

Collective *Kiai* Leadership Policies in Enhancing Madrasah Quality at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Tambakberas Jombang

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the collective *kiai* leadership policies in enhancing the quality of madrasah education at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Tambakberas, Jombang. Using a qualitative research method with a phenomenological approach, the study collects data through in-depth interviews, structured observation, and documentation. The data analysis process involves three stages: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. The study reveals that the formulation of collective leadership policies is based on the need to achieve religious goals, legal foundations, and community needs. These policies are oriented toward problem-solving and continuity, formulated through deliberation and consensus involving all *kiai* leaders of both formal and non-formal educational institutions within the pesantren. The implementation of these policies emphasizes scholarly sanad and intellectual tradition across all educational institutions. Key aspects include educational administration, human resource development, strengthening formal education based on national accreditation standards, providing entrepreneurship education, and participating in faith-based as well as science and technology competitions at national and international levels. The evaluation of these policies is carried out collectively by all caretakers and leaders in alignment with established policies to ensure quality improvement across the pesantren's formal and non-formal educational institutions.

Keywords: Collective Leadership; *Kiai*; Madrasah; Policy; Quality Improvement.

1. Introduction

The dynamics of the development of Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Tambakberas, Jombang, cannot be separated from the role of the *kiai* as both caregiver and leader. As with other Islamic educational institutions, *kiai* leadership has a significant influence on institutional progress and the quality of its management. Therefore, examining the *kiai*'s perspective in managing educational institutions becomes a fundamental basis for a deeper understanding of the *kiai*'s role in sustaining the existence of a quality-oriented Islamic boarding school.

Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School is one of the largest salaf Islamic boarding schools in East Java and has even experienced very rapid development at the national level in Indonesia. This is evidenced by the establishment of various formal educational institutions that have achieved, on average, very high accreditation ratings. Document studies collected indicate that several formal educational institutions under the auspices of Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School have obtained excellent accreditation status. Notably, Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School has also been able to establish and manage educational institutions with a focus on the health sector.

Mujamil Qomar states that based on openness to external changes, *pesantren* can be classified into two types: traditional (*salafi*) *pesantren* and modern (*kehalaf*) *pesantren*. *Salafi pesantren* tend to be conservative, whereas *khalaf pesantren* are adaptive in nature. This adaptation is carried out in response to changes and developments in education that arise from the demands of advancements in modern science and technology. The existence of *pesantren* in the face of such changes is inevitable, particularly in terms of institutional management and administration (Qomar, 2008).

Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Tambakberas, Jombang, fulfills the characteristics of a salaf or traditional *pesantren* that is adaptive and open to change. Accordingly, Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Jombang, accepts institutional

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change, development, and transformation. Research by Devi Pramitha indicates that one of the roles of collective leadership at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Tambakberas, Jombang, serves as a driving force for institutional development and transformation. The study can also be understood as a form of collective awareness to undertake managerial transformation and evolution. However, the study requires further follow-up, as it does not examine the role of collective leadership in quality-based development (Pramitha, 2020). In fact, empirically, according to KH. Syifa, although the *kiai* may not understand quality from a theoretical perspective, the foundation of quality lies in public welfare and alignment with the needs of the *ummah*.

The success in formulating and reorienting the direction of the Islamic boarding school without altering its salafi identity cannot be separated from the leadership exercised by the caregivers and administrators of the *pesantren* in responding to the challenges of the times. "When a leadership model within the internal community finds its proper place, all obstacles in realizing the shared ideals agreed upon by the caregivers and administrators will be resolved and naturally dissipate." Leadership is not only required within *pesantren*; it is also essential in other institutions or organizations to prevent misunderstandings and minimize conflict (Dhofir, 2004).

The identity of an Islamic boarding school depends on the leadership model of the *kiai* applied in responding to such changes. In general, from a leadership perspective, *pesantren* remain predominantly centralistic and hierarchical, centered on a single *kiai*. The *kiai* serves as a dominant element in *pesantren* life, regulating the rhythm of development and institutional sustainability through expertise, depth of knowledge, charisma, and leadership skills. It is not uncommon for a *pesantren* to lack a well-structured educational management system, as most matters rely on the wisdom and decisions of the *kiai* (Affandi, 2017).

In *pesantren* culture, a *kiai* performs multiple roles, including religious scholar, educator and caregiver, community liaison, leader, and *pesantren* administrator. Such a complex set of roles requires the *kiai* to be able to position himself appropriately in diverse situations. Accordingly, a *kiai* must possess strong capabilities, dedication, and a high level of commitment to effectively fulfill these responsibilities, while consistently maintaining depth, breadth, and wisdom in the field of Islamic religious knowledge. Moreover, every leader involved in collective leadership is required to have a very strong and profound understanding of religious sciences, grounded in an authentic Sunni scholarly lineage (*sanad*) (Sukamto, 1999).

From its establishment to the present, Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Tambakberas, Jombang, has undergone several leadership transitions; however, over the years it has continued to experience sustained development, both in terms of physical infrastructure and overall institutional quality. This progress is attributable to a leadership dynamic in which both the caregivers and administrators of the *pesantren* perceive themselves as mutually complementary in achieving shared goals. The caregivers and administrators clearly understand their respective domains and responsibilities, thereby preventing any overlap of authority. This condition demonstrates that the *kiai* plays a central role in the dynamics of *pesantren* life itself. Such a leadership pattern differs from those applied in educational institutions outside the *pesantren* context (such as formal educational institutions), which tend to implement structurally defined divisions of authority in carrying out the teaching and learning process (Shofiyyah, Ali dan Sastraatmadja, 2019).

In the development of Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Tambakberas, Jombang, the pattern of charismatic leadership continues to be acknowledged, even though the process of leadership appointment or selection employs democratic mechanisms. This condition has compelled the leadership of Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Tambakberas, Jombang, to reexamine long-held practices, including leadership patterns, communication among leaders, the transformation of students' mindsets, and related aspects. This reassessment is necessary because, often without being fully realized, the networks of modernity have permeated all dimensions of human life as a logical consequence of scientific advancement and global phenomena (Ismail, 2012).

The development and transformation of Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Tambakberas, Jombang, reflect effectiveness in policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation. All forms of guidance, instructions, and decisions arising from collective

leadership serve as representations of policy within the Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School environment. Gus Wafi stated that policies at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Tambakberas, Jombang, cannot be limited solely to written and formally endorsed documents; rather, unwritten policies aimed at enhancing institutional quality and identity are also considered integral policies. Accordingly, the development of Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Tambakberas, Jombang, can be interpreted as evidence of accuracy, effectiveness, and proficiency in policy-making.

Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Tambakberas, Jombang, has undergone educational transformation by accommodating the curricula of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Ministry of National Education across various levels of formal and higher education. Despite the increasing development of formal educational activities, the *pesantren* continues to preserve the teaching of classical Islamic texts (*kitab salaf*) through traditional methods such as *sorogan*, *bandongan*, and *tahfidz*. Salaf education is organized at multiple levels and managed in a semi-autonomous manner under the foundation's policies. This management model affirms a balance between the modernization of education and the preservation of *pesantren* traditions.

Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Tambakberas, Jombang, develops students' interests and talents through a wide range of extracurricular activities in academic, vocational, artistic, and religious fields (Pramitha, 2012). In addition to its focus on religious education, the *pesantren* is also actively engaged in enhancing students' capacities in social engagement, leadership, and entrepreneurship. Despite keeping pace with contemporary developments, religious scholarship and *salaf* traditions remain well preserved and socially recognized. The salaf identity functions as a form of collective quality awareness that is continuously maintained as the *pesantren's* defining characteristic.

2. Research Methods

In the design of this study, the researcher, together with a local guide (Gus Wafi), collected field data, conducted document analysis, and carried out interviews with representative informants. Through this process, the researcher obtained a comprehensive understanding of Collective *Kiai* Leadership in Improving *Madrasah* Quality at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Tambakberas, Jombang. Throughout the research process, data were collected in accordance with the research focus without any significant obstacles. In line with the characteristics of qualitative research employing a phenomenological approach (Fitri and Haryanti, 2020), the data collected involved understanding the meanings underlying participants' behaviors, describing backgrounds and complex interactions among academic communities, exploring and identifying types of informants to capture their perspectives, and describing the phenomenon of educational implementation at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Tambakberas, Jombang.

This approach assists in understanding events and the experiences of groups or individuals within the environment of Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Tambakberas, Jombang. This is consistent with the fundamental understanding of the phenomenological approach as articulated by Bogdan. The phenomenological approach is employed to explore recurring events that give rise to the characteristics of individuals within particular occurrences and situations (Semiawan, 2010). Such an understanding led the researcher to investigate data related to the phenomenon of quality improvement within the *pesantren* environment. From the perspective of organizational culture within phenomenology, collective *kiai* leadership constitutes an event or experiential phenomenon of leadership practiced repeatedly and consistently in generating policies (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). This aligns with the basic principles of modern management, in which organizational culture is constructed upon shared values that are embodied in policy. Each member of the organization, whether voluntarily or under obligation, continues to implement policies or values with consistency (*istiqamah*). This occurs because policies that function as values represent reflections of collective agreement. When individuals do not endorse or adhere to such collective agreements, they are considered to be engaging in deviant behavior (Jones, 2010).

Data collection in this study was conducted using three techniques: in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. In-depth interviews were carried out to explore the meanings of phenomena experienced by the informants, while observations were conducted directly to examine the implementation of collective leadership within the

environment of Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Tambakberas, Jombang. Documentation was employed to obtain data related to the process of formulating collective leadership policies, encompassing their formulation, implementation, and evaluation stages (Huberman & Miles, 1994).

This study applied three data collection methods: observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observation involved direct participation in activities at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Tambakberas, Jombang, such as policy formulation and evaluation processes. In-depth interviews were conducted with predetermined informants, including caregivers, foundation members, and teachers, to obtain more comprehensive data. Documentation was used to collect data from official documents and scholarly publication reports, serving as a means of validating data obtained through interviews and observations. These methods were employed to gain an in-depth understanding of collective *kiai* leadership in improving educational quality at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Tambakberas, Jombang.

Data analysis in qualitative research employs an inductive mode of reasoning (Morse, 2003). Qualitative data analysis is conducted using inductive thinking (Koro-Ljungberg, 2008) through the flow model developed by Huberman and Miles. According to Huberman, qualitative data analysis focuses on ordinary events that occur naturally within their natural settings (Datta, 1997). The data analysis process involves three main stages: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data condensation refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, and transforming data to enhance their analytical strength and enable the drawing of conclusions. Data display involves presenting data in a systematic narrative form, allowing users to derive conclusions and take action. Conclusion drawing is carried out based on premises whose truth values are established, using principles of logical reasoning. In the data validation process, the researcher conducted member checks by confirming findings with informants via WhatsApp to ensure data accuracy.

3. Research Result And Discussion

The Formation of Collective *Kiai* Leadership Policies in Improving Quality at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Tambakberas, Jombang

Based on observational data, the understanding of collective leadership at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Tambakberas, Jombang, cannot be separated from its organizational structure and strategic governing bodies. Leadership within this pesantren involves the extended family of the founder, KH. Chasbullah, which is collectively represented by four bani: Bani Wahab, Bani Abdul Hamid, Bani Abdurrohman, and Bani Fatimah (Bani Fattah). The Council of Caregivers (Majelis Pengasuh) consists of 13 members representing each bani, with three representatives from each bani and one chairperson, resulting in one bani having four representatives. Meanwhile, the management of ribath remains entirely under the authority of the founder, allowing a single individual to serve simultaneously as a caregiver and as the founder of a ribath as an educational unit under the auspices of the Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Foundation, Tambakberas, Jombang.

Functionally, the Council of Caregivers (Majelis Pengasuh) provides guidance to the daily management and the foundation administrators, who are entrusted with several primary responsibilities, namely: (a) formulating the General Policy Guidelines (Garis-garis Besar Kebijakan/GBK) of the pesantren and the foundation; (b) strengthening coordination, consolidation, and cooperation, both internally and externally within the pesantren; (c) making policy decisions; (d) monitoring the implementation of programs and policies; and (e) developing pesantren human resources in an integrated manner.

The authority underlying the leadership behavior of the Council of Caregivers (Majelis Pengasuh) in the pesantren is derived from charismatic power and authority. This source becomes dominant because *kiai* are believed to possess the capacity to bestow grace (*barakah*) as well as calamity (*bala'*), and they are also recognized for their personal piety and profound spiritual knowledge. Nevertheless, the *kiai* collectively seek to cultivate loyalty based on norms and values derived from religious principles, rather than on individual personalities. Authority grounded solely in charisma is increasingly perceived as less relevant in periods marked by rapid developments in knowledge and technology. This condition should be understood in a more practical context, particularly with regard to

policies that genuinely originate from collective kiai leadership. As Gus Syifa stated, collective kiai leadership continues to accommodate the dawuh or guidance of the kiai due to their deep scholarly and spiritual authority, which is intrinsically linked to the universal leadership and management of pesantren. However, in matters related to modernity, younger members take more active roles, while remaining aware of boundaries and striving not to violate the rules or guiding principles established by the kiai.

The policy formation process begins with the initial stage of problem formulation, which constitutes a crucial phase. This stage is preceded by problem identification, which refers to the process of understanding the nature of the issues at hand. This step is carried out by mapping the problem situation through careful examination and scanning of changes occurring in both the internal and external environments. At this stage, the primary focus is on identifying the root causes of the problems. Given that multiple issues may compete for attention, only the most significant ones proceed to the next stage, where they are defined and structured as policy problems (Ofstad, 1981).

This stage is also referred to as agenda setting. The policy agenda-setting process begins with the emergence of an issue within society. An issue may initially be perceived as a private problem, then develop into a public problem, and eventually evolve into a policy issue. At the policy issue stage, differences of opinion often arise among members of an organization regarding perceptions of the nature of the problem and its possible solutions. Accordingly, Dunn argues that a policy issue is the result of debate over the definition, classification, explanation, and evaluation of a problem (James P Lester and J Stewart, 2000).

Kraft and Furlong, as cited in Muchlis, define policy formulation as the design and preparation of policy objectives along with strategies for achieving those objectives. This activity is closely related to the formulation of policy problems. First, it involves the design of policy formulation; however, the design of a policy may differ from the initial formulation of the policy problem, in line with the dynamics occurring both within and outside the policy community. Second, policy formulation also encompasses strategies for achieving policy objectives. Through these activities, it is emphasized that for each policy alternative, concrete steps should be formulated from the outset regarding the actions to be taken if the alternative is selected as policy.

Based on the data obtained, the findings are consistent with William N. Dunn's theory, as cited by Peter Brownell (1982), which explains that policy formulation, or forecasting, is an activity aimed at determining factual information about future conditions based on currently available information. Forecasting examines plausible and potential future scenarios and normatively evaluates them by estimating the consequences of existing or proposed policies, identifying constraints that may arise in achieving objectives, and assessing the feasibility of various policy alternatives.

The formulation of collective kiai leadership policies at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Tambakberas, Jombang, is oriented toward achieving institutional objectives through a comprehensive assessment of problems. This process involves all collective leadership actors at every stage, including problem identification, the formulation of policy alternatives, and the determination of the most appropriate policy. Policy formulation is conducted on an ongoing basis in response to the various challenges faced by the pesantren. Policies are formulated in situations where appropriate regulations have not yet been established, enabling them to be implemented and accepted as effective solutions to existing problems.

The process of forming collective kiai leadership policies is carried out through an adoption mechanism. The adoption of collective kiai leadership policies in quality development at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Tambakberas, Jombang, emphasizes empowering the institutions under the foundation of the pesantren to act proactively, think creatively, and optimize performance within their respective units. This stage is often referred to as the policy legitimation stage, in which policies have obtained legitimacy. Problems that have become the focus of deliberation are addressed through policy solutions that are subsequently implemented. In selecting policy alternatives, careful consideration is required to ensure that policy makers do not become trapped in choices that serve only particular personal interests.

Existing problems are first deliberated through consultation to identify appropriate solutions for addressing the issues at hand. Problem solving through deliberative

consensus (*musyawarah*) within the collective kiai leadership at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Tambakberas, Jombang, can be interpreted as an effort to apply the rational–comprehensive model. The rational–comprehensive model is one of the most widely recognized and broadly accepted models among policy analysts (Griffin & Gregory Moorhead, 2014). This theoretical model emphasizes the notion of policy as a means of achieving maximum social gain, implying that leadership authorities, as policy makers, must select policies that generate benefits for improving pesantren quality and enhancing public trust. The model asserts that the policy formulation process should be grounded in needs that have been rationally assessed. The rationality applied involves comparing the costs incurred with the outcomes achieved (Johnson & Kruse, 2009). Ultimately, all forms of policy formulation undertaken by the collective kiai leadership at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Tambakberas, Jombang, are directed toward addressing challenges and issues related to institutional quality improvement. All authorities are mobilized and strengthened to seek solutions or alternatives for enhancing quality and public confidence.

Implementation of Collective *Kiai* Leadership Policies in Improving Quality at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Tambakberas, Jombang

Policy implementation refers to the act of executing a policy as well as demonstrating its impact in practice. To analyze the policy implementation process, several approaches may be employed, one of which is the top-down approach. This approach is based on the perspective that decisions or policies established by policy makers must be promptly implemented by all elements within Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Tambakberas, Jombang. These elements include the entire council of *kiai*, foundation administrators, *pesantren* management, school and madrasah leaders and administrators, the security division, stakeholders, and the students (*santri*) (Ismail al-Bukhari, 1403).

All members of the *pesantren* community at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Tambakberas, Jombang, implement the policies that have been formally established, although the extent of implementation is carried out in accordance with each individual's capacity and capability. The primary factor underpinning this implementation is the collective awareness of each member to uphold the trust (*amanah*) inherent in the agreed-upon policies. This awareness may also be understood as a form of fundamental consciousness, namely the application of Qur'anic principles that obligate every Muslim to possess the quality of trustworthiness. The command to uphold *amanah* is reflected in verse 58 of Surah An-Nisa', which states: "Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due, and when you judge between people, judge with justice. Excellent is that which Allah instructs you. Indeed, Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing".

The analytical focus of this approach typically lies in issues related to the achievement of the formal objectives of established policies. In other words, a policy can be considered successfully implemented when all policy guidelines or procedures have been carried out and the intended policy objectives have been achieved. This view aligns with Rohman's perspective, as cited in Ali Ramdhani, which defines policy implementation as a relationship that enables the attainment of an activity's ultimate goals or intended outcomes. Any deficiencies or errors in policy execution can be identified only after the policy has been implemented (Nurhalizah, Ramdhani & Nurmila, 2023).

At the same time, the success of policy implementation can be assessed from the impacts generated as a result of evaluating the implementation process. Furthermore, Edward III identifies in accordance with the data found at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Tambakberas, Jombang that the major contributing factors in policy implementation include communication, resources, the disposition or attitudes of implementers, and organizational structure. These four aspects, both directly and indirectly, influence one another in the process of policy implementation (Saifuddin, 2016).

Development of the *Pesantren* Curriculum: Madhhab Sanad as the Identity of *Pesantren* Quality

The implementation of policies for the development of the *pesantren* curriculum (*pesantren* educational institutions) constitutes an imperative as a form of collective awareness among the *kiai* as the highest leadership authority. Such curriculum development policies are formulated only after undergoing a series of in-depth reviews and considerations, particularly because *pesantren* encompass numerous educational institutions that require continuous development (Dunn, 1999).

Policies for the development of the *pesantren* curriculum can be formulated by taking into account several important considerations related to their implementation, which must be carried out in such a manner as to design meaningful and essential activities for *santri* during their period of study in the *pesantren* (Saifuddin, 2016). Conceptually, curriculum development policy refers to a set of steps or actions that must be undertaken by all educational institutions, both formal and non-formal, with the aim of ensuring the successful implementation of educational activities in achieving predetermined goals and targets within an organization or educational institution, particularly *pesantren*-based educational institutions. However, the application of a strategy is not merely a simple plan that can be executed at any time and in any context. Rather, the implementation of curriculum development policies requires careful preparation of several essential instruments so that the policy can be effectively carried out and generate positive implications for the improvement of the quality of the *pesantren* (Kusumawati & Nurfuadi, 2024).

The findings of the field research indicate that the implementation of *pesantren* curriculum development policies is carried out through several systematic stages to ensure that the curriculum can be properly developed and effectively implemented. Referring to the concept proposed by Pearce and Robinson regarding learning development management, this process requires active involvement from *pesantren* leaders, particularly the *kyai* and foundation administrators. Institutional development management can be understood as a set of predetermined policies or actions undertaken to formulate policy directions, implement plans designed to achieve organizational goals and objectives, and conduct control or evaluation of activities that have been carried out within the organization.

Based on field findings obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation studies, the implementation of *pesantren* curriculum development policies at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Tambakberas Jombang is carried out through several key stages. First, the curriculum is reviewed with reference to the vision, mission, philosophical foundations, and the lineage (*sanad*) of scholarly tradition as the basis for *pesantren* curriculum development. Second, the curriculum is formulated based on an analysis of environmental needs as well as assessments of students' needs and contemporary developments. Third, curriculum development is oriented toward enhancing students' skills and nurturing their individual potentials. Fourth, the curriculum formulation is designed by a development team, quality assurance team, or expert team established by the *kyai*, selected on the basis of their developmental competence, educational background, mastery of classical texts, and religious understanding. Fifth, the *pesantren* curriculum is formally established upon the recommendations and approval of the caretakers (*kyai*) (TotoSuharto, et al.(ed), 2005).

The implementation of curriculum development is an urgent matter for educational institutions. As argued by Pearce and Robinson in curriculum development management, the initial stage of formulation plays a crucial role in determining the success of implemented programs, including the application of *pesantren* curricula. In the development and implementation of the *pesantren* curriculum, *kyai* and the appointed curriculum development or expert teams conduct systematic studies, formulations, and analyses of the policies being implemented, particularly with regard to aligning curriculum development with existing conditions and the future needs of students (Saifuddin, 2016).

The implementation of *pesantren* curriculum development is grounded in the vision, mission, philosophy, and scholarly lineage (*sanad*) as the primary references for curriculum development. In formulating curricula within educational institutions, particularly *pesantren*, such formulations are necessarily aligned with the vision, mission, philosophy, and scholarly lineage upheld by the *pesantren* (AR, Z. T., 2018). Therefore, the vision and mission serve as the main foundations for developing the educational curriculum at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Tambakberas Jombang.

The fundamental basis of educational implementation in *pesantren* is inherently grounded in the primary sources of Islam, namely the Qur'an and Hadith, which function as references and guidelines for the organization of *pesantren* education. This foundation aims, among other objectives, to shape students who pursue knowledge into figures with strong Muslim character while simultaneously developing their various potentials or skills so that they may become well-rounded individuals (*insan kamil*). This reality reflects

Qur'anic and Prophetic values that have long been embedded as customs and cultural practices within *pesantren* life, albeit not always in a proportional manner. Within the traditions and educational culture of *pesantren*, the actions and words of the *kiai* are regarded as authoritative, positioning the *kiai* as a figure who holds full authority over the course and direction of the *pesantren* as an educational institution (Anwar, 2011).

The distinctive concept of *silsilah keilmuan* or *sanad keilmuan* in Islamic education within *pesantren* refers to a system of knowledge transmission that guarantees the authenticity and validity of the knowledge acquired, through an unbroken chain linking one teacher to another. In other words, it clearly identifies both the teacher and the scholarly lineage through which a *santri* receives knowledge. This scholarly tradition, based on *silsilah* or *sanad keilmuan*, continues to be preserved and trusted as an essential means of acquiring knowledge with a clear and accountable chain of transmission and recognized teachers. This approach stands in contrast to contemporary educational models in which the sources of knowledge are sometimes unclear, such as information obtained from the internet that is often consumed uncritically without consideration of the author's identity, scholarly background, or academic credibility. Such practices have given rise to what is commonly referred to as "instant scholars," individuals who claim knowledge without undergoing a prolonged and structured learning process, relying solely on superficial reading in the digital sphere (Pawit M. Yusup, 2012).

The tradition of studying classical Islamic texts (*kitab kuning*) and maintaining scholarly lineages (*sanad keilmuan*) of *kiai* or ulama constitutes a distinctive characteristic of *pesantren* education, setting it apart from many educational institutions outside the *pesantren* system. This tradition embodies a strong commitment to the pursuit of knowledge and the preservation of traditional Islamic scholarship, which is inseparable from the authoritative role of the *kiai* or ulama. Accordingly, the consistent preservation of sanad-based scholarly traditions prevents the emergence of the phenomenon often referred to as "instant preachers," which carries the risk of misleading or being misguided. Preserving this *pesantren* scholarly tradition is crucial, as it ensures the continuity of legitimate chains of knowledge transmission from previous generations and the use of classical Islamic texts or academically authoritative references. In this sense, the knowledge disseminated to the wider community is derived from the works of ulama whose scholarly authority is firmly grounded in an authentic and verifiable *sanad* (Marzuki Wahid, 2005).

The Organization of Competitive Formal Education

Based on the research findings, Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Tambakberas Jombang is a *pesantren* that maintains a purely *salaf* curriculum while being supported by a modern educational system, including classical classroom instruction, course-based programs, and various training or workshop models. Both the traditional and modern instructional systems implemented at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Tambakberas Jombang are closely aligned with the objectives of national education. Fundamentally, these educational practices aim to shape Muslim individuals who are prepared to live and function effectively within society, resilient in facing social and environmental changes marked by the erosion of established values, and capable of developing personal independence (Kusumawati, I., & Nurfuadi. 2024).

The objectives of organizing formal education at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Tambakberas Jombang accommodate the mandates of the national education goals as stipulated by law. As outlined earlier, the integration of scientific and religious curricula at Pondok *Pesantren* Bahrul Ulum is implemented through the provision of formal education. One strategy employed is curriculum reform aimed at advancing the *pesantren's* future development by placing greater emphasis on the study of classical texts that were previously less explored, condensing learning materials, and restructuring educational levels in accordance with stages of teaching and learning activities. The declining public interest in *salaf pesantren* has made the integration of a formal curriculum an appropriate solution, even though the institution continues to maintain strong *salaf* traditions (Anwar, 2011). *Salaf pesantren* that are able to endure are those that remain attractive due to their quality and consistency (*istiqamah*). This educational integration represents an effective approach to shaping the mental resilience of *santri*, as they will eventually apply their knowledge in direct interaction with the wider community. Without a strong mental foundation, *santri* risk becoming mere spectators within society rather than active and constructive contributors (Marzuki Wahid, 2005).

The system of integrating formal/modern education at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Tambakberas Jombang demonstrates that, in its development, the *pesantren* has not merely grown upon the traditional *salaf* pattern, but has also undergone systematic transformation in the development of its educational system. This development does not diminish the *pesantren's* traditional role, which has long been central to Islamic religious education, particularly as an institution of *tafaqquh fi al-din*. On the contrary, such integration further enriches and strengthens the transmission of traditional Islamic intellectual heritage as contained in the *kitab kuning*, while simultaneously expanding the scope of *pesantren* services to respond to societal demands and needs, especially in the field of formal education (Bawani, 1993).

Initially, the integration of traditional and modern (classical) educational systems began with the establishment of only the *Shifir*, *Ibtida'iyah*, and *Tsanawiyah* classes. The *Aliyah* level was established later in 1977, at which time the *Shifir* class was merged into *Ibtida'iyah*. Subsequent developments introduced further changes, including the addition of a two-year *Takbhosus* program, the conversion of *Ibtida'iyah* classes II and III into *Ibtida'iyah* classes V and VI, *Tsanawiyah* classes I, II, and III into *Aliyah* classes I, II, and III, and *Aliyah* classes I and II into *Takbhosus* I and *Takbhosus* II. In recent years, significant changes have occurred, particularly in teaching and learning activities, with the introduction of a formal curriculum for *Tsanawiyah*, *Aliyah*, and higher education levels. This initiative aims to equip *santri* with formal diplomas, which are increasingly required by society, thereby broadening the scope of *santri's* opportunities. The integration of education is reflected in the organization of learning, which is structured according to each class level (Mahmudah, 2009).

This classical model represents an accommodation between traditional teaching and educational systems and modern instructional methods. Furthermore, the *pesantren* has introduced innovations to provide *santri* with life skills. *Santri* are given the freedom to choose specific skills according to their abilities, ensuring that graduates possess practical competencies. In addition, skill development programs include screen printing, sewing, and computer training. Sewing classes are offered exclusively at the female *pesantren*, while screen printing is conducted in designated units within Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Tambakberas Jombang.

The skills-based course system aims to develop *santri* with practical abilities, fostering independence so that they can effectively support the religious knowledge acquired at the *pesantren*. Although in practice the outcomes may not always meet expectations, the *pesantren* at least provides *santri* with essential life skills. Numerous training programs are offered, including workshops in carpentry, agriculture, animal husbandry, mechanical work, cooperative management, handicrafts, and many others. Additionally, some training programs are designed for general skills development, such as IT training for creating educational animations, which are implemented by the *pesantren* to enhance the overall quality of the *santri* (Bawani, 1993).

Santri are given the freedom to choose the skills offered at the *pesantren*. For male *santri*, training programs are conducted during designated hours on the condition that they participate in *ndalem*, as all assets belong to the caretakers and their management is entrusted to the *santri*, simultaneously providing them with practical skills. It can be observed that this integration of education has a positive impact on the learning process. Several studies indicate that the integration of formal education and *pesantren* education positively influences the moral and spiritual development of the *santri* (Kusumawati, I., & Nurfuadi, 2024).

The integration of formal education and *pesantren* education influences the development of *santri* character. It is therefore expected that, moving forward, the empowerment of this integration will continue to be implemented, providing a new dimension to education in Indonesia. Educational processes, as part of the quality development of the *pesantren*, strengthen institutional competitiveness. In this way, Pondok *Pesantren* Bahrul Ulum Jombang essentially develops in accordance with the demands of national and global societal needs. However, the collective awareness of the *keiai* does not prioritize achieving accreditation scores, as these may not align with the traditional (*salaf*) character of the institution.

Evaluation of Collective *Kiai* Leadership Policies in Improving Quality at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Tambakberas Jombang

Based on the researcher's observations and interviews, it can be seen that policy evaluation is an effort to monitor the outcomes of policy formulation and implementation, measure organizational achievement based on quality, and take corrective actions when necessary. According to Dunn (1999), the function of evaluation in policy analysis is to provide valid and reliable information regarding policy performance, as well as to offer clarity and critique of the values underlying the selection of goals and objectives, while supplying information for problem formulation and practical decision-making.

The evaluation process at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Tambakberas Jombang aligns with the theoretical development proposed by Dunn. Dunn developed three approaches to policy evaluation: pseudo-evaluation, formal evaluation, and rhetorical evaluation. Pseudo-evaluation is "an approach that employs descriptive methods to produce valid and reliable information regarding policy outcomes without attempting to question the benefits or value of those outcomes on the policy targets" (Shodiqin, 2019). Pseudo-evaluation assumes that measures of benefit or value are self-evident. Formal evaluation, on the other hand, is an approach that uses descriptive methods to generate valid and reliable information regarding policy outcomes, but evaluates these outcomes against the program objectives formally announced by the policymakers.

Mechanism of Policy Evaluation at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Tambakberas Jombang

Policy evaluation and implementation at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Tambakberas Jombang are conducted from a quality development perspective. This means that determinations and assessment standards are guided by a quality-oriented perspective, with the establishment of quality standards based on salaf learning as the defining character or identity of the *pesantren*. In other words, policy control is carried out to ensure that the salaf character of the *pesantren* is preserved, while still accommodating the fulfillment of quality standards set by the government (Mustajab, 2015).

Policy evaluation at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Tambakberas Jombang focuses primarily on the implementation of education. This is because the broader context surrounding the learning process significantly contributes to the achievement of learning outcomes. Such broader contexts include institution-based program policies. All these policies are evaluated or assessed based on their influence on the learning process. Therefore, in a comprehensive and holistic assessment, the institutional programs themselves must also be evaluated (Dunn, 1999).

Within the *pesantren* environment, the collective policies issued can be categorized into several areas, including: learning policies, student development policies, policies for the development of *pesantren* facilities and infrastructure, teacher/ustad/ustadah development policies, institutional development policies, and policies related to partnerships or relations with the wider community.

The policy evaluation conducted ensures that the entire series of activities is collectively and deliberately assessed to determine the extent to which the policy implementation has been successful. The data collected indicate that policy evaluation can be categorized into process evaluation, outcome evaluation, and impact evaluation (Al Hudib & Cousins, 2022). Denzin and Lincoln state that policy evaluation in educational institutions is oriented toward the concerns of policymakers and funders, typically including questions regarding the causes behind which programs have achieved their intended objectives. In this regard, Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Tambakberas Jombang collectively aligns policy evaluation with the fulfillment and preservation of the salaf tradition. Simultaneously, collective policies ensure that the objectives for alumni correspond with the intellectual development of Muslim scholars grounded in salaf knowledge.

In the policy evaluation process, the outcomes are divided into two categories: the achievement of scholarly knowledge and the synchronization of performance between formal and non-formal institutions. This entire process aims to fulfill the collective objectives of the *kiais* who oversee the *pesantren (ribath)* within Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Tambakberas Jombang. The achievement of scholarly knowledge focuses on the implementation of policies related to the teaching of salaf sciences. Meanwhile, the evaluation of policy synchronization reflects the *pesantren's* effort to

accommodate government-mandated policies while ensuring they do not conflict with the *pesantren's* salaf identity.

The data obtained in this study indicate that policy control at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Tambakberas Jombang is carried out through a structured performance cycle. This cycle is conducted periodically according to a predetermined schedule to ensure the achievement of policies and institutional transformation. According to Richard Gorton and Schneider, as cited by Heinz Weihrich and Harold Koontz (1993), policy control or evaluation within an organizational culture is a process of carefully, objectively, and comprehensively examining and assessing both individual and group performance to identify strengths and weaknesses of a program. The orientation of policy control through evaluation emphasizes outcomes and alignment with planning. If a policy does not align with the plan, objectives, or targets, new measures must be taken to adjust or replace the policy. Furthermore, evaluation results serve as input or feedback for formulating subsequent policies within a policy-based development context. Evaluation not only focuses on the final outcomes but also considers and references each stage of the policy implementation process.

The implementation of policy evaluation at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Tambakberas Jombang can be divided into two components: policy control in administration and academic analysis. These two components fulfill accreditation requirements by clarifying both the institutional vision and the academic vision. The institutional vision emphasizes the fulfillment of quality documentation, which is directly related to formal educational institutions. In contrast, the academic vision focuses on the mastery of scholarly identity and the development of knowledge. Both components are consistently discussed as essential elements in the ongoing quality improvement process (Roidah, 2018).

Currently, policy evaluation at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Tambakberas Jombang is conducted using two models: the structural approach and the cultural approach. The structural approach is often discussed in formal foundation meetings, where the authority and mechanism for evaluation are delegated to the foundation administrators and the supervisors or heads of each unit. According to policymakers, the most effective way to conduct policy evaluation is through the cultural approach. This approach ensures that individuals or units do not feel as if they are being intervened with or scrutinized for mistakes. On the other hand, the cultural approach allows for obtaining solutions to problems arising from each policy and its implementation (Dursun, T., Oskaybaş, K., & Gökmen, C. 2013).

According to Lev Vygotsky, a sociocultural theorist, the term cultural approach is part of the application of constructivist theory. This means that the goal of activities using the cultural approach is a conscious effort to build based on the values held by the community. Robins, in his book on organizational behavior, explains that work culture cannot be established solely on primordial constructs by using approaches based on work specialization. If such methods are applied, humans as organizational actors risk being treated as mere machines or atomic units (Erkan Yaman dan Keyhan Ruclar, 2015).

The evaluation mechanism for madrasahs within Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Tambakberas Jombang refers to the implementation of the *Madrasah* Self-Evaluation/ *Evaluasi Diri Madrasah* (EDM) as a necessary process to enhance the performance and quality of the *madrasah*. The *Madrasah* Self-Evaluation report is prepared as a follow-up to findings obtained through the EDM assessment tools, referring to the eight National Education Standards (SNP), namely: graduation competency standards, content standards, process standards, educator and education personnel standards, facilities and infrastructure standards, financing standards, management standards, and assessment standards. The collective awareness of the *kiai* leadership at Pondok *Pesantren* Bahrul Ulum recognizes that the *Madrasah* Self-Evaluation (EDM) is a process through which all stakeholders examine the *madrasah's* identity, strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and priorities.

The *Madrasah* Self-Evaluation (EDM) in each madrasah is the responsibility of the Head of the *Madrasah* and is carried out by the *Madrasah* Development Team, which consists of the Head of the *Madrasah*, teachers, the *Madrasah* Committee, parents, supervisors, and local religious figures. The foundation acts as a stakeholder overseeing the evaluation comprehensively. This type of assessment is commonly referred to as a self-

assessment. Self-assessment must be conducted honestly and transparently to ensure that accurate and reliable information is revealed.

The evaluation mechanism at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Tambakberas Jombang is conducted periodically, namely each semester, at the beginning of the academic year, and at the end of the academic year. The learning evaluation carried out by the *pesantren* is highly systematic and aligns with general principles of evaluation, which are: (1) validity, (2) competency-oriented, (3) continuity, (4) comprehensiveness, (5) meaningfulness, (6) fairness and objectivity, (7) thoroughness, (8) sincerity, (9) practicality, and (10) accurate recording.

Policy Evaluation as a Quality Control Mechanism at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Tambakberas Jombang

The collective awareness of the *kiai* at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Tambakberas Jombang emphasizes that quality improvement in the *pesantren* should produce outcomes in two domains: 1) the development of ulama capable of addressing all aspects of life in accordance with the teachings and principles of the Qur'an and Hadith, and 2) the formation of individuals possessing competitive skills in science and technology (ITC) in line with contemporary developments.

This quality refers to the *pesantren's* ability to integrate educational standards, which inherently requires, in an accelerated manner, the reconstruction or even deconstruction of the existing system. Although, on the one hand particularly in the context of fields such as medicine, astronomy, and others the classical corpus, known as the *kitab kuning*, already contains substantial knowledge on these subjects.

Similar to the definition of quality, the concept of total quality also carries multiple interpretations. According to the United States Department of Defense, total quality encompasses continuous improvement activities that involve everyone within the organization, both managers and all staff working in an integrated manner to achieve progressively higher performance at every level (Chowdhury, 2004).

The quality of education at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Tambakberas Jombang can be ensured as consistently strengthened to meet or exceed the expectations of stakeholders while maintaining its salaf character. Quality is also reflected in the institution's products, services, and environment. Identity-based quality elevates standards to a level that addresses societal changes. In other words, the highest level of quality at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Tambakberas Jombang is grounded in collective salaf awareness (Nur Zazin, 2011). Furthermore, the development of quality in accordance with external needs is juridically oriented, adjusted to meet governmental requirements and challenges.

Quality is continuously developed in the processes of education and teaching in accordance with the salaf character. The teaching patterns and quality development are based on *salaf* learning principles. This aligns with the *salaf* learning development model proposed by Terry and Leslie, where the quality orientation focuses on preserving the salaf character. Therefore, in the implementation of evaluation, the collective leadership of the *kiai* applies a SWOT perspective. Consequently, field data indicate that the evaluation of collective *kiai* leadership policies in improving quality at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Tambakberas Jombang produces;

First, the implementation of collective *kiai* policies for quality improvement in the *pesantren* is influenced by the typology of the educational system used; however, in substance, it follows the same pattern: organization, planning, implementation, monitoring, and innovation. This pattern forms a recurring cycle in the management of quality activities, with oversight from those responsible for quality in collaboration with all stakeholders in the *pesantren*, particularly the organizers of educational activities. Second, quality-based policy evaluation in the *pesantren* consistently exhibits characteristics built upon the service provider's belief in their ability to satisfy clients, exercise effective leadership, foster cooperation with all stakeholders, and maintain trust in the quality of services according to established standards. These characteristics, originally developed in the industrial sector, have been adapted to the *pesantren* context, emphasizing client satisfaction, total stakeholder involvement (both internal and external) in quality activities, quality standards aligned with client expectations, the *pesantren* service provider's commitment to fostering a culture of quality, continuous improvement through raising quality standards in line with client expectations, and innovation in *pesantren* value systems

to increase attractiveness to society, prospective students, and users, particularly through integrated education and double graduation programs, which are increasingly favored. Third, the impact of collective *kiai* policy evaluation in the *pesantren* is the enhancement of a quality culture, which in turn increases public interest in enrolling their children, leading to higher student enrollment and greater recognition of the *pesantren's* educational quality within society.

4. Conclusion

Based on the research findings and discussion, it can be concluded that: first, the formulation of collective leadership policies in improving the quality of madrasahs at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Tambakberas Jombang is grounded in religious achievements, juridical foundations, and community needs. The policies are also based on problem-solving and continuity responsibilities, with decision-making conducted through deliberation and consensus involving all *kiai* and leaders in both formal and non-formal educational institutions within the environment of Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Tambakberas Jombang. Second, the implementation of collective leadership policies in enhancing madrasah quality emphasizes the aspects of sanad and scholarly knowledge across all formal and non-formal educational institutions within the *pesantren*. Policy implementation includes the management of educational programs, strengthening human resources, development of formal education aligned with national accreditation standards, organization of entrepreneurship education, and participation in competitions based on religious and scientific competencies at both national and international levels. Third, the evaluation of collective leadership policies in improving madrasah quality is carried out through a mechanism of collective awareness involving all supervisors, leaders of formal and non-formal educational institutions, in accordance with the established policies. Evaluation activities function as a quality control mechanism within the *pesantren*, conducted by all foundation management components and quality assurance teams in formal educational institutions at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Tambakberas Jombang. The implications of this study indicate that the collective leadership policies of *kiai* in improving madrasah quality at Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Tambakberas Jombang will be highly effective if they are developed based on three aspects: first, the strengthening of religious values as envisioned by the founders; second, juridical considerations in accordance with prevailing laws and regulations; and third, the needs of the community. These three aspects reinforce the theory proposed by Mark Olsen and Anne-Marie O'Neil, which asserts that educational policy is a key factor in achieving excellence. This study further highlights that in the context of *pesantren*, policy-making is dominated by the affirmation of sanad, scholarly knowledge, and the ideological foundations of the *pesantren*. Therefore, additional aspects of collective leadership policy to enhance quality include the consideration of strengthening the character or institutional identity of the *pesantren*. The theoretical implication emphasizes the need to examine policy production and implementation as a means to reinforce Indonesian national awareness based on Pancasila ideology as a collective consciousness among all human resources within the *pesantren*, ultimately contributing to the cultivation and strengthening of national ideology among the broader society.

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