the challenge of changing towards modernization and increasing management effectiveness. Limited human resources and the absence of a complete management structure demand an improvement in management aspects and management capacity development, returning to the family-centered type, can hinder innovation and professionalism in the governance of Islamic boarding schools. Therefore, future leadership requires a good balance between maintaining the traditions that are the identity of Islamic boarding schools and opening up to a sense of renewal that can increase institutional effectiveness, both in terms of formal and non-formal education.

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