

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY IN IMPROVING TEACHER PROFESSIONALISM IN PESANTREN

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji manajemen sumber daya manusia (SDM) dalam peningkatan profesionalisme guru di Pondok Pesantren Almunawwaroh Tahfiz Walhadist Sungai Misang. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif, penelitian ini menemukan bahwa profesionalisme guru tidak hanya mencakup kompetensi pedagogis, tetapi juga integritas moral, komitmen ilmiah, dan keterampilan multiguna sebagai pendidik, pembimbing spiritual, dan pemimpin komunitas. Sistem SDM pesantren menerapkan perencanaan berbasis nilai Islam, rekrutmen berbasis akhlak, pelatihan berkelanjutan, evaluasi kinerja multi-sumber, serta perhatian terhadap kesejahteraan guru, meski terkendala sumber daya terbatas. Faktor pendorong meliputi kepemimpinan visioner, budaya belajar yang religius, dan komitmen institusional terhadap pengembangan profesional. Sementara itu, hambatan utama mencakup keterbatasan dana, praktik manajemen tradisional, dan minimnya jejaring eksternal. Keberhasilan pesantren dalam menghasilkan lulusan yang kompeten secara akademik dan matang secara spiritual menunjukkan bahwa manajemen SDM yang selaras dengan ajaran Islam; seperti tazkiyah, ikhlas, dan tawakkal dapat menjadi fondasi efektif bagi pendidikan holistik. Temuan ini memberikan pelajaran berharga bagi lembaga pendidikan umum maupun keagamaan tentang pentingnya menyelaraskan standar profesional dengan nilai-nilai etis dan spiritual.

Kata kunci: manajemen SDM, profesionalisme guru, pesantren, nilai Islam, holistik.

Abstract

This study examines human resource management (HRM) in enhancing teacher professionalism at Pondok Pesantren Almunawwaroh Tahfiz Walhadist Sungai Misang. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach, the research reveals that teacher professionalism encompasses not only pedagogical competence but also moral integrity, scholarly commitment, and multifaceted roles as educators, spiritual mentors, and community leaders. The pesantren's HRM system integrates Islamic values into planning, morally grounded recruitment, continuous training, multi-source performance evaluation, and genuine support for teacher well-being, despite financial constraints. Enabling factors include visionary leadership, a spiritually rooted learning culture, and institutional commitment to professional development. Key challenges involve limited funding, traditional management practices, and insufficient external collaboration. The pesantren's success in producing graduates who excel academically while demonstrating spiritual maturity underscores how HRM aligned with Islamic principles; such as tazkiyah (self-purification), ikhlas (sincerity), and tawakkul (trust in God) can foster holistic education. These insights offer valuable lessons for both religious and mainstream educational institutions on harmonising professional standards with ethical and spiritual foundations.

Keywords: human resource management, teacher professionalism, Islamic boarding school, Islamic values, holistic

INTRODUCTION

Education not only plays a role in the formation of individuals but also shapes the culture of society towards a better quality of life. Educational institutions are required to provide professional services to the community. The high interest in education encourages people to be more critical and choose the realistic ones. This requires realistic management of human resources in educational institutions. to maintain and improve a good image in the eyes of the public. According to Astomo, education has an important role in all aspects of life in facing the demands of the progress of a competitive era in the era of globalization.¹ Efendi et al, that education is an effort to make humans reach a level called prosperity.²

A potential alternative to anticipate such rapid changes and increasingly complex challenges for Indonesian educational institutions is to increase the competitiveness of graduates and other academic products. The quality of education policy will produce intelligent and competitive human beings in the world of work. Ramdani & Sulasmi, the high level of competition in the job market implicitly requires educational institutions to produce quality graduates.³ Fauzi & Rosadi, the existence of deregulation that allows foreign countries to establish formal and non-formal educational institutions in Indonesia makes competition between educational institutions and the job market more competitive.⁴

The fundamental problem of manausia resources in the world of education today is the problem of educators who have not fully developed the potentials possessed by an educational institution.⁵ Educators have a role, strategic position and great responsibility for the success of the Education process. Educators are the spearhead in educating the lives of the nation's children and developing the curriculum of the national education system. Improvements made in improving the quality of education will not make a significant contribution without the support of professional educators and quality human resource management needed to obtain professional human resources management is one of the strategies in managing human resources to have optimal competence and performance in achieving educational goals.⁶

Pesantren, as distinctive Islamic educational institutions, embody a particular character shaped by their religious, cultural, and pedagogical traditions. According to Law No. 18 of 2019 concerning Islamic Boarding Schools, Article 1 defines pesantren

¹ Putera Astomo, "Politik Hukum Penyelenggaraan Sistem Pendidikan Nasional Yang Responsif Di Era Globalisasi," *Masalah-Masalah Hukum* 50, no. 2 (2021): 172–83, <https://doi.org/10.14710/mmh.50.2.2021.172-183>.

² Safrijal Efendi, Sri Nurabdiah Pratiwi, and Emilda Sulasmi, "Manajemen Strategis Kepala Sekolah Dalam Pengembangan Sumber Daya Manusia Untuk Meningkatkan Profesional Kerja Tenaga Pendidikan Dan Kependidikan Di SMK Muhammadiyah 8 Medan Strategic Management Of," *EduTech* 9, no. 1 (2023): 95–103.

³ Muhammad Rendi Ramdhani and Robiatul Adawiyah, "Strategi Peningkatan Kompetensi Guru Sekolah Kejuruan (SMK) Islam Swasta Pada Era 4.0," *Progressive of Cognitive and Ability* 2, no. 3 (2023): 180–91.

⁴ Achmad Fauzi and Kemas Imron Rosadi, "Faktor-Faktor Yang Mempengaruhi Paradigma Berpikir Kesisteman Dalam Pendidikan Islam: Globalisasi, Manajemen Lembaga Dan Mutu Pendidikan," *Jurnal Ilmu Hukum, Humaniora Dan Politik* 2, no. 2 (2022): 183–97, <https://doi.org/10.38035/jihhp.v2i2.1936>.

⁵ Donna Sampaleng and Baharuddin Baharuddin, "Analisis Manfaat Perencanaan Pendidikan Dalam Otonomi Daerah Pada Pendidik Dan Tenaga Kependidikan Di Kecamatan Babela," *Al Qalam: Jurnal Ilmiah Keagamaan Dan Kemasyarakatan* 17, no. 2 (2023): 14, <https://doi.org/10.35931/aq.v17i2.1953>.

⁶ Damara Triarsuci et al., "Manajemen Sumber Daya Manusia Dalam Pengelolaan Infrastruktur Sekolah Dasar: Tantangan Dan Solusi," *Jurnal Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar* 1, no. 3 (2024): 15, <https://doi.org/10.47134/pgsd.v1i3.551>.

education as that which is organised by Islamic boarding schools within the pesantren environment, implementing a curriculum tailored to their specific characteristics, typically grounded in classical Islamic texts, commonly referred to as the yellow books, or structured around Islamic *dirasah* with a muallimin educational model. Beyond their instructional role, pesantren form an integral part of the National Education System and serve as vital spaces for the actualisation of three core functions: education, da'wah (Islamic propagation), and community empowerment. This multifaceted identity necessitates a human resource approach that is not only administratively sound but also deeply attuned to the spiritual and communal values that define the pesantren tradition. According to Firdaus et.al., human resource management in educational institutions inevitably reflects the unique ethos and operational context of each setting, and this is especially evident in pesantren education.⁷

Ivancevich stated that *Human Resource Management is the effective management of people at work. Human Resource Management examines what can or should be done to make working people more productive and satisfied.*" Dessler argues that Human resource management is the process of acquiring, training, assessing, and compensating employees, paying attention to their employment relationships, health, safety, and justice issues.⁸

Good human resource management also includes a teacher performance evaluation system. With structured supervision, pesantren can assess the extent of the effectiveness of learning provided by teachers and provide feedback for future improvements. This evaluation is not only carried out by the leaders of the Islamic boarding school, but also involves students and colleagues to be more objective and comprehensive. Although human resource management is very important in improving teacher professionalism, there are still various challenges faced by Islamic boarding schools in implementing this system.⁹ Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) face several significant challenges that hinder the effective management and development of their teaching staff. One of the most pressing issues is limited resources. Many pesantren operate with constrained budgets, which restricts their capacity to offer professional training or meaningful incentives for teachers. In addition, inadequate learning facilities often compel educators to improvise without sufficient technological support, placing additional strain on their ability to deliver quality instruction. These resource constraints not only affect teaching effectiveness but also impact teacher morale and retention over time.

Many pesantren still rely on informal, tradition-based HR practices (lacking clear standards for hiring, evaluating, or supporting teachers) which makes fair assessment and growth difficult. Limited time, resources, and external partnerships leave educators isolated from new teaching methods and professional development opportunities. To move forward, pesantren can strengthen teacher growth through regular, relevant training, meaningful collaboration with universities, and more structured HR systems that honor both educational quality and their unique spiritual mission.

⁷ Muhammad Aditya Firdaus, Sofia Ratna Awaliyah F, and Mohamad Erihadiana, "Manajemen Peserta Didik Pendidikan Islam," *Islamic Management: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 5, no. 01 (2022): 41, <https://doi.org/10.30868/im.v5i01.1991>.

⁸ Gunawan et al., "Pengelolaan Sumber Daya Manusia Dalam Mengembangkan Mutu Pendidikan," *Jurnal Ilmiah Wahana Pendidikan* 8, no. 13 (2022): 149–55.

⁹ Yudha Catur Pamungkas, Lilik Hamidah, and Ryan Purnomo, "Problematika Ekonomi Dalam Dakwah : Studi Realita Akses Pendidikan Di Pondok Pesantren Dan Dampak Biaya," *Kamaya: Jurnal Ilmu Agama* 7, no. 4 (2024): 38–48.

Caring for teachers means more than hiring and training, it means supporting their well-being, growth, and daily work with dignity. Simple steps like keeping thoughtful records of their progress, offering fair recognition, and improving classroom resources can make a real difference. When pesantren open doors to seminars, online learning, and a culture of reading, teachers stay inspired and connected to both tradition and innovation. Strong, human-centered HR practices don't just uplift educators, they shape a generation of students grounded in faith, knowledge, and readiness for the future.¹⁰

For this reason, pesantren leaders must continue innovating in human resource management to ensure their educational model remains relevant and competitive. With effective HR practices, Islamic boarding schools can sustain their role as centres of quality Islamic education, nurturing a new generation that is intellectually capable, morally grounded, and able to thrive in contemporary society. In many settings, teacher certification has not translated into meaningful classroom competence, leaving educational quality below expectations and ill-equipped to meet workforce demands. Almunawwaroh Tahfiz Walhadist Islamic Boarding School in Sungai Misang, however, stands apart through its distinct approach.

Empirically rooted in Islamic tradition, Almunawwaroh places strong emphasis on religious studies, aiming to produce graduates who serve as future preachers and community leaders. While general science instruction is less intensive than in mainstream schools, its graduates consistently gain admission to higher education institutions and often outperform peers from conventional schools. The pesantren's reputation is such that it regularly hosts study visits from formal schools across Merangin Regency and other parts of Jambi Province, serving as a benchmark for educational excellence. This success stems directly from deliberate policies to enhance teacher professionalism; such as inviting external experts for lectures and requiring teachers to produce scientific papers that contribute to pedagogical or managerial innovation. Far from a mere administrative requirement, this scholarly obligation is viewed as both an institutional duty and a moral commitment to student development, reinforcing the pesantren's credibility and educational impact.

METHOD

According to Sukmadinata, this research when viewed from the location of the data source is included in the field research category.¹¹ And judging from the nature of the data, it is included in qualitative research. So, this study seeks to uncover and answer from the focus of the research. In order for the things being researched to be revealed properly and clearly, in-depth observations and interviews are needed to obtain a lot of detailed data.

This study uses a qualitative approach, immersing itself in real-life settings to understand experiences as they naturally unfold, guided by stories, observations, and images rather than numbers. Staying open and responsive throughout, it prioritizes depth, human nuance, and mutual understanding between researcher and participants to build trustworthy, context-rich insights. This study embraces qualitative research as a way to listen deeply, to capture people's lived realities in their own words, without altering or simplifying them. Rooted in observation and conversation, it seeks not to generalize, but to reveal the rich, everyday meanings that shape human experience. According to Arief

¹⁰Pamungkas, Hamidah, and Purnomo.

¹¹Syaefuddin Ahrom Al-Ayubbi, "Kepemimpinan Kiai Dalam Pembaharuan Pendidikan Pesantren Di Era Disrupsi," *Jurnal Of Social Movements* 1, no. 2 (2021): 130–39.

Furchan, descriptive research is research designed to obtain information about the status of symptoms when the research is conducted.¹²

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Forms of Human Resource Management at Almunawaroh Tahfiz Walhadist Islamic Boarding School Sungai Misang

Human resource management in this pesantren is carried out systematically through the following stages: 1) **HR Planning**; the determination of the number and qualifications of teachers is carried out by considering the needs of the curriculum and Islamic values embraced by the pesantren. 2) **Recruitment and Selection**; the teachers recruited are those who are not only capable in the field of religious science but also have good morals. 3) **Training and Development**; teachers are required to participate in training, workshops, and scientific development through the writing of scientific papers. 4) **Performance Evaluation**; it is carried out periodically by pesantren leaders, peers, and input from students. And 5) **Improving Teacher Well-Being**; despite the limited funds, the pesantren still strives to provide proper incentives and supporting facilities.

Teacher Professionalism at Almunawaroh Tahfiz Walhadist Islamic Boarding School Sungai Misang

The professionalism of teachers is shown in the following aspects: 1) Scientific Competence: Teachers master teaching materials, especially in religious science. 2) Moral Example: Teachers are exemplary in Islamic behavior and morality. 3) Scientific and Moral Commitment: Teachers are required to write scientific papers as a form of moral and professional responsibility. 4) Teaching Methodology: Teachers use an approach that is appropriate to the times, even though technology is still limited.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors of HR Management

Supporting Factors: 1) High commitment of pesantren leaders in improving the quality of education. 2) Islamic work culture and strong spiritual values. 3) Regular training and continuous evaluation system. 4) The task of scientific work is a moral and institutional obligation.

Inhibiting Factors: 1) Funding Constraints: Hindering training programs and incentives. 2) Minimal Technology Facilities: Teachers have difficulty accessing digital learning resources. 3) Traditional Management: There is no standard system in HR management. 5) Lack of Access to Self-Development: Teachers do not have the opportunity to participate in training outside the pesantren.

Solution Strategy

Pesantren develops several strategies to overcome these obstacles: 1) The ongoing training program is in collaboration with other institutions. 2) The HR management system is structured with teacher performance documentation. 3) Improving the welfare of teachers within the capacity of the institution. 4) Encourage self-development through online seminars and the culture of writing scientific papers.

¹²Miza Nina Adlini, "Tarbiatuna: Journal of Islamic Education Studies," *Tarbiatuna: Journal of Islamic Education Studies* 4, no. 1 (2023): 52–63.

Discussion

Human Resource Management in Improving the Professionalism of Teachers in Islamic Boarding Schools

At Pondok Pesantren Almunawwaroh, human resource management is guided by faith and values, not just procedures, it's a living practice shaped by the community's Islamic identity. From hiring to daily support, every step reflects a commitment to nurturing both educational excellence and moral character. According to Putra, pesantren demonstrate values-driven human resource management where Islamic principles guide educational and administrative processes.¹³ Pesantren successfully integrate spiritual development with practical outcomes through productive waqf systems and business cooperation models that promote institutional welfare while maintaining Islamic identity.¹⁴

HR Planning

Staffing at the pesantren starts with thoughtful planning, hiring teachers whose qualifications and character reflect both academic needs and the Islamic values that shape its spiritually rooted learning community. According to Ma'arif, pesantren institutions implement strategic teacher recruitment processes based on specific religious affiliations and principles, such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) values, ensuring alignment with institutional Islamic foundations.¹⁵ The planning process incorporates learning organization principles to optimize educator resources while maintaining strict recruitment standards aligned with pesantren values.¹⁶

Recruitment and Selection

The pesantren chooses teachers not just for their knowledge, but for their character, seeking individuals whose moral integrity matches their religious scholarship. After all, in a place where ustadz are both guides and role models, who they are matters as much as what they teach. According to Ma'arif, pesantren implement rigorous teacher selection processes, prioritizing individuals who embody strong moral integrity and religious moderation.¹⁷ Kiai and ustadz function as both instructors and moral guides, with their leadership strategies including careful recruitment of educators aligned with moderate Islamic values.¹⁸

Training and Development

Teachers are warmly encouraged to keep learning, through workshops, training, and meaningful scholarly engagement. They're invited not just to sharpen their teaching

¹³Aditya Halim Perdana Kusuma Putra et al., "Key Factors of Business Sustainability: Strengthening Leadership, Psychology, and Fairness Aspects from an Islamic-Management Perspective," *Nurture* 17, no. 4 (2023): 694–710, <https://doi.org/10.55951/NURTURE.V17I4.500>.

¹⁴Ratih Winarsih, Atika Rukminastiti Masrifah, and Khoirul Umam, "The Integration of Islamic Commercial and Social Economy Through Productive Waqf To Promote Pesantren Welfare," *Journal of Islamic Monetary Economics and Finance* 5, no. 2 (2019): 321–40, <https://doi.org/10.21098/jimf.v5i2.1065>.

¹⁵Muhammad Anas Ma'arif et al., "Shaping Students' Moderate Islamic Character At Madrasah," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 10, no. 2 (2024): 323–35, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v10i2.34029>.

¹⁶Muhammad Anas Ma'arif et al., "Developing Pesantren Educator Resources through Optimizing the Learning Organization," *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 6, no. 3 (2023): 475–91, <https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v6i3.4415>.

¹⁷Muhammad Anas Ma'arif et al., "Kiai'S Leadership Strategies in Strengthening Religious Moderation in Islamic Boarding Schools," *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun* 13, no. 1 (2025): 23–48, <https://doi.org/10.26811/peuradeun.v13i1.1168>.

¹⁸Dewi Sadiyah, "Developing Pesantren Education Quality Thorough Radicalism Prevention Program for Santri," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 8, no. 1 (2022): 63–74, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v8i1.17947>.

skills, but to enrich Islamic intellectual life by writing, reflecting, and sharing insights. This ongoing journey of growth deepens their knowledge and strengthens their role as mentors. In turn, their passion for learning becomes a quiet spark that inspires students to seek knowledge with purpose and heart. Purwanto, et al., reflective practice emerges as a crucial component, enhancing pedagogical competence through innovative teaching methods and self-reflection among prospective teachers.¹⁹ Teachers actively engage in autonomous professional learning experiences, capitalizing on Islamic concepts of lifelong learning to meet contemporary educational demands.²⁰

Performance Evaluation

Evaluation happens regularly through input from leaders, peers, and even students, honoring the deeply relational and spiritual role teachers play in the pesantren community. According to Mahadiputra, the effective HR management significantly impacts employee performance and motivation through reward systems.²¹ Advanced measurement systems utilize sophisticated approaches like the Human Resource Scorecard method combined with Association Rules Mining to assess key performance attributes in agro-industries.²²

Improving Teacher Well-Being

Even with limited resources, the pesantren thoughtfully supports its teachers, offering meaningful incentives and practical tools as a heartfelt recognition of their vital role in shaping students and sustaining the community. Fauzi, pesantren provide teacher development through integrated coaching, training strategies, and cultivation of self-directed learning.²³ They offer compensation and maintain discipline in teacher duties, with professional development supported by the pesantren organization.²⁴ Quality improvement strategies include fostering teacher development, supervision, providing facilities and infrastructure, building commitment, and offering benefits.²⁵

This comprehensive HRM framework illustrates how Pondok Pesantren Almunawwaroh Tahfiz Walhadist Sungai Misang successfully balances professional standards with Islamic character formation. The close bond between ustadz and santri, the centrality of *akhlaq* (moral conduct), and the seamless integration of religious practice into daily routines all demand an approach to human resource management that is both structured and spiritually attuned. Consequently, the pesantren does not merely develop

¹⁹Yedi Purwanto, Aep Saepudin, and Sofaussamawati, "The Development of Reflective Practices for Islamic Religious Education Teachers," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 9, no. 1 (2023): 107–22, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v0i0.24155>.

²⁰Mariam Alhashmi and Jase Moussa-Inaty, "Professional Learning for Islamic Education Teachers in the UAE," *British Journal of Religious Education* 43, no. 3 (2021): 278–87, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01416200.2020.1853046>.

²¹Bagus Oka Mahadiputra and Noni Antika Khairunnisah, "Pengelolaan Manajemen Sumber Daya Manusia Dalam Upaya Meningkatkan Kinerja Dan Motivasi Melalui Reward System Pada Karyawan Pegadaian Cabang Lombok Utara," *Business Management* 2, no. 2 (2023): 135–41, <https://doi.org/10.58258/bisnis.v2i2.6499>.

²²Rahmat Fadhil, Taufik Djatna, and Mohamad Syamsul Maarif, "Analysis and Design of a Human Resources Performance Measurement System for the Nutmeg Oil Agro-Industry in Aceh," *Journal of Regional and City Planning* 28 (2017): 99–110, <https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:67438363>.

²³Imron Fauzi et al., "The Pattern of Development of Competence, Commitment, and Motivation of Teachers in Pesantren," *AL-TANZIM: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 6, no. 4 (2022): 1175–89, <https://doi.org/10.33650/al-tanzim.v6i4.3703>.

²⁴Ma'arif et al., "Developing Pesantren Educator Resources through Optimizing the Learning Organization."

²⁵Apud, "Strategi Peningkatan Mutu Guru Sekolah Di Lingkungan Pesantren," *Adaara: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 10, no. 1 (2020): 87–98, <https://doi.org/10.32678/tarbawi.v4i02.1227>.

teachers, it nurtures educators who are intellectually capable, morally upright, and spiritually conscious.

The Implementation of Professionalism through SDM Development

At Pondok Pesantren Almunawwaroh Tahfiz Walhadist Sungai Misang, teacher professionalism is understood as a multidimensional commitment that extends well beyond conventional classroom instruction. Rather than being confined to pedagogical technique alone, professionalism here encompasses scientific rigour, moral integrity, and consistent behavioural excellence. This holistic view recognises that in a pesantren environment) where education is inseparable from spiritual formation (the teacher is not merely a transmitter of knowledge but a living embodiment of the values being taught. Consequently, the institution has cultivated a distinctive framework that nurtures educators capable of guiding students intellectually, ethically, and spiritually.

Compulsory Scientific Writing

At Pondok Pesantren Almunawwaroh, teachers are encouraged to write scholarly papers regularly, not as a box-ticking exercise, but as a meaningful part of their role as educators and moral guides. This practice invites them to reflect deeply on their teaching, enrich their grasp of religious and pedagogical ideas, and share insights that benefit the wider Islamic education community. In this way, continuous learning becomes both a professional duty and an ethical commitment, rooted in the pesantren's values. As Suwendi observes, such efforts are strengthened by the vibrant intellectual networks within pesantrens, which help spread knowledge and keep these institutions meaningfully engaged with today's challenges.²⁶

Training and Workshops

The pesantren Almunawwaroh actively nurtures teacher growth by hosting regular workshops and training sessions, often led by scholars from universities or trusted Islamic institutions. These gatherings blend modern teaching insights with Islamic ways of knowing, helping educators stay relevant while honoring their spiritual foundation. Even with modest resources, the sessions are hands-on and rooted in the everyday experiences of pesantren life, focusing on practical adaptability over rigid formulas. As Ma'arif notes, this commitment to growth is part of a broader learning culture, one that begins with value-aligned hiring and includes leadership development to strengthen the community's shared identity and purpose.²⁷

Moral Leadership

In this pesantren, true teacher professionalism is rooted in moral leadership. Where educators are called to live out Islamic values not just while teaching, but in every aspect of their daily lives. Students and families watch closely, seeing teachers as living examples of *akhlaq*, or moral virtue, making integrity as essential as academic skill. As Bahzar emphasizes, teachers in Islamic schools carry a dual role: they are guardians of both knowledge and character, entrusted to shape minds and hearts with equal care.²⁸

²⁶Suwendi et al., "Roles and Challenges of Pesantren Intellectual Networks," *Jurnal Ilmiah Islam Futura* 24, no. 2 (2024): 453–70, <https://doi.org/10.22373/jiif.v24i2.23134>.

²⁷Ma'arif et al., "Developing Pesantren Educator Resources through Optimizing the Learning Organization."

²⁸Moh. Bahzar, "Authentic Leadership In Madrassas: Asserting Islamic Values in Teacher Performance," *Journal of Social Studies Education Research* 10 (2019): 259–84, <https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:150657578>.

Multifunctional Roles

Teachers at this pesantren don't just teach, they walk alongside students as mentors, spiritual guides, and trusted members of the community. One day might find them explaining fiqh in the classroom, offering quiet counsel to a troubled student, leading congregational prayer, and mediating a family concern, all with patience and presence. Such a rich tapestry of roles calls for more than subject knowledge; it demands emotional wisdom, deep faith, and the ability to respond with care in ever-changing situations. As Zakaria notes, this is why the pesantren values adaptable, whole-person educators over narrowly specialized instructors, because shaping hearts and minds requires far more than a lesson plan.²⁹

These practices collectively shape a model of teacher professionalism that is deeply contextual yet rigorously structured. Scientific competence remains foundational (teachers are expected to master their subject matter, particularly in religious sciences) but it is always paired with moral example. Their commitment to scholarly writing reflects not just academic diligence but a sense of duty to uphold and advance Islamic knowledge responsibly. Even in the face of technological limitations, teachers strive to employ teaching methodologies that are responsive to contemporary realities, demonstrating creativity and resilience.

The professionalism cultivated at this pesantren produces educators who are not only knowledgeable but also ethically grounded and socially engaged. They are equipped to nurture students who excel not only in memorising the Qur'an or mastering classical texts but also in embodying compassion, critical thinking, and moral courage. In this way, the institution reaffirms its role not just as a centre of learning, but as a living space where knowledge, faith, and character converge to shape future generations of balanced, principled individuals.

Enabling and Inhibiting Factors

The development of teacher professionalism at Pondok Pesantren Almunawwaroh Tahfiz Walhadist Sungai Misang is shaped by a combination of enabling conditions and persistent challenges. These dynamics reflect the broader tension between the pesantren's deeply rooted traditions and its aspirations for educational advancement in a changing world.

Visionary Leadership

Progress at the pesantren is deeply shaped by leaders who see education not as a fixed tradition, but as a living, evolving journey. They actively nurture a culture where teachers feel supported to reflect, innovate, and grow. This forward-looking approach blends spiritual commitment with professional dedication, giving educators the space and encouragement to develop their practice meaningfully. As Moh observes, such visionary leadership doesn't just inspire it directly strengthens teacher performance and the overall effectiveness of the school by offering both clarity of purpose and practical pathways to bring that vision to life.³⁰

²⁹Abd Razak Zakaria et al., "Strategic Management Practices In Pesantren: Innovations For Enhancing Educational Quality And Organizational Sustainability," *Malaysian Online Journal of Educational Management*, 2025, <https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:280383877>.

³⁰Masnun Moh, "The Visionary Leadership of the School Principal for Improving the Quality of Education," *Journal of Ecohumanism* 6798 (2024): 3297–3304, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.62754/joe.v3i8.4971>.

Institutional Commitment to Professionalism

The pesantren turns its vision into action through thoughtful policies that nurture both accountability and growth, like requiring teachers to write scholarly reflections, not as a formality, but as a way to keep their minds engaged and their practice alive. Performance reviews, shaped by feedback from peers, students, and leaders, create a shared space for honest dialogue and mutual support. As Pedersen highlights, this kind of professional development thrives not through top-down mandates, but through communities where educators learn together, guided by shared values and a deep sense of purpose, even in the face of limited resources.³¹

Culture of Learning and Morality

At the heart of the pesantren lies a shared ethos where sincerity (*ikhlas*), discipline, and faith shape everyday learning, turning teaching and studying into acts of worship. This spiritual grounding nurtures deep motivation, mutual respect, and a sense of common purpose, so that growing as an educator feels less like a job requirement and more like a personal calling. While Firdaus notes this powerful culture drives character formation and commitment, he also acknowledges that real challenges (like limited resources and structural constraints) still stand in the way of fully realizing its potential.³²

Limited Financial Resources

The pesantren runs on limited funds, which makes it difficult to offer competitive compensation or invest in up-to-date teaching tools and digital resources. Although teachers stay devoted to their mission, the lack of financial support can quietly wear down morale and restrict their ability to enrich learning with modern materials. As Georgieva observes in a different context, tight budgets often force tough trade-offs, requiring thoughtful, step-by-step strategies to make the most of scarce resources without losing sight of long-term goals.³³

Traditional Management Practices

Certain human resource processes still rely on informal, ad hoc arrangements inherited from long-standing customs. Although these practices reflect the pesantren's communal character, they sometimes lack the transparency, consistency, and documentation needed for systematic development. This informality can unintentionally obscure performance standards or delay necessary reforms.

Limited External Networking

The scope for professional growth is constrained by relatively few formal partnerships with universities, training centres, or other educational institutions. Without regular exposure to external expertise, research trends, or collaborative projects, teachers may find it difficult to broaden their pedagogical repertoire or engage with wider academic discourses. Strengthening such networks could significantly enrich the pesantren's educational ecosystem while preserving its distinctive identity.

³¹Kristin Warr Pedersen, "Supporting Collaborative and Continuing Professional Development in Education for Sustainability through a Communities of Practice Approach," *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education* 18 (2017): 681–96, <https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:151459482>.

³²Muhammad Aditya Firdaus and Rinda Fauzian, "Pendidikan Akhlak Karimah Berbasis Kultur Pesantren," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 11, no. 2 (2020): 136–51, <https://doi.org/10.22236/jpi.v11i2.5888>.

³³Penka V. Georgieva, Ivan P. Popchev, and Stanimir N. Stoyanov, "A Multi-Step Procedure for Asset Allocation in Case of Limited Resources," *Cybernetics and Information Technologies* 15, no. 3 (2015): 41–51, <https://doi.org/10.1515/cait-2015-0040>.

The Pesantren's Unique Role and Reputation

Despite facing constraints such as limited financial resources, informal management traditions, and restricted external collaboration, Pondok Pesantren Almunawwaroh Tahfiz Walhadist Sungai Misang has managed to sustain a strong and respected reputation both locally and beyond. This standing is not merely symbolic but is substantiated by tangible outcomes that reflect the institution's educational effectiveness.

Alumni Success in Higher Education

One clear indicator of the pesantren's impact is the ability of its graduates to thrive in higher education settings. Former students consistently demonstrate the intellectual preparedness and personal discipline required to succeed in universities and other advanced institutions, often excelling in both religious and secular disciplines. Setiadi, Pesantren alumni consistently succeed in higher education and develop diverse business models that incorporate Islamic values while promoting economic independence.³⁴

Recognition Through Study Visits

The pesantren has also attracted the attention of other educational institutions, many of which organise comparative studies or study visits to observe its teaching methods, management practices, and community dynamics. This external interest serves as a form of peer validation, highlighting the pesantren's role as a model worth examining within Indonesia's diverse educational landscape.

Holistic Graduate Development

Perhaps most significantly, the institution has built a proven track record of nurturing graduates who embody a rare balance of academic competence and spiritual maturity. These young individuals are not only knowledgeable in religious texts and general subjects but also grounded in strong moral character, a testament to the pesantren's integrative approach to education.

This sustained success is closely tied to the strategic and values-driven implementation of human resource management policies. By prioritising teacher development (through scholarly engagement, moral accountability, and continuous learning) the pesantren ensures that its educators are well equipped to fulfil its dual mission of intellectual instruction and spiritual formation. In doing so, it demonstrates that even within resource-limited contexts, a clear vision rooted in Islamic educational principles can yield enduring and meaningful outcomes.

Alignment with Islamic Teachings

The human resource management practices at the pesantren are not merely administrative procedures but are profoundly shaped by Islamic principles that permeate every aspect of institutional life. Core Quranic values; such as integrity, sincerity, continuous self-improvement (*tazkiyah*), and *tawakkal* (trust in Allah) are actively woven into daily operations, from recruitment and evaluation to professional development and interpersonal conduct. This spiritual grounding transforms HRM from a functional necessity into a moral and devotional practice, where managing people is seen as an act of stewardship (*amanah*) rather than mere organisational control. Ababneh's studies reveal that Islamic principles such as integrity, sincerity (*ikhlas*), stewardship (*amanah*),

³⁴Hari Setiadi, "Model Bisnis Alumni Pondok Pesantren," *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 2, no. 1 (2023): 125, <https://doi.org/10.52434/jpai.v2i1.2933>.

and continuous self-improvement (*tazkiyah*) are embedded in HRM practices, though implementation varies across organizations.³⁵

This integration of faith and function fosters an environment in which teachers are encouraged to grow not only in professional competence but also in character and piety. Their commitment to sincerity (*ikhlas*) ensures that teaching is approached as a form of worship, while the emphasis on *tazkiyah* promotes ongoing reflection and ethical refinement. Likewise, *tawakkul* instils resilience and humility, reminding educators to strive diligently while placing ultimate trust in divine guidance. As a result, the spiritual foundation of HRM directly contributes to the holistic development of students, who learn as much from their teachers' conduct and values as they do from formal lessons. In this way, the pesantren cultivates a learning community where professional excellence and spiritual maturity advance hand in hand.

Implications for Broader Educational Practices

The experience of Pondok Pesantren Almunawwaroh Tahfiz Walhadist Sungai Misang offers insightful lessons that resonate well beyond the realm of Islamic education, holding relevance for both religious and mainstream educational institutions.

Investing in Teacher Development Builds Institutional Credibility

One of the most compelling takeaways is that sustained investment in teacher development (through scholarly engagement, training, and ethical formation) directly enhances an institution's reputation and trustworthiness. When educators are supported to grow intellectually and morally, the quality of teaching improves, student outcomes strengthen, and external recognition naturally follows.

Spiritual and Moral Values Enhance, Rather Than Hinder, Professionalism

Contrary to assumptions that religious values might conflict with modern professional standards, the pesantren demonstrates that integrity, sincerity, and spiritual discipline can in fact reinforce and elevate professionalism. Moral character and technical competence are not opposing forces but complementary dimensions of a well-rounded educator.

Structured HRM Strengthens Even Traditional Settings

The case underscores that even within deeply traditional educational environments, the adoption of structured human resource management practices (such as clear recruitment criteria, performance evaluation, and continuous development pathways) can significantly boost organisational effectiveness without eroding cultural or spiritual identity. Maarif, effective human resource management practices, including structured recruitment, performance evaluation, and continuous development, strengthen traditional educational settings without compromising cultural identity.³⁶

Together, these insights reveal that educational excellence need not come at the expense of ethical or spiritual foundations. Instead, when human resource practices are thoughtfully aligned with an institution's core values, they become a powerful catalyst for both credibility and meaningful impact.

³⁵Hayel Ababneh and Alex Avramenko, "Impact of Islamic Values on HRM Practices: An Empirical Study of Jordanian Universities," *International Journal of Business Excellence* 10 (2016): 1–19, <https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:155448920>.

³⁶Ma'arif et al., "Developing Pesantren Educator Resources through Optimizing the Learning Organization."

CONCLUSION

This research into human resource management at Pondok Pesantren Almunawwaroh Tahfiz Walhadist Sungai Misang reveals a compelling model in which teacher professionalism is cultivated not through technical compliance alone, but through a deeply integrated fusion of Islamic values, structured development, and communal responsibility. The pesantren's HRM system (spanning careful planning, morally grounded recruitment, continuous training, multi-source evaluation, and genuine concern for teacher well-being) demonstrates how professional standards can be meaningfully aligned with spiritual and ethical imperatives. Central to this approach is the understanding that teachers are not merely instructors but moral exemplars and spiritual guides, entrusted with shaping both the intellect and character of their students. This vision is operationalised through practices such as compulsory scientific writing, regular workshops, and an emphasis on *akhlaq* (moral conduct), all of which reinforce a culture where intellectual rigour and personal integrity are inseparable.

The study further identifies key enablers (visionary leadership, institutional commitment to scholarly and moral growth, and a learning culture rooted in sincerity and discipline) as critical to sustaining professionalism, even amid significant constraints. Financial limitations, lingering informal management traditions, and limited external networking present real challenges, yet they have not undermined the pesantren's effectiveness. On the contrary, its graduates consistently excel in higher education and are widely recognised for their balanced development; academically capable, spiritually grounded, and ethically conscious. This success is directly linked to HRM practices infused with core Islamic teachings such as *tazkiyah* (self-purification), *ikhlas* (sincerity), and *tawakkal* (trust in Allah), which transform administrative functions into acts of worship and stewardship. Ultimately, the case of Almunawwaroh offers valuable insights for educational institutions far beyond the pesantren context: it affirms that professionalism thrives not in spite of moral and spiritual foundations, but because of them, and that even in resource-constrained settings, a values-driven, human-centred approach to human resource management can yield enduring educational excellence and societal impact.

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