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POAC-Based Santri Leadership Development Through IPNU: Balancing Student Autonomy and Pesantren Authority

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ABSTRACT

Pesantren must prepare students to combine religious knowledge with responsible leadership. Student organizations offer practical settings for developing these capacities within institutional traditions and the pesantren educational environment. This study examines the management of santri leadership development through IPNU at API ASRI 2 Bandongan using Terry's POAC framework. A qualitative descriptive case study was employed. Data came from in-depth interviews with six purposively selected informants, observations from March to May 2026, and organizational documents; analysis followed Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña's interactive model, supported by triangulation. Planning involved participatory work meetings aligned with religious schedules and institutional priorities. Organizing established formal roles, although uneven participation and overlapping schedules required task adjustments. Actuating provided leadership experiences through delegated responsibilities and advisor mentorship. Administrators reported greater confidence in public speaking and communication. They also described opportunities to practise decision-making and collaboration. Controlling involved direct supervision, accountability reports, and post-activity evaluations. However, pesantren routines sometimes delayed reporting and evaluation. Practically, the findings encourage clearer responsibilities, guided student autonomy, and feasible evaluation schedules. Theoretically, the study extends Islamic educational management by conceptualizing managerial compromise as the negotiation of student initiative, institutional supervision, and pesantren cultural expectations.

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INTRODUCTION

Developing young people's leadership capacity is an educational priority because communities need emerging leaders who can communicate responsibly,

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make informed decisions, collaborate, and address collective problems. Leadership is therefore not merely a formal position but a set of competencies developed through participation, responsibility, and reflection. A study involving 541 Malaysian young people demonstrates that leadership competence encompasses cognitive, affective, value-based, and practical dimensions (Mohamad et al., 2024; Wahyudin et al., 2025). Similarly, research involving 290 participants in a youth development programme indicates that authentic responsibilities and opportunities for task mastery support leadership development (Drabek et al., 2024; Musthofa et al., 2026). These findings highlight the need for educational environments that enable young people to practise leadership while remaining accountable to others.

This responsibility is particularly relevant to pesantren, whose educational mission extends beyond religious knowledge to the formation of ethical and socially responsible individuals. Their residential arrangements, collective routines, mentoring relationships, and religious traditions provide opportunities to develop discipline, service, deliberation, and responsibility. Research identifies leadership formation in pesantren through curriculum, communication, delegation, mentorship, and evaluation (Abidin & Sirojuddin, 2023). Structured participation in religious extracurricular activities also supports interpersonal intelligence and social interaction (Susanti & Rokhman, 2022). Nevertheless, pesantren must respond to changing educational conditions while maintaining their institutional identity (Muid et al., 2024). Leadership education should therefore integrate Islamic values with practical organizational experiences, preparing graduates to combine moral commitment with the ability to organize, cooperate, and serve.

However, leadership aspirations do not automatically translate into competencies. Although young people may understand responsibility as a moral expectation, they may lack opportunities to practise planning, task allocation, coordination, communication, conflict management, and evaluation. These challenges are particularly complex in residential educational settings, where organizational activities must align with learning schedules, religious obligations, and institutional rules. Research on pesantren curriculum integration emphasizes the need to coordinate religious and national educational components within a coherent institutional framework (Kusumawati & Nurfuadi, 2024). Character education likewise requires systematic management and habituation rather than normative instruction alone (Khasanah et al., 2025). Organizational communication further influences programme implementation, particularly when members have different commitments and schedules (Puspita et al., 2025). Thus, leadership development requires an integrated management process connecting goals, people, activities, and evaluation.

Previous studies have established the relevance of IPNU and IPPNU to youth civic and intellectual development. Anwar and Yani (2023) examined how organizational programmes, including cadre development, contributed to adolescents' nationalist character. Nisa (2023) demonstrated that cadre activities, training, and discussions provided opportunities for critical thinking and deliberation. Puspita et al. (2025) further examined organizational communication strategies and their relationship to programme effectiveness. These studies position IPNU as a setting for values formation, intellectual engagement, and collective action. However, their analyses primarily address specific developmental outcomes or communication practices, offering limited explanation of how planning, role allocation, implementation, and evaluation function together as a management system for developing santri leadership within a pesantren-based autonomous organization.

Leadership studies have also expanded understanding of the values and practices underlying student development. Abidin and Sirojuddin (2023) explain how pesantren traditions, leadership training, mentorship, and feedback contribute to prophetic leadership formation, while Sabililhaq et al. (2023) examine institutional leadership in strengthening students' religious and disciplinary character. Drabek et al. (2024) emphasize authentic opportunities and task mastery, while Mohamad et al. (2024) provide a multidimensional perspective on youth leadership competencies. Yuniarti et al. (2025) integrate POAC functions with Islamic leadership values in managing a pesantren student organization. Although these studies provide important insights, differences in organizational structures and institutional cultures limit the transferability of their findings. Further analysis is needed to explain how POAC operates within IPNU governance and adapts to the authority relations and daily routines of a salaf-contemporary pesantren.

The state of the art of this study positions POAC as an adaptive process that coordinates student autonomy, supervisory guidance, and pesantren norms. Building on Yuniarti et al.'s (2025) value-based application of POAC, this study examines commissariat-level IPNU governance and the interaction between managerial responsibilities and pesantren cultural expectations. This setting requires administrators to balance organizational effectiveness with religious routines, learning needs, and hierarchical guidance. The four POAC functions are examined as an interconnected cycle: planning establishes priorities, organizing distributes responsibilities, actuating facilitates learning through action and mentorship, and controlling strengthens accountability and improvement. This perspective also explores the negotiation between student initiative and institutional obedience, conceptualized as managerial compromise. Understanding this process is essential because organizational autonomy

without institutional support, or excessive supervision that restricts responsibility, may constrain meaningful leadership development.

Against this background, the study addresses the following research question: How is santri leadership developed through the IPNU organization at API ASRI 2 Bandongan Islamic Boarding School through the planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling functions? It examines work-programme formulation, role distribution, activity implementation, and performance evaluation. The study argues that santri leadership develops when these functions operate as a mutually reinforcing process rather than isolated managerial tasks. Participatory planning encourages ownership, clear role allocation creates authentic responsibility, guided implementation strengthens practical competencies, and reflective control reinforces accountability. These processes, however, must be adapted to the pesantren's educational priorities and religious routines. Accordingly, this study explains the managerial mechanisms and institutional adjustments through which organizational participation contributes to leadership development.

This study contributes to Islamic educational management in two respects. Theoretically, it extends the application of POAC by examining its functions within a pesantren-based student organization, where organizational practices, mentorship, religious discipline, and institutional authority shape leadership learning. It also introduces managerial compromise as an interpretive lens for understanding how student initiative operates within pesantren norms. Practically, the findings may assist pesantren leaders, IPNU advisors, and student administrators in designing programmes, distributing responsibilities, facilitating guided decision-making, and strengthening evaluation. Rather than proposing a universally applicable organizational model, the study identifies management principles that require contextual adaptation. It thus positions student organizations as educational spaces in which leadership develops through responsible participation, practical experience, and continuous reflection.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach with a case study design to examine the management of santri leadership development through the Ikatan Pelajar Nahdlatul Ulama (IPNU) at API ASRI 2 Bandongan Islamic Boarding School. The qualitative approach was selected to explore organizational processes, managerial practices, and participants' experiences rather than measure relationships between predetermined variables. A case study design enabled an in-depth investigation of organizational phenomena within their actual institutional context, drawing on multiple sources of empirical evidence (Villamin et al., 2025; Knott et al., 2022). The analysis was guided by George R.

Terry's four managerial functions: planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling (POAC), while considering their interaction with pesantren values and organizational culture.

The research was conducted at API ASRI 2 Bandongan Islamic Boarding School, Magelang Regency, Central Java, Indonesia. The institution was purposively selected because its salaf-contemporary educational system accommodates student autonomous organizations within established religious and institutional regulations. The study focused on management practices within the active IPNU Commissariat Executive Board. Six informants were purposively selected based on their organizational positions, direct involvement, and knowledge of leadership development, comprising the Head of the Pesantren, two IPNU advisors (Advisors I and II), and three executive board members (chairman, secretary, and treasurer). Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis. Interviews explored programme planning, organizational structures, role distribution, delegation, leadership practices, mentoring, motivation, soft-skill development, supervision, accountability, and evaluation in accordance with the POAC framework. Observations were conducted over three months, from March to May 2026, to examine organizational activities and interactions. Documents included work-meeting records, organizational charts, cadre-training modules, and internal institutional regulations. These complementary techniques enabled comprehensive examination of managerial practices from multiple perspectives (Chand, 2025; Morgan, 2022; McMullin, 2023).

Data analysis followed the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), comprising data collection, data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. These activities were conducted iteratively throughout the research. Interview transcripts, observation notes, and institutional documents were systematically compiled and condensed through selection, simplification, and categorization based on the four POAC dimensions. Initial categories were developed deductively from the theoretical framework, while additional themes emerging from the empirical data were incorporated inductively, allowing the analysis to remain theoretically focused and contextually responsive (Bingham, 2023). The condensed data were subsequently organized into descriptive narratives and thematic categories to identify relationships among managerial practices, institutional regulations, and leadership development. Conclusions were drawn by interpreting recurring patterns, comparing evidence across informants and data sources, and verifying interpretations against the original empirical materials, thereby supporting systematic and transparent analysis (Cloutier & Ravasi, 2021; Villamin et al., 2025).

Data trustworthiness was strengthened through source triangulation and methodological triangulation. Source triangulation involved comparing accounts from the Head of the Pesantren, IPNU advisors, and executive board members to identify convergences, differences, and complementary perspectives. Methodological triangulation compared interview findings with observational evidence and institutional documents. For example, information about programme planning was cross-checked against work-meeting records, while accounts of organizational accountability were examined through administrative documents and observed practices. These procedures reduced reliance on individual accounts and helped establish the consistency of empirical findings. Furthermore, systematic documentation of data collection, analytical decisions, and the relationship between evidence and interpretation supported the credibility and dependability of the research (Bingham, 2023; Cloutier & Ravasi, 2021).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Planning: Participatory Programme Formulation and Institutional Alignment

Interview findings indicate that IPNU activity planning at API ASRI 2 Bandongan Islamic Boarding School is conducted through organizational work meetings (rapat kerja) involving executive board members and advisors. The IPNU chairman explained that these meetings provide opportunities to formulate work programmes based on organizational priorities, available time, and pesantren activities. The advisors confirmed that administrators can propose and discuss programmes, although their implementation remains subject to institutional supervision to ensure alignment with pesantren regulations and religious learning schedules. The Head of the Pesantren emphasized that programmes should strengthen students' responsibility and teamwork without compromising their educational obligations.

Observations conducted between March and May 2026 confirmed that organizational responsibilities were carried out alongside routine pesantren activities, including mandatory religious learning sessions. This indicates that programme planning must accommodate established institutional schedules rather than operate independently. Examination of work-meeting records and internal regulations further provided evidence of programme formulation and coordination between student administrators and pesantren authorities.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that IPNU planning combines participatory decision-making with institutional supervision. Administrators have opportunities to formulate programmes and express organizational aspirations, while proposed activities are adjusted to available time, educational

priorities, and religious obligations. These findings illustrate how organizational initiatives are coordinated with the pesantren environment. Evidence from interviews, observations, and documentary analysis regarding the planning function is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Empirical Evidence of the Planning Function

Data source	Empirical evidence	Identified pattern
Interview: IPNU Chairman	Work programmes are formulated through organizational meetings, considering priorities, available time, and institutional responsibilities.	Participatory programme formulation
Interview: IPNU Advisors	Administrators can propose activities, while advisors ensure alignment with institutional regulations and religious schedules.	Supervised organizational planning
Interview: Head of the Pesantren	Organizational programmes should foster responsibility and teamwork without interfering with educational and religious obligations.	Institutional alignment
Observation (March-May 2026)	Administrators maintained organizational involvement alongside daily pesantren routines and mandatory religious learning activities.	Coordination between organizational and religious commitments
Document analysis	Work-meeting records and internal institutional regulations were examined to understand programme formulation and institutional requirements.	Formal planning and regulatory context

Table 1 shows that IPNU planning combines participatory decision-making with institutional supervision. Administrators contribute ideas and formulate programmes, while advisors and pesantren leaders ensure their alignment with institutional priorities. Observations and documentary evidence further indicate that programme formulation must accommodate religious schedules, educational responsibilities, and organizational feasibility. Thus, planning reflects a balance between student initiative, available resources, and pesantren expectations.

Organizing: Role Distribution and Managerial Responsibilities

The interview findings indicate that the organizing function is implemented through a formal structure comprising santri administrators and appointed advisors. The chairman coordinates organizational activities, the secretary manages administration, and the treasurer oversees financial matters, while other members implement programmes according to their assignments. Advisors provide guidance and supervision to ensure compliance with

pesantren regulations. However, interviews revealed that actual participation does not always correspond to assigned responsibilities, as less active members sometimes require other administrators to assume additional tasks.

Observations further showed that administrators must balance organizational responsibilities with compulsory pesantren routines. Overlapping schedules occasionally complicate coordination and task completion, requiring adjustments and cooperation among members to maintain organizational continuity. The Head of the Pesantren confirmed that IPNU provides opportunities for santri to manage organizational activities while remaining under institutional guidance. These findings highlight the interaction between student autonomy and supervisory authority in organizational management.

Documentary analysis of organizational structures and internal regulations confirmed the formal distribution of positions and institutional authority. Overall, the organizing function involves formal role allocation, practical adjustments to responsibilities, and supervisory coordination. These arrangements enable organizational activities to continue despite differences in member participation and scheduling constraints. Table 2 summarizes the empirical findings concerning organizational structures, responsibility distribution, and coordination challenges.

Table 2. Empirical Evidence of the Organizing Function

Data source	Empirical evidence	Identified pattern
Interview: IPNU Advisors	Some administrators do not consistently fulfil their assigned responsibilities, requiring more active members to assume additional tasks.	Uneven responsibility distribution
Interview: Executive Board Members	Overlapping organizational and pesantren schedules complicate coordination and task completion.	Scheduling and coordination challenges
Interview: Head of the Pesantren	Student administrators are encouraged to manage organizational activities under institutional guidance.	Supervised student autonomy
Observation (March-May 2026)	Administrators participated in organizational and institutional activities while maintaining their pesantren responsibilities.	Multiple role commitments
Document analysis	Organizational charts and internal regulations were examined to identify formal positions, responsibilities, and institutional authority.	Formal organizational structure

Table 2 highlights the gap between formal organizational structures and actual task implementation. Although responsibilities are clearly assigned, differences in member participation sometimes create workload imbalances. Observations also indicate that administrators must coordinate organizational

duties with compulsory pesantren activities. Thus, the organizing function depends on formal authority, individual commitment, and practical coordination. The organizational structure provides a foundation for leadership development, but its effectiveness relies on consistent participation and the ability to manage institutional constraints.

Actuating: Experiential Learning and Leadership Mentorship

Interview findings indicate that IPNU activities provide santri with opportunities to develop leadership competencies through direct organizational involvement. Advisors encourage administrators to take responsibility for programme implementation, including coordinating activities, communicating with members, managing tasks, and addressing operational challenges. Executive board members also reported improvements in communication, public speaking, collaboration, decision-making, and accountability through repeated organizational involvement. These experiences demonstrate how delegated responsibilities become practical learning opportunities that strengthen students' independence and confidence.

Observations conducted between March and May 2026 confirmed administrators' involvement in daily pesantren routines, leadership responsibilities during mandatory student study sessions, and major institutional events. These activities demonstrate that leadership practice extends beyond formal IPNU meetings to broader institutional responsibilities, requiring active participation and cooperation. The Head of the Pesantren emphasized the importance of institutional support, including activity permissions and encouragement from organizational advisors, in sustaining student involvement.

The advisors further explained that their role involves providing direction and motivation while allowing administrators to manage activities independently within institutional boundaries. Overall, the actuating function operates through practical involvement, delegated responsibilities, and continuous mentorship. These processes provide opportunities for santri to strengthen leadership competencies through direct experience and guided organizational practice. Table 3 summarizes the empirical findings concerning programme implementation and leadership development.

Table 3. Empirical Evidence of the Actuating Function

Data source	Empirical evidence	Identified pattern
Interview: IPNU Advisors	Administrators are encouraged to take responsibility for programme implementation, while advisors provide direction and motivation.	Delegated responsibility and mentorship

Interview: Executive Board Members	Administrators reported increased confidence in public speaking through repeated involvement in organizational activities.	Communication skills development
Interview: Executive Board Members	Organizational involvement provided opportunities to practise decision-making, collaboration, and accountability.	Experiential leadership learning
Interview: Head of the Pesantren	Institutional permission, encouragement, and continuous guidance support student participation.	Institutional support
Observation (March-May 2026)	Administrators demonstrated involvement in daily routines, leadership responsibilities during mandatory student study sessions, and major institutional events.	Practical leadership participation
Document analysis	Cadre-training modules were among the institutional documents examined. Their specific contents are not described in the reported findings.	Cadre development context

Table 3 shows that the actuating function provides practical opportunities for santri to develop leadership competencies through delegated responsibilities and organizational participation. Interview and observational findings highlight improvements in communication, decision-making, collaboration, and accountability, including greater confidence in public speaking. These learning experiences are reinforced by guidance and encouragement from advisors and pesantren leadership. Overall, leadership development occurs through practical experience, shared responsibilities, and continuous institutional mentorship.

Controlling: Supervision, Accountability, and Evaluation

Interview findings indicate that the controlling function within the IPNU Commissariat is implemented through advisor supervision, administrative accountability, and post-activity evaluation. Advisors explained that supervision ensures programme implementation aligns with established plans and institutional expectations. Accountability is maintained through the preparation of the *Laporan Pertanggungjawaban* (LPJ), while evaluation meetings provide opportunities to assess programme achievements, identify challenges, and formulate recommendations. Executive board members confirmed that these evaluations support organizational reflection, although reporting and evaluation are sometimes delayed due to compulsory pesantren activities.

Observations conducted during the research period confirmed that administrators had limited opportunities to complete administrative reports and conduct immediate evaluations after organizational events because they had to resume their religious and educational routines. The Head of the Pesantren also emphasized the need for more consistent supervision, structured planning, clear

task distribution, and regular evaluation arrangements. Work-meeting records and institutional regulations provided additional context regarding formal accountability procedures.

Overall, the controlling function involves supervision, accountability reporting, and reflective evaluation. However, its implementation remains constrained by the need to balance organizational responsibilities with compulsory pesantren routines. Strengthening the consistency and scheduling of evaluation activities is therefore important for improving organizational accountability. Table 4 summarizes the findings concerning supervisory practices, administrative reporting, and evaluation challenges.

Table 4. Empirical Evidence of the Controlling Function

Data source	Empirical evidence	Identified pattern
Interview: IPNU Advisors	Direct supervision and post-activity evaluations are used to monitor programme implementation and identify operational shortcomings.	Supervisory control
Interview: IPNU Executive Board Members	LPJ preparation and post-event evaluations are sometimes delayed because administrators must resume compulsory pesantren activities.	Administrative accountability challenges
Interview: Head of the Pesantren	More structured planning, clearer task distribution, and regular evaluations are needed to improve organizational supervision.	Need for systematic evaluation
Observation (March-May 2026)	Observations covered the coexistence of organizational duties and compulsory pesantren routines. The available account does not specify a directly observed delayed LPJ episode.	Time-related evaluation constraints
Document analysis	Work-meeting records and institutional regulations were examined. The reported findings do not identify specific LPJ samples or post-event evaluation records.	Institutional accountability context

Table 4 shows that controlling involves advisor supervision, LPJ reporting, and post-activity evaluation to maintain organizational accountability. However, delays in reporting and evaluation reflect the challenges of balancing organizational responsibilities with compulsory pesantren activities. Although supervision and accountability mechanisms are institutionally established, their effectiveness depends on time availability, task coordination, and consistent evaluation. Therefore, accountability procedures must be adapted to the pesantren's daily educational routines.

Discussion

The findings show that POAC operates as an interconnected process for leadership development rather than detached administrative tasks. Participatory work meetings enable IPNU administrators to formulate programmes, but the

pesantren's religious timetable and institutional priorities delimit what can be implemented. This pattern is consistent with research showing that student organizations in pesantren are managed through participatory planning, defined roles, guidance, and evaluation (Linda et al., 2026). It also resonates with Abidin and Sirojuddin's (2023) account of pesantren traditions as resources for developing prophetic leadership, and Maksum et al.'s (2025) finding that deliberation supports democratic organizational structures. The present case, however, shifts the analytical focus from institutional leadership to the everyday management of a student-led IPNU commissariat. It demonstrates that participation is institutionally enabled, yet negotiated within the pesantren's established routines, revealing how planning translates educational intentions into feasible organizational commitments.

The organizing findings reveal a tension between formal role allocation and uneven member participation. Although the chairman, secretary, treasurer, and other administrators have responsibilities, inactive membership and overlapping schedules redistribute workloads and complicate coordination. This extends studies of IPNU that emphasize cadre activities, civic character, and critical thinking (Anwar & Yani, 2023; Nisa, 2023) by showing that developmental outcomes depend on the capacity to sustain organizational responsibilities. It is consistent with Puspita et al.'s (2025) finding that communication, commitment, and scheduling influence IPNU programme effectiveness. Likewise, Nuryana and Sirojuddin (2025) identify guidance and continuity of cadre development as important to santri organizational capacity. The present study adds that formal structure alone is insufficient: role clarity must be accompanied by active participation, flexible coordination, and supervisory support. This matters because autonomy without task fulfilment may intensify rather than distribute organizational workloads.

The actuating findings indicate that leadership learning occurs through responsibility, participation, and advisor mentorship. Administrators' accounts of improved public-speaking confidence and decision-making opportunities are consistent with research linking authentic leadership opportunities and task mastery to youth leadership development (Drabek et al., 2024; Maksum & Furqon, 2025). They align with Mohamad et al.'s (2024) multidimensional account of youth leadership competencies and Susanti and Rokhman's (2022) finding that structured religious extracurricular activities can support interpersonal intelligence. Ramamoorthi et al. (2023) explain leadership identity as relational and collectively developed through interaction. The present case adds a pesantren-specific dimension: experiential learning is not detached from religious formation but is situated within supervision and institutional routines. Nevertheless, the reported growth should be interpreted as participants' perceived development, not as a measured causal effect. Its contribution is to

identify the conditions through which leadership experiences become available to santri locally.

The controlling findings show that supervision, accountability reports, and post-activity evaluation are established, yet their regularity in this case is constrained by compulsory pesantren schedules. This distinction between procedures and consistent implementation matters. Khasanah et al. (2025) associate educational quality management with systematic habituation and institutional support, while Muid et al. (2024) emphasize the need for pesantren to adapt management practices without losing their educational identity. Siregar and Pulungan (2025) similarly describe leadership formation as an integrated process involving organizations, discipline, role modelling, and mentoring. The present findings suggest that accountability should be designed around the temporal realities of residential education. Practically, pesantren and IPNU advisors could establish reporting deadlines, short post-event reflection sessions, delegated documentation roles, and periodic follow-up reviews. Theoretically, controlling is better understood as an adaptive learning mechanism, not merely an inspection function focused on administrative compliance.

The study's novelty lies in the concept of managerial compromise: the adjustment through which santri exercise organizational initiative while remaining accountable to advisors and pesantren authority. This concept does not imply that autonomy and obedience are opposites; rather, it explains how they are coordinated through participatory planning, bounded delegation, mentorship, and context-sensitive evaluation. Theoretically, the study extends POAC from a management sequence into a situated framework for student leadership development, complementing research on organizational development in pesantren (Maksum et al., 2025; Mundiri et al., 2026) and santri board management (Nuryana & Sirojuddin, 2025; Furqon & Zahroh, 2025). Practically, it offers pesantren leaders a way to design student organizations as supervised learning environments, strengthen role accountability, and protect time for reflection. Its potential impact is improved continuity of student programmes and leadership practice. Because this is a single qualitative case, the framework is analytically transferable rather than universally generalizable.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that santri leadership development through the IPNU organization at Islamic Boarding School is managed through the interconnected functions of planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling (POAC). The most important finding is that effective leadership development requires more than organizational participation; it depends on balancing student autonomy, institutional supervision, and adherence to pesantren traditions. This relationship is conceptualized as managerial compromise, which enables santri

to exercise initiative while remaining accountable to institutional authority and educational responsibilities. Theoretically, this study contributes to Islamic educational management by extending the POAC framework through a contextual understanding of managerial compromise as a mechanism for developing student leadership within pesantren-based organizations. Practically, the findings provide implications for pesantren leaders and IPNU advisors to strengthen participatory planning, clarify organizational responsibilities, provide meaningful leadership experiences, and establish more consistent evaluation mechanisms. Nevertheless, this study is limited by its qualitative single-case design, six informants, and reliance on evidence from one pesantren, which restrict the transferability of its findings. Future research should employ comparative multi-site and longitudinal approaches, involve broader stakeholder groups, and examine observable leadership development indicators to explore the applicability and development of managerial compromise across different pesantren contexts.

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