

The Leadership Role of *Tuan Guru* in Developing Islamic Boarding Schools in Lombok

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, the leadership of *Tuan Guru*, particularly in Lombok, has emerged as a central and charismatic influence, significantly shaping the progress and evolution of Islamic boarding school-based education. Effective teacher leadership within Islamic boarding schools is pivotal for fostering quality institutions. This study aims to elucidate three key aspects: firstly, the conceptual framework of *Tuan Guru* leadership in advancing Islamic boarding schools; secondly, strategic approaches to their development; and thirdly, the manifold benefits accrued by both these institutions and their surrounding communities. Specifically, this research underscores the creation of new employment opportunities for local residents and the attainment of economic autonomy by Islamic boarding schools, empowering them with authority and self-governance. The findings of this study hold profound implications for the entrepreneurial advancement of Islamic boarding schools grounded in religious principles. The pivotal role of "*tuan guru*" as leaders further catalyzes the advancement of Islamic boarding school-based education, particularly in Lombok where these institutions are flourishing under the guidance of dedicated teachers.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Islamic boarding schools in Lombok have undergone significant development, primarily driven by the influential roles of *Kiyai* and *Tuan Guru* as key figures in this progression. These institutions are now perceived as the last bastions of morality within the current educational framework, serving as pivotal centers for civilization and proactive social transformation. The ontology and existence of Islamic education are crucial, and anticipated to foster the advancement of Muslim civilization at both theoretical and practical levels. Islamic education, being foundational in establishing ethical and moral standards, plays a critical role in shaping individuals, particularly Muslims. It is central to the educational system as a moral cornerstone and acts as a dynamic force for civilizational and social change, proactively contributing to the enrichment and progression of the Muslim community across various dimensions. Islamic education is not only understood as the transfer of knowledge, but the most urgent thing is how the social value system becomes a transformation of change, as well as a moral bulwark against the negative access of globalization and modernization in the midst of social diversity. Pluralistic cultural society. In this context, the development of the Islamic education system, as Shofan(2004)said, Islamic education has given birth to two contradictory patterns of thinking. Both take different forms, whether in material aspects, educational systems, or even institutional forms. The

two models in question are Islamic education with a traditionalist (eastern) pattern. In its development, it places more emphasis on aspects (*doctrinaire-normative*) and nature (*exclusive-apologetic*), while in the second model, the portrait of Islamic education is modernist and, in its development, has begun to lose things that are transcendental (Fauzi, 2015).

Islamic education in Indonesia has existed since the arrival of Islam to Indonesia, going hand in hand with the development of Islam itself. This is because every time a Muslim community meets, there is Islamic education. Furthermore, when an Islamic society was formed, the main concern was building a house of worship, namely a mosque, as the Prophet built a mosque in Madina during the *Hijrah*, because mosques have multiple functions (Fauzi, 2015). Then, there was a change in thinking (quality of the people) and an increase in the Muslim population in Indonesia, and Islamic educational institutions also developed. Educational institutions are one of the most important components and play a big role in the implementation of education.

Educational institutions serve as a critical component and play a strategic role in the execution of education, encompassing formal, non-formal, and informal sectors. The involvement of society, with its diverse cultural attributes, is essential in the educational sphere to comprehend and engage actively with educational programs. Such involvement is crucial for motivating society to maximize its contribution to these programs. A tangible example of societal contribution is the encouragement of parents to enrol their children in educational institutions, facilitating accessible and beneficial educational resources.

Community engagement in education is a vital element, underscoring the inseparable connection between education and society, as education inherently constitutes a social endeavor. Ali Khalil articulated that various educational components—encompassing vision, mission, objectives, foundations, curriculum, methodologies, educators, evaluations, graduates, and educational infrastructure—must be tailored to meet community needs, reflecting the unique character of each society (Dahlan, 2017). This perspective aligns with the views of Ibn Khaldun, Yusuf Al-Qardhawi, and M. Quraish Shihab, who recognize that Islamic education consistently interacts with the societal context surrounding it. Sociologically, Islamic education should dynamically engage with its societal environment, embodying a universal vision of mercy to all creations (*rahmatan lil' alamin*). This engagement should uphold principles of harmony, peace, mutual respect, and empowerment rather than fostering social or cultural domestication (Muqoyyidin, 2013).

Therefore, normatively, Islam has provided a foundation for the implementation of universal education, namely restoring the values of Islamic teachings (*kaffah*) in accordance with the socio-cultural of Indonesian society based on divine values and human values (*human*). This holistic view is based on several things, including: a) Islam emphasizes that education is a religious obligation where all learning activities and the transmission of knowledge are very meaningful for humans b) the entire series of educational implementation is the worship of Allah as a form of worship to Him, c) Islam provides degrees to educated people d) Islam provides a foundation, lifelong education e) the Islamic education model is dialogical, innovative, inclusive and tolerant. The problems above can provide an illustration as well as a portrait of Islamic education today which is faced with fundamental changes, especially in preparing people who can live and integrate into a pluralistic society with various socio-cultural conditions. This is an effort to build a portrait of Islamic education with a vision *rahmatanlilalamin*, can be done via (*grand project*) namely that Islamic education must have quality human resources with high integrity and morality and be able to analyze developing religious issues, the basis of education which has been understood to be dichotomous to monochromic, this unification is framed with normative values so that it can give rise to morality for each individual (Mudyahardjo, 2002).

Islamic boarding schools in Lombok are developing very rapidly, especially in West Lombok. Islamic boarding schools are developing under the leadership of teachers. Some of the arguments above show that there is a universal pattern and system of Islamic education that has interesting goals for development, especially non-formal education or Islamic boarding school-style education because Islamic boarding schools are a forum for developing Islamic education itself, the position of Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia has a very positive impact. In developing education itself, especially Islamic education because of the position of Islamic boarding schools in the view of many people, really contributes and plays an active role. The success of Islamic boarding schools cannot be separated from

the kiyai, Tuan Gurus, ustas/ustazah because they provide role models and attitudes in shaping the personality of their students. Therefore, Tuan Gurus or *kiyai* play a very important role in Islamic education itself, therefore, in this article the author will try to portray the leadership role of Tuan Gurus in developing Islamic boarding schools.

The preceding arguments underscore the existence of a universal pattern and system within Islamic education, with notable developmental objectives, particularly in non-formal education, such as Islamic boarding school-style education. Islamic boarding schools serve as pivotal arenas for the advancement of Islamic education, a fact which holds particular significance in Indonesia, where they exert a profoundly positive influence on educational development. The pivotal role of Islamic boarding schools, especially in the eyes of many, is indisputable, as they contribute significantly and actively to educational advancement. The success of these institutions is intricately intertwined with the guidance provided by esteemed figures such as kiyai, Tuan Gurus, and ustas/ustazah, who serve as exemplary figures, shaping the character of their students. Consequently, the leadership role of these Tuan Gurus in the evolution of Islamic boarding schools is the focal point of this article. The research delves into various specific dimensions, notably highlighting that the role and competence of Tuan Gurus extend beyond mere preaching, particularly evident in places like Lombok, where they assume dual roles in education. Thus, the primary objective of this study is to elucidate the role of Tuan Guru in Lombok's pesantren, encompassing tasks such as institutional management, curriculum development, student nurturing, educational innovation, and community engagement. By exploring these facets, the article aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of Tuan Guru's contributions to the development of pesantren, solidifying their stature as educational and community development hubs.

2. METHODS

In examining the leadership of Tuan Guru in the development of Islamic boarding schools in Lombok, this study employs a qualitative research methodology with a descriptive approach. This methodology aims to provide an in-depth and holistic understanding of the phenomena by delving into the individuals or groups involved's meanings, perceptions, and experiences (Juliansyah, 2013). The qualitative approach facilitates exploring and comprehending the complexities within social, cultural, and psychological realms, employing the collection and analysis of unstructured descriptive data.

This research specifically focuses on the leadership role of Tuan Guru within the context of pesantren (Islamic boarding schools) in Lombok. The methodology involves a detailed examination of various stakeholders' narratives, experiences, and perceptions, including Tuan Guru, the students (*santri*), the pesantren staff, and the local community. The descriptive nature of the approach emphasizes the detailed depiction and interpretation of the collected data (Maleong, 2011), aiming to thoroughly describe the phenomenon under study.

Data sources are categorized into primary and secondary types (Suigiono, 2010). Primary data are gathered directly from the field through observations, interviews, and documentation from several prominent pesantren in West Lombok. Secondary data are derived from journals relevant to the study and various books that serve as data information sources. The data analysis process encompasses data collection, data analysis, and data verification, ensuring a comprehensive and systematic examination of the subject matter.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings in this research are that the study of education and the leadership of Tuan Gurus in Lombok to develop education has developed with several Islamic boarding schools developing and of course, under the leadership of Tuan Gurus. Teachers have become important figures in the development of education. Islamic boarding schools in Lombok are growing a lot. This shows that Islamic boarding school education under teacher leadership is very successful and is the goal of the

Islamic boarding school's hopes.

3.1. *The Leadership Concept of Tuan Guru In Developing Islamic Boarding Schools*

The leadership paradigm of Tuan Guru in the evolution of Islamic boarding schools is intrinsically collective-collegial, consultative, and instructive, anchoring on the profound authority and influential mantle of Tuan Guru. As the keystone of governance, Tuan Guru acts as a pivotal consultative figure, wielding paramount decision-making power within the boarding school milieu. This individual commands significant respect and authority, adeptly delegating tasks and responsibilities to adept individuals equipped with the requisite competencies and skills for handling intricate technical endeavors.

Emerging from this leadership ethos, Tuan Guru assumes a pivotal and strategic role in sculpting policies pertinent to the developmental trajectory and resource allocation within the Islamic boarding schools. This role extends to orchestrating the selection of personnel pivotal to the schools' developmental and progressive endeavors, positioning the Master as the linchpin steering the organizational and cultural evolution of the Islamic boarding school. Echoed by Sulaiman and Asnawan, Tuan Guru is esteemed as the central figure within the boarding school, embodying the quintessence of nurturing, educating, and serving as a paragon, catalyzing the latent potential within the Islamic boarding school framework (Mustaan, 2020).

Similarly, Supriyani (2022) elucidates that an educational leader is fundamentally an individual wielding the capacity to exert influence over others, directing the execution of designated tasks. This perspective aligns with Pramitha's (2020) findings, which articulate that the kiai or Tuan Guru leadership model prevalent in Islamic boarding schools encompasses strategic, collective decision-making executed collegially via a consultative process within a cohesive team, known as team building. It also encompasses the inspiration and motivation of subordinates, particularly students, fueling their zeal for the school's development and cultivating productive, innovative behaviors through task delegation and role assignment, enabling students to actively contribute to the school's evolution.

The empirical evidence from the research underscores the criticality of the teacher's role and support in the Islamic boarding school's developmental narrative. Absent such a teacher's guiding influence and support, the progression and realization of the Islamic boarding school or madrasah's potential remain elusive, highlighting the teacher's centrality in driving the school's comprehensive development across various dimensions, including curricular and infrastructural facets. Moreover, the leadership role of the teacher in managing and nurturing the Islamic boarding school is not merely an obligation but a vested right, serving as a manager and overseer. The prosperity and advancement of the Islamic boarding school hinge on the presence and proactive engagement of a central figure who fosters and propels its growth, with the teacher's leadership acumen being a determinant of the school's progressive trajectory.

3.2. *Tuan Guru/Kiyai's strategy in Maintaining and Developing Islamic Boarding Schools*

The strategies employed by Tuan Gurus to evolve Islamic boarding schools, notably akin across different institutions, comprise a multifaceted approach: firstly, they focus on empowering students, alumni, and their guardians, fostering a sense of ownership and active participation in the school's development. Secondly, they prioritize building synergies with a spectrum of stakeholders, including governmental and private entities, to forge robust partnerships that bolster the school's growth. Thirdly, they are proactive in innovating and crafting business ventures, encompassing both products and services, which serve as practical extensions of the educational experience. Fourthly, there is an emphasis on nurturing high-caliber human resources capable of steering these burgeoning enterprises. Lastly, a pivotal aspect of their strategy is the infusion and dissemination of religious principles within the business realm, aligning economic activities with the core tenets of Islamic teachings (Nur & Yaqien, 2023). The distinctiveness of this strategy lies not in the pursuit of mere financial gain but in its foundation upon spiritual and ethical values, aiming to disseminate benevolence and utility in society.

This study corroborates findings by Rahmawati & Setiawan, which delineate that the essence of nurturing and preserving the unique character of Islamic boarding schools is to augment their appeal as vibrant educational hubs, thereby enriching the experiential journey of the students poised to

graduate. This enhancement of entrepreneurial interest is achieved through the infusion of religious values, which consequently shapes the social behaviors and attitudes of the students (Firdaus & Hendriyanto, 2022).

Such religious values as honesty, diligence, discipline, accountability, promise-keeping, and consistent prayer are shown to significantly impact the performance dynamics within these communities (Supriyanto, 2022). The active engagement of students, or santri, in the development process of these schools not only heightens their motivational levels and zest but also orientates them towards attaining spiritual gains, alongside material success. This engagement serves as a practical framework for the students to embody and enact religious values in their entrepreneurial endeavors (Wijaya & Aini, 2020).

Further research underscores that the strategic development of Islamic boarding schools, when executed through modern and innovative methods and in collaboration with diverse entities, and when spearheaded by adept human resources ingrained with religious values like honesty, diligence, accountability, promise-keeping, and a commitment to zakat and almsgiving, leads to heightened performance and productivity. Such a strategy enhances the schools' competitive edge in the global arena, illustrating a successful integration of traditional religious values with contemporary business acumen.

3.3. Benefits of Tuan Guru Leadership Development in the Entrepreneurial Sector at Islamic Boarding Schools

The implementation of Tuan Guru-led entrepreneurial initiatives in Islamic boarding schools has yielded significant benefits for students, alumni, guardians, local communities, and institutions. These schools have established entrepreneurial ventures and fostered economic self-sufficiency among students, empowering them with religious education and financial independence. This independence reduces reliance on external donations. Institutionally, such schools experience accelerated development through diversified funding sources. The entrepreneurial curriculum balances theoretical knowledge with practical skills, ensuring graduates are not limited to religious teaching roles but can also pursue successful entrepreneurial careers characterized by piety, trustworthiness, honesty, and fairness (Almuin et al., 2017).

This research underscores the transformative impact of kiai (Islamic scholars) led entrepreneurial initiatives in these schools, which benefits the educational community and promotes institutional growth. Consequently, leaders of Islamic boarding schools reliant on traditional funding methods are encouraged to embrace the entrepreneurial models of their successful counterparts. This shift not only serves as an educational model but also propels the schools towards financial autonomy. Moreover, fostering entrepreneurship within these institutions cultivates a generation of entrepreneurs equipped with modern business acumen and a foundation in religious values (Irawan, 2019).

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the leadership approach of Tuan Gurus in Islamic boarding schools is characterized by a collective-collegial, consultative, and instructive style underpinned by the authority and influence of these educators. Specifically, the strategies for school development mirror those in modern organizations and include empowering students, alumni, and their guardians, collaborating with various entities, including government and private sectors, fostering innovation, enhancing human resource quality, and integrating religious values in economic activities, which are central to Islamic teachings. Additionally, the entrepreneurial efforts within these schools have led to tangible advantages, such as meeting the essential needs of the school community, creating employment opportunities locally, and establishing economic self-sufficiency for the schools, thus granting them greater autonomy in their operations. However, this research acknowledges limitations, including theoretical and methodological constraints, contextual variances, and the scope of respondents and subjects. Notably, the focus on specific Islamic boarding schools in Lombok may restrict the direct applicability of the findings to other schools in the region or beyond, indicating a need for cautious

generalization. Future research should address these limitations to enhance the understanding and applicability of the findings.

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