

Change Management Strategies for Enhancing Education Quality at Islamic Boarding School

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ABSTRACT

Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) have long been integral to the development of Islamic education in Indonesia, shaping both the educational landscape and cultural values. *Pesantren* are indigenous institutions with distinct advantages and a legacy of scientific and moral transmission. In the face of globalization and societal demands, these institutions continuously adapt to maintain their relevance and excellence. This qualitative field research employed a case study design to investigate the change management strategies in Islamic boarding schools aimed at enhancing educational quality. Data collection techniques included observation, interviews, and documentation, using snowball sampling to identify participants. Data were analyzed through reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing, with validity ensured via triangulation, extended researcher participation, and persistent observation. Findings reveal that the change management process is spearheaded by the *Kiai*, who plays a collegial role involving all stakeholders. Change is implemented through the cultivation of both spiritual and social values, fostering collaborative efforts among educators, students, and community members. Stakeholder involvement is critical in designing and executing programs focused on improving the educational quality and competitiveness of *pesantren*. The success of change management in *pesantren* underscores the importance of inclusive leadership and value-driven reforms. By aligning traditional values with modern educational demands, Islamic boarding schools can sustain their pivotal role in Indonesia's educational system while achieving excellence across various scientific disciplines.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Basically, Islamic education in Indonesia cannot be separated from the great role of *pesantren* education (Sukino, Setyaningrum, Muttaqin, & Supriyatno, 2023). Meanwhile, Islamic boarding schools are traditional-cultural Islamic educational institutions in which there are a series of activities that include; studying, deepening, understanding, educating, nurturing, appreciating, and practicing Islamic teachings by prioritizing the need for religious moral aspects as a guideline for daily life

(Sukino, Saumi Setyaningrum, Imron Muttaqin, & Triyo Supriyatno, 2023). The traditional sense here shows that the institution has emerged a long time ago (tens, even hundreds of years before) (Haryanto & Ngarifin, 2022). This history shows that the birth of Islamic boarding school was firstly built by Sheikh Maulana Malik Ibrahim around 1399 AD to spread Islamic teachings in Java (Heryana, 2020). Over time, Islamic boarding schools continue to develop and adapt to the needs of the community in an effort to improve the quality of education with the emergence of various changes at all levels of education.

Pesantren (Islamic Boarding School) comes in the midst of society as a community of life that has ability to be involved in alternative educational activities that are used and combine education and its teaching. (Kamal, 2018). *Pesantren* has important elements that, in certain circumstances are different from other educational models. These important elements include *kiai*, *santri*, mosques, cottages, and the study of yellow books (Dhofier, 2011). Thus, it seems that *pesantren* gives a different color to the educational model outside the *pesantren*. *Pesantren* have differences as well as uniqueness compared to education outside *pesantren*.

The existence of Islamic boarding schools has long received wide recognition from the wider community. The work of *pesantren* is very large to rally unity and contribute to the implementation of education in the country (Kholifah, 2022). Besides, *pesantren* is also an institution for fulfilling religious rituals, an institution for mental strengthening, an institution for *dakwah coaching*, and the most substantial and fundamental is as an Islamic institution in the field of education that always experiences romance to face various external or internal challenges (Thoah & Hannan, 2022). In fact, *pesantren* are present not only to fulfil the needs of the community but also as a solution for the development and progress of the world of Islamic education.

However, Islamic boarding schools and Islamic educational institutions need to conduct a critical review so that the results of the development of science and technology can be empowered for the greater benefit of the life of mankind (Suradi, 2018). Not the other way around, the development of science and technology actually brings disaster to the existence of human life, because it is influenced by the capitalist and liberalist way of thought that is out of values (Basori, Raharjo, Prihatin, & Yulianto, 2023). Therefore, in order to improve the quality of education, it is very important to harmonise the two, as there is still a dichotomy between religious knowledge and science and technology in society.

Besides, to face modernization era and to maintain the existence of Islamic boarding schools as Islamic educational institutions that still survive, Islamic boarding schools need to make changes (Nurtawab & Wahyudi, 2022). Certainly, *Pesantren* will not be spared from the "laws of nature" and the demands of change. Contextually, when the world of education has entered the era of globalization, and *pesantren* must be faced with a variety of challenges that are more complex and increasingly broad (Zulkarnain, 2023). If Islamic educational institutions are able to respond to the flow of change with their various innovations and creativity, then the opportunity to continue to "survive" is very large. On the other hand, if it fails or is late in responding to the flow of change, sooner or later it will be further left behind (Shodiq, 2011). Thus, *pesantren* are automatically abandoned by the community. *Pesantren* that are not responsive to change and do not immediately innovate will be left behind.

The changes made by Islamic boarding schools certainly have a specific purpose. The general purpose of a change (planned) in organizational life is actually an effort to improve the organizational ability to align itself with the various changes faced (Zaenurrosyid, Cholil, & Sholihah, 2020). In this context, there are two types of goals: first, to improve adaptability, which is the ability of an organization to feel and better understand both its internal and external environments and take a harmonious action to create better harmony or self-balance between the two environments. Second, the ability of a social system to continue to maintain its integrity and identity as a solid system by making adjustments to all forms of changes that occur, both in the external and internal environment (Supendi, Hasanah, & Mahmud, 2019). The problem is that changes are often not made with the right management and adequate human resources. It often happens that the changes made actually become

the beginning of the deterioration of the quality of education itself because it is not balanced by the ability to change properly.

Meanwhile, the quality of education is a process of doing the best from the early of the institution and making continuous and periodic improvements, starting from the determination of the vision, mission, goals, targets, implementation, control, monitoring, and evaluation which in this case is aimed at the substance of education that is more meaningful, starting from input, process, out-put, to the outcome level (Hadinata, Andari, Ansori, & Purwanti, 2023). In the educational environment, especially Islamic boarding schools, the satisfaction expected by the community will be realized if the Islamic boarding school succeeds in proving its sustainable quality and graduates from the Islamic boarding school can be useful to the community.

In essence, Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) have historically played a pivotal role in shaping Islamic education in Indonesia, functioning as institutions that preserve religious values while addressing societal needs through their distinctive educational models. Characterized by key elements such as the *kiai*, *santri*, mosques, dormitories, and classical yellow book studies, *pesantren* offer a culturally rooted educational approach, distinct from mainstream institutions. Over time, *pesantren* have evolved to meet the demands of a dynamic society, contributing significantly to both religious and social spheres. However, in the face of globalization, technological advancement, and complex societal shifts, *pesantren* encounter substantial challenges, particularly in balancing tradition with modern educational demands. Previous studies have extensively explored *pesantren*'s historical and cultural significance, yet there is still a paucity of research examining how organizational change within *pesantren* is strategically managed to maintain educational quality amidst modernization pressures. Furthermore, limited attention has been given to how *pesantren* integrate religious knowledge with contemporary science and technology without compromising their core identity. This study addresses these gaps by critically analysing how *pesantren* implement organizational changes, focusing on their adaptability strategies and quality assurance mechanisms.

The novelty of this research lies in its integrative approach, which combines organizational change theory, quality management frameworks, and the socio-cultural context of Islamic boarding schools. Unlike prior research that treats *pesantren* as static traditional institutions or entities separate from modern educational discourse, this study positions *pesantren* as dynamic organizations capable of innovation while preserving religious authenticity.

Accordingly, the primary aim of this research is to analyze how Islamic boarding schools manage organizational change to improve educational quality while maintaining their traditional values. Specifically, the study seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of change management strategies, the integration of modern knowledge systems, and the alignment of institutional practices with community expectations.

2. METHODS

2.1 Research Design

This study employs a qualitative research method with a phenomenological approach (Sugiyono, 2014). The qualitative design was chosen to enable an in-depth exploration of the lived experiences and perspectives of key stakeholders in Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), particularly regarding their change management practices. The phenomenological approach is appropriate for uncovering the subjective meanings, attitudes, and interpretations that underlie organizational changes in *pesantren*, offering insights into how these institutions navigate modernization while maintaining their core values (Suharsimi Arikunto, 2014).

Additionally, this research utilizes a case study design, which allows for an intensive, detailed examination of specific cases within their real-life context (Abduh, Alawiyah, Apriansyah, Abdullah, & Afghani, 2023). The focus on two case study sites — Al-Amanah Islamic Boarding School, Situbondo,

and Al-Mashduqiah Islamic Boarding School, Probolinggo—provides a comparative perspective on how different pesantren implement change strategies to improve educational quality.

2.2 Research Setting

The research was conducted at Al-Amanah Islamic Boarding School in Situbondo and Al-Mashduqiah Islamic Boarding School in Probolinggo, Indonesia. These two institutions were purposefully selected based on their reputation, long-standing history, and active engagement in change initiatives aimed at enhancing educational quality while preserving traditional Islamic values.

2.3 Data Collection Techniques

To gather comprehensive and credible data, the following techniques were employed:

1. **In-depth Interviews:** Interviews were conducted with key informants, including kiai (religious leaders), teachers, school administrators, and selected santri (students). These interviews aimed to capture personal experiences, perceptions, and strategies related to change management.
2. **Direct Observation:** The researcher observed the daily activities, institutional practices, and educational processes within both pesantren. This allowed for contextual understanding and validation of interview data.
3. **Document Analysis:** Relevant institutional documents such as school policies, vision and mission statements, quality assurance reports, and curriculum materials were reviewed. Document analysis helped triangulate findings and provided additional insights into the formal mechanisms guiding change and quality improvement.

2.4 Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis, allowing the researcher to identify recurring patterns, themes, and categories relevant to pesantren change management. The process involved organizing interview transcripts, field notes, and documents, followed by coding and categorizing the data. Themes were then synthesized to provide a holistic understanding of the phenomena studied.

2.5 Research Objectives

The primary objectives of this study are threefold:

1. **Discovery:** To uncover new and previously unexplored data regarding how pesantren manage organizational change.
2. **Verification:** To provide empirical evidence that addresses uncertainties about the effectiveness of these change initiatives.
3. **Development:** To deepen and expand existing knowledge on integrating religious education with contemporary educational demands (Moleong, 2019; Pahleviannur et al., 2022).

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The flow of change is so fast and runs linearly following the acceleration of human life today that it requires the formation of a social life system and the challenge of modern society which is identified as the antithesis of traditional society (Ruhayat, Didin Saepudin, Nirwan Syafrin, & Budi Handrianto, 2024). Although some experts argue that these changes occur in a non-linear, unsustainable and unpredictable manner, these premises have illustrated concern about human unpreparedness and, at the same time, are an encouragement to prepare for dialogue with their environment (Rosdiana & Aslami, 2022). Likewise with the changes made at Al-Amanah Islamic Boarding School and Al-Mashduqiah Islamic Boarding School. Through good and sustainable change management, the quality of education in both pesantren continues to experience significant improvement.

These two pesantren continue to make various improvements in all areas of education through a long process, strategies developed and solutions to various challenges faced. This section will describe

the findings in the field regarding the change management of Islamic boarding schools to improve the quality of their education.

3.1. Change process

All forms of change in society require pesantren to reorganise their education system which previously only focused on legal Islamic studies (Anwar, Mauliza, & Afkarina, 2021). So far, pesantren have been more centred on the regeneration of Muslim intellectuals only. That is why to meet the needs of the community and to answer the challenges of change, all elements that play a role, both at Al-Amanah Islamic Boarding School and Al-Mashduqiah Islamic Boarding School by making changes on all fields

The most fundamental change of Al-Amanah Islamic Boarding School is to establish formal institutions. Starting from PAUD, SDI, MTs (Islamic Junior High School) to MA (Islamic Senior High School). This combination can be seen from the establishment of formal institutions that exist today. Furthermore, *santri* are equipped with several skills, such as sewing, painting Qur'anic calligraphy, self-defence and communication science (Islam 2024). This effort is made to improve the quality of human resources as the main provision to improve the quality of education.

Meanwhile, Al-Mashduqiah Islamic Boarding School applies the Muallimin system to accelerate the process of change. With the Muallimin system, the learning process can be carried out in an integrated manner between general education models combined with religious learning. Most pesantren are still struggling with formal education institutions combined with Madrasah Diniyah, so the Muallimin system seems unfamiliar to the community. In addition, there are also some Islamic boarding schools that are purely *salafiyah*, do not provide formal education (Mukhlisin 2024). Although religiously based, Al-Mashduqiah Islamic Boarding School also enriches scientific knowledge such as mathematics, astronomy, and information technology.

Islamic boarding schools as the vanguard of Islamic education continue to learn from various cases that have occurred, long before the changes, pesantren firstly opened a broader, tolerant, and inclusive social relationship (Khoiriyah & Riyadi, 2023). These changes are not just opening conventional educational institutions, but in a competitive order of life and responding to the challenges of globalization. Meanwhile, in this modern era, people need a formal diploma. So, with a diploma, the students can easily pass on to a higher level. Both at school and in college (Mukhlisin 2024). Therefore, Al-Mashduqiah Islamic Boarding School combines non-formal institutions with formal institutions and the Muallimin system, which then becomes the co-curriculum at Al-Mashduqiah Islamic Boarding School.

Meanwhile, in Al-Amanah Islamic Boarding School, active students and alumni who are considered worthy and concerned about Al-Amanah Islamic Boarding School will be given a role in each institution and in the overall management of the pesantren to continue to devote themselves (Islam 2024). Alumni who excel are given special tasks to train *santri* so that their achievements continue in the next generation. In the midst of modernisation, globalisation, individualism, and an increasingly materialistic lifestyle, pesantren are still consistent and active in presenting an education system that continues to keep up with the times. Through alumni empowerment, motivation and *ruhl jihad* can be internalised in the education process because each alumni will have a high sense of belonging.

3.2. Change strategy

With various strategies, Islamic boarding schools have combined the modern education system with wider knowledge enrichment through formal institutions without damaging the positive values of Islamic boarding school culture (Zainal, Manumanoso Prasetyo, Aziz Yaacob, & Jamali, 2022). In addition, institutions in Islamic boarding schools are increasingly able to obtain new strengths in the form of quality educators (Rosi & Wahyuni, 2022). The strategies developed by Al-Amanah Islamic Boarding School are, first, needs analysis by conducting surveys to students, teachers, and parents to understand their needs and expectations regarding education. Second, the quality of education must

be evaluated by identifying strengths and weaknesses in the current education system. Third, integrated curriculum development by designing a curriculum that combines religious education with general subjects such as science, maths and skills. Fourth, curriculum flexibility by providing space for teachers to adjust teaching methods according to the needs of the santri. Fifth, training and improving the quality of teachers through regular training for teachers on innovative teaching methods and the latest curriculum. Sixth, the utilisation of technology in learning by integrating technology in the teaching and learning process, such as the use of educational applications and online platforms. Seventh, improving facilities and infrastructure through improving the quality of classrooms, laboratories, sports facilities and libraries. Eighth, a positive learning environment by creating a comfortable and conducive learning atmosphere (Ivan 2024).

On the other hand, the strategies implemented at Al-Mashduqiah Islamic Boarding School are, first, improving academic and non-academic achievements. Second, better learning outcomes. Many students have achieved achievements in academic and non-academic competitions at local, national and international levels. Third, foreign language skills (English, Arabic and Mandarin). This situation is evidenced by the santri who later studied in China, Japan, Egypt and Australia. Fourth, special programmes such as student exchanges and overseas scholarships. Fifth, the development of practical skills. Santri who participated in the entrepreneurship programme successfully started small businesses, such as food sales, handicrafts, or services. Fifth, technical skills through training in information technology, graphic design, and other practical skills. Sixth, creative learning methods by adopting active learning methods, such as project-based learning and case studies. So that *santri* can learn through direct experience and develop critical thinking and collaboration skills (Rifa'i 2024).

In addition, the change strategies should focus on innovation, visionary leadership, flexible adaptation, and strong collaboration, and these two pesantren can create an educational environment that is more relevant and responsive to *santri* achievement and the quality of pesantren education. Success in implementing this strategy is highly dependent on the commitment and active involvement of all stakeholders, including *santri*, teachers, parents, alumni, and the community.

3. 3. Challenges of Change

In every change, there are often challenges, both on a large and small scale, internal and external. Based on the findings of the research, several problems were faced. It is very natural for resistance to occur because the desire to change can pose a risk and increase workload (Dewi, 2016). Likewise, with the changes at Al-Amanah Islamic Boarding School. Everything does not just go like that. Everything requires such a long process. In addition, many things must be done and addressed. Among them are obstacles, challenges, and resistance from various parties. The resistance can be seen from the journey of Al-Amanah Islamic Boarding School at the beginning of its establishment, where not many people looked at Al-Amanah Islamic Boarding School as a place to study, recite the Koran and build character (Shaleh 2024). Moreover, in the vicinity of Al-Amanah Islamic Boarding School, there are large Islamic boarding schools that have long been established with their own characteristics.

For this reason, concrete steps are needed to overcome the challenges to the intended changes. With these steps, it is expected that changes can take place well, run smoothly, and be able to minimize the emergence of challenges (Naami, Mansouri, & Ma, 2023). Therefore, pesantren must be ready to face the challenges of an increasingly strict modern world. By integrating the pesantren curriculum with formal education, students will not only understand religion, but also be able to compete in the world of work, technology, and other scientific fields. This is important, because today's challenges are not only about faith and worship, but also about how we play a role in a dynamic global society (Rifa'i, 2024).

Every change has its challenges. One of the biggest challenges is maintaining a balance between religious and general education. Do not let the existence of formal education marginalize religious education. Pesantren must be able to develop a fair curriculum, where students still get in-depth religious teaching, but do not neglect general education. In addition, educators in pesantren also need to be ready to follow the development of this formal curriculum. Our teachers need to continue to learn

and improve their competencies (Mukhlisin 2024). Thus, overcoming obstacles to improving the quality of education in pesantren requires a holistic and collaborative approach. By involving all parties and providing the necessary support, pesantren can create a better and more relevant learning environment in the modern era.

Some individuals may feel threatened by change, especially if they feel unprepared to adjust to new methods. Uncertainty about how the change will affect their position and role can lead to resistance (Mukhlisin, 2024). Indeed, resistance to change in pesantren is natural and requires special attention. With the right approach, including socialization, training, and support from all stakeholders, this resistance can be overcome to improve the quality of education in pesantren (Rifa'i 2024). Therefore, the most effective solution to overcome change resistance is through a participatory approach that involves all stakeholders, balanced with clear education, proper human resource support, and a good evaluation system. In this way, change can be better accepted and effectively implemented to improve the quality of education.

The rapid development in science and technology inevitably causes pesantren institutions to make a series of changes. Changes must be made for the development and progress of the pesantren itself (Roqib, 2021). Therefore, to manage these changes, it is necessary to have a clear vision and contacts, which are then elaborated in the mission, and supported by skills, incentives, and resources (physical and non-physical, including quality human resources), which are then realized in a clear work plan (Zafi, Jamaluddin, Partono, Fuadi, & Chamadi, 2021). Thus, change will occur. Therefore, the real challenge to managing change at Al-Amanah Islamic Boarding School is to answer the public's view that a superior pesantren is a pesantren inhabited by intelligent students who are superior in intelligence or at least superior in material terms. Or vice versa, that pesantren is like a "workshop" that is tasked with repairing and fixing damaged goods (Islam 2024). In a sense, pesantren is not only a place of learning, but only as a fulfillment for children who when at home have poor character, are lazy to go to school, or trouble their parents so that their parents send them to pesantren.

In some pesantren, the community is sometimes considered a place to live, like rented accommodation. So the jargon "nyantri while going to school" then changes to "school while nyantri". Pesantren is no longer seen as a solution, but as an option. This situation is a challenge for Al-Amanah Islamic Boarding School, which stands in the middle of the hustle and bustle of the urban Situbondo area. Another challenge is the source of funds to build pesantren facilities and infrastructure. Without adequate funds, it is impossible for development to run smoothly. With very affordable tuition fees, *santri* needs can be met such as dormitories, places of worship, schools and madrasas, libraries, language and Mathematics laboratories, and sports facilities (Ivan 2024). In today's digital era, technology integration in education is a must. However, not all boarding schools are ready to adapt to the latest technology. Some *santri* and teachers may not have the necessary skills to use digital tools effectively. Training and technical support are crucial, but these challenges take time and effort to overcome.

The biggest challenge at Pondok Pesantren Al-Amanah is resistance from various parties. Some *santri*, teachers, and even parents may feel comfortable with the traditional way of learning. There is a concern that the new approach will change the essence of religious education that has existed for many years. To overcome this, there needs to be clear communication about the benefits of change, as well as the involvement of all parties in the planning process. This often leads to uncertainty and discomfort when trying new approaches. In addition, limited resources and facilities are also an obstacle. As such, we need to provide sufficient support and training to help them adapt. In addition, there are also challenges in providing relevant and up-to-date learning materials. For this reason, we hold open discussions to listen to their input, so that they feel involved in the change process. Some students do feel comfortable with the old way of learning. However, after they experienced the new teaching method, many of them felt more engaged and enthusiastic (Shaleh, 2024). The quality of education is highly dependent on the quality of teachers. Many Islamic boarding schools have difficulty in recruiting

teachers who are qualified to teach general subjects such as science and foreign languages. As such, ongoing training and professional development programs are essential, but also a challenge.

Other challenges are the strengthening of community demands for quality pesantren education, the high competition regarding the quality of education both at the regional and national levels, the projecting of schools in the country to be developed into Rintisan Sekolah Bertaraf Internasional, and the establishment of national education standards to measure the level of progress and quality of educational institutions, including pesantren. People are also increasingly realizing that *pesantren* education is their last hope to educate and foster the morals of their children (Islam 2024). Adjusting the existing curriculum to make it more relevant to the needs of the times is a big challenge. Islamic boarding schools must be able to create a curriculum that not only teaches religious knowledge, but also skills needed in the modern world. This requires in-depth research and development so that the material taught is in line with the times.

3.4. Quality of education

Some steps taken by Al-Amanah Islamic Boarding School to improve the quality of education are first, teacher training and capacity building. To ensure that teachers and pesantren managers have adequate competencies, the pesantren organizes training programs and workshops regularly. This program includes innovative teaching methods, curriculum development, and education management. Through systematic training, teachers can adopt more modern and effective approaches in the teaching and learning process, so that santri get a better educational experience. Second, the provision of curriculum and learning materials. Pesantren provide an integrated curriculum between religious and general education. By developing a relevant standardized curriculum, pesantren can more easily implement comprehensive education. In addition, the provision of quality learning materials, such as textbooks, modules, and digital resources to support the learning process of students. Third, access to technology and infrastructure. Pesantren provide technological facilities, such as internet networks, computer devices, and modern educational tools. Santri can utilize technology for learning, such as online learning and wider research (Islam 2024).

Meanwhile, Al-Mashduqiah Islamic Boarding School applies several steps so that the quality of education can be improved, namely first, financial support to ensure the sustainability and improvement of the quality of education in pesantren. This support is needed to improve the quality of education, conduct training, use various facilities, conduct comparative studies, and promote cooperation. Second, pesantren encourages cooperation between other pesantren to establish teacher and student exchange programs, collaboration in research, or implementation of joint activities. Third, pesantren organize community service programs. Through this program, *santri* can contribute to social activities, such as education for children in underprivileged areas, health counseling, and environmental activities (Mukhlisin 2024).

Through these strategic steps, boarding schools not only improve the quality of education but also strengthen their position in society. Achievements will be a reflection of the quality of education provided and create a positive impact on the wider community. In the future, it is important for both institutions to continue to adapt, learn from each other's experiences, and maintain a balance between tradition and innovation to improve the quality of boarding school education in Indonesia.

Discussion

The description of the two Islamic boarding schools shows how the pesantren responds to various changes around them. To face various changes and challenges, all elements involved in Al-Amanah Islamic Boarding School and Al-Mashduqiah Islamic Boarding School do not just and hastily transform pesantren institutions into fully modern Islamic education institutions. On the contrary, they tend to maintain a more prudent policy. They accept changes and updates or modernization of Islamic education in management and control without leaving the peculiarities of their pesantren to survive.

The theory of change developed by Kurt Lewin (unfreeze, change, and refreeze) offers a systematic framework for understanding and managing the change process in various contexts, including education in Islamic boarding schools (Khofifuddin, 2019). In an educational environment full of tradition and religious values, the application of this theory becomes urgent to improve the quality of education so that students can better face the challenges of modern times (Siregar & Prasetyo, 2023). Similarly, Al-Amanah Islamic Boarding School and Al-Mashduqiah Islamic Boarding School continue to experience constant growth, both in the number of students and institutions established. In addition, the two *pesantren* did not stop at the madrasa experiment as usual. Both *pesantren* have established formal institutions under two different ministries. This development provides benefits beyond the identity of *pesantren* as *tafaqquh fiddin*, preparing candidates for kiai and ulama, but in all segments of life such as in government, social organizations, and the world of work. That way, *pesantren* not only come to survive. But further than all that, with responsiveness, adjustment, transformation, and innovation, *pesantren* are able to develop themselves and even re-place themselves in a much more important position in the education system in Indonesia.

Besides, there are many advantages and also advantages with the inclusion of science materials in Islamic boarding schools. First, scientific integration is seen as a unity of all sciences. There is no longer a dichotomy between religious and general sciences. Second, *pesantren* quickly adapt to the changes and demands of the times and the needs of the community. As for the advantages, first, *santri* study in the *pesantren* because of worship. Second, teaching kiai and all educators or teachers in *pesantren* is almost entirely based on sincerity. Third, students are trained and educated to live independently. So that maturation is faster. Fourth, learning takes place for 24 hours so that the knowledge absorbed is also broader.

For both KH Syaiful Islam and KH Mukhlisin, the most fundamental change must be started by the people within. Without people changes, changes do not necessarily produce good quality. The quality of education also refers to the success of *santri* learning which includes various aspects, namely the relevant curriculum, the quality of teachers, the learning environment, and the achievements achieved by the *santri*. Ultimately, it did not take long for the two *pesantren* to improve the quality of education by building educational institutions both formal and non-formal, public libraries, sports facilities, skills, mastery of foreign languages and academic and non-academic achievements.

Based on the findings at Al-Amanah Islamic Boarding School and Al-Mashduqiah Islamic Boarding School, culturally, Islamic boarding schools have four important roles in the midst of society, namely serving for dry spirituality, instilling Islamic values, inheriting *pesantren* culture, and participating in building the nation's civilization. So that, from these four important roles, the changes made by boarding schools have a major impact on improving the quality of education. Therefore, in an effort to realize these lofty ideals, good and organized cooperation is needed between *pesantren* leaders (Kiai), *santri* guardians, the community and stakeholders with all components of the *pesantren* to carry out the process of changing *pesantren*, especially in improving the quality of education.

Kurt Lewin's theory of change provides a clear and structured framework for understanding and managing change in boarding school education. Through the unfreeze, change, and refreeze stages carried out in a planned manner, *pesantren* can create an educational environment that is more responsive and adaptive to the needs of students. The application of this theory not only improves the quality of education, but also strengthens the relationship between all stakeholders in the *pesantren* community. Thus, this approach can be an effective strategy to create quality and relevant education in the modern era, while still respecting and preserving existing traditional values. This process is expected to create a generation of *santri* who are not only knowledgeable but also have a strong character and are able to contribute positively to society.

By using the framework developed by Kurt Lewin, Pondok Pesantren Al-Amanah and Al-Mashduqiah, we can design effective change strategies to improve the quality of education. The success in implementing this strategy is highly dependent on the support of all stakeholders, including alumni,

community, and parents, as well as the commitment to continue learning and adapting to the times so that the pesantren can successfully achieve the desired quality of education.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the dynamic social changes in society necessitate Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) to reorganize and adapt their educational systems, which have traditionally focused on formal Islamic legal studies. Both Al-Amanah Islamic Boarding School and Al-Mashduqiah Islamic Boarding School demonstrate proactive change management strategies to meet evolving community needs and educational challenges. The research identifies four key elements crucial to successful pesantren change management: (1) the pivotal role of the *kiai* as the initiator, leader, and maintainer of institutional change; (2) the essential contribution of dedicated and competent human resources to drive both traditional and institutional reforms; (3) the sustainability of the pesantren depends on collaborative leadership that integrates the efforts of *kiai*, administrators, teachers, and the guardians of both students and *santri*; and (4) the strategic vision and decisions of the *kiai* significantly influence the institution's ability to transform obstacles and resistance into opportunities for growth. However, this research has certain limitations, particularly its focus on only two case study sites, which may not fully represent the diversity of pesantren practices across Indonesia. Additionally, the study's qualitative nature limits the generalizability of its findings. Future research is recommended to expand the scope by incorporating a larger sample of pesantren, applying mixed-method approaches, and exploring the long-term impact of organizational change on student outcomes. Further investigation into how pesantren integrate modern educational technologies while preserving their traditional identity would also offer valuable insights for advancing Islamic education in the contemporary era.

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