

# The Influence of Leadership Strategies on Teacher Professionalism in Modern Islamic Boarding Schools

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**Abstract:** Modern pesantren as Islamic educational institutions face great challenges in maintaining relevance and quality in the midst of global change. This research aims to systematically understand how various leadership strategies can improve teacher professionalism in modern pesantren. In the context of globalization and the Industrial Revolution 4.0, Islamic education plays an important role in maintaining Islamic values while answering the challenges of the times through the integration of traditional values and the use of technology. Teacher professionalism is one of the key elements in realizing quality education, especially in a modern pesantren environment which is required to be adaptive and progressive. This research uses a qualitative approach with the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method, reviewing various scientific literature published between 2015 and 2024 and sourced from trusted databases such as Dimensions and Scopus. The results show that transformational, collaborative and Islamic values-based leadership strategies have a significant impact on improving teacher professionalism, both in terms of pedagogical competence, work commitment and learning innovation. In addition, the involvement of the pesantren head as a visionary leader and facilitator also determines the success of human resource development in Islamic educational institutions. This research makes an important contribution to strengthening leadership practices in modern pesantren to encourage sustainable teacher professionalism.

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**Keywords:** Leadership Strategy; Professionalism; Modern Pesantren; Management.

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## A. INTRODUCTION

Modern *pesantren* are Islamic educational institutions that combine religious and general studies, so that graduates have Islamic knowledge as well as academic skills in accordance with the times. However, along with technological advances and globalization, modern *pesantren* face various challenges in improving the quality of education, especially in managing teaching staff. These challenges include improving teachers' qualifications, welfare, and training so that they can keep up with the development of science and technology (Gianto, 2018). In addition, national education policies also affect the quality standards of teachers in *pesantren*, which requires curriculum adjustments and better management strategies (Rasidi, 2022).

Teacher professionalism consists of four main aspects, namely teaching ability, personality, social skills, and expertise in the field, all of which play a role in creating a good learning process (Nurarfiansyah et al., 2022). In modern *pesantren*, teachers' duties are broader than in regular schools, because in addition to teaching, they also serve as examples for *santri* in terms of academic and spiritual life. Teachers not only convey knowledge, but also shape the character and morals of students through exemplary daily life (Ferihana & Rahmatullah,

2023). Therefore, improving teacher professionalism is very important to improve the quality of learning in *pesantren*. Efforts such as regular training, welfare improvement, and good performance evaluation are needed so that teachers can continue to develop and provide the best education for students.

Good leadership plays an important role in improving teacher professionalism by guiding, motivating, and creating a comfortable work environment (Permatasari et al, 2023). In Islamic education, there are several leadership models that are often used, such as transformational leadership, participatory leadership, and Islamic value-based leadership (Roni Harsoyo, 2022). Transformational leadership aims to inspire and empower teachers to have a clear vision in educating students, while participatory leadership involves teachers in the decision-making process so that they feel responsible for the development of *pesantren* (Kurniawan et al., 2023). Meanwhile, Islamic value-based leadership emphasizes the importance of morals and sharia principles in managing education, so that teachers can work in an atmosphere that is in harmony with Islamic values.

In modern *pesantren*, leadership strategies are instrumental in creating a supportive academic environment and improving teachers' abilities through continuous coaching (Alhabsyi et al., 2022). Leadership that has a clear vision and supports teachers can create a positive work atmosphere, increase their motivation to continue learning, and strengthen their sense of loyalty to educational institutions (Efendi & Sholeh, 2023). In addition, good leadership also encourages innovation in teaching methods, so that *pesantren* can keep up with the development of science and technology (Badi'ah et al., 2021). In Islamic education, leadership based on Islamic values helps strengthen the morale and work ethic of teachers, which in turn affects the quality of learning and the development of students (Sugito et al., 2023).

Previous research shows that leadership in *pesantren* is characterized by Islamic values, such as exemplary, sincerity, and deliberation in decision-making (Muhajir & Aali Dawwas, 2022). Leadership in *pesantren* often relies on the charisma and spirituality of a kyai, who has a major role in setting policies and instilling educational values in the institution (Nurdiana, 2020). Most studies discuss how leadership affects *pesantren* governance, while studies that discuss its impact on teacher professionalism are still limited (Fathiyah & Khusna, 2024). In fact, effective leadership can help improve teacher competence through continuous training and the establishment of a conducive academic culture (Yulianto et al., 2023). In addition, the Islamic value-based leadership approach also plays a role in shaping the work ethic and responsibility of teachers in educating *santri* (Muhammad & Wahid, 2023).

Several previous studies have found that teacher professionalism is influenced by various factors, such as ongoing training, a supportive work environment, and support from educational institutions (Prima, 2024). Good training helps teachers improve their teaching skills and professionalism in managing classroom learning (Solechan et al., 2023). A positive work environment plays an important role in improving teachers' motivation and performance in carrying out their duties. The study also showed that effective leadership can improve teacher performance by 4%, while the work environment has a more significant impact on teacher performance, which is 39.4% (Dwiyono et al., 2024). Support from

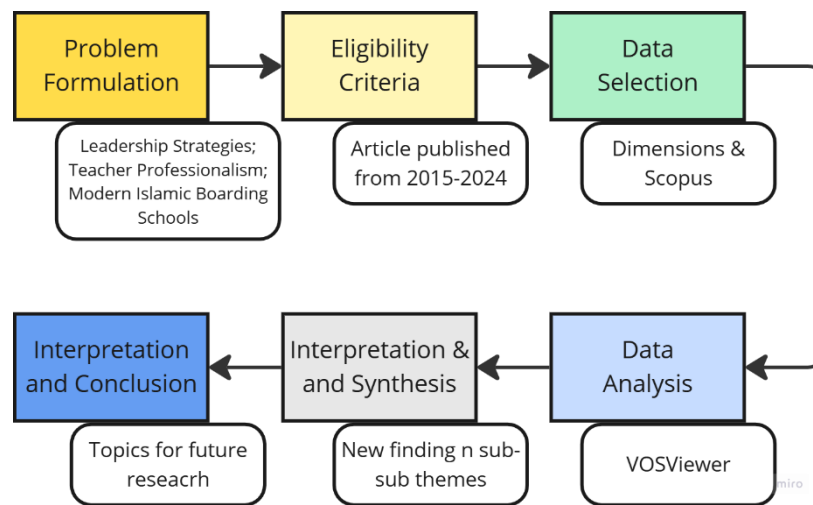
educational institutions, especially through policies that support teacher development, also plays an important role in improving their professionalism (Mustofa et al., 2023).

Although many studies discuss leadership and teacher professionalism, there are still limitations in clearly understanding how leadership strategies directly affect teacher professionalism in modern *pesantren*. Each *pesantren* has a different leadership approach, depending on its values and the way it is managed. Therefore, this study aims to systematically understand how various leadership strategies can improve teacher professionalism in modern *pesantren*. In addition, this study will also identify the most effective leadership strategies in improving teachers' skills, motivation, and performance, so that it can be a reference for *pesantren* managers in designing better education policies.

## B. METHODS

This research is a qualitative research with Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach. This method is used to identify, evaluate, and interpret all relevant research results regarding leadership strategies for teacher professionalism in modern Islamic boarding schools. This approach allows researchers to collect and analyze data from various relevant sources systematically, so as to provide a comprehensive understanding of the topic under study. The data in this study were sourced from the Dimensions database (<https://app.dimensions.ai>) and Scopus (<https://www.scopus.com>) with the latest 10-year interval publications to ensure that the data used is current and relevant to leadership strategies for teacher professionalism in modern Islamic boarding schools.

Data eligibility criteria in this study were established to ensure that only relevant and high-quality literature was analyzed. The criteria include (1) scientific articles published in reputable national and international journals; (2) studies that specifically address leadership strategies for teacher professionalism in modern Islamic boarding schools; (3) publications published in the last 10 years (2015–2024); (4) articles available in full text and in English or Indonesian. To ensure all selected articles met the eligibility criteria, a rigorous validation process was employed. This included a two-step review process. First, two independent reviewers screened the articles based on their titles and abstracts, ensuring alignment with the predefined criteria. Discrepancies between reviewers were resolved through discussion or by consulting a third reviewer as a tiebreaker. Second, for articles deemed eligible after the initial screening, a full-text review was conducted to verify compliance with all criteria. Inter-rater reliability was assessed using Cohen's Kappa statistic to ensure consistency in the selection process. The research procedure is as shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Research procedures

Figure 1 shows that this research was conducted in several stages, namely problem formulation, determining eligibility criteria, data selection, data analysis, data interpretation and synthesis, and drawing conclusions. The problem formulation stage is important to limit the topic discussed, namely leadership strategies for teacher professionalism in modern Islamic boarding schools. Eligibility criteria were determined to filter data that fit the topic with relevant keywords such as “(Strategi Kepemimpinan AND Profesionalisme Guru AND Pondok *Pesantren* Modern) OR (Leadership Strategy AND Teacher Professionalism AND Modern Islamic Boarding School)”. Next, data were selected from the Dimensions database and a filter was applied for data published in the last 10 years (2013-2024). Next, the collected data was imported into VOSviewer software to create a visualization of the relationship between keywords and themes in the study, and R-Studio was used for descriptive statistical analysis and deeper data exploration such as calculating the frequency of themes and conducting trend analysis. The results of data visualization and analysis from VOSviewer and R-Studio were interpreted to explain the key variables in leadership strategies for teacher professionalism in modern Islamic boarding schools. These results were used to formulate key findings and theoretical and practical implications of curriculum management in modern Islamic boarding school. Finally, the researcher formulated conclusions and studies for further research topics in the future.

## C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Data Selection Results

The search results in the indexer database found a total of 1,185 open access data, including open access as much as 718 data and the rest is close access. Of the 718 data, 514 were articles and 204 were books and proceedings. Thus, there are 504 data to be analyzed at the next stage. The distribution of the amount of data according to Figure 2.

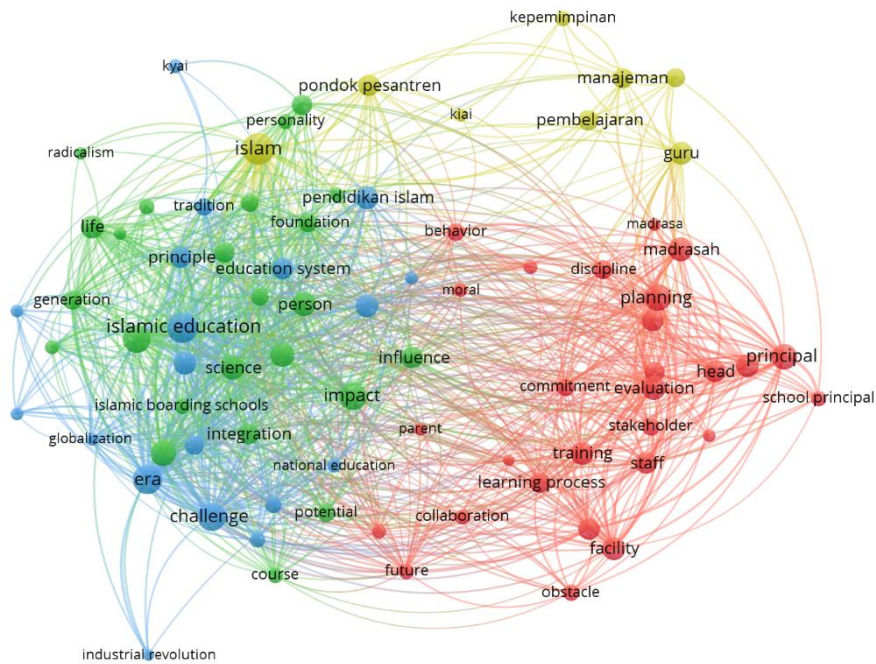


**Figure 2.** Distribution of the amount of data over a decade

Figure 2 shows that the amount of available data fluctuates but generally shows an increasing trend from 2014 to 2024. In 2014, the amount of data available was very low, with only 4 data points. However, in 2015 there was a significant spike to 34, followed by a slight decrease to 31 in 2016. In the period 2017-2021, the amount of data remained relatively stable with a range of 43-48 publications per year, indicating a fairly consistent research interest in this topic. However, starting in 2022, there is a significant spike with 84 available data, peaking in 2023 with 98 publications. This surge indicates that the topic is gaining more attention among academics, as the focus on modernizing leadership and teacher professionalism in modern *pesantren* systems increases. However, 2024 saw a decrease in the number of data to 73, which could be due to several factors, such as changes in research trends, shifts in academic focus, or limited indexed data until mid-2024. Overall, this pattern shows that research on leadership strategies and teacher professionalism in the context of modern *pesantren* has increased significantly in recent years, which may be influenced by the transformation of the Islamic education system and the increasing demands for professionalism in the management of modern *pesantren*.

## 2. Network Visualization of Data

The data that has gone through the selection process is then visualized using VOSviewer to see the research variables and the relationship between variables. The visualization results are as shown in Figure 3.



**Figure 3.** Network visualization of research variables

Figure 3 is a network visualization of all the variables studied over the past 10 years and depicts four different color groups: green, red, yellow, and blue. The interpretation of each variable is as follows.

- a. Green Cluster (Islamic Education Concepts and Principles)

The green cluster dominates concepts related to Islamic education, education system, principle, integration and impact. These keywords show how the Islamic education system has a strong foundation in the values of Islamic principles (principle), as well as its influence on national education. In addition, there is a connection with science, which shows that Islamic education is not separate from science and scientific development. Islamic boarding schools and Islamic boarding schools are also part of this system, which plays a role in shaping students' personalities based on Islamic values.

- b. Blue Cluster (Challenges and Globalization in Islamic Education)

The blue cluster is closely related to the era, challenge, industrial revolution, and globalization. This highlights the challenges of Islamic education in facing the era of industrial revolution and globalization. Keywords such as generation, life, and science indicate that Islamic education must adapt to the times without losing its fundamental values. These challenges include how Islamic education institutions can respond to technological and social changes without losing their identity.

- c. Red Cluster (Islamic Education Management and Planning)

The red cluster focuses on the managerial and policy aspects of Islamic education, with keywords such as planning, principal, head, school principal, training and learning process. This suggests that planning in Islamic education relies heavily on the

leadership of the school principal, as well as the involvement of stakeholders such as teachers, staff and parents. Other related factors are discipline, commitment and evaluation, which emphasize the importance of standards and evaluation systems in Islamic education.

d. Yellow Cluster (Teacher Role and Learning Management)

The yellow cluster relates to the learning aspect, with keywords such as management, teachers, leadership and learning. This indicates that the effectiveness of Islamic education is highly dependent on the role of teachers and learning management strategies implemented in schools or madrasahs. In addition, there is a connection with behavior, which indicates that moral and behavioral aspects are also an important part of the educational process.

Based on the cluster division, researchers can make a more in-depth study of several topics as follows.

a. The Role of Islamic Education in Maintaining the Integration of Islamic Values in the Era of Globalization

Islamic education serves as a bulwark for preserving Muslim identity amidst the currents of globalization, which often introduce foreign cultural influences and secular values. Through education, the younger generation is taught to understand and appreciate Islamic teachings, enabling them to adapt to global developments without compromising their Islamic identity (Musa et al., 2024). Moreover, the era of globalization necessitates that Islamic education integrate traditional values with the demands of the modern age, such as the incorporation of technology into the learning process. This calls for reforms in both curriculum and pedagogical methods to ensure continued relevance and responsiveness to contemporary challenges. Islamic education must be capable of harmonizing religious teachings with universal principles such as tolerance and pluralism (Alanshori, 2025). Furthermore, Islamic education plays a critical role in shaping students' character and moral values. It extends beyond the transmission of religious theory to instill essential ethical values such as honesty, responsibility, and discipline, thereby fostering morally and ethically grounded individuals. This aspect is particularly crucial in facing the threats posed by globalization, which has the potential to erode traditional values (Ihsani, 2019). In this regard, teachers hold a pivotal role in delivering religious values to students. They function as facilitators who guide learners through the complexities of global challenges, ensuring that religious values remain pertinent and serve as a compass in navigating social, technological, and economic transformations (Sabtina, 2023). Additionally, Islamic education requires active involvement from both parents and the wider community to effectively support the educational process. Through a collaborative approach, the younger generation can attain a deeper understanding of religious values and be safeguarded against the adverse effects of globalization (Jailani, 2014).



Islamic education plays a vital role in preserving Islamic principles amid the challenges posed by globalization and technological advancement. The integration of Islamic values into educational frameworks is essential for nurturing a generation that is both adaptable and rooted in their faith. The philosophy of Islamic education emphasizes core principles such as tawhid (monotheism) and moral education (*akhlak*), which remain relevant despite the pressures of modernity (Mujiburrohman & Sayidah, 2025). The curriculum should incorporate theological values derived from the Qur'an and Sunnah to ensure that students develop both intellectually and ethically (Norlianti et al., 2024). However, Islamic education faces internal challenges, including the need to align with national education standards while also addressing character development (Zainuddin et al., 2025). External challenges involve adapting to rapid technological changes and the globalization of education, necessitating a curriculum that is both flexible and contextually relevant (Amin et al., 2025). In response, Islamic educational institutions must adopt strategic management practices grounded in Islamic values to enhance their competitive advantage in the digital age (Alkhubra et al., 2025). Values such as trust and cooperation are critical in maintaining Islamic identity while embracing modernization. While Islamic education seeks to uphold its foundational principles, it faces the risk of cultural dilution through globalization. Balancing the demands of modern education with the integrity of religious teachings remains a complex but essential endeavor for educators.

Islamic education functions not only as a center for learning but also as a medium for safeguarding Islamic values amid the rapid changes of the modern era. With a curriculum rooted in the Qur'an and Sunnah, Islamic education plays a critical role in shaping a generation of Muslims who are critical thinkers, responsible individuals, and capable of adapting to global developments without compromising their Islamic identity. Nevertheless, several challenges persist, including the need to align Islamic education with national education standards and to foster students' character development. Moreover, technological advancements and globalization demand a more flexible educational system to remain relevant and effective in cultivating a profound understanding of Islam. Islamic education has proven to be a solid foundation for Muslim youth in the era of globalization. However, its success largely depends on the strategies implemented by educational institutions. One viable solution is the adoption of strategic management practices based on Islamic values to enhance the competitiveness of Islamic education in the digital age. Trust and collaboration are also essential factors in building a resilient educational community. Nonetheless, the most pressing challenge remains: how to harmonize modern educational demands with Islamic teachings to ensure that Islamic values are preserved and not eroded by the influence of globalization.

- b. Islamic Education Management: The Role of Principals, Teachers, and Stakeholders in Madrasah Management



Islamic education management plays a strategic role in ensuring the effective governance of madrasahs through collaboration among school principals, teachers, and stakeholders (Wahyudi et al., 2022). Principals act as key leaders responsible for planning, implementing, and evaluating educational policies aimed at enhancing the quality of learning within madrasahs (Hasanah, 2020; Nurafni et al., 2022). Teachers hold a central role in the instructional process by employing teaching methods aligned with Islamic educational principles, guiding students in character development, and fostering a conducive learning environment (Judrah et al., 2024). Meanwhile, stakeholders, including parents, madrasah committees, and the wider community contribute by supporting infrastructure, funding, and educational policies that promote the sustainability and quality of madrasahs (Judrah et al., 2024). Synergy among principals, teachers, and stakeholders is essential in establishing an educational system that remains adaptive to contemporary developments while upholding Islamic values. This collaborative framework enables madrasahs to continue functioning as educational institutions committed to both academic excellence and the spiritual growth of students.

The effectiveness of Islamic education management largely depends on the collaboration between school principals and teachers in designing planning strategies, conducting evaluations, and improving the quality of instruction. Principals adopt transformational leadership approaches that emphasize empathy, moral support, and participatory decision-making, thereby enhancing educators' commitment and performance (Humam et.al., 2024). Additionally, principals play a crucial role in human resource management by granting professional autonomy to teachers, motivating them, and facilitating training programs to improve teaching quality and professional discipline (Al Faruq et.al., 2024). In terms of infrastructure development, principals strive to provide essential resources, including instructional media and library materials, to support effective teaching and learning processes (Adi Santoso, 2021). Teachers, on the other hand, are responsible for implementing innovative teaching methods by utilizing various pedagogical approaches, including practical applications, attitude-based assessments, and the moral development of students. Moreover, continuous professional development through participation in training and seminars is essential for enhancing teacher competence and adapting to evolving educational strategies (Muhammad et al., 2022). Despite these efforts, the management of Islamic education still faces several challenges, such as limited resources and issues related to teacher discipline, which can hinder the optimal functioning of the education system. Therefore, sustained collaboration and commitment from all stakeholders are necessary to address these obstacles and ensure the overall enhancement of Islamic education quality.

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that the effectiveness of Islamic education management does not rely solely on the individual roles of principals or teachers, but rather on the synergistic collaboration with stakeholders. Principals who adopt transformational leadership are more effective in fostering an environment that

supports teacher professionalism and enhances the quality of learning in madrasahs. At the same time, teachers who are given opportunities to participate in training and develop their pedagogical skills are better equipped to implement innovative teaching methods aligned with Islamic values. The role of stakeholders is equally vital, particularly in the provision of educational facilities and policies that support the sustainability of madrasahs. Therefore, an effective Islamic education management approach must consider the dynamic interaction between principals, teachers, and stakeholders to achieve educational goals centered on both academic and spiritual development. The study indicates that Islamic education systems continue to face several challenges, including limited resources, issues with teacher discipline, and the influence of globalization, which may dilute Islamic values in education. Despite the adoption of transformational leadership by school principals, difficulties in providing adequate infrastructure remain a significant barrier to effective learning. Furthermore, limited access to teacher training affects the implementation of innovative pedagogical strategies, ultimately impacting the quality of education in madrasahs. Hence, more systematic efforts are required to address these challenges, such as strengthening Islamic education policies, increasing investment in infrastructure, and developing more sustainable professional development programs for educators.

c. **Challenges and Opportunities for Islamic Education in the Context of the Industrial Revolution 4.0**

The challenges and opportunities facing Islamic education in the context of the Fourth Industrial Revolution reflect both the transformative potential of technology and the difficulties in adapting traditional educational frameworks. Key challenges include the digital divide, where unequal access to technology hinders engagement with online Islamic educational resources; cultural conflicts arising from the integration of digital technologies that may be perceived as conflicting with traditional Islamic values (Adiyono et al., 2024); and information overload, where the vast amount of online content makes it difficult for students to discern credible Islamic teachings (Dalimunthe et al., 2023). Nevertheless, this era also presents significant opportunities, such as increased access to Islamic educational materials via the Internet; the use of innovative digital platforms that facilitate interactive and engaging learning experiences aligned with the principles of Education 4.0 (Udvaros et al., 2023); and global collaboration among Islamic educators, promoting the exchange of diverse ideas and practices. While these advancements offer promising directions for the future of Islamic education, maintaining a balance between technological adaptation and the preservation of Islamic values remains a critical concern for educators and policymakers alike.

Madrasahs and boarding schools can adapt to contemporary developments while preserving their Islamic identity through the strategic integration of curricula, innovative management practices, and community involvement. By implementing an Islamic-based curriculum that combines religious teachings with national educational standards, these institutions can strengthen students' religious character while

ensuring academic competence (Setyawan et al., 2023). Recognizing madrasahs as formal educational institutions further permits the integration of broader educational frameworks, thereby enhancing access and quality for the community. In terms of management, institutions such as the Bin Baz Islamic Center have introduced organizational breakthroughs by compartmentalizing educational activities to maintain quality and adapt to ever-changing demands (Robbaniyah & Lina, 2023). Additionally, the transition toward democratic governance within madrasahs fosters increased collaboration and student participation, ultimately leading to improved educational outcomes (Mushtofa & Aminah, 2023). Moreover, engaging parents and community members in the educational process ensures that the objectives of madrasahs align with societal needs, thereby preserving their relevance (Tanjung & Jamilus, 2023). Nevertheless, despite the critical nature of such adaptations for sustainability, ongoing challenges remain in balancing innovation with the preservation of Islamic teachings, as excessive modernization may weaken traditional values.

The primary challenges faced by Islamic education in the context of the Fourth Industrial Revolution are not solely related to technological advancement but also concern how such technologies can be integrated without compromising Islamic values. The digital divide encompasses not only disparities in access to technological devices but also the readiness of human resources to utilize these tools effectively for Islamic learning. Furthermore, cultural conflict arises from tensions between modernization and traditionalism within Islamic education systems, where digitalization is often perceived as a potential threat to the essence of Islamic values. Another emerging challenge is the phenomenon of information overload, which underscores the need to enhance digital literacy so that students and the broader community can distinguish authentic Islamic teachings from unreliable sources. Nevertheless, the digital era also presents significant opportunities for Islamic education, including improved access to Islamic literature through digital platforms, increased inclusivity in education by aligning with both national and international standards without compromising Islamic principles, and enhancements in the governance of madrasahs and Islamic schools, allowing for more effective administrative systems. Integrating an Islamic-based curriculum with national educational standards may serve as an effective adaptation strategy; however, its implementation must strike a balance between religious and academic content to ensure that madrasah graduates remain competitive in the modern workforce. Additionally, managerial innovations, such as those applied by the Bin Baz Islamic Center, offer potential models for addressing contemporary challenges, though not all madrasahs possess the necessary resources to adopt such strategies. Efforts to democratize governance within madrasahs also present distinct challenges, as transitioning toward more participatory structures requires a cultural shift within the traditionally hierarchical leadership model of Islamic education. Moreover, community involvement in Islamic education is crucial to maintaining the relevance of

madrasahs in the digital age; however, fostering sustainable partnerships with communities remains difficult, particularly in the face of skepticism toward the use of technology in religious education. Therefore, adapting Islamic education to the demands of the Fourth Industrial Revolution requires a holistic approach, one that incorporates technological integration, the reinforcement of Islamic values, innovative management practices, and active, sustained community engagement.

#### D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Islamic education plays a strategic role in maintaining Islamic values amid the challenges of globalization and the Industrial Revolution 4.0. Through learning based on the Qur'an and Sunnah, Islamic education not only functions as a center of knowledge transmission, but also as a guardian of the identity and character of Muslims. In a global era filled with foreign cultural flows and secular values, Islamic education is expected to be able to integrate traditional values with the demands of the times, including the use of technology in the learning process. Teachers, madrasah heads, parents and communities have an important role in ensuring that education remains relevant and able to form a generation that is religious, tolerant and adaptive to global developments.

Effective Islamic education management requires synergistic collaboration between the madrasah head, teachers and stakeholders. The madrasah principal acts as a transformational leader who supports teachers' professional development and adequate resource management, while teachers are responsible for implementing innovative learning methods that are aligned with Islamic values. On the other hand, community involvement in providing infrastructure and policy support determines the sustainability of the madrasah. Challenges such as limited infrastructure, unequal access to technology, and cultural conflicts due to modernization must be overcome with a strategic managerial approach and strong Islamic values. Nevertheless, the digital era also opens up great opportunities for Islamic education to improve access, efficiency and global collaboration, as long as it maintains a balance between modernization and preservation of Islamic values.

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