

Human Resource Management in Islamic Boarding Schools: A Case Study at Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim, North Sumatra

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32332/nizham.v13i02.11690>

Received: 08-10-2025

Revised: 25-10-2025

Accepted: 15-11-2025

Abstract

This study aims to examine the implementation of Human Resource Management (HRM) in improving the quality of educators and education personnel at Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim. The research seeks to understand how HRM practices contribute to the enhancement of educational quality through systematic management, training, and professional development. Employing a qualitative descriptive method, the data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation with the head of the madrasah, educators, staff, and foundation representatives. The findings reveal that HRM at Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim is implemented through six key aspects such as planning, recruitment, selection, training and development, performance evaluation, and integration. The study found that both educators and education personnel play significant roles not only as instructors and administrators but also as moral guides and role models in nurturing students' religious and ethical values. Effective HRM practices at Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim contribute substantially to improving the quality of human resources, enhancing institutional performance, and promoting the development of Islamic education within a modern educational framework.

Keywords: Kiai Leadership, Development of Insan Kamil, Human Resource Management



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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji penerapan Manajemen Sumber Daya Manusia (MSDM) dalam meningkatkan kualitas pendidik dan tenaga kependidikan di Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim. Penelitian ini berupaya memahami bagaimana praktik MSDM berkontribusi terhadap peningkatan mutu pendidikan melalui manajemen yang sistematis, pelatihan, serta pengembangan profesional. Dengan menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif, data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi bersama kepala madrasah, pendidik, staf, serta perwakilan yayasan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penerapan MSDM di Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim dilaksanakan melalui enam aspek utama seperti perencanaan, rekrutmen, seleksi, pelatihan dan pengembangan, evaluasi kinerja, serta integrasi. Penelitian ini juga menemukan bahwa pendidik dan tenaga kependidikan memiliki peran penting tidak hanya sebagai pengajar dan pengelola, tetapi juga sebagai pembimbing moral dan teladan dalam menanamkan nilai-nilai religius serta etika kepada santri. Penerapan praktik MSDM yang efektif di Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim memberikan kontribusi yang signifikan terhadap peningkatan kualitas sumber daya manusia, peningkatan kinerja lembaga, serta pengembangan pendidikan Islam dalam kerangka pendidikan modern.

Kata Kunci: Kepemimpinan Kiai, Pengembangan Insan Kamil, Manajemen Sumber Daya Manusia

Introduction

Management is the most essential process in any organization because, fundamentally, it deals with shared goals, the ways people work together, and the effective utilization of available resources.¹ Thus, it can be stated that management is always concerned with the goals, work patterns, and human resources within a particular social context. By examining the elements of managerial tasks related to the placement of human resources, it becomes clear that management is essential for enhancing the effectiveness of human resources within an organization. Its ultimate goal is to provide the organization with an efficient and effective workforce unit.² Human resource management (HRM) places greater emphasis on the labor factor as a key element of production. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that human resource management

¹Panglaykim, Hazil Tanzil, *Manajemen Suatu Pengantar*, (Jakarta: Ghalia Indonesia, 1981), h. 89

²Handoko T. Hani, *Manajemen Personalia Dan Sumber Daya Manusia*, edisi 2, (Yogyakarta: BPFE, 2001), h 6

must not entirely disregard matters related to workforce productivity. Therefore, in HRM, there must be a clear, firm, and precise division of responsibilities so that the established programs can operate systematically. This clarity ensures that all employees are willing to work and carry out the tasks assigned to them effectively.

In practice, however, it is frequently observed that the leaders or administrators of Islamic boarding schools often pay insufficient attention to the planning function when determining activity programs. As a result, many of the formulated programs fail to achieve their intended objectives or are implemented inconsistently. For example, program activities are sometimes launched without a clear timeline, measurable targets, or appropriate human resource allocation, leading to inefficiencies and poor coordination among stakeholders. The management of human resources within pesantren also remains underdeveloped, and the level of internal support as well as external engagement from the surrounding community, is relatively weak. Consequently, these shortcomings hinder effective collaboration between managers and subordinates in determining evaluation criteria, scheduling assessments, and assigning responsibility for performance evaluation.

Therefore, it is necessary to develop a system that can provide maximum contribution to achieving both organizational goals and the personal goals of the human resources themselves. One of the strategies that must be implemented to maintain the existence of Islamic boarding schools is through effective HRM. HRM plays a crucial role in pesantren as it ensures the quality of the graduates produced. After all, Islamic boarding schools graduates, upon completing their education, will directly interact with society as the “users” or recipients of their competencies. Hence, HRM must receive serious attention, supported by systematic and detailed planning that is oriented toward the future.³ To build a truly competitive institution, it is essential to implement positive reforms based on the principles of good governance. The success of any institution fundamentally depends on the presence of effective HRM, as it plays a vital role and makes a significant contribution to determining the overall success of an organization.

In today’s rapidly evolving business environment, human resources play a pivotal role in securing and sustaining competitive advantage. Consequently, organizations must continually enhance their performance to achieve long-term success. Managing human resources, therefore, entails (a) making strategic and evidence-based decisions and (b) effectively responding to environmental shifts such as technological innovation, market competition, business restructuring, and changes in social, political, and legal contexts. These

³Hamalik Oemar, *Perencanaan Pengajaran Berdasarkan Pendekatan Sistem*, Jakarta: PT. Bumi Aksara, 2003, h. 76

factors must be comprehensively understood and skillfully managed to enable organizations to thrive in a dynamic marketplace.⁴

Unlike many Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia, Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim has adopted a range of structured management practices aimed at ensuring institutional sustainability and adaptability. These management systems, particularly in the domain of human resource management, have enabled the pesantren to maintain organizational stability while cultivating high-quality human resources capable of responding to contemporary challenges.⁵ Empirical observations reveal that the pesantren integrates HR principles into its daily operations. This approach not only enhances the educational and moral formation of its students but also reinforces the institution's contribution to national development and community welfare.

The success of modern Islamic boarding schools is largely determined by the collective synergy of their stakeholders, particularly teachers (ustadz), who function simultaneously as educators, mentors, and leaders. At Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim, the implementation of management principles rooted in the Panca Jangka (Five Long-Term Goals), Panca Jiwa (Five Core Spirits), and the institutional motto serves as a strategic foundation for continuous improvement.⁶ Based on field observations, the Kyai of the pesantren has demonstrated effective leadership by institutionalizing structured HRM practices, including teacher development programs, performance monitoring, and extracurricular initiatives that foster academic and non-academic excellence. Through these efforts, the pesantren exemplifies how theoretical concepts of HRM can be contextualized and operationalized within an Islamic educational framework.

The leader of Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim has demonstrated that a leader plays a vital role in managing, organizing, and maintaining order in all institutional activities to achieve the desired objectives. This is accomplished through continuous communication and coordination with staff members and educators to ensure the effective realization of the pesantren's goals.

In addition to collecting data through observation, the researcher also conducted an interview with the Kyai of Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim. The pengasuh explained that the pesantren "never sleeps," meaning it continuously conducts various activities, supervision, evaluations, and applications aimed at improving the quality of Islamic education. These efforts are carried out through regular programs such as *taftisy i'dad*, *taftisy mufaji'*, *naqdu tadris*, *ta'bil*,

⁴Wilson Bangun, *Manajemen Sumber Daya Manusia*, (Jakarta: PT. GeloraAksara Pratama, 2012), h.4

⁵Abdullah Syukri Zarkasyi, *Manajemen Pesantren (Pengalaman Pesantren Imam Muslim)*, (Ponorogo: Trimurti Press, 2005), h. 36

⁶NurHadi Ihsan, Muhammad Akrimul Hakim dan Ahmad Hasan Al-Banna, *Profil Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor Ponorogo Jawa Timur Indonesia*, (Ponorogo:Darussalam Press, 2006), cet ke-2, h. 62

insya yaumi, *muraja'ah durus*, and *taftisyu mufatisyat*. In addition to these routine activities, there are also periodic programs such as *fathul kutub*, *kasyful mu'jam*, and *fathurrahman*, as well as evaluation processes conducted in the form of general tests and semester examinations. These initiatives reflect the pesantren's strong commitment to maintaining and continuously enhancing the quality of Islamic education.

Discussion

Human Resources Management at Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim

As previously mentioned, HRM plays a crucial role in every educational institution, as the achievement of its vision, mission, and educational goals largely depends on the quality of its human resources. Based on an interview with the head of the madrasah at Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim, it was revealed that HRM in the institution is carried out through various training and development programs attended by teachers and administrative staff. Although these activities are not conducted intensively on a monthly basis, they are held at least twice a year as an evaluation mechanism for teaching and learning activities conducted in each academic semester.

This view is supported by one of the administrative staff, who stated that the implementation of HRM at the institution has indeed been running but still needs improvement. They suggested that training programs should be organized more frequently and better facilitated by the school administration. However, due to financial limitations and other technical constraints, such activities have not yet reached their full potential. Despite these challenges, the Ministry of Religious Affairs continues to play an active role in providing professional guidance to teachers and staff at least once every semester. These sessions cover managerial leadership for principals, curriculum development, dissemination of BOS and BOSDA funding guidelines, as well as administrative skills training, particularly for EMIS operators and data management officers.

A teacher at Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim also emphasized that the implementation of HRM within the institution aims to enhance the quality of educators and staff through training, professional development, and workshops. This aligns with the statement of the chairman of the foundation, who explained that the application of HRM is an institutional effort to manage and nurture all personnel so that they can develop their potential and adapt to changing times. Based on interviews with the head of the madrasah, educators, staff members, and the foundation's representatives, it can be concluded that HRM at Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim is realized through continuous training and development designed to create competent and professional teaching and administrative personnel.

The human resource components of the institution include all individuals involved in the educational process, such as the head of the madrasah, teachers, administrative staff, foundation members, supervisors, and educational consultants. This demonstrates that Pondok Pesantren Imam

Muslim views every individual within the institution as an integral part of its educational system. Furthermore, the main goal of HRM at this pesantren is to improve the quality of teachers and staff while supporting the institution's overall vision and mission. Additionally, HRM practices are directed toward ensuring staff welfare and creating an effective institutional management system.

The madrasah head plays a pivotal role in implementing HRM. He consistently provides encouragement and motivation to teachers and staff to continuously improve their competencies, including by attending training programs or pursuing higher education. However, financial constraints often pose significant challenges to these professional development initiatives. Some staff members acknowledged that expenses for training or further education are still covered personally rather than being funded by the school.

In practice, six main aspects of HRM are implemented at Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim: (1) planning, (2) recruitment, (3) selection, (4) training and development, (5) performance evaluation, and (6) integration. The planning stage begins with assessing the need for additional teaching staff in response to the increasing student population. Once the proposal is approved by the foundation, recruitment and selection are carried out through interviews that emphasize both professional qualifications and personal dedication to the institution's vision and values. Subsequent stages involve capacity-building initiatives, including workshops and continuous professional development programs, followed by annual performance evaluations conducted by the head of the *madrasah*. Finally, the integration process focuses on sustaining motivation, strengthening interpersonal relationships, and fostering effective collaboration between the institution and its academic and administrative staff.

The role of the *madrasah* head serves as a central pillar in the implementation of HRM at the pesantren. Based on interview data, the madrasah head not only manages institutional operations but also acts as a motivator and mentor, guiding teachers and staff to perform their duties with professionalism and integrity. The chairman of the foundation affirmed this perspective, noting that the madrasah head occupies a strategic position as the primary leader, initiator, and catalyst for enhancing the overall quality of human resources within the institution.

Overall, the findings indicate that HRM practices at Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim encompass all essential components of educational administration and contribute positively to teacher performance and institutional development. For instance, the implementation of structured training programs has reportedly improved pedagogical competence and classroom management skills, while systematic evaluations have encouraged accountability and continuous improvement. Although financial limitations remain a persistent challenge, the pesantren demonstrates that well-coordinated HRM practices can enhance both staff performance and educational outcomes, aligning institutional growth with the broader goals of modern Islamic education.

The Quality of Educators and Educational Staff

The quality of human resources required in the modern era cannot be developed instantly; rather, it must be cultivated through a long-term process that involves systematic educational planning and management. Educational programs must be designed to prepare and develop human resources capable of adapting to rapid social changes. In other words, high-quality human resources require effective management to ensure that every stage of their development aligns with institutional goals. In the context of education, this responsibility lies primarily with educators and educational staff.

Based on an interview with the head of madrasah at Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim, it was explained that educators and educational staff have a primary responsibility to teach and nurture students with a focus on moral formation (akhlak) and cognitive development. Similarly, one of the teachers emphasized that high-quality educators and staff are those who carry out their duties responsibly, uphold their trust, and continuously enhance their knowledge and skills for the advancement of the institution. A similar view was expressed by one of the administrative staff, who highlighted the importance of responsibility, trustworthiness, and self-development in supporting the growth of the madrasah. Furthermore, the chairman of the Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim Foundation stated that educators hold dual roles while educational staff must perform their administrative and technical duties diligently and responsibly. From these perspectives, it can be concluded that educators play a key role in guiding students' moral and cognitive development, while educational staff provide essential administrative and technical support for the educational process.

The interview results further indicate that qualified educators and educational staff are those who are innovative, creative, and able to continuously develop new approaches in carrying out their professional responsibilities. The madrasah head stressed that competent educators and staff must be able to adapt to contemporary needs and challenges. This was reinforced by the opinions of several teachers and staff members, who stated that a person's quality is reflected in their sense of responsibility, professionalism, and capacity to expand their knowledge and skills for the institution's benefit. The chairman of the foundation added that the indicators of quality among educators and staff are measured by their fulfillment of the academic standards and qualifications established by the institution.

In general, the academic qualifications of educators at Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim already meet the minimum requirement of a bachelor's degree (S1). However, there remain challenges concerning the alignment between the educators' fields of expertise and the subjects they teach. The madrasah head acknowledged that although all teachers possess at least a bachelor's degree, some are not teaching in their specific area of study due to limited human resources and the relatively small size of the madrasah. This issue

was confirmed by several educators and staff, who admitted that there are still mismatches between educational backgrounds and teaching assignments, for example, an industrial engineering graduate teaching Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and crafts, or an economics graduate teaching social studies. The foundation's chairman also affirmed that the institution still requires additional educators and staff whose qualifications are more aligned with their respective teaching fields.

In enhancing the quality of educators and staff, both the *madrasah* head and the foundation play pivotal roles through structured performance assessments and evaluations. Based on interview data, the madrasah head is responsible for evaluating teachers and administrative staff, while his own performance is reviewed by an external supervisor appointed by the foundation. These evaluations are conducted periodically to measure the extent to which educational programs and institutional activities have achieved their intended goals. The foundation's chairman confirmed that the evaluation process is carried out collaboratively between the foundation and the madrasah leadership to ensure transparency and accountability.

Beyond procedural aspects, the evaluation system has a significant influence on teacher motivation and institutional improvement. Teachers reported that regular feedback sessions encourage self-reflection and foster a sense of professional responsibility, motivating them to enhance classroom performance and pedagogical innovation. Furthermore, the use of structured assessment tools helps ensure that evaluations are conducted objectively and based on measurable criteria. Consequently, this systematic approach not only supports the professional growth of educators but also contributes to the continuous improvement of educational quality and institutional governance at Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim.

Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim currently employs educators and staff who meet the minimum academic qualification of a bachelor's degree (S1), with some already pursuing or holding a master's degree (S2). Nevertheless, challenges remain in ensuring the relevance between academic backgrounds and assigned subjects, as well as in addressing the limited number of personnel. Performance evaluations are routinely conducted by the madrasah head and the foundation to ensure continuous improvement in human resource quality. Despite existing constraints, the institution remains committed to enhancing the competence of its educators and staff to meet the demands of professionalism in the modern educational era.

Human Resource Management in Improving the Quality of Educators and Education Personnel

HRM in educational institutions plays a crucial role in enhancing the quality of educators and education personnel. One form of its implementation is through regular training and development programs conducted either by the institution itself or by relevant educational authorities. Based on an interview

with the Head of Madrasah at Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim, training for educators and education staff is considered a mandatory agenda that must be followed periodically. According to him, training is essential to broaden perspectives, enrich experience, and deepen the knowledge of both educators and education personnel. Consequently, the outcomes of such training can be applied to the teaching process and institutional management. He also added that the head of the madrasah personally participates in Kelompok Kerja Madrasah (KKM) training every three months as part of ongoing quality improvement efforts.

A similar view was expressed by educators at Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim, who explained that the training programs they attended were organized by various institutions, including the Department of Education, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, KKM (Madrasah Working Group), and MGMP (Subject Teacher Forum). The training schedule is flexible and adjusted according to the organizing institutions' timelines. The education staff emphasized that training activities are designed based on the needs of the madrasah and the relevance of the materials being taught. Training is considered highly beneficial as it contributes significantly to achieving the vision, mission, and goals of the educational institution. The Chairman of the Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim Foundation also affirmed that training is conducted regularly, although the schedule may vary depending on the institution's conditions and needs. From these findings, it can be concluded that human resource training and development activities at Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim are conducted periodically, with flexible scheduling tailored to institutional demands and competency enhancement needs of educators and education personnel.

In carrying out their duties, educators at Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim serve not only as instructors but also as mentors and role models for students. The head of the madrasah stated that all educators have fulfilled their responsibilities well through teaching, character building, and providing positive examples. Educators also reported that religious habituation activities are an integral part of the educational process, including *kajian kitab kuning* (classical text study), *istighosah* (collective prayer), *shalat tasbeih*, and weekly *khataman Al-Qur'an* (Qur'an completion). This was reinforced by education personnel who noted that such religious activities serve as a means of moral and spiritual development for students. The foundation's chairman added that although the institution is relatively small, it possesses a strong determination to produce graduates who are not only knowledgeable but also virtuous and beneficial to society through regularly organized religious activities. Students also confirmed that teachers teach with enthusiasm, maintain friendly attitudes, and serve as good role models in daily conduct. From these perspectives, it can be concluded that educators at Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim actively engage in nurturing and shaping students' character through consistent moral and religious habituation practices.

In addition to educators, education personnel also play an essential role in supporting the success of the educational process by providing friendly, quick, and efficient services to students. The head of the madrasah noted that education staff consistently strive to deliver excellent service, both in administrative matters and in assisting students with other needs. This statement was supported by educators and education staff, who explained that they diligently assist students in managing data and documents, even when faced with challenges such as incomplete submissions. The foundation's chairman also emphasized that effective education personnel are those who can serve with courtesy, patience, and exemplary behavior. Likewise, students acknowledged that administrative staff and education personnel at the *madrasah* are friendly and always ready to assist when needed. From these findings, it can be inferred that the education personnel of Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim have demonstrated commendable service and polite behavior in supporting the smooth implementation of educational activities.

Based on observations, the head of the madrasah plays a strategic role in motivating and supporting all human resources within Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim. The head regularly conducts evaluations and performance assessments every semester to ensure continuous improvement in the quality of educators and education staff. Moreover, in implementing HRM, both supporting and inhibiting factors have been identified that influence the achievement of institutional goals.

The main supporting factor is the harmonious relationship among the head of the madrasah, educators, and education staff, characterized by openness, cooperation, and mutual assistance in achieving the institution's vision, mission, and objectives. Moral support and motivation from the leadership also play a vital role in fostering work enthusiasm and professionalism. Meanwhile, the inhibiting factors include limited facilities and infrastructure, insufficient numbers of educators and education personnel, and financial constraints that hinder the optimal execution of educational programs.

Findings

The findings of this study indicate that HRM practices at Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim reflect a conscious institutional effort to promote teacher and staff development through periodic training, mentoring, and motivational leadership. Although such training programs are not held monthly, their implementation at least twice per semester demonstrates the institution's awareness of the need for professional growth. However, the programs remain sporadic and have yet to form part of a sustainable, systematized HRM framework. This observation is consistent with Hynds' assertion that effective professional learning depends on continuity, contextualization, and post-training reflection, as isolated training sessions rarely yield enduring changes in teacher

practice.⁷ The case of Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim thus emphasizes the need to institutionalize continuous, reflective, and collaborative professional development programs that align with the institution's broader educational mission.

Leadership emerged as a critical factor in shaping HRM effectiveness within the pesantren. The school principal performs multiple roles, not only as an administrator but also as a motivator, facilitator, and moral exemplar (*uswah hasanah*). This finding aligns with McTigue's research, which demonstrates that school leadership significantly influences teacher engagement, motivation, and the transfer of professional learning into classroom practices.⁸ In Islamic educational contexts, leadership transcends managerial dimensions and embodies spiritual and ethical responsibilities. The Kyai or school leader holds moral authority, guiding both teachers and students through example. This dual role underscores the integration of ethical, spiritual, and managerial elements within HRM, reflecting the Islamic concept of leadership as an *amanah* (trust) that demands both accountability and compassion.

Despite commendable efforts, HRM at Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim still faces challenges, particularly regarding financial constraints and the mismatch between teachers' qualifications and their teaching assignments. The study found that limited funding restricts the frequency of professional training and the institution's ability to recruit subject-qualified teachers. Similar challenges have been identified by Tran, who argues that financial barriers and human capital shortages remain persistent obstacles in educational HRM, particularly in developing contexts.⁹ Tran proposes that competency-based recruitment, performance-linked incentives, and partnerships with external institutions can mitigate such limitations. For Islamic boarding schools, these strategies could provide practical solutions while maintaining their distinct spiritual and cultural identity.

Another critical issue concerns the alignment between teacher qualifications and subject assignments. The findings indicate that several teachers are assigned to teach subjects outside their specific academic expertise, a practice that undermines instructional quality and pedagogical coherence. This misalignment can lead to superficial content delivery, reduced student engagement, and inconsistent learning outcomes, as teachers may lack the disciplinary depth necessary to integrate theory and practice effectively. Such a

⁷ Anne S. Hynds et al., "The Impact of Teacher Professional Development to Reposition Pedagogy for Indigenous Students in Mainstream Schools," *The Teacher Educator* 51, no. 3 (July 2, 2016): 230–49, <https://doi.org/10.1080/08878730.2016.1176829>.

⁸ Erin M. McTigue et al., "The Role of School Leader Support on Teacher's Engagement during Intervention Implementation," *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, May 30, 2024, 1–19, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603124.2024.2358038>.

⁹ Henry Tran, "Revolutionizing School HR Strategies and Practices to Reflect Talent Centered Education Leadership," *Leadership and Policy in Schools* 21, no. 2 (April 3, 2022): 238–52, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15700763.2020.1757725>.

pattern also risks diminishing institutional performance by lowering academic standards and weakening the culture of professional competence. This observation aligns with Vekeman's study, which emphasizes that qualification alignment is a key determinant of institutional effectiveness, shaping both student achievement and staff morale.¹⁰ Therefore, a structured HRM framework is essential for ensuring that teaching assignments correspond to teachers' professional expertise and that instructional performance supports the broader goals of Islamic education.

The HRM practices observed at Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim reflect a developing yet committed approach to staff capacity building that integrates professional training, moral and character formation, and supportive administrative oversight. Although the pesantren periodically organizes training programs and workshops these initiatives tend to be conducted on an ad hoc basis without consistent follow-up or institutionalized planning. As a result, professional development activities risk becoming episodic rather than transformative, offering short-term skill enhancement without sustained pedagogical impact. Several teachers noted that while such training sessions were beneficial in introducing new teaching methods, the absence of systematic monitoring and post-training evaluation limited their long-term effectiveness. To achieve meaningful and continuous improvement, the pesantren would benefit from embedding these training efforts within a formal HRM policy framework that ensures continuity, accountability, and measurable outcomes in teacher professional growth.

Contemporary research on teacher professional learning argues that sustained, practice-embedded is far more likely to change classroom practice than one-off workshops, a point underscored in recent syntheses of professional learning.¹¹ The pesantren's emphasis on teachers as moral exemplars and on routine religious practices (e.g., weekly khataman, istighosah) signals a holistic conception of educator identity in which pedagogical competence and spiritual leadership are intertwined; scholarship on professional learning in practice stresses that such contextual and identity-based dimensions must be integrated into design for maximum relevance and uptake.¹² Moreover, leadership and administrative support at the pesantren mirror findings that distributed and

¹⁰ Eva Vekeman, Melissa Tuytens, and Geert Devos, "Differences in Teachers' Perception of Job Demands and Resources Related to Well-Being According to Schools' Strategic Human Resource Management?," *Educational Studies* 51, no. 5 (September 3, 2025): 781–804, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03055698.2024.2369852>.

¹¹ Ken Jones and Jim O'Brien, "From INSET to Professional Learning: 50 Years of Change as Seen through the Pages of Professional Development in Education," *Professional Development in Education* 50, no. 1 (January 2, 2024): 1–10, <https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2024.2296231>.

¹² Xi Ling et al., "The Application of Distributed Leadership in Middle School Classroom," *Frontiers in Education* 8 (July 3, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2023.1200792>.

talent-focused leadership contribute significantly to teacher motivation and the institutionalisation of learning systems.¹³

Nonetheless, structural constraints persist: limited funding, occasional misalignment between teachers' formal qualifications and assigned subjects, and variable scheduling of activities undermine long-term HRM effectiveness. To address these gaps, recent HRM scholarship recommends a strategic approach that links competency-based recruitment and placement, continuous professional learning communities, and leadership practices that prioritise resourcing and monitoring of staff development.

Conclusion

HRM at Pondok Pesantren Imam Muslim demonstrates progress in professional development and leadership motivation but still requires greater institutionalization, funding support, and qualification alignment. A strategic, value-oriented HRM framework, grounded in Islamic ethics and modern management principles could enhance both organizational performance and the spiritual integrity of Islamic educational institutions. By balancing professionalism with moral leadership, The pesantren can strengthen their role as centers for both intellectual and character development.

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¹³ Petri Salo, Susanne Francisco, and Anette Olin Almqvist, "Understanding Professional Learning in and for Practice," *Professional Development in Education* 50, no. 3 (May 3, 2024): 444–59, <https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2024.2311108>.

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