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Spiritual Leadership in the Sufi Tradition of Islamic Boarding Schools: An Anthropological Perspective on Islamic Educational Management

[*]Norma Fitria[1], Ani Apiyani[2], Nurkholis[3]
[12]Universitas Islam Lampung, Indonesia
[3]Universitas Islam Negeri Jurai Siwo Lampung
Corresponding author:[*] normafitriapramuji@gmail.com

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the practice of spiritual leadership within the Sufi tradition at Bustanul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Central Lampung, through the perspective of Islamic educational anthropology. The study employed a qualitative ethnographic approach. Data were collected through participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation involving kyai, teachers, administrators, and students. The findings reveal that spiritual leadership in the pesantren is constructed through the kyai's spiritual authority, the internalization of Sufi values, spiritual relationships between kyai and students, and spiritual riyadhah practices that shape the organizational culture of the pesantren. Values such as sincerity (ikhlas), devotion (khidmah), respect (ta'dzim), and simplicity (zuhud) become the primary foundation of Islamic educational management within the institution. The study also finds that educational modernization poses challenges to the sustainability of pesantren spiritual culture; however, the Sufi tradition remains the core spirit of leadership and institutional management. The novelty of this research lies in the formulation of the Sufi-Based Spiritual Leadership model, which integrates Sufi spirituality, pesantren culture, and Islamic educational management into a new theoretical framework.

Keywords: Spiritual Leadership, Sufism, Islamic Boarding School, Educational Anthropology

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis praktik spiritual leadership dalam tradisi tasawuf pesantren di Pondok Pesantren Bustanul Ulum Lampung Tengah melalui perspektif antropologi pendidikan Islam. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis etnografi. Data diperoleh melalui observasi partisipatif, wawancara mendalam, dan dokumentasi terhadap kyai, ustadz, pengurus, dan santri pesantren. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa spiritual leadership di pesantren dibangun melalui otoritas spiritual kyai, internalisasi nilai-nilai tasawuf, relasi spiritual antara kyai dan santri, serta praktik riyadhah spiritual yang membentuk budaya organisasi pesantren. Nilai-nilai seperti ikhlas, khidmah, ta'dzim, dan zuhud menjadi fondasi utama dalam sistem manajemen pendidikan Islam di pesantren. Penelitian juga menemukan bahwa modernisasi pendidikan menghadirkan tantangan terhadap keberlangsungan budaya spiritual pesantren, namun tradisi tasawuf tetap menjadi ruh utama kepemimpinan dan pengelolaan lembaga. Novelty penelitian ini adalah terbentuknya model Sufi-Based Spiritual Leadership yang mengintegrasikan spiritualitas tasawuf, budaya pesantren, dan manajemen pendidikan Islam dalam satu konstruksi teoretik baru.

Kata Kunci: Spiritual Leadership, Tasawuf, Pesantren, Antropologi Pendidikan Islam

Introduction

The development of Islamic educational institutions today faces increasingly complex challenges along with the rapid social, cultural, and technological changes. Pesantren as one of the oldest Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia no longer only deals with the problem of religious knowledge transfer, but is also required to be able to build a leadership system that is adaptive, humanist, and still rooted in Islamic spiritual values. In the context of modern management, leadership is understood as the ability to influence individuals or groups to achieve organizational goals effectively and efficiently.[1] However, the modern leadership paradigm that tends to emphasize aspects of rationality, productivity, and administrative orientation is often considered not able to answer the inner needs of human beings in educational

[1] Anthony K. Isabirye, Kholeka Constance Moloi, and Ramoshweu Solomon Lebelo, "Examining the Role of Managerial Assertiveness and Self-Confidence in Enhancing Employees' Loyalty and Productivity: A Theoretical Perspective," *Edelweiss Applied Science and Technology* 9, no. 3 (March 14, 2025): 1159–74, https://doi.org/10.55214/25768484.v9i3.5444.

organizations.[2] Louis W. Fry through the theory of Spiritual Leadership explained that spiritual leadership is a leadership model built on the basis of vision values, altruistic love, and hope/faith that aims to create spiritual well-being for the organization's members.[3] From the perspective of Islamic education, the concept has a strong relevance to the tradition of Islamic boarding schools which from the beginning placed the spiritual dimension as the main foundation in building leadership relationships. Therefore, the study of spiritual leadership in the Sufism tradition of Islamic boarding schools is important to understand how spiritual values not only function as individual ethics, but also become a managerial system that shapes the culture of Islamic educational organizations.

In the tradition of pesantren, the leadership of a kyai is not solely born from structural legitimacy, but is built through moral authority, spiritual depth, and social recognition that grows culturally in the midst of the pesantren community. This kind of leadership pattern has a very close relationship with the Islamic Sufism tradition which emphasizes purification of the soul (tazkiyatun nafs), control of lust, sincerity, simplicity, and closeness to Allah SWT.[4] Al-Ghazali in his concept of Sufism places the development of the heart as the core of all activities of human life, including in leadership practice.[5] A leader must not only have intellectual intelligence and administrative abilities, but also have deep cleanliness of heart, moral exemplarity, and deep spiritual awareness. These Sufism values then live in the culture of Islamic boarding schools through the tradition of solemnity, tawadhu', manners to teachers, spiritual riyadhah, and respect for scientific sanad.[6] In this context, spiritual leadership in pesantren is not only understood as an organizational leadership technique, but as a process of forming a collective spiritual culture that is inherited from generation to generation. Thus, sufistic leadership in Islamic boarding schools is actually a synthesis of scientific authority, spiritual power,

[2] Aulia Riski, Abdin Chande, and Adriantoni, "Implementation of a Digital Leadership Model in Improving the Quality of Islamic Boarding Schools," *Munaddhomah: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 5, no. 2 (March 16, 2024): 185–94, https://doi.org/10.31538/munaddhomah.v5i2.566.

[3] Louis W. Fry et al., "Spiritual Leadership as a Model for Performance Excellence: A Study of Baldrige Award Recipients," *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion* 14, no. 1 (January 2, 2017): 22–47, https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2016.1202130.

[4] Sabri B. Awang, "Hallucination Disorders: The Effects of Using the Tazkiyatun Nafs Module on the Academic Achievement of Students with Hallucinations," *European Journal of Education and Pedagogy* 3, no. 4 (July 30, 2022): 41–51, https://doi.org/10.24018/ejedu.2022.3.4.422.

[5] Abd. Aziz, "Filsafat Dan Agama; Sebuah Kajian Kompromis-Analitis," *HUMANISTIKA : Jurnal Keislaman* 4, no. 2 (June 1, 2018): 107–28, https://doi.org/10.36835/humanistika.v4i2.33.

[6] Zulfiana Herni, Junaidi, and Ernaka Heri Putra Suharyanto, "SUFISTIC APPROACH IN ISLAMIC EDUCATION," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 11, no. 2 (November 12, 2021): 48–60, https://doi.org/10.38073/jpi.v11i2.618.

and cultural legitimacy that form the distinctive character of traditional Islamic education in Indonesia.

The study of spiritual leadership has been more developed in the realm of modern organizations, especially in companies and formal institutions, while the discussion in the context of pesantren is still relatively limited. Even though pesantren have a unique social and cultural organizational system because it is built on emotional and spiritual relationships between kyai, students, and the community. Max Weber in the theory of charismatic leadership explained that the legitimacy of a leader can be born from personal qualities that are considered to have extraordinary power by his followers.[7] In the context of Islamic boarding schools, kyai's charisma comes not only from his intellectual abilities, but also from his spiritual reputation, life example, and depth of religious practice.[8] This charisma then gave birth to moral obedience and social loyalty that were very strong in the pesantren environment. However, in contrast to charismatic leadership in general which tends to be personalistic, leadership in the Sufism tradition of Islamic boarding schools is actually built on the principles of service, devotion, and spiritual responsibility to the people. The study of spiritual leadership in the Sufism tradition of Islamic boarding schools is interesting because it shows the integration between the concept of charismatic leadership, sufistic spirituality, and the distinctive culture of Islamic educational organizations.

From the perspective of Islamic educational anthropology, pesantren can be understood as a cultural space that forms a system of symbols, values, and social practices that are inherited collectively from generation to generation. Clifford Geertz views religion not just as a system of beliefs, but also as a system of symbols that shape the way humans understand social reality and their lives.[9] In the context of Islamic boarding schools, the Sufism tradition gives birth to cultural symbols that influence the pattern of social interaction and the construction of spiritual leadership in the Islamic educational environment. Dhikr rituals, manaqib readings, tirakat traditions, respect for kyai, and adab communication patterns are part of the cultural symbols that form the social habitus of pesantren.[10] Pierre Bourdieu referred to habitus as a system of

[7] Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization* (New York: The Free Press, 1947).

[8] Nur Hidayati and Mamlukhah, "GAYA KEPEMIMPINAN KHARISMATIK KIAI DALAM MENGEMBANGKAN PONDOK PESANTREN AL-ISLAMI SUMBERMULYO PESANGGARAN BANYUWANGI," *Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam Darussalam* 5, no. 2 (October 11, 2023): 155–71, https://doi.org/10.30739/jmpid.v5i2.2553.

[9] Wensdy Tindaon, "REVITALISASI IDENTITAS AGAMA LOKAL UGAMO MALIM DALAM KEHIDUPAN MODERNITAS," *Studia Philosophica et Theologica* 18, no. 2 (December 7, 2019): 198–218, https://doi.org/10.35312/spet.v18i2.31.

[10] Masmuni Mahatma and Zarrina Saari, "Embodied Religious Belief: The Experience of Syahadatain Sufi Order in Indonesia," *Wawasan: Jurnal Ilmiah Agama Dan Sosial Budaya* 6, no. 1 (August 21, 2021): 87–100, https://doi.org/10.15575/jw.v6i1.13462.

dispositions that shape individual mindsets and actions in social life.[11] This spiritual habitus of pesantren then gave birth to a leadership model that is not only oriented to organizational effectiveness, but also to the formation of spiritual awareness and collective morality. Thus, spiritual leadership in the Sufism tradition of pesantren cannot be understood only as a theoretical concept of management, but as a cultural practice that lives in the daily life of the pesantren community and continues to be reproduced through the tradition of Islamic education.

In the midst of the current modernization of Islamic education, Islamic boarding schools face a major challenge in the form of a change in institutional orientation towards a more professional, competitive, and technology-based system. The modernization does have a positive impact on strengthening the governance of Islamic educational institutions, but on the other hand it also has the potential to shift the spiritual dimension that has been the main spirit of Islamic boarding schools. Not a few Islamic educational institutions have begun to experience an exemplary crisis, a weakening of the solemn culture, and a decline in emotional relations between leaders and members of the institution due to the dominance of administrative and bureaucratic approaches. In such a situation, the concept of spiritual leadership based on the Sufism tradition of Islamic boarding schools becomes very relevant as an alternative to the leadership model of contemporary Islamic education. Peter Senge in the theory of learning organization emphasizes the importance of building a common vision and collective awareness in the organization in order to create the sustainability of institutional values and culture.[12] In the context of Islamic boarding schools, the collective vision is not only built through the formal organizational system, but also through the internalization of spiritual values that live in the Sufism tradition. Therefore, research on spiritual leadership in the Sufism tradition of Islamic boarding schools is important to explain how spiritual values persist, transform, and function as the foundation of Islamic educational leadership in the midst of modern social changes.

This research uses a qualitative approach with the type of ethnographic research because the research seeks to understand in depth the practice of spiritual leadership in the Sufism tradition of pesantren as a social and cultural reality that lives in the Islamic educational environment. The ethnographic approach was chosen because the research focuses not only on the formal aspects of leadership, but also on the meanings, symbols, values, traditions, and daily practices that make up the spiritual culture of the Islamic boarding school. From the perspective of Islamic educational anthropology, pesantren is

[11] Wisnu Pudji Pawestri and Siti Kholifah, "Fashion: Akumulasi Modal Dan Habituasi Pada Praktik Dakwah Komunitas Hijrah," *Religious: Jurnal Studi Agama-Agama Dan Lintas Budaya* 4, no. 3 (October 30, 2020): 145–60, https://doi.org/10.15575/rjsalb.v4i3.9814.

[12] Peter Senge, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization* (New York: Doubleday, 1990).

understood as a cultural community that has a distinctive value system and social interaction patterns, so it is necessary for the direct involvement of researchers in the social life of pesantren to gain a holistic understanding of the phenomenon of sufistic leadership. The research was conducted in the Bustanul Ulum Islamic boarding school environment in Central Lampung which has a strong Sufism tradition, both through the practice of religious rituals, the tradition of recitation of the book of Sufism, and the pattern of spiritual relationships between kyai and students. The source of research data consists of primary data and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through participatory observation, in-depth interviews with kyai, ustadz, students, and pesantren administrators, as well as documentation of various educational activities and spiritual rituals in Islamic boarding schools. Meanwhile, secondary data were obtained from Sufism books, Islamic boarding school archives, scientific journals, and various literature relevant to the study of spiritual leadership, Sufism, anthropology, and Islamic education management.

The data analysis technique in this study uses the Miles and Huberman interactive analysis model which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing continuously during the research process. The data obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation were analyzed interpretively to find patterns of meaning related to spiritual leadership practices in the Sufism tradition of Islamic boarding schools. This research also uses Clifford Geertz's interpretive anthropological approach to understand the cultural symbols and spiritual practices that live in the pesantren environment as part of the construction of Sufistic leadership. With this approach, the research not only describes leadership practices formally, but also interprets spiritual values, solemn culture, kyai-santri relations, riyadhah traditions, and various other symbolic practices that shape the legitimacy of leadership in Islamic boarding schools. To maintain the validity of the data, the research uses source triangulation techniques, method triangulation, and member checking to research informants so that the interpretation of the data remains in accordance with the social realities that develop in the pesantren environment. Thus, this research is expected to be able to produce a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between Sufism, pesantren culture, and spiritual leadership practices in the context of contemporary Islamic education management.

Discussion

The Construction of Spiritual Leadership in the Sufism Tradition of Islamic Boarding Schools

The results of the study show that the construction of spiritual leadership in the Sufism tradition of Islamic boarding schools is built through the spiritual authority of kyai which is born from moral example, depth of religious knowledge, and consistency in carrying out spiritual practices. Based on the results of the researcher's observations, the life of kyai in the pesantren does not show a formal leadership pattern that is distant from the students, but rather

displays very close emotional and spiritual relationships. Kyai is not only present in formal teaching activities, but also directly involved in the daily activities of the pesantren such as leading night dhikr, attending wirid assemblies, accompanying students in worship activities, and participating in meals with students in a simple atmosphere. The researcher observed that this simple lifestyle is a source of very strong moral legitimacy in the eyes of students and the pesantren community. On several occasions, the students seemed to show high respect for the kyai not because of the formal power structure, but because they viewed the kyai as a figure who had spiritual depth and the blessing of life. This situation shows that leadership in Islamic boarding schools is built more through a spiritual exemplary approach than a mere administrative control mechanism.

This was strengthened by the results of an interview with one of the senior students who stated that the students' obedience to the kyai was born from spiritual beliefs and deep respect for the morals and simple life of the kyai. The informant explained: "We obeyed not because we were afraid of being punished, but because we saw firsthand how he lived. Kyai always wakes up at night, participates in cleaning the mosque, and never distinguishes himself from the students. From there we learned about sincerity and manners." The statement shows that the practice of spiritual leadership in pesantren is formed through the process of internalizing Sufism values in daily life. Kyai not only functions as the leader of educational organizations, but also as a spiritual murabbi who guides the spiritual life of students. In the perspective of Spiritual Leadership theory, these findings show that there is an element of altruistic love that is reflected through care, example, and emotional connection between leaders and members of the organization.[13] In addition, the leadership pattern also shows the character of charismatic leadership as explained by Max Weber, where the legitimacy of leadership is born from personal qualities that are seen as having moral and spiritual strength by their followers. However, the charisma of kyai in pesantren is not built through the image of power, but through consistent spiritual practices and social service that is constantly carried out in the pesantren environment.

In addition, the results of observations also show that the spiritual culture of pesantren indirectly forms a collective leadership pattern that is loaded with Sufism values. In various pesantren activities, important decisions are often preceded by spiritual rituals such as istikharah, dhikr together, and deliberations led directly by the kyai. The researcher found that the decision-making process in Islamic boarding schools does not only consider rational and administrative aspects, but also considers the dimensions of blessings, the

[13] Louis W. Fry and Melanie P. Cohen, "Spiritual Leadership as a Paradigm for Organizational Transformation and Recovery from Extended Work Hours Cultures," *Journal of Business Ethics* 84, no. S2 (January 27, 2009): 265–78, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-008-9695-2.

benefit of the ummah, and Islamic moral values. One of the administrators of the pesantren explained: "In the pesantren, the decision is not only a matter of profit and loss or slowness, but whether the decision brings blessings or not. Usually the kyai will ask us to pray more before making a big decision."

These findings show that spiritual leadership in the Islamic boarding school Sufism tradition has a transcendental character that distinguishes it from the modern organizational leadership model. Leadership is not only directed to achieve the effectiveness of the institution, but also aims to maintain spiritual values and social harmony in the pesantren community.[14] The construction of spiritual leadership in pesantren can be understood as a combination of spiritual authority, sufistic culture, and Islamic education management practices that are oriented towards the formation of collective morality.

Values of Sufism as the Cultural Foundation of Islamic Boarding School Organizations

The results of the study show that the values of Sufism are the main foundation in the formation of the organizational culture of the Islamic boarding school. Based on the results of observations, social life in pesantren is built on spiritual values such as sincerity (ikhlas), devotion (khidmah), simplicity (zuhud), respect for teachers (ta'dzim), and spiritual discipline which is manifested in the daily activities of students and pesantren administrators. The researcher observed that the culture is not only taught through lectures or the recitation of the book of Sufism, but is directly internalized through the practice of daily life in the pesantren environment. The tradition of kissing the hand of kyai, maintaining manners when talking to teachers, getting used to dhikr together, carrying out sunnah fasting, and the habit of helping Islamic boarding school work selflessly are part of the process of forming a Sufism-based organizational culture. Even in administrative activities, spiritual values remain the main foundation in social relations between pesantren residents. This situation shows that the pesantren culture is not built on the basis of formal rules alone, but rather rests more on the moral and spiritual awareness that lives in the collective tradition of the pesantren.

The results of the interview with one of the senior ustadz show that the culture of solemnity is one of the most important values in the formation of the character of the students and the organizational system of the Islamic boarding school. The informant said: "In Islamic boarding schools, students are taught that knowledge is not enough to be learned, but must be accompanied by devotion. Therefore, students are used to helping without being told, cleaning the environment, serving guests, and even helping the needs of kyai sincerely." The statement shows that the value of Sufism is not only understood as an individual ritual practice, but also as a social mechanism in building

[14] Kamilia Hamidah and Arif Chasannudin, "Mechanization of Islamic Moderation Da'wah in the Nahdlatul Ulama Pesantren Tradition," *Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah* 41, no. 1 (June 30, 2021): 15–29, https://doi.org/10.21580/jid.v41.1.7134.

organizational solidarity and loyalty. The researchers also found that social relationships between members of the pesantren took place in a relatively egalitarian and respectful atmosphere. Despite a clear leadership structure, the pattern of daily interaction indicates a strong culture of collectivity. In the perspective of Pierre Bourdieu's anthropology, this condition can be understood as a form of spiritual habitus formed through social practices that are carried out continuously in the life of the pesantren.[15] This habitus then gives birth to a pattern of collective behavior that makes the value of Sufism the main guideline in acting and interacting socially.[16] In addition, the results of observations show that Sufism values also function as an effective social control system in maintaining the discipline and cultural stability of pesantren organizations.

Researchers found that violations of the rules in Islamic boarding schools are rarely resolved through harsh formal punishment, but are more often done through spiritual approaches and moral coaching. One of the administrators of the pesantren explained: "If there are students who violate the rules, they are usually not immediately punished severely. They are talked to, given advice, sometimes asked to participate in dhikr or help with certain activities so that they are more aware." These findings show that the organizational culture of the pesantren emphasizes inner awareness more than structural pressure. Spiritual symbols such as dhikr, adab, and collective rituals function to form a system of meaning that directs the social behavior of the pesantren community.[17] Therefore, the values of Sufism in the culture of Islamic boarding school organizations not only function as religious identities, but also as an instrument of social management that forms the loyalty, discipline, and harmony of the Islamic educational community.

Kyai and Santri Relations as Spiritual and Cultural Relations

The results of the study show that the relationship between kyai and santri in the Sufism tradition of pesantren is not only pedagogical, but also a spiritual and cultural relationship that forms the social structure of pesantren life. Based on the results of observations, the interaction between kyai and santri took place in an atmosphere full of respect, emotional closeness, and very strong adab values. The researcher found that students do not view kyai only as a teacher of religious science, but as a spiritual figure who is believed to have the blessings of life (barakah), moral example, and spiritual depth. This can be seen

[15] Pawestri and Kholifah, "Fashion: Akumulasi Modal Dan Habituasi Pada Praktik Dakwah Komunitas Hijrah."

[16] Fransiskus Markus Pereto Keraf and Kokom Komalasari, "HABITUASI UNTUK MENGUATKAN KARAKTER NASIONALISME PESERTA DIDIK WILAYAH PERBATASAN PADA ABAD 21," *Jurnal Pendidikan Karakter* 9, no. 2 (November 4, 2019), https://doi.org/10.21831/jpk.v9i2.25627.

[17] M. Lutfi Mustofa, M. Fauzan Zenrif, and Ahmad Barizi, "Towards an Islamic Ecotheology: Indonesian Muslim Organizations in Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Efforts," *Problemy Ekorozwoju* 20, no. 2 (July 1, 2025): 21–31, https://doi.org/10.35784/preko.7089.

in various daily activities of students such as bowing when walking in front of the kyai, kissing hands after the study, maintaining the intonation of the voice when speaking, and showing readiness to help the needs of the kyai without being directly commanded. This pattern of interaction shows the existence of a cultural construction that places the relationship between kyai and santri as a relationship that is not only formal-organizational, but also loaded with spiritual and symbolic meanings.[18] Respect for kyai is understood not as a form of educational feudalism, but as part of the adab in the Islamic scientific tradition that is inherited from generation to generation in the pesantren environment.[19]

The results of interviews with several students show that their loyalty to kyai is more built on the basis of emotional bonds and spiritual beliefs than formal institutional rules. One of the senior students said: "We feel close to the kyai not because he is often given orders, but because he always prays for us, pays attention to the condition of the students, and even memorizes the names of the students who are sick. That's what makes us respect and feel an inner bond." The statement shows that kyai leadership in pesantren runs through a paternalistic-spiritual approach that emphasizes compassion, care, and life examples. The researchers also found that these relationships gave birth to a unique pattern of obedience in the pesantren environment. Students obey the rules not solely because they are afraid of sanctions, but because of moral awareness and embarrassment if they disappoint the kyai. From the perspective of emotional bonding theory, strong emotional connections between leaders and members of an organization can increase social loyalty and collective discipline more effectively than formal structural control. In addition, from the perspective of Sufism, the relationship between the kyai and the students also resembles the relationship between murshid and students in the tradition of the tarekat, where the educational process is not only oriented to the transfer of knowledge, but also to the formation of spirituality and purification of the soul.

Furthermore, the results of observations show that the spiritual relationship between kyai and santri also shapes the cultural structure of the pesantren organization as a whole. In various pesantren activities, kyai becomes a symbolic center that unites all elements of pesantren through its moral and spiritual authority. The researcher observed that the presence of kyai in recitation forums, dhikr rituals, and social activities of pesantren has always been the center of attention and a source of social legitimacy in the pesantren environment. One of the administrators of the pesantren explained: "If the kyai has given directions, usually the students move immediately without many more

[18] Sari Hernawati, Khoirun Nofik, and Muhammad Hafizh, "The Paradigm of Salaf Pesantren: The Concept of Charismatic Spiritual Leadership of Kyai at Assalafiyah Pesantren," *Edukasia Islamika* 9, no. 1 (June 30, 2024): 97–111, https://doi.org/10.28918/jei.v9i1.7276.

[19] Mashur Imam and Moh. Hamzah, "Problematika Dan Konsepsi Kemandirian Pesantren Salaf," *Nusantara Journal of Islamic Studies* 4, no. 1 (March 28, 2023): 32–47, https://doi.org/10.54471/njis.2023.4.1.32-47.

orders. They feel that carrying out the direction of the kyai is part of worship and devotion." These findings show that spiritual leadership in the Sufism tradition of Islamic boarding schools has the ability to build social solidarity and organizational cultural integration through symbolic and spiritual power. The position of kyai can be understood as the owner of symbolic capital that has high legitimacy in the social structure of the pesantren.[20] The symbolic capital was born from the reputation of science, spiritual piety, and the collective recognition of the moral authority of the kyai.[21] The relationship between kyai and santri in the tradition of Islamic boarding school Sufism not only forms the pattern of Islamic education, but also becomes the main foundation in the reproduction of organizational culture and spiritual leadership in the pesantren environment.[22]

The Practice of Spiritual Riyadhah in Leadership Formation

The results of the study show that the practice of spiritual riyadhah has an important role in the formation of leadership character in the pesantren environment. Based on the results of observations, pesantren life is filled with various spiritual activities that are carried out regularly and collectively, such as dhikr together, sunnah fasting, qiyamul lail, recitation of certain wirids, khataman Al-Qur'an, to tirakat traditions carried out by students and pesantren administrators. The researchers found that these practices are not only understood as individual worship rituals, but also as processes of mental formation, self-control, and spiritual discipline that affect the social behavior patterns of pesantren residents. On several occasions, researchers observed that students who actively participated in riyadhah activities tended to show a calmer, more disciplined, simple, and easy-to-direct attitude in carrying out the tasks of the pesantren organization. This situation shows that the tradition of Sufism in Islamic boarding schools not only forms ritual piousness, but also builds leadership character based on spiritual awareness and self-control.

The results of an interview with one of the ustadz who caretakers of the pesantren show that spiritual riyadhah is seen as an important process in shaping the mental and moral readiness of a leader. The informant explained: "If a person wants to lead others, he must be able to control himself first. Therefore, in Islamic boarding schools, students are accustomed to fasting, waking up at night, and doing a lot of dhikr, so that their hearts are clean and

[20] Tianyang Li, "A Study of the Relationship Between Individuals and the Society," *Lecture Notes in Education Psychology and Public Media* 9, no. 1 (September 14, 2023): 224–29, https://doi.org/10.54254/2753-7048/9/20230182.

[21] Mohammad Fahri Husaeni, "Critical Literature Review on Moral Education System in Indonesia: How Islamic Education and Pancasila Education Monopolize Morality in Schools," *Muslim Education Review* 2, no. 1 (July 13, 2023): 65–98, https://doi.org/10.56529/mer.v2i1.163.

[22] Ahmad Hariyadi, "KEPEMIMPINAN KARISMATIK KIAI DALAM MEMBANGUN BUDAYA ORGANISASI PESANTREN," *Equity In Education Journal* 2, no. 2 (October 20, 2020): 96–104, https://doi.org/10.37304/eej.v2i2.1694.

not easily controlled by lust." The statement shows that the formation of leadership in the Sufism tradition of Islamic boarding schools begins from the process of individual spiritual development before a person is given social responsibility in the organization. In the perspective of Al-Ghazali's Sufism, the process of tazkiyatun nafs is an important stage in the formation of human morals because a clean heart is believed to give birth to good behavior and the ability to control lust. Researchers also found that students who are trusted to be administrators of Islamic boarding school organizations are generally those who are considered to have worship discipline, moral responsibility, and emotional stability. This shows that the legitimacy of leadership in pesantren is not only measured based on technical ability or intellectual intelligence, but also based on spiritual qualities and moral maturity of a person.[23] The results of observations show that the practice of spiritual riyadhah also forms a simple and service-oriented Islamic boarding school organizational culture.

Researchers found that pesantren administrators are used to carrying out tasks without excessive material orientation. Many administrators remain active in serving the needs of students even with limited facilities and a fairly high workload. One of the pesantren administrators said: "In our pesantren we are taught that taking care of students is part of worship. So the tiredness is not too much to feel if it is intended to be solemn." These findings suggest that spiritual practices are able to form intrinsic motivation in carrying out organizational tasks. This condition shows a relationship between spirituality and the formation of calling or awareness of the meaning of work in the organization.[24] Organizational activities are no longer understood simply as administrative work, but as part of spiritual devotion to Allah SWT. Thus, the practice of spiritual riyadhah in the Sufism tradition of Islamic boarding schools not only functions as a religious ritual, but also as a mechanism for the formation of leadership character, organizational culture, and Islamic education management system based on spirituality.

The Sufi-Based Spiritual Leadership Model in Islamic Boarding School Education Management: A New Theoretical Construction

The results of the research on the first to the sixth findings show that spiritual leadership in the Islamic boarding school Sufism tradition is not just a personal leadership style of a kyai, but an Islamic cultural and educational management system built through the integration of Sufism spirituality, pesantren social relations, and values-based organizational management

[23] Giorgia Miotto, Cristina Del-Castillo-Feito, and Alicia Blanco-González, "Reputation and Legitimacy: Key Factors for Higher Education Institutions' Sustained Competitive Advantage," *Journal of Business Research* 112 (May 2020): 342–53, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.11.076.

[24] Husain Heriyanto, "SPIRITUALITAS, TRANSENDENSI FAKTISITAS, DAN INTEGRASI SOSIAL," *Khazanah: Jurnal Studi Islam Dan Humaniora* 16, no. 2 (January 7, 2019): 145, https://doi.org/10.18592/khazanah.v16i2.2384.

practices. Based on the overall observation and interview data, the researcher found that the main strength of pesantren leadership lies in the ability of the Sufism tradition to form an organizational culture oriented towards moral exemplarism, spiritual devotion, and collective awareness. The first findings show that the legitimacy of kyai leadership is born from spiritual authority and life example, not solely the formal structure of the organization. The second finding shows that Sufism values such as sincerity, khidmah, zuhud, and ta'dzim are the cultural foundation of pesantren organizations. Meanwhile, the third and fourth findings confirm that the spiritual relationship between kyai and students as well as the practice of spiritual riyadhah play a major role in forming social loyalty, discipline, and leadership character in the pesantren environment. The fifth finding shows that these spiritual values are then translated into an Islamic education management system that emphasizes trust, deliberation, moral development, and spiritual awareness in organizational management. Meanwhile, the sixth finding shows that the modernization of education and the development of digital culture present new challenges to the sustainability of the spiritual leadership model of Islamic boarding schools.

Based on the integration of all these findings, this study resulted in a new theoretical construction called the Sufi-Based Spiritual Leadership Model in Islamic Boarding School Management. This model shows that spiritual leadership in the Islamic boarding school Sufism tradition has different characteristics compared to modern spiritual leadership theories that have been more developed in the context of Western business and management organizations. If Louis' theory places spirituality as an instrument for the formation of intrinsic motivation and organizational culture, then in the context of pesantren spirituality is actually the ontological foundation of the entire educational leadership and management system. Spirituality not only serves as a supporting value of the organization, but also becomes the center of all social, cultural, and managerial activities of the pesantren.[25] The findings of this study show that the sufistic leadership model of pesantren is built through five main elements, namely: (1) the spiritual authority of kyai as a source of leadership legitimacy; (2) internalization of Sufism values as organizational culture; (3) paternalistic-spiritual relations between kyai and students; (4) the practice of spiritual riyadhah as a mechanism for the formation of leadership character; and (5) education management based on trust and blessings. These five elements are interconnected and form a distinctive, transcendental, and Sufistic culture-based leadership system of Islamic education.

The main novelty of this research lies in its success in building the integration of spiritual leadership theory, the Sufism tradition, and the anthropological perspective of Islamic education into a Sufistic-based pesantren

[25] Chwen-Li Chang and Ivon Arisanti, "How Does Spiritual Leadership Influences Employee Well-Being? Findings from PLS-SEM and FsQCA," *Emerging Science Journal* 6, no. 6 (September 20, 2022): 1358–74, https://doi.org/10.28991/ESJ-2022-06-06-09.

education management model. So far, research on spiritual leadership has generally only focused on aspects of work motivation, organizational culture, or moral leadership in the context of modern organizations. This research presents a new perspective that spiritual leadership in Islamic boarding schools is actually the result of integration between sufistic spirituality, Islamic boarding school culture, and Islamic education management practices that form a distinctive leadership system based on transcendental values. Thus, the Sufi-Based Spiritual Leadership model produced in this study can be a new theoretical contribution in the development of Islamic education management, as well as enrich the anthropological study of Islamic education regarding the relationship between spirituality, culture, and leadership in contemporary Islamic boarding school educational institutions.

Conclusion

This study shows that spiritual leadership in the Sufism tradition at the Bustanul Ulum Islamic Boarding School in Central Lampung is not just a form of individual leadership of a kyai, but is a cultural system and Islamic education management that is built through the integration of Sufism values, spiritual relations, and social practices of the Islamic boarding school. Kyai's leadership gains legitimacy through moral example, spiritual depth, and a culture of devotion that lives in the life of the pesantren. Sufism values such as sincerity, khidmah, ta'dzim, and zuhud have proven to be the main foundation in the formation of organizational culture, the pattern of kyai-santri relations, and the management system of pesantren education. The practice of spiritual riyadhah also plays an important role in shaping the leadership character and moral awareness of pesantren residents. In the midst of the challenges of modernizing education and changing digital culture, Islamic boarding schools are still able to maintain spirituality as the main spirit of Islamic education management. This research produces a novelty in the form of a Sufi-Based Spiritual Leadership model that places Sufism spirituality as the ontological foundation of pesantren education leadership and management, thereby enriching the study of Islamic education management as well as the anthropology of contemporary Islamic education.

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