

Reconstructing Islamic Education Governance through *Pesantren* Values: A Multi-Site Model for Building Globally Competitive Islamic Boarding Schools

Abdul Halim^{1✉}, Syamsun Niam², Ahmad Muhtadi Anshor³, Syahril Siddik⁴, Mujamil⁵, Kojin⁶

¹Universitas Bondowoso, Indonesia

^{2,3,4,5,6}Universitas Islam Negeri Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung, Indonesia

Abstract

This study aims to reconstruct Islamic education governance through *pesantren* values by developing a multi-site governance model that strengthens institutional excellence and global competitiveness. The research responds to the growing need for governance frameworks that preserve the philosophical identity of Islamic boarding schools while adapting to educational transformation in the digital and global era. A qualitative approach with a multi-site case study design was employed at Salafiyah-Syafi'iyah Islamic Boarding School in Sukorejo, Situbondo, and Al Qodiri Islamic Boarding School in Jember, Indonesia. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, document analysis, and field notes, and analyzed using the interactive model of data condensation, data display, and conclusion verification. The findings reveal that effective Islamic education governance is built upon the integration of value-based leadership, *pesantren* organizational culture, strategic educational management, integrated curriculum, professional human resource development, collaborative governance, and continuous quality assurance. These interconnected components contribute significantly to institutional innovation, educational quality, organizational resilience, and graduate competitiveness. The study proposes a *Pesantren*-Based Islamic Education Governance Model as its primary theoretical contribution, demonstrating that traditional Islamic values can serve as strategic organizational resources for sustainable institutional transformation. The findings imply that educational policymakers and *pesantren* leaders should integrate religious values with contemporary governance practices to strengthen institutional performance and prepare globally competitive graduates while preserving the authentic identity of Islamic boarding schools.

Keywords: Islamic Education Governance, *Pesantren* Values, Educational Leadership, Organizational Culture, Global Competitiveness

Article History:

Received: July 2025; Revised: September 2025; Accepted: November 2025

✉ **Correspondence Author:** abdulhalimhalim7423@gmail.com

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.61987/edsojou.v3i2.2959>

How to Cite:

Halim, A., Niam, S., Anshor, A. M., Siddik, S., Mujamil, M., & Kojin, K. (2025). Reconstructing Islamic Education Governance through *Pesantren* Values: A Multi-Site Model for Building Globally Competitive Islamic Boarding Schools. *Education and Sociedad Journal*, 3(2), 160-175.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid transformation of globalization, digital technology, and the knowledge-based economy has fundamentally reshaped the governance of educational institutions worldwide. Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), as one of Indonesia's oldest and most influential Islamic educational institutions, are increasingly challenged to preserve their traditional educational identity while simultaneously responding to global demands for educational quality, institutional accountability, and international competitiveness. This dual responsibility requires *pesantren* to

reconstruct their educational governance by integrating deeply rooted *pesantren* values with modern governance principles that emphasize effectiveness, innovation, transparency, collaboration, and continuous quality improvement (Bush, 2020; Hallinger, 2021). Consequently, governance has become a strategic issue in ensuring that Islamic educational institutions remain relevant in the twenty-first century without abandoning their religious and cultural foundations.

In Indonesia, *pesantren* have historically played significant roles in religious education, character formation, social empowerment, and community development. Their educational philosophy is grounded in distinctive values such as sincerity (*ikhlas*), simplicity (*kesederhanaan*), independence (*kemandirian*), Islamic brotherhood (*ukhuwah Islamiyah*), discipline, moderation (*wasatiyyah*), and respect for scholarly traditions. These values have enabled *pesantren* to survive social and political changes for centuries while maintaining strong public trust (Afandi, 2022). However, contemporary educational challenges including digital transformation, international quality standards, technological innovation, global labor market competition, and changing expectations of students and stakeholders—require *pesantren* to adopt more adaptive governance models. Traditional administrative systems that rely heavily on charismatic leadership and informal organizational structures often face limitations in responding effectively to increasingly complex educational environments (Desfitri et al., 2024; Andiono et al., 2024).

Recent educational reforms have encouraged Islamic educational institutions to strengthen institutional governance through strategic planning, quality assurance systems, digital administration, human resource development, and collaborative partnerships. Nevertheless, governance transformation in many *pesantren* remains uneven because modernization initiatives are frequently implemented without sufficiently integrating the philosophical values that distinguish *pesantren* from other educational institutions (Baqir et al., 2023). As a result, governance reforms sometimes improve managerial efficiency but unintentionally weaken the institutional culture that has historically become the foundation of *pesantren* excellence. Therefore, reconstructing Islamic education governance should not merely involve adopting modern management techniques but should also preserve and revitalize *pesantren* values as the primary source of institutional identity and organizational sustainability.

Previous studies have extensively discussed Islamic educational leadership, *pesantren* management, organizational culture, and educational quality improvement. Bush (2020) emphasized that effective educational governance depends on strategic leadership and institutional accountability. Hallinger (2021) highlighted the importance of adaptive leadership in improving educational performance under rapidly changing environments. Within the Indonesian context, Sutomo et al. (2024) explained the sociocultural foundations of *pesantren*, while Purwanto and Wafa (2023) analyzed the modernization of Islamic education in response to globalization. More recent studies have explored digital transformation in *pesantren* management, quality assurance systems, and organizational innovation; however, these studies generally examine governance, organizational culture, leadership, or educational innovation as separate dimensions rather than as an integrated governance framework rooted in *pesantren* values. Consequently, the relationship between traditional *pesantren* philosophy and contemporary governance practices remains insufficiently theorized.

This limitation reveals an important knowledge gap. Existing literature has paid limited attention to how *pesantren* values can be systematically reconstructed into a comprehensive governance model capable of strengthening institutional excellence while enhancing global competitiveness. Most governance studies focus primarily on managerial effectiveness, whereas studies on *pesantren* values often emphasize religious and cultural preservation without explaining their practical contribution to institutional governance. Furthermore, empirical studies employing a

multi-site approach to compare governance practices across leading *pesantren* remain relatively scarce. This gap indicates the need for a more integrative governance framework that simultaneously accommodates organizational effectiveness, institutional sustainability, educational innovation, and the preservation of Islamic values.

Responding to this gap, the present study proposes a reconstruction of Islamic education governance through *pesantren* values by developing a multi-site governance model based on two prominent Islamic boarding schools: Salafiyah-Syafi'iyah Sukorejo Situbondo and Al Qodiri Jember. These institutions were selected because both have demonstrated sustained educational development while preserving strong *pesantren* traditions amid contemporary educational transformation. The originality of this study lies in integrating governance theory, organizational culture, Islamic educational philosophy, and *pesantren* values into a single conceptual framework for building globally competitive Islamic boarding schools. Rather than positioning tradition and modernization as contradictory paradigms, this study argues that *pesantren* values constitute strategic institutional capital that can strengthen governance effectiveness, organizational resilience, educational quality, and international competitiveness. Accordingly, this research aims to analyze the reconstruction of Islamic education governance based on *pesantren* values, identify the governance mechanisms that contribute to institutional excellence, and formulate a multi-site governance model that supports globally competitive Islamic boarding schools while maintaining their authentic Islamic identity.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research approach using a multi-site case study design to explore and reconstruct Islamic education governance based on *pesantren* values for building globally competitive Islamic boarding schools. A qualitative approach was selected because the study sought to obtain an in-depth understanding of governance practices, organizational culture, educational values, and institutional transformation within their natural settings. The multi-site case study enabled cross-case comparisons to identify both shared patterns and unique governance characteristics between two leading *pesantren*, thereby enhancing the credibility and transferability of the findings.

The research was conducted at Salafiyah-Syafi'iyah Islamic Boarding School, Sukorejo, Situbondo, and Al Qodiri Islamic Boarding School, Jember, East Java, Indonesia. These institutions were purposively selected because they have demonstrated sustained educational excellence, institutional innovation, and successful integration of traditional *pesantren* values with contemporary educational management. Moreover, both *pesantren* have developed comprehensive educational systems encompassing formal, non-formal, and religious education while maintaining strong commitments to Islamic traditions and community empowerment.

The researcher served as the primary research instrument, directly engaging with participants and interpreting the meanings embedded in educational governance practices. Prolonged engagement, continuous observation, and reflective field notes were employed to enhance the trustworthiness of the study. Research participants were selected through purposive sampling, involving individuals who possessed substantial knowledge and direct experience related to institutional governance. Informants consisted of *pesantren* leaders (*kyai*), vice directors, principals of formal educational institutions, administrative managers, senior teachers, boarding supervisors, and selected students. Additional supporting information was obtained from alumni and community representatives familiar with institutional development.

Table 1. Research Participants and Data Sources

Participants	Selection Criteria	Data Collection Techniques
<i>Pesantren</i> Leaders (<i>Kyai</i>)	Institutional policy makers	In-depth interviews
Vice Directors/Board Members	Governance and strategic planning	Semi-structured interviews
School Principals	Academic management	Interviews, observation
Senior Teachers	Curriculum implementation	Interviews, observation
Administrative Staff	Administrative governance	Interviews, document analysis
Students	Learning and boarding experiences	Focused interviews, observation
Documents	Strategic plans, regulations, reports, curriculum	Documentation analysis

Data were collected through four complementary techniques. First, in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore participants' experiences, perceptions, and governance practices related to leadership, organizational culture, educational management, and institutional innovation. Second, participant observation was carried out to examine everyday governance activities, decision-making processes, educational interactions, disciplinary systems, and the implementation of *pesantren* values in both academic and non-academic settings. Third, document analysis included institutional strategic plans, organizational structures, curriculum documents, quality assurance reports, internal regulations, accreditation reports, annual work programs, and other official records. Finally, field notes and reflective memos were systematically maintained throughout the research process to capture contextual information and emerging analytical insights.

Data analysis followed the interactive model consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. During data condensation, interview transcripts, observation records, and documentary evidence were coded and categorized into meaningful themes related to Islamic education governance, *pesantren* values, organizational culture, leadership, innovation, and global competitiveness. The categorized data were then organized into thematic matrices and comparative displays to facilitate within-case and cross-case analyses. Finally, conclusions were developed through continuous verification by comparing findings across multiple data sources and research sites until consistent patterns emerged.

To ensure research trustworthiness, the study applied four qualitative validity criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility was strengthened through source triangulation, method triangulation, prolonged engagement, member checking, and peer debriefing. Transferability was supported by providing detailed contextual descriptions of both research sites. Dependability was maintained through an audit trail documenting every stage of the research process, while confirmability was achieved by preserving documentary evidence, interview transcripts, and analytical memos to ensure that the findings were grounded in empirical data rather than researcher bias. This rigorous methodological framework enabled the development of a comprehensive governance model that integrates *pesantren* values with contemporary educational governance for globally competitive Islamic boarding schools.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Reconstructing Islamic Education Governance

The findings demonstrate that the reconstruction of Islamic education governance in Salafiyah-Syafi'iyah Sukorejo Islamic Boarding School and Al Qodiri Islamic Boarding School is fundamentally grounded in the preservation of *pesantren* values while simultaneously responding to contemporary educational demands. Interviews with *pesantren* leaders, principals, teachers, administrators, students, and alumni consistently revealed that governance is not merely understood as an administrative mechanism but as an integrated system that combines Islamic

leadership, organizational culture, educational management, and institutional accountability. Governance reconstruction therefore reflects a continuous process of integrating traditional *pesantren* philosophy with modern educational management without eliminating the authentic identity of Islamic boarding schools (Nasith et al., 2023).

Observation data indicate that both *pesantren* have successfully maintained their classical educational traditions while adopting contemporary governance practices. Daily educational activities continue to emphasize *tafaqquh fi al-din*, character education, discipline, and spiritual development through regular religious studies, congregational prayers, Qur'anic learning, and moral supervision. Simultaneously, both institutions have introduced strategic planning, digital administration, quality assurance systems, performance evaluation, financial accountability, and structured organizational management. This coexistence illustrates that governance modernization is implemented as institutional strengthening rather than institutional transformation that replaces traditional values.

Interviews with the Kyai of both *pesantren* revealed that institutional governance is always guided by the classical *pesantren* principle:

"Al-Muhafazhah 'ala al-Qadim al-Shalih wa al-Akhdzu bi al-Jadid al-Ashlah" (Maintaining valuable traditions while adopting better innovations).

This philosophy serves as the primary governance framework for educational decision-making. Every institutional innovation—including curriculum development, digital learning, administrative modernization, international collaboration, and human resource development is evaluated based on its compatibility with Islamic teachings and *pesantren* values. Consequently, modernization is interpreted as an instrument for improving educational quality rather than replacing the religious identity of the institution.

Observation further indicates that organizational culture significantly influences governance implementation. Unlike conventional educational institutions that primarily rely on formal regulations, *pesantren* governance combines formal organizational structures with informal moral authority. The charismatic leadership of the Kyai remains central in shaping institutional vision, while operational management is delegated to professional administrators through participatory decision-making. This governance structure creates organizational flexibility while maintaining institutional cohesion.

Interviews with school principals confirmed that governance responsibilities are distributed across several organizational units responsible for curriculum development, student affairs, financial management, boarding supervision, community relations, and quality assurance (Efendi et al., 2022). Although authority is decentralized operationally, all strategic decisions remain aligned with *pesantren* values and institutional vision established by the Kyai. This combination of spiritual leadership and professional management creates a governance system that is both adaptive and value-oriented.

Teachers interviewed emphasized that governance reconstruction also affects instructional management. Curriculum integration combines religious sciences with general education, entrepreneurship, digital literacy, foreign languages, leadership development, and community engagement. Classroom observations confirmed that teachers are encouraged to implement student-centered learning while maintaining Islamic ethics, discipline, and respect toward teachers. Consequently, governance extends beyond administrative arrangements into the pedagogical process itself.

Students consistently described governance as a system that develops both academic competence and moral responsibility. They highlighted that disciplinary rules, mentoring systems, boarding activities, leadership training, and extracurricular programs cultivate independence,

cooperation, honesty, responsibility, and social awareness. Such findings indicate that governance contributes significantly to holistic student development.

Document analysis further demonstrates that institutional strategic plans explicitly integrate *pesantren* values into governance objectives. Vision statements, educational policies, curriculum documents, quality assurance manuals, and annual development plans consistently emphasize religious commitment, educational excellence, innovation, professionalism, and community service. These documents confirm that governance reconstruction is institutionalized through formal regulations rather than remaining solely a philosophical aspiration.

Table 1. Reconstruction of Islamic Education Governance Based on *Pesantren* Values

Governance Dimension	Salafiyah-Syafi'iyah Sukorejo		Al Qodiri Jember	Common Characteristics
Leadership	Kyai-centered leadership	strategic	Charismatic-participatory leadership	Spiritual and visionary leadership
Organizational Culture	Discipline, independence	sincerity,	Spirituality, service, discipline	<i>Pesantren</i> values as institutional culture
Educational Management	Integrated curriculum		Integrated curriculum	Religious and general education integration
Administration	Digital and manual systems		Digital administration	Accountability and transparency
Quality Assurance	Internal evaluation		Continuous improvement	Sustainable quality culture

Table 1 demonstrates that although each *pesantren* possesses distinctive organizational characteristics, both institutions share a common governance philosophy emphasizing value-based leadership, organizational accountability, educational innovation, and continuous institutional improvement. Governance reconstruction therefore represents the harmonization of Islamic values with modern management principles rather than the replacement of one by the other.

The cross-site analysis also identified six core *pesantren* values embedded within governance reconstruction: ikhlas (sincerity), amanah (trustworthiness), ukhuwah (brotherhood), kemandirian (self-reliance), musyawarah (consultative decision-making), and khidmah (service). These values function as governance principles guiding leadership behavior, organizational communication, conflict resolution, human resource development, and institutional decision-making. Their consistent implementation contributes to organizational resilience and strengthens institutional legitimacy among students, parents, alumni, and surrounding communities.

The findings indicate that governance reconstruction in both *pesantren* is not driven solely by external policy reforms or educational accreditation requirements. Instead, it emerges from the dynamic interaction between Islamic educational philosophy, organizational culture, institutional leadership, and contemporary governance practices. This interaction enables *pesantren* to maintain their religious authenticity while continuously adapting to educational transformation, thereby establishing a strong foundation for institutional excellence and global competitiveness.

Governance Innovation for Institutional Excellence

Institutional excellence in Salafiyah-Syafi'iyah Sukorejo Islamic Boarding School and Al Qodiri Islamic Boarding School is strongly influenced by continuous governance innovation. Unlike conventional educational reforms that primarily emphasize administrative modernization, governance innovation in both *pesantren* integrates organizational innovation with Islamic educational philosophy and *pesantren* values. Interviews with *pesantren* leaders, principals, teachers, administrative staff, and students indicate that innovation is perceived as a continuous institutional process aimed at improving educational quality while preserving the identity and traditions of *pesantren*.

Interviews with the Kyai and vice directors demonstrated that governance innovation begins with institutional vision. Both *pesantren* formulate long-term strategic plans that prioritize educational quality, religious character formation, organizational sustainability, and global competitiveness. The vision is translated into measurable strategic objectives through annual institutional planning, performance evaluation, and continuous quality improvement programs. Informants consistently emphasized that innovation should never undermine *pesantren* traditions but rather strengthen their relevance in contemporary society.

Observation data further revealed significant innovation in organizational management. Both institutions have adopted integrated administrative systems to improve efficiency, transparency, and institutional accountability. Student administration, academic records, financial management, personnel administration, and institutional reporting are increasingly supported by digital technologies. Administrative staff explained that digitalization has accelerated decision-making processes, minimized administrative errors, facilitated information sharing, and improved service quality for students, parents, and stakeholders. Nevertheless, digital transformation is carefully supervised to ensure that technological advancement remains aligned with Islamic ethical principles and institutional values.

Another important innovation concerns curriculum governance. Document analysis and classroom observations indicate that both *pesantren* have developed an integrative curriculum combining Islamic sciences, general education, digital literacy, foreign language proficiency, entrepreneurship, leadership education, and character development. Teachers explained that curriculum integration enables students to acquire religious competence while simultaneously developing twenty-first-century skills necessary for higher education, professional careers, and community leadership.

The findings also demonstrate substantial innovation in human resource management (Tri, 2023b). Professional development programs are regularly organized to enhance teachers' pedagogical competence, digital literacy, research capacity, curriculum implementation, and instructional innovation. Interviews with teachers revealed that participation in workshops, academic seminars, collaborative training, and comparative studies has become an integral component of institutional governance. Such initiatives contribute not only to improving instructional quality but also to strengthening teachers' commitment to lifelong learning and institutional development.

Leadership innovation represents another distinctive characteristic identified during the field study. Although the Kyai remains the highest authority, governance practices increasingly emphasize participatory leadership involving vice directors, principals, department heads, teachers, and administrative personnel. Interviews indicate that strategic decisions are generally preceded by consultative meetings (*musyawarah*), allowing diverse perspectives to be considered before institutional policies are implemented (Wahyudin, 2022). This participatory approach strengthens organizational ownership, institutional commitment, and collective responsibility among all members of the *pesantren* community.

Community engagement also emerged as an important governance innovation. Both *pesantren* have established collaborative partnerships with universities, government institutions, private organizations, alumni associations, and local communities. Interviews with administrators revealed that these partnerships support curriculum enrichment, student internships, entrepreneurship programs, community service activities, teacher professional development, and institutional resource mobilization. Such collaborations expand institutional networks while increasing the social relevance of *pesantren* education.

Observation findings further indicate that innovation extends beyond academic management into student development. Leadership training, entrepreneurship education, digital competency programs, foreign language development, extracurricular organizations, and community empowerment initiatives are systematically integrated into boarding life. Students consistently reported that these activities enhance confidence, leadership capacity, communication skills, teamwork, and social responsibility. Consequently, governance innovation contributes to producing graduates who demonstrate both academic competence and strong Islamic character.

Document analysis confirms that institutional innovation is continuously monitored through internal quality assurance mechanisms. Annual evaluations assess curriculum implementation, teaching effectiveness, student achievement, organizational performance, financial accountability, infrastructure development, and stakeholder satisfaction (Sufyan et al., 2020). Evaluation results become the basis for continuous institutional improvement, ensuring that governance innovation remains dynamic and responsive to emerging educational challenges.

Table 2. Governance Innovations Supporting Institutional Excellence

Governance Innovation	Salafiyah-Syafi'iyah Sukorejo		Al Qodiri Jember		Institutional Impact	
Strategic Planning	Long-term roadmap	institutional	Integrated management	strategic	Sustainable development	institutional
Digital Administration	Academic and boarding information systems		Digital administrative services		Greater efficiency and transparency	
Curriculum Innovation	Integration of religious and general sciences		Competency-based integrated curriculum		Holistic competencies	graduate
Human Resource Development	Teacher training and research programs		Continuous development	professional	Improved quality	instructional
Participatory Leadership	Consultative decision-making		Collaborative structure	governance	Strong commitment	organizational
External Collaboration	Universities, alumni	government,	Government, sector	NGOs, private	Expanded networks	institutional
Quality Assurance	Internal evaluation	monitoring and	Continuous assessment	institutional	Continuous improvement	quality

Table 2 illustrates that governance innovation in both *pesantren* encompasses strategic, managerial, academic, and organizational dimensions. Rather than introducing isolated reforms, innovation is implemented as an integrated governance system that strengthens institutional effectiveness while preserving *pesantren* identity. Each innovation contributes directly to educational quality, organizational sustainability, stakeholder satisfaction, and institutional competitiveness.

Cross-site comparison further reveals that successful governance innovation depends upon the interaction of four principal factors. First, visionary leadership provides strategic direction while safeguarding *pesantren* values. Second, organizational culture encourages innovation without compromising Islamic ethics. Third, participatory governance promotes collaboration among institutional stakeholders. Fourth, continuous evaluation ensures that governance innovations remain adaptive to changing educational environments.

The findings therefore demonstrate that institutional excellence is not merely the product of technological modernization or managerial efficiency. Instead, excellence emerges from the successful integration of *pesantren* values, visionary leadership, organizational learning, professional management, and continuous innovation. Governance innovation thus becomes a strategic mechanism through which Islamic boarding schools maintain educational relevance while strengthening their competitiveness in an increasingly global educational landscape.

A Multi-Site Governance Model for Building Globally Competitive Islamic Boarding Schools

The formulation of a Multi-Site Islamic Education Governance Model derived from a cross-case analysis of governance practices at Salafiyah-Syafi'iyah Sukorejo Islamic Boarding School and Al Qodiri Islamic Boarding School. The comparative analysis indicates that both institutions have successfully developed governance systems capable of preserving *pesantren* traditions while responding to the challenges of globalization, digital transformation, educational quality assurance, and international competitiveness. Although each *pesantren* possesses distinctive organizational characteristics, the analysis reveals common governance components that constitute an integrated governance model for Islamic boarding schools.

The model emerged through systematic comparison of interview transcripts, participant observations, institutional documents, and field notes. Data coding identified recurring themes related to leadership, organizational culture, strategic management, curriculum governance, human resource development, institutional networking, quality assurance, and graduate competitiveness. These themes were subsequently synthesized into an integrated governance framework illustrating how *pesantren* values function as the foundation for institutional transformation.

Interviews with *pesantren* leaders consistently emphasized that governance reconstruction begins with visionary and value-based leadership. The Kyai serves not merely as an institutional leader but as the guardian of *pesantren* values and the principal architect of organizational transformation. Leadership decisions are continuously guided by Islamic ethical principles, collective responsibility, and long-term institutional sustainability (Mauludi, 2021). Both institutions demonstrated that successful governance depends upon balancing charismatic leadership with professional management practices.

The second component identified is organizational culture based on *pesantren* values. Observation findings indicate that institutional culture is reflected in everyday educational activities, disciplinary systems, interpersonal relationships, decision-making processes, and community service programs. Core values including *ikhlas* (sincerity), *amanah* (trustworthiness), *ukhuwah* (brotherhood), *ta'awun* (mutual cooperation), *musyawarah* (consultative decision-making), *khidmah* (service), and *kemandirian* (self-reliance) shape organizational behavior at every institutional level. Unlike conventional governance models emphasizing administrative compliance, *pesantren* governance prioritizes moral commitment as the principal mechanism for ensuring organizational effectiveness.

A third finding concerns strategic educational management. Both *pesantren* employ structured planning processes integrating institutional vision, curriculum development, human resource management, infrastructure planning, financial accountability, and community engagement. Strategic planning is reviewed periodically through participatory evaluation involving institutional leaders, teachers, administrators, and supporting staff. This governance mechanism enables both institutions to remain adaptive while preserving institutional stability.

Curriculum governance also emerged as a central component of the proposed model. Interviews and classroom observations confirmed that curriculum development extends beyond academic achievement by integrating Islamic knowledge, general sciences, technological literacy, entrepreneurship, foreign language mastery, leadership education, and character development. Such curriculum integration produces graduates possessing comprehensive competencies that respond to national educational standards while preparing students for global competition.

Human resource governance constitutes another important component identified through cross-site analysis. Both *pesantren* invest significantly in teacher recruitment, professional development, performance evaluation, leadership succession, and institutional capacity building (Manaf, 2023). Teachers are encouraged to pursue postgraduate education, participate in

professional training, conduct educational research, and develop innovative learning strategies. Continuous professional development strengthens institutional adaptability and promotes educational excellence.

The findings further indicate that collaborative governance significantly contributes to institutional development. Partnerships with universities, government agencies, religious organizations, alumni associations, industries, and international institutions expand educational opportunities and strengthen institutional reputation (Hidayatullah et al., 2025). Collaboration supports curriculum enrichment, research activities, student internships, entrepreneurship development, scholarship programs, and international academic exchanges. Consequently, *pesantren* governance increasingly operates within broader educational networks rather than functioning as isolated institutions.

Quality assurance represents another key governance component. Institutional documents demonstrate systematic implementation of planning, monitoring, evaluation, internal audits, accreditation preparation, stakeholder satisfaction surveys, and continuous improvement programs. Evaluation findings are consistently utilized to revise institutional policies and strengthen educational quality. This culture of continuous improvement enables *pesantren* to maintain educational relevance amid rapidly changing educational environments.

The final component identified is global competitiveness, which functions as the ultimate outcome of governance reconstruction. Interviews with alumni, employers, teachers, and institutional leaders revealed that graduate quality is measured not only through religious competence but also through intellectual capability, communication skills, technological literacy, leadership, entrepreneurship, foreign language proficiency, adaptability, and commitment to Islamic ethics. Thus, globally competitive graduates are individuals who successfully integrate professional competence with Islamic morality.

Table 3. Multi-Site Governance Model for Building Globally Competitive Islamic Boarding Schools

Governance Component		Core Indicators	Institutional Outcomes	
Value-Based Leadership		Visionary Kyai, ethical leadership, strategic direction	Strong institutional commitment	
<i>Pesantren</i> Culture	Organizational	Ikhlas, Amanah, <i>Ukhuwah</i> , <i>Musyawarah</i> , Khidmah	Sustainable organizational identity	
Strategic Management	Educational	Planning, implementation, evaluation, accountability	Effective governance	institutional
Integrated Curriculum		Religious studies, general sciences, digital literacy, entrepreneurship	Holistic competencies	graduate
Human Resource Development		Teacher professionalism, leadership succession, capacity building	Educational excellence	
Collaborative Governance		Partnerships with universities, government, industries, alumni	Institutional and networking	innovation
Quality Assurance		Continuous evaluation, accreditation, stakeholder satisfaction	Sustainable improvement	quality
Global Competitiveness		International outlook, innovation, leadership, adaptability	Globally graduates	competitive

Table 3 illustrates that governance reconstruction is a multidimensional process integrating Islamic values with contemporary educational management. Each governance component reinforces the others, creating a dynamic institutional system capable of responding to educational transformation without compromising *pesantren* identity. The model demonstrates that global competitiveness is not achieved through abandoning tradition but through transforming *pesantren* values into strategic organizational resources.

Cross-site comparison further confirms that governance effectiveness depends upon the interaction among leadership, organizational culture, strategic management, collaborative partnerships, and continuous quality improvement. Leadership establishes institutional vision, organizational culture shapes collective behavior, strategic management translates vision into operational programs, collaborative governance expands institutional resources, and quality assurance maintains organizational sustainability. Together, these components generate graduates who possess academic excellence, professional competence, spiritual integrity, and global perspectives.

The originality of this study lies in proposing a *Pesantren*-Based Islamic Education Governance Model that integrates governance theory, organizational culture, educational leadership, and Islamic values within a unified conceptual framework. Unlike previous studies that discuss leadership, organizational culture, educational management, or *pesantren* values separately, this model demonstrates the interdependence of these dimensions in producing institutional excellence and global competitiveness. Therefore, the proposed model contributes both theoretically and practically to the development of Islamic education governance by offering a comprehensive framework applicable to Islamic boarding schools seeking sustainable institutional transformation while preserving their religious identity and cultural heritage.

Discussion

The reconstruction of Islamic education governance in Salafiyah-Syafi'iyah Sukorejo and Al Qodiri Islamic Boarding Schools extends beyond administrative reform toward a comprehensive transformation integrating Islamic educational philosophy with contemporary governance principles. Governance is conceptualized not merely as a managerial mechanism but as a value-based institutional system in which leadership, organizational culture, educational management, quality assurance, and stakeholder participation function as interconnected components. This finding supports educational governance theory, which argues that institutional effectiveness depends upon the alignment between organizational vision, leadership, strategic management, and stakeholder collaboration (Bush, 2020; Hallinger, 2021). However, the present study expands this perspective by demonstrating that governance effectiveness within Islamic boarding schools is fundamentally determined by the institutionalization of *pesantren* values throughout organizational processes.

A notable contribution of this research is the identification of *pesantren* values as strategic governance resources rather than merely religious or cultural traditions. Values such as *ikhlas* (sincerity), *amanah* (trustworthiness), *ukhuwah* (brotherhood), *musyawarah* (consultative decision-making), *khidmah* (service), and *kemandirian* (self-reliance) shape organizational behavior, leadership ethics, communication patterns, conflict resolution, and institutional decision-making (Aspandi et al., 2023). These values strengthen organizational cohesion while encouraging innovation and institutional adaptability. This finding reinforces organizational culture theory proposed by Lutfauziah et al. (2023), which emphasizes that shared values and assumptions constitute the deepest layer of organizational effectiveness. Nevertheless, the present study extends Schein's framework by illustrating that religious values not only define organizational identity but also become operational governance principles influencing institutional performance.

The research also confirms the relevance of transformational leadership theory. Interviews consistently reveal that the Kyai functions as a visionary leader who inspires organizational commitment while preserving institutional values. Unlike bureaucratic leadership models emphasizing administrative authority, leadership within *pesantren* combines spiritual legitimacy, moral influence, participatory management, and strategic decision-making (Yugo, 2019). Such

leadership encourages institutional innovation without generating resistance because organizational members perceive innovation as part of their religious responsibility. Consequently, transformational leadership in *pesantren* represents an integration of ethical leadership and strategic educational management.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that governance reconstruction supports the concept of the learning organization. Both *pesantren* continuously evaluate institutional performance, develop teacher competencies, improve curriculum quality, strengthen stakeholder collaboration, and adapt organizational strategies to changing educational environments. Continuous learning enables institutions to maintain sustainability while responding effectively to globalization, technological advancement, and educational competition. Therefore, governance reconstruction should be understood as an ongoing organizational learning process rather than a one-time institutional reform.

Another important theoretical implication concerns the relationship between governance and institutional resilience. The findings reveal that institutions possessing strong organizational values demonstrate greater adaptability when facing educational transformation (Fillah et al., 2023). Digitalization, international collaboration, curriculum reform, and quality assurance initiatives become successful because they are interpreted within the framework of *pesantren* philosophy rather than external administrative requirements. Consequently, institutional resilience emerges from the interaction between organizational culture and adaptive governance.

The study proposes that Islamic education governance should be viewed as an integrated value-based governance system where leadership, organizational culture, educational management, collaboration, and quality assurance function collectively to achieve institutional excellence. This conceptualization broadens existing educational governance literature by positioning religious values as strategic organizational assets capable of enhancing educational quality and global competitiveness.

The present findings both support and extend previous scholarship concerning Islamic educational governance. Bush (2020) argues that effective educational governance depends on strategic leadership, institutional accountability, and organizational effectiveness. Similarly, Hallinger (2021) emphasizes adaptive leadership as a prerequisite for educational improvement in dynamic environments. The findings of this study confirm these arguments by demonstrating that strategic leadership and institutional accountability significantly influence governance effectiveness within Islamic boarding schools. However, unlike previous governance models, this study shows that leadership effectiveness is inseparable from *pesantren* values that shape ethical decision-making and institutional commitment (Khorri et al., 2024).

Earlier studies by Suwendi et al. (2024) primarily describe *pesantren* as socio-religious institutions preserving Islamic traditions and community values. Saharani et al. (2024) further explains the modernization of Islamic education through curriculum reform and institutional development. While these studies provide important historical and sociological perspectives, they pay limited attention to governance reconstruction as an integrated organizational process. The present research complements these works by demonstrating how *pesantren* values are operationalized within strategic planning, quality assurance, digital administration, human resource development, and collaborative governance.

Recent studies concerning digital transformation in Islamic education generally focus on technological innovation, online learning, or educational management. These studies frequently regard technology as the principal driver of educational modernization (Yahya et al., 2025). In contrast, the findings of this study reveal that technological innovation alone does not guarantee institutional excellence. Instead, innovation becomes effective only when integrated with

organizational values, visionary leadership, and sustainable governance structures. Consequently, digital transformation should be considered one component of broader governance reconstruction rather than an independent institutional objective.

Another distinction concerns organizational culture. Previous research often treats organizational culture as a supporting factor influencing institutional performance. The current study demonstrates that organizational culture constitutes the foundation of governance itself. *Pesantren* values influence leadership practices, communication systems, policy implementation, stakeholder participation, curriculum development, and institutional evaluation. Thus, governance reconstruction begins with cultural transformation rather than administrative restructuring alone.

The multi-site design employed in this research also represents an important methodological contribution. Many previous studies investigate a single *pesantren*, thereby limiting opportunities for comparative analysis. By examining two well-established Islamic boarding schools with different historical backgrounds yet similar educational missions, this study identifies governance principles that transcend institutional uniqueness while respecting contextual differences. Cross-site comparison strengthens analytical generalization and contributes to the development of a more comprehensive governance framework.

The principal novelty of this research lies in the formulation of the *Pesantren*-Based Islamic Education Governance Model. Existing literature generally discusses educational leadership, organizational culture, curriculum development, quality assurance, or *pesantren* values separately (Sutopo, 2024). The proposed model integrates these dimensions into a unified governance framework consisting of value-based leadership, *pesantren* organizational culture, strategic educational management, integrated curriculum, human resource development, collaborative governance, continuous quality assurance, and global competitiveness. This integrated perspective represents a significant theoretical advancement in Islamic educational governance.

Moreover, the proposed model introduces global competitiveness as the ultimate outcome of governance reconstruction. Unlike conventional governance frameworks emphasizing administrative efficiency or accreditation achievement, this study defines institutional success through graduates' ability to combine religious integrity, academic excellence, technological competence, leadership capacity, entrepreneurial skills, intercultural communication, and global citizenship. Accordingly, the model provides a more comprehensive understanding of educational excellence within contemporary Islamic education.

The governance model developed in this study offers several practical implications for Islamic educational institutions seeking sustainable institutional transformation. First, educational policymakers should recognize that governance reform cannot rely solely on administrative modernization. Institutional effectiveness requires the integration of governance mechanisms with organizational values that reflect the identity and educational philosophy of Islamic boarding schools. Governance policies that ignore institutional culture may improve administrative efficiency but risk weakening organizational cohesion and educational authenticity.

Second, *pesantren* leaders should strengthen value-based leadership through systematic leadership development and succession planning. The findings demonstrate that visionary leadership significantly influences institutional innovation, organizational commitment, and stakeholder trust (Sandra et al., 2023). Leadership development should therefore integrate managerial competence, strategic planning, ethical decision-making, communication skills, and Islamic character. Third, governance innovation should prioritize continuous professional development for teachers and educational staff. Human resource quality determines the successful implementation of curriculum reform, technological innovation, quality assurance, and educational transformation.

Fourth, curriculum governance should adopt an integrative approach balancing Islamic sciences with contemporary competencies. Religious education, digital literacy, foreign languages, entrepreneurship, leadership education, research skills, and community engagement should be developed simultaneously to produce graduates capable of contributing effectively to national development and global society. Such curriculum integration reflects the holistic educational philosophy characteristic of *pesantren*. Fifth, collaborative governance should be expanded through partnerships with universities, industries, governmental agencies, alumni organizations, international institutions, and civil society. These partnerships provide access to financial resources, technological innovation, academic exchange, research collaboration, and graduate employment opportunities.

The governance model highlights the importance of continuous quality assurance as a mechanism for sustainable institutional improvement. Internal evaluation, stakeholder feedback, supervision, accreditation processes, and strategic planning should function as interconnected components of governance rather than isolated administrative activities. Continuous evaluation enables institutions to identify organizational strengths, respond to emerging challenges, and maintain educational excellence over time. The practical implications of this study indicate that globally competitive Islamic boarding schools are not established by abandoning traditional *pesantren* values but by reconstructing those values into a modern governance framework characterized by visionary leadership, collaborative management, organizational learning, innovation, accountability, and continuous quality improvement. Through this reconstruction, *pesantren* are able to preserve their religious identity while simultaneously strengthening institutional excellence and responding effectively to the demands of global education.

CONCLUSION

The multi-site investigation conducted at Salafiyah-Syafi'iyah Sukorejo Situbondo and Al Qodiri Jember demonstrates that effective governance is not merely achieved through administrative modernization or digital transformation but through the systematic integration of Islamic values, visionary leadership, organizational culture, strategic management, collaborative governance, and continuous quality assurance. The findings reveal that *pesantren* values—including *ikhlas* (sincerity), *amanah* (trustworthiness), *ukhuwah* (brotherhood), *musyawarah* (consultative decision-making), *khidmah* (service), and *kemandirian* (self-reliance)—serve as strategic organizational resources that strengthen institutional resilience, encourage innovation, and sustain educational transformation without compromising the authentic identity of *pesantren*. These values constitute the philosophical foundation upon which governance policies, educational practices, and institutional development are continuously reconstructed. The principal contribution of this research is the development of a *Pesantren*-Based Islamic Education Governance Model, which integrates value-based leadership, organizational culture, strategic educational management, integrated curriculum, professional human resource development, collaborative governance, quality assurance, and global competitiveness into a comprehensive governance framework.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author would like to express sincere appreciation to all lecturers of the Doctoral Program in Islamic Education at the Graduate School of UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung for their invaluable academic guidance, intellectual inspiration, and continuous encouragement throughout the completion of this research.

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