Islamic Boarding School Management in the Modern Era: Literature Review of Local Wisdom-Based Management Models

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the modern pesantren management model by emphasizing the integration of local wisdom values in institutional governance, especially in pesantren in Mandailing Natal Regency, North Sumatra. Using a qualitative approach that combines a comprehensive literature review and limited field observation, this study found a hybrid management model that integrates contemporary managerial principles with local cultural values such as dalihan na tolu, charismatic leadership of kiai, and the tradition of community mutual cooperation (marsialap ari). The model has been proven to strengthen the character of students, increase social legitimacy, and build institutional resilience in facing the flow of globalization. Although the results are positive, aspects of managerial professionalism, institutional documentation, and technology utilization still need strengthening. These findings enrich the literature on contextual, adaptive, and sustainable pesantren management. Limitations of the study include the narrow geographic scope and the absence of quantitative measurements of model effectiveness; therefore, cross-regional comparative research with mixed methods is recommended to produce a more holistic analysis.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini menganalisis model manajemen pesantren modern dengan menitikberatkan integrasi nilai-nilai kearifan lokal dalam tata kelola kelembagaan, khususnya pada pesantren-pesantren di Kabupaten Mandailing Natal, Sumatera Utara. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif yang memadukan telaah pustaka komprehensif dan observasi lapangan terbatas, studi ini menemukan model manajemen hibrida yang mengintegrasikan prinsip-prinsip manajerial kontemporer dengan nilai budaya lokal seperti dalihan na tolu, kepemimpinan kharismatik kiai, dan tradisi gotong royong masyarakat *(marsialap ari)*. Model tersebut terbukti memperkuat karakter santri, meningkatkan legitimasi sosial, dan membangun ketahanan kelembagaan dalam menghadapi arus globalisasi. Kendati hasilnya positif, aspek profesionalisme manajerial, dokumentasi kelembagaan, dan pemanfaatan teknologi masih memerlukan penguatan. Temuan ini memperkaya literatur mengenai manajemen pesantren yang kontekstual, adaptif, dan berkelanjutan. Keterbatasan studi meliputi cakupan geografis yang sempit dan ketiadaan pengukuran kuantitatif efektivitas model; oleh karena itu, riset komparatif lintas wilayah dengan metode campuran direkomendasikan guna menghasilkan analisis yang lebih holistik.

A. INTRODUCTION

Pesantren is the oldest Islamic educational institution in Indonesia that has played a strategic role in shaping the character, spirituality, and intellectuality of the people.[1] Along with the development of the era and the demands of modernization, pesantren are not only required to maintain the heritage of their scientific traditions,[2] but are also challenged to increase institutional capacity through a professional and adaptive management system to social, economic, and technological changes.[3] This phenomenon has given rise to the need for a pesantren management pattern that is not solely oriented towards spiritual aspects, but is also able to integrate modern managerial principles.

The pressures of globalization, demands for professionalization, and technological developments have encouraged Islamic boarding schools to make institutional adaptations. Modernization of management based on transparency, accountability, and efficiency is now the main demand. However, these efforts often clash with traditional values inherent in the social structure of Islamic boarding schools. Several studies such as those conducted by Munifah and Mufron reflect the existence of dialectics and even tension between professionalism and the preservation of traditional values.[4]

Mandailing Natal Regency in North Sumatra Province is one of the regions that has a strong Islamic tradition and is rich in local wisdom. The existence of Islamic boarding schools in Mandailing Natal is not only as a center for religious education, but also as a social and cultural institution that plays an important role in maintaining Islamic Mandailing traditional values. In this context, many Islamic boarding schools in Mandailing Natal have unwrittenly developed a management model based on local values such as the "*dalihan na tolu*" culture, charismatic kiai leadership, and community mutual cooperation practices. However, until now, there have not been many academic studies that systematically reveal how this local wisdom is internalized in the governance and management of Islamic boarding school institutions in this area.

Various previous studies have emphasized the importance of integration between Islamic boarding school management and local wisdom as an adaptive strategy in facing the challenges of modernity. Haryanto's research at the Musthafawiyah Mandailing Natal Islamic Boarding School revealed that spiritual, intellectual, and social empowerment of students was carried out through an approach rooted in classical Islamic boarding school traditions. The pondok system, community deliberations, and internal leadership of students are important elements in the management pattern that has survived the current of globalization.[5] This finding is reinforced by Sapirin, who emphasized that the education system in the Islamic

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[1] Imam Mujahid, "Islamic Orthodoxy-Based Character Education: Creating Moderate Muslim in a Modern Pesantren in Indonesia," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 11, no. 2 (December 8, 2021): 185–212, https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v11i2.185-212.

[2] Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, "Modern Pondok Pesantren: Maintaining Tradition in Modern System," *Tsaqafah* 11, no. 2 (November 30, 2015): 225–26, https://doi.org/10.21111/tsaqafah.v11i2.267.

[3] Yusroful Kholili, "Challenges for Pesantren in the Revolution Era of Society 5.0," *AMCA Journal of Religion and Society* 1, no. 1 (March 3, 2021): 8–12, https://doi.org/10.51773/ajrs.v1i1.33.

[4] Munifah, "Antara Tradisi Dan Modernitas Metamorfosis Pesantren Di Era Digital," *Prosiding Nasional* 2, no. November (2019): 1–24; Ali Mufron, "Transformasi Pondok Pesantren: Upaya Merawat Tradisi Dan Modernisasi Sistem Pesantren Di Era Disrupsi," *Tarbawi Ngabar: Jurnal of Education* 1, no. 02 (2020): 191–208, https://doi.org/10.55380/tarbawi.v1i02.55.

[5] Rudi Hary Anto, "Pemberdayaan Santri Pondok Pesantren Musthafawiyah Di Era Globalisasi (Studi Kasus Pondok Pesantren Musthafawiyah)," *Al-Ishlah: Jurnal Pendidikan* 9, no. 2 (December 30, 2017): 16–32, https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v9i2.15.

boarding school does not only rely on yellow books as the main curriculum, but also internalizes moral values and local wisdom of Mandailing in forming the character of students. This approach has been proven to produce graduates who play an active role in a multicultural society without losing their contextual and moderate Islamic identity.[6]

In the context of strengthening Islamic boarding school institutions, Putri and Baharun empirically prove that participatory leadership, educational innovation, and preservation of local wisdom contribute significantly to improving the reputation of Islamic boarding schools. These three elements cannot be separated, and need to be integrated synergistically to maintain the relevance and competitiveness of institutions amidst changing times.[7] This research is in line with the findings of Fatahillah and his colleagues, who highlighted the importance of integrating traditional methods such as sorogan and bandongan with the culture of literacy of yellow books and the Qur'an at the Tarbiyatul Islamiyah Islamic Boarding School. They concluded that educational activities in Islamic boarding schools are a form of acculturation between authentic Islamic values and local Indonesian culture, which strengthens Islamic identity amidst the rapid pace of globalization.[8]

Local wisdom also plays an important role in the formation of the values and character of students. Ismail and Parinduri in their study emphasized the relevance of the local Mandailing philosophy, namely *Poda Na Lima*, which contains five moral and cleanliness principles as the basis for the formation of community character. These values are inherited through family education, customs, and the pesantren environment.[9] Sarwan found something similar in the context of Madurese culture, which showed that values such as respect for parents, social concern, and role models were actively internalized in character education in Islamic boarding schools. This study confirms that Islamic boarding schools are not just religious institutions, but also socio-cultural educational institutions that shape the character of students through living and relevant local values.[10]

As time goes by, Islamic boarding schools have also begun to show openness to innovation and technology. Nasution and his colleagues noted that although traditional Islamic boarding schools still maintain classical methods such as bandongan and sorogan, they have also begun to adopt technology in the learning process. This shows that Islamic

[6] Sapirin, "Islamic Education Institutions Based On Local Wisdom (Study Of Mustafawiyah Madina Islamic Boarding School)," *Journal of Education and Teaching Learning (JETL)* 4, no. 3 (2022): 202–19. https://doi.org/10.51178/jetl.v4i3.643

[7] Putri Fahmadia, Dinda Maulida, and Hasan Baharun, "Strengthening the Reputation of Islamic Boarding Schools : The Role of Leadership , Educational Innovation , and Local Wisdom," *Managere: Indonesian Journal of Educational Management* 6, no. 3 (2024): 331–46. https://doi.org/10.52627/managere.v6i3.720

[8] Auliya' Fatahillah, Chuanchen Chuanchen, and Abdul Wahid Zaini, "Cultivating Cultural Synergy: Unifying Boarding Schools, Local Wisdom, And Authentic Islamic Values For The Enhancement Of Islamic Identity," *Managere: Indonesian Journal of Educational Management* 5, no. 2 (August 11, 2023): 187–97, https://doi.org/10.52627/managere.v5i2.339.

[9] Ismail Ismail and Muhammad Abrar Parinduri, "Poda Na Lima as a Pillar Of Strengthening Character Educationto The Mandailing Tribe Community," *Forum for Linguistic Studies* 6, no. 1 (July 9, 2024): 891–905, https://acad-pubs.com/index.php/FLS/article/view/139.

[10] Sarwan Sarwan, "Cultural Wisdom and Character Building in Islamic Boarding Schools: A Case Study in Madura," *Syaikhuna: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pranata Islam* 16, no. 01 (March 23, 2025): 141–56, https://doi.org/10.62730/syaikhuna.v16i01.7682.

boarding schools are undergoing digital transformation selectively and contextually, where traditional values are maintained while responding to the dynamics of the times.[11]

In a broader dimension, Yumnah, Haris, and Fannani proposed the concept of moderation based on local wisdom in Islamic boarding school education. They emphasized the importance of strengthening moderate Islamic values that are in harmony with local culture to counteract intolerance and strengthen social harmony. This moderation is realized through education of tolerance, deliberation, and cross-cultural cooperation, which are applied in social life and learning activities in Islamic boarding schools.[12]

Meanwhile, Sauri and his colleagues highlighted that values such as simplicity, independence, sincerity, and respect for the kiai are characteristic of Islamic boarding schools in various regions in Indonesia. These values not only become the cultural identity of the Islamic boarding school, but also form a strong informal management system in regulating social relations, learning, and leadership in the Islamic boarding school environment.[13]

Overall, the above findings indicate that the integration of local values and modern management strategies in Islamic boarding schools forms a unique and adaptive institutional model. Local wisdom not only functions as a cultural heritage, but also as an ethical framework, value system, and managerial mechanism that supports the sustainability of Islamic boarding schools in facing various challenges of the times.

From the overall study, it can be concluded that the management of Islamic boarding schools rooted in local wisdom has many advantages, such as strengthening character, social legitimacy, and resilience to identity crises due to modernization. However, the challenges faced remain great, especially in terms of strengthening management professionalism, wider adoption of technology, and developing institutional capacity. This study is here to fill the gap in the literature that specifically examines the management model of Islamic boarding schools based on local wisdom in Mandailing Natal Regency. By combining the approaches of literature study and field observation, this study provides an important contribution in formulating a model of Islamic boarding school governance that is contextual, sustainable, and relevant to the dynamics of the times. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine in depth the management model of Islamic boarding schools based on local wisdom that has developed in Mandailing Natal Regency, with a focus on how local values such as dalihan na tolu, charismatic leadership, and mutual cooperation are integrated into modern Islamic boarding school managerial practices. This study is expected to provide academic and practical contributions in developing contextual, adaptive, and sustainable Islamic boarding school governance.

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[11] Sahkholid Nasution et al., "Learning Arabic Language Sciences Based on Technology in Traditional Islamic Boarding Schools in Indonesia," *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 7, no. 1 (February 25, 2024): 77–102, https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v7i1.4222.

[12] Siti Yumnah, Abd Haris, and Bakhruddin Fannani, "Moderation of Islamic Boarding School Education Based on Local Wisdom," *Rigeo* 11, no. 7 (December 31, 2021): 1374–83, https://rigeo.org/menu-script/index.php/rigeo/article/view/1930.

[13] Sofyan Sauri, Nunung Nursyamsiah, and Yayan Nurbayan, "A Critique of Local Wisdom Values in Indonesia's Pesantren," *Social Sciences & Humanities* 26, no. 1 (2018): 37–50.

B. METHODS

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a type of library research enriched with limited field studies.[14] This approach was chosen to explore in depth the models of Islamic boarding school management in the modern era that are integrated with local wisdom values, especially in the context of Mandailing Natal Regency. The main data sources in this study come from relevant literature, such as academic books, scientific journal articles, research reports, policy documents from the Ministry of Religion, as well as dissertation and thesis results that discuss the theme of Islamic boarding school management and local wisdom. In addition, this study is also supported by limited primary data obtained through non-participatory observation and semi-structured interviews with several key informants, such as Islamic boarding school leaders, community leaders, and local religious leaders in Mandailing Natal, to confirm the relevance of literature findings to the reality in the field.

The selection of informants was carried out purposively by considering certain criteria, namely the head of the Islamic boarding school or kiai who has managerial authority, senior teachers who have taught for more than five years, and community or traditional leaders who are actively involved in the social activities of the Islamic boarding school. The number of informants in this study was seven people, consisting of three Islamic boarding school leaders, two senior teachers, and two traditional leaders. Data collection techniques were carried out through systematic literature studies, direct observation of Islamic boarding school management practices, and interviews to explore the views of the main actors in Islamic boarding school management.

All data were analyzed qualitatively using thematic content analysis techniques. The analysis procedure followed the stages according to Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, namely data reduction to filter relevant information based on main themes such as leadership, community participation, and integration of local values; presentation of data in the form of thematic narratives and summary tables; and drawing conclusions based on patterns and relationships between findings. The coding process was carried out manually with an open approach, using a framework of local values such as dalihan na tolu and poda na lima as a reference for initial categorization.[15] To maintain the validity of the data, source triangulation was carried out, namely by comparing information from literature, observation results, and interviews. In addition, interpretation validation was also strengthened through discussions with experts in the field of Islamic education management and local Mandailing culture.[16] This method is expected to be able to produce a complete and contextual understanding of the management model of Islamic boarding schools based on local wisdom in the modern era.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of a literature review enriched by field observations and interviews with several Islamic boarding school leaders and community leaders in Mandailing Natal, it was found that Islamic boarding school management in the modern era has undergone

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[14] Nur Khoiri, *Metodologi Penelitian Pendidikan: Ragam, Model & Pendekatan*, *Prosedur Penelitian* (Semarang: Southeast Asian Publishing, 2018). https://eprints.walisongo.ac.id/id/eprint/9459/

[15] Jonny Saldana Mattew B Miles, A. Michael Hubermann, *Qualitative Data Analysis*, 3rd ed. (Arizona: Sage Publication, 2014).

[16] Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, Dan R&D* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2017).

significant transformation in various aspects, including leadership systems, institutional planning, human resource management, and curriculum development. However, in the midst of this modernization, Islamic boarding schools in Mandailing Natal Regency still maintain their identity and local values that are the social and cultural foundations of their communities.

One of the important findings from interviews with the leaders of the Musthafawiyah Purba Baru Islamic Boarding School shows that the leadership structure of the Islamic boarding school is deliberately not strictly formalized in order to remain flexible and close to the community. According to him, "Kiai is not only an administrative leader, but also a spiritual parent who is fully trusted by the students and the community. If it is too bureaucratic, the sense of family and the spirit of the pesantren will be lost." This model resembles transformational leadership, but is strongly influenced by the principle of dalihan na tolu which is the framework for social relations in the Mandailing community.

In observations at two Islamic boarding schools in Batahan and Kotanopan Districts, researchers found that the mutual cooperation system or marsialap ari was carried out routinely for dormitory maintenance, environmental cleanliness, and physical development. Villagers voluntarily help whenever there is a pesantren construction. This confirms that Islamic boarding school management is not merely the internal domain of the institution, but is communitarian in nature. Even one of the traditional figures stated, "If the Islamic boarding school builds a new kitchen, the village will join in the mutual cooperation without being asked."

In terms of curriculum development, the results of an interview with Ustazah Siti Mariam Harahap, a senior teacher at the Al-Muhtadin Kotanopan Islamic Boarding School, show that many Islamic boarding schools have begun to design integration between yellow book lessons and skills training such as basic computers, local entrepreneurship (for example, ulos weaving and organic farming), and character building through local Islamic values. He added that, "Children today must be ready to live independently. So we include skills training outside of halaqah hours, but still rooted in Islamic values and our customs."

From the results of observations in the study rooms and dormitories, it was found that the relationship between students and teachers was very fluid and egalitarian, without reducing respect. Several senior students are given the responsibility of organizing night study activities, cleanliness, and worship guidance, which also become internal managerial practicums. This shows that the model of active involvement of students in internal management is part of the leadership cadre process based on local values such as trust, loyalty, and collective responsibility.

High community involvement is also reflected in the funding of Islamic boarding schools. The results of an interview with the treasurer of the Nurul Yaqin Islamic Boarding School in East Panyabungan showed that most of the operational costs of the Islamic boarding school were obtained from community donations and waqf, not from formal government assistance. Even in emergency cases, the community makes customary agreements to help each other. This shows how social trust plays a major role in strengthening Islamic boarding school institutions.

Overall, the results of these interviews and observations strengthen the findings of the literature that the management model of Islamic boarding schools in Mandailing Natal is a hybrid form between local traditions and modern innovations. Its strength lies in collective

wisdom, charismatic and participatory leadership, and flexibility supported by the cultural values of dalihan na tolu. However, the sustainability of this model depends on the ability of Islamic boarding school leaders to improve managerial capacity and build collaborative networks that still respect local wisdom.

One important finding is that the leadership of Islamic boarding schools in Mandailing Natal is generally charismatic and deeply rooted in traditional and religious social structures. Kiai or the leader of the Islamic boarding school not only plays a role as a manager of the educational institution, but also as a central figure who is respected in the social order. This leadership model resembles the concept of transformational leadership, but is wrapped in the framework of local Mandailing wisdom, such as the principle of dalihan na tolu which regulates the ethics of social relations. Kiai not only leads administratively, but also becomes a moral and spiritual role model for students and the surrounding community.

In terms of resource management, many Islamic boarding schools rely on community participation and a strong mutual cooperation system. The traditions of *marsialap ari* (rotational work) and *marhobas* (community service) are part of the unwritten, yet effective, support system of Islamic boarding schools. The contribution of the community around the Islamic boarding school is not only material, but also in the form of trust, protection, and the dissemination of Islamic boarding school values to the community. This shows that the local wisdom-based management system is not only efficient, but also strengthens social relations and collective values in the Islamic boarding school environment.

In terms of curriculum and educational programs, many Islamic boarding schools have begun to develop integration between traditional curriculum (yellow books) and modern curriculum based on skills and technology. However, this integration is not carried out frontally, but gradually by considering the readiness of students and the community. Most Islamic boarding schools in Mandailing Natal maintain their traditional scientific base by adding entrepreneurship training, basic information technology skills, and character education programs based on Islamic values and local culture. This shows an awareness of the importance of adapting academic management in the digital era without losing the identity of Islamic boarding schools.

The results of this study also identified that the local wisdom-based management model has advantages in creating continuity of values and social acceptance. Management based on local values such as sincerity, trustworthiness, deliberation, and respect for leaders contributes to high loyalty and participation of all elements of the Islamic boarding school. In addition, flexibility in decision-making and non-formal relations between elements of the Islamic boarding school are strengths in themselves that are not found in conventional management systems based on formal bureaucracy.

However, there are also challenges in developing this model. Among them are the limited professional human resources in the field of educational management, weak institutional documentation, and minimal modern management training that is in accordance with the characteristics of local Islamic boarding schools. Therefore, a strategy is needed to increase institutional capacity without ignoring deeply rooted local values.

In addition, the process of modernizing Islamic boarding school management is also inseparable from value conflicts and cultural resistance that arise in society. Several Islamic boarding school leaders and community leaders expressed concerns that the formalization of management systems such as the preparation of digital financial reports, administrative

archiving, and the use of online-based management applications could actually erode the spiritual and family values that are the soul of Islamic boarding schools. One of the leaders of the boarding school in Kotanopan stated, "We are worried that if there are too many systems and SOPs, students will feel like they are studying in an ordinary institution, no longer an Islamic boarding school that educates with the heart." This concern indicates a dilemma between the need for managerial efficiency and the preservation of the cultural identity of Islamic boarding schools.

On the other hand, the surrounding community also showed diverse responses to the implementation of technology and new management patterns in Islamic boarding schools. Most of the parents of students who come from villages still view technology with suspicion, especially if it is considered to interfere with the process of moral formation. Meanwhile, the younger generation in Islamic boarding schools enthusiastically welcomes innovations such as multimedia-based learning, computer training, and online-based student information systems. This tension illustrates the existence of generational differences in responding to change, which if not managed wisely can lead to internal gaps.

Furthermore, it was found that some senior teachers experienced confusion when they had to adjust to the digital-based reporting system that was starting to be implemented by several Islamic boarding schools. This raises new challenges in the form of the need for continuous training for Islamic boarding school human resources so that they are not left behind in the digital transformation, while ensuring that modernization does not reduce the noble values of Islamic boarding schools such as sincerity, simplicity, and spiritual submission to the kiai.

Overall, these findings confirm that the management of Islamic boarding schools based on local wisdom in Mandailing Natal Regency is a hybrid model between tradition and modernity. Its success depends largely on the ability of Islamic boarding school leaders to maintain a balance between local cultural heritage and the demands of global change. Therefore, a contextual, participatory, and local values-based management approach needs to continue to be developed as an alternative model for Islamic boarding school governance in Indonesia.

The findings of this study indicate that the management of Islamic boarding schools that integrate local wisdom values plays an important role in responding to the challenges of modernization without losing cultural roots. In addition, this finding is reinforced by the results of Sapirin's research which emphasizes that the Musthafawiyah Madina Islamic Boarding School not only focuses on the transmission of religious knowledge based on the Syafi'i school of thought, but also plays a vital role in the formation of character and morality based on local culture.[17] In the social context of Mandailing Natal which is rich in local wisdom, Islamic boarding schools function as cultural fortresses that combine formal education, teaching of yellow books, and character building under the direct supervision of kiai and caregivers. This emphasizes the position of Islamic boarding schools as centers for the formation of a generation of morals that are not disconnected from traditional values.

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[17] Sapirin, "Islamic Education Institutions Based On Local Wisdom (Study Of Mustafawiyah Madina Islamic Boarding School)"; Riski Humairoh Nasution et al., "Studi Kasus Tantangan Tata Kelola Pendidikan Islam Di Daerah 3T: Analisis Di Desa Parlampungan, Mandailing Nata," *Mataazir: Jurnal Administrasi Dan Manajemen Pendidikan* 4, no. 1 (2025): 334–47.

Furthermore, Haryanto stated that the simplicity of the social system and structure of traditional Islamic boarding schools such as Musthafawiyah is a factor in the sustainability of these institutions in facing the currents of globalization.[18] The values of spiritual, intellectual and social empowerment are the pillars in producing cadres of ulama and community leaders.

On the other hand, Putri et al. added a strategic dimension that inclusive leadership, educational innovation, and preservation of local wisdom are significant factors in strengthening the reputation of Islamic boarding schools. They found that innovations such as technology integration and participatory approaches in decision-making can strengthen the position of Islamic boarding schools as modern educational institutions without losing local identity.[19]

The importance of preserving local values is also emphasized by Ismail 2024, who describes the philosophy of *Poda Na Lima* as an ethical framework for the life of the Mandailing people: *paias rohamu* (cleansing the heart), *paias pamatangmu* (cleansing the body), *paias parabitonmu* (cleaning clothes), *paias bagasmu* (cleaning the house), and *paias pakaranganmu* (cleaning the environment). These values explicitly support the national movement to strengthen character education (PPK), especially religious values, nationalism, integrity, and mutual cooperation.[20]

Another study Maulida & Baharun also emphasized that the combination of transformative leadership, educational innovation, and strengthening local values contributed significantly to increasing the competitiveness and public trust in Islamic boarding schools. This is in line with efforts to recontextualize cultural values in the management of Islamic educational institutions.[21]

Research by Syifa Syarifah also highlights the importance of adapting Islamic boarding school management to global challenges. He emphasized that in the context of modern society, Islamic boarding schools can no longer rely solely on traditional authorities, but need to adopt the principles of professionalism, accountability, and transparency in institutional management.[22] However, this process must still respect local values so that cultural alienation does not occur in the Islamic boarding school environment. He noted that the balance between system transformation and tradition conservation is a crucial point in today's Islamic boarding school management.

In a more futuristic study, Hafnan noted that Islamic boarding schools as miniatures of multicultural societies are required to be more inclusive of social dynamics. The dominant yellow book-based educational approach in traditional Islamic boarding schools remains a characteristic, but openness to differences and social challenges actually enriches the managerial experience of Islamic boarding schools. This is in line with Mandailing cultural

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[18] Anto, "Pemberdayaan Santri Pondok Pesantren Musthafawiyah Di Era Globalisasi (Studi Kasus Pondok Pesantren Musthafawiyah)," 16–32.

[19] Fahmadia, Maulida, and Baharun, "Strengthening the Reputation of Islamic Boarding Schools : The Role of Leadership , Educational Innovation , and Local Wisdom," 331–46.

[20] Ismail and Muhammad Abrar Parinduri, "Poda Na Lima As A Pillar of Strengthening Character Education," *Tec Empresarial* 19, no. 1 (2024): 3130–44.

[21] Fahmadia, Maulida, and Baharun, "Strengthening the Reputation of Islamic Boarding Schools : The Role of Leadership , Educational Innovation , and Local Wisdom"; Faisal Musa, "Ulama Mandailing Dan Terbentuknya Jaringan Pesantren Di Sumatera Utara," *JMPS: Jurnal Ilmiah Mahasiswa Pendidikan Sejarah* 8, no. 3 (2023). https://jim.usk.ac.id/sejarah/article/view/26530

[22] Syifa Syarifah, "Kurikulum Titik Temu (Studi Kurikulum Di Pondok Pesantren Musthafawiyah Purba Baru Mandailing Natal Tahun 1975-1985)" (UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, 2019).

principles such as dalihan na tolu which uphold harmony and deliberation in resolving institutional issues.[23]

Furthermore, in a dynamic study focused on Islamic boarding schools in Mandailing Natal, it was found that the transformation of Islamic boarding school management in this region cannot be separated from changes in social structure due to modernization and digitalization. Islamic boarding schools are required not only as centers of religious education, but also as competitive economic and social entities. Therefore, a hybrid approach between tradition and digital innovation has begun to be applied. However, as explained by the study "Dynamics of Islamic Boarding Schools: Futuristic Study", this transformation must be supported by policies that protect the identity of Islamic boarding schools so that they are not trapped in market pragmatism or the secularization of the education system.[24]

Thus, these results show that strengthening Islamic boarding school management based on local wisdom is not only a strategic choice, but an absolute necessity to maintain the relevance of Islamic boarding school institutions amidst the rapid flow of change. Integration between local value systems and managerial professionalism can strengthen legitimacy, institutional resilience, and improve the quality of Islamic boarding school education holistically.

Based on the results of literature studies and limited observations in the field, it was found that the management of Islamic boarding schools in the modern era has undergone significant transformation, especially in the aspects of leadership, institutions, human resources, and curriculum. This transformation is seen through the implementation of modern managerial practices such as strategic planning, technology-based management, and strengthening professionalism. However, this transformation did not take place without friction. One of the main challenges is the emergence of a value conflict between the spirit of managerial efficiency and the traditional identity of the pesantren.

For example, the implementation of a digital reporting system or the use of online administration applications often causes resistance, especially from senior teachers and caretakers of Islamic boarding schools who are accustomed to informal systems and family relationships. This resistance is not merely a rejection of technology, but also a form of concern about the loss of the "spirit" of Islamic boarding schools, namely sincerity, simplicity, and spiritual closeness between kiai, students, and the community. Several informants stated that if Islamic boarding schools are managed too bureaucratically, the nuance of education that educates "with the heart" will be replaced by a distant, mechanistic system.

Another conflict arises in the context of generations. Younger generation students tend to be more adaptive to modernization, including the use of multimedia in learning and digital skills training. On the other hand, some parents of students and traditional leaders still believe that such an approach can reduce the solemnity and sacredness of the process of learning the yellow books which are the main identity of Islamic boarding schools. This shows the existence of inter-generational tension in responding to the transformation of Islamic boarding schools.

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[23] Hafnan Aziz Hasibuan, "Pendidikan Akhlak Islam Melalui Kearifan Lokal Dalihan Na Tolu," *Tabyin: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 03, no. 1 (2021): 163–78.

[24] Suryadi Nasution, Muhammad Ikbal, and Ali Jusri Pohan, "Dinamika Pesantren : Studi Futuristic Transformasi- Tansmisi Sistem Pesantren Di Mandailing Natal," *Edukasi Islami: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 10, no. 1 (2021), https://doi.org/10.30868/ei.v10i001.1853.

From the leadership aspect, although transformational leadership models are beginning to emerge, there is still a dilemma between maintaining the charisma of the kiai as a spiritual leader and the demands to implement a more participatory and accountable management system. Some Islamic boarding schools experience difficulties in regenerating leadership because the system is too centered on one charismatic figure. This risks creating institutional dependency and hampering organizational renewal.

In addition, integration efforts between traditional curricula and modern skills programs often face obstacles in terms of human resource readiness. Several teachers admitted to having difficulty integrating local Islamic values into technology-based learning. Lack of training and facilities are major inhibiting factors.

Thus, although the local wisdom-based pesantren management model in Mandailing Natal shows great potential as an adaptive hybrid system, strategic steps are still needed to overcome the structural and cultural dilemmas that accompany it. Pesantren leaders are required not only to be guardians of tradition, but also as innovators who are able to bridge local values with the demands of modern professionalism.

D. CONCLUSION

Islamic boarding school management in the modern era shows significant transformation in various aspects, including leadership systems, institutional planning, human resource management, and curriculum development. However, Islamic boarding schools in Mandailing Natal still maintain local values such as dalihan na tolu, charismatic leadership of kiai, and mutual cooperation culture *(marsialap ari),* which are the social and spiritual foundations of society.

This study found that the Islamic boarding school management model based on local wisdom provides many advantages, including: strengthening the character of students, high social legitimacy, and resilience to identity crises due to globalization. The participatory and flexible leadership approach, integration of local values in the curriculum, and active community involvement in funding and physical development of Islamic boarding schools make Islamic boarding schools adaptive educational institutions that remain rooted in tradition.

However, challenges remain, especially in terms of management professionalism, adoption of modern technology, and increasing institutional capacity. Therefore, a managerial strengthening strategy is needed that still respects local cultural values. This study emphasizes the importance of a contextual and sustainable management approach as an alternative model for managing Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia. This study has limitations in terms of area and approach, so the results cannot be generalized. Further research is recommended using a mixed approach and covering various cultural areas in order to obtain a more comprehensive and representative picture of the management model of Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia.

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