

Research Article

Improving the Quality of Islamic Boarding School Education through Organizational Commitment of Human Resources

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Abstract: Improving the quality of Islamic boarding school education is essential to meet the demands of modern times and global competition. These institutions are expected not only to produce academically capable students but also those with strong character, noble morals, and spirituality. A key factor influencing the quality of Islamic boarding school education is the organizational commitment of human resources, particularly educators and educational staff. This study examines the role of human resource commitment in enhancing the quality of Islamic boarding school education, using a library research method by reviewing books, journals, and previous studies on organizational commitment and education quality. The findings highlight that organizational commitment, expressed through affective, normative, and sustained commitment, significantly impacts education quality. These dimensions encourage educators and staff to work professionally and responsibly, focusing on quality in both learning and management. Additionally, *pesantren* leadership and an organizational culture rooted in Islamic values further strengthen this commitment, leading to a positive and sustainable impact on education quality. The study concludes that fostering strong organizational commitment is crucial for improving *pesantren* education, urging managers to prioritize human resource development through effective management, visionary leadership, and a conducive organizational culture.

Keywords: Commitment; Human Resources; Islamic Boarding Schools; Organizational Culture; Quality of Education

1. Introduction

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Pesantren are the oldest Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia and play a strategic role in shaping the character, morals, and scientific competence of students. In line with the times and the demands of globalization, *pesantren* are not only required to maintain Islamic values and classical scientific traditions, but are also challenged to improve the quality of education in order to produce graduates who are competitive, adaptive, and relevant to the needs of modern society.

Quality management in Islamic boarding schools is not solely focused on meeting academic standards, but also emphasizes the formation of the moral and spiritual character of students as an integral part of the objectives of Islamic education. The success of improving the quality of Islamic boarding schools is largely determined by the institution's ability to combine a curriculum based on classical Islamic texts with a contextual learning approach that is responsive to the times (Fachrudin, 2021). This approach is in line with Fathurrohman (2018) view that the quality of Islamic education must cover four main aspects, namely the quality of input, which includes students and supporting resources, a meaningful learning process, the quality of output in the form of excellent graduates, and the added value felt by the community. To achieve these four components, a quality control system that is structured, systematic, and sustainable is needed so that Islamic boarding schools remain relevant and competitive in the face of social and educational changes.

Legal recognition of Islamic boarding schools through Law Number 18 of 2019 provides ample space for the implementation of an education quality control system that is in line with the characteristics of Islamic boarding schools. The implementation of this system is based on fundamental values such as independence, responsibility, togetherness, spirituality, and simplicity, which serve as the foundation of a culture of quality while strengthening the professionalism and accountability of *pesantren* management. The success of quality control is largely determined by the level of commitment, discipline, and ability to integrate local and institutional values in each stage of its implementation (Siswanto, 2022). The implementation of a quality control system has been proven to improve the quality of learning through the development of teacher innovation, the application of student-oriented learning, and the achievement of more optimal learning outcomes (Sherwina Ranisa et al., 2025). Furthermore, Suherman & Cipta (2024) emphasize that the dissemination and training of quality control systems to all stakeholders from *pesantren* leaders, the *asatidz* council, to educational staff is a strategic step in building an independent and sustainable organization in developing quality instruments. Additionally, the effective implementation of management functions in this system can strengthen educational governance and enhance the effectiveness of the learning process for students.

On the other hand, Islamic boarding schools still face various challenges in implementing quality control in education, especially in the digital era. The results of the study show that the main obstacles include the limited number and competence of educators, learning methods that lack variety, a strong *kiaisentrism* culture, and weak institutional management (Larasati et al., 2025). The other challenge that is no less important is the low competitiveness of Islamic boarding school graduates in responding to the needs of the job market and human resource development, which is reflected in the limited public trust in the competence of Islamic boarding school graduates (Khoirunisa & Yulianti, 2024). This condition is exacerbated by the orientation of *pesantren* education, which tends to focus solely on religious aspects, while the development of creativity, scientific skills, and technological mastery has not received adequate attention, even though these aspects are major considerations for the business world in the recruitment process (Syarifudin, 2022). Therefore, a comprehensive study of the opportunities and challenges in controlling the quality of *pesantren* education is needed so that the policies and practices implemented can run more effectively and optimally.

Human resource organizational commitment reflects the extent to which individuals have emotional attachment, willingness to contribute, and desire to remain part of the organization. In the context of Islamic boarding schools, organizational commitment is not only professional in nature, but also imbued with spiritual values, sincerity, and devotion. This commitment has the potential to encourage more optimal performance by educators, consistency in the implementation of learning, and the creation of a work culture that is conducive to improving the quality of education.

However, various studies show that there are still challenges in human resource management in Islamic boarding schools, such as high workloads, limited welfare, a lack of ongoing professional training, and weak modern management systems. These conditions have the potential to affect the level of organizational commitment of human resources and ultimately impact the overall quality of education in Islamic boarding schools.

Previous studies have shown that the quality of education, including in Islamic educational institutions, is highly dependent on the quality and involvement of the human resources who manage them. Human resources not only play a role as implementers of educational activities, but also as determinants of the direction, culture, and sustainability of the institution's quality.

Research conducted by Amarullah (2023) shows that the quality of human resources has a major influence on the quality of educational institutions. The findings of this study reveal that good HR performance and productivity will have a direct impact on improving the quality of educational services. Although this study does not specifically discuss Islamic boarding schools, the results provide an overview that the success of improving the quality of education is largely determined by the extent to which HR is committed and serious in carrying out its role.

Furthermore, Selvia et al. (2023) through a literature study, emphasize the importance of human resource management in Islamic education. This study explains that improving the quality of education cannot be separated from the process of human resource development involving all elements of the institution, from leaders to educational staff. This finding is relevant to the context of Islamic boarding schools, as it confirms that educational quality can

only be achieved if all elements of the organization work in harmony and have a strong commitment to the institution's goals.

In the context of Islamic boarding schools, several studies specifically highlight the importance of organizational commitment in maintaining and improving educational quality. Siswanto (2022) found that the successful implementation of a quality control system in Islamic boarding schools is largely determined by the commitment and discipline of human resources in internalizing the values of Islamic boarding schools. Values such as sincerity, responsibility, and togetherness have proven to be capable of building a strong culture of quality and encouraging professionalism in the Islamic boarding school environment.

However, on the other hand, a number of studies have also revealed various challenges that Islamic boarding schools still face in their efforts to improve the quality of education. Larasati et al. (2025) stated that the limited number and competence of educators, less varied learning methods, and the strong tradition of *kiaisentr* (cleric-centered) education are obstacles in managing the quality of education in Islamic boarding schools. These conditions often cause the implementation of quality policies to be less than optimal.

Research by Khoirunisa & Yulianti (2024) notes that the low competitiveness of Islamic boarding school graduates in the workforce is related to the suboptimal development of human resource competencies in Islamic boarding schools. This shows that organizational commitment to human resources still needs to be directed not only at strengthening religious aspects but also at improving the quality of education relevant to the needs of society and the workforce.

Based on the results of a review of previous studies, it can be concluded that although the issues of education quality and human resource management have been widely discussed, studies that specifically place organizational commitment to human resources as a major factor in improving the quality of *pesantren* education are still relatively limited. Most studies focus more on aspects of management or quality systems in general, without exploring in depth the role of HR commitment in supporting the sustainability of *pesantren* education quality. Therefore, this study is important to fill this gap by providing a more comprehensive understanding of the role of organizational commitment of human resources in improving the quality of *pesantren* education.

2. Literature Review

Human Resource Management

Management is generally understood as the process of organizing, directing, and managing various resources to achieve specific goals effectively and efficiently. With the development of science, the concept of management is no longer interpreted simply as an activity of organizing, but as a series of structured functions oriented towards achieving organizational goals (Yuliyati, 2020). In this context, management emphasizes two main aspects, namely effectiveness in achieving the right goals and efficiency in the use of time and available resources (Sinambela, 2016).

Management cannot be separated from the role of humans, because the achievement of organizational goals always involves cooperation between individuals. A manager has the responsibility to coordinate and delegate tasks to subordinates according to their functions and competencies so that organizational goals can be achieved optimally (Nawawi & La'alang, 2020; Rokhmiyati, 2018). Therefore, management is essentially the art and science of managing others to complete work collectively.

In educational institutions, especially Islamic education, human resource management plays a very important role. HRM is understood as the process of managing educators and educational staff, which includes planning, recruitment, development, evaluation, and rewards to support the achievement of educational goals (Mubarok, 2021). The principal or head of an educational institution acts as a manager responsible for developing the potential of human resources so that they are able to work professionally and sustainably.

Human resource management is an important part of educational management, in addition to curriculum management, student affairs, infrastructure, finance, and community relations. The success of an educational institution is greatly influenced by the leadership's ability to manage human resources appropriately, as teachers are a key factor in the success of the learning process. Therefore, teachers need to be guided, directed, and developed in accordance with the vision and mission of the educational institution.

Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment is reflected in the sincerity of individuals in carrying out their roles within the organization, which is evident through their work ethic and motivation. Work ethic is understood as a set of values, attitudes, and habits that form the basis of an individual's or group's work behavior. This ethos serves as a moral guideline that shapes how individuals interpret their work, responsibilities, and life goals, both in a personal and institutional context (Bertens, 2011; Muhaimin, 2012).

Various studies show that work ethic cannot be separated from the value systems and beliefs held by individuals and society. These values serve as a guide for behavior and form the basis for loyalty, discipline, and willingness to contribute optimally to the organization (Geertz, 1973; Madjid, 1995). Therefore, work ethic is a tangible manifestation of organizational commitment that stems from beliefs and work culture.

From an Islamic perspective, work ethic has a strong spiritual dimension because it is directly related to the faith and purpose of life of a Muslim. Work is seen as part of worship and a means of obtaining the pleasure of Allah SWT, so that commitment to work is not only driven by material interests, but also by moral and religious awareness (Al-Faruqi, 1995; Madjid, 1995). The Islamic work ethic encourages individuals to work diligently, honestly, and responsibly as a form of devotion to God and social contribution.

In addition to work ethic, organizational commitment is also supported by work motivation. Motivation is an internal or external drive that influences an individual's enthusiasm, perseverance, and consistency in carrying out tasks to achieve certain goals (Mundiri, 2015; Steers et al., 1996). Internal motivation stems from personal needs, values, and beliefs, while external motivation is influenced by the work environment, rewards, and organizational support (Rusyan et al., 1989).

Work motivation is not solely influenced by economic factors, but also by non-material factors such as values, norms, and moral integrity. In many contexts, values and beliefs are the main drivers for individuals to remain and commit to the organization, even though the material rewards received are relatively limited (Anorogo & Widiyanti, 1993; Asifudin, 2004). This shows that organizational commitment is formed from the integration of a value-based work ethic and work motivation oriented towards meaningful goals.

Thus, organizational commitment can be understood as a psychological condition that encourages individuals to remain loyal, actively involved, and responsible to the organization. In educational institutions, especially Islamic boarding schools, the organizational commitment of human resources is an important foundation in maintaining consistent performance, improving the quality of education, and strengthening a work culture that is in line with Islamic values and institutional goals.

Quality of Education

In popular dictionaries, the term quality is defined as degree, level, and is analogous to something of high value such as gems and pearls (Shihab, 1999). In line with this, Shihab explains that quality refers to the measure of how good or bad something is, which indicates the level of quality it possesses. In the Management Dictionary, quality is defined as the extent to which a set of characteristics inherent in an object is able to meet certain requirements. Tom Peters and Nancy Austin, through their work *A Passion for Excellence*, view quality as something closely related to enthusiasm and self-esteem (Sallis, 2006). Meanwhile, Arcaro (2007) emphasizes that quality is a structured and continuous process in an effort to improve results or outputs. According to him, quality is not something magical or complicated, but is based on common sense principles.

Menurut Arcaro (2007) reveals that when discussing improving the quality of education, the focus of the discussion is often limited to improving class promotion rates or report card grades. In higher education institutions with this pattern, the responsibility for improving the quality of education is largely placed on teachers. In general, teachers tend to focus on the academic aspects of students, namely helping students in the learning process and acquiring knowledge.

3. Research Method

This study applies a qualitative approach using a literature review method as proposed by Zed (2008). This method was chosen because it is suitable for examining and analyzing in depth the various opportunities and challenges in controlling the quality of Islamic boarding school education, especially in facing the developments of the digital era. Research data was collected through documentation techniques by searching and reviewing various primary and

secondary literature sources, including books, scientific journal articles, research reports, and other supporting documents relevant to the focus of the study.

To ensure the validity, accuracy, and relevance of the data, the source selection process was carried out selectively and systematically. The literature used was prioritized on main reference books and scientific journal articles published in the last ten years, although some classical references were still used as a conceptual basis when deemed relevant.

Data analysis was conducted using Miles and Huberman's interactive analysis model, which includes three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Miles et al., 2014). In data reduction, all collected information was selected and filtered to obtain data most relevant to the research objectives. Next, the reduced data was presented thematically to facilitate the process of identifying and understanding the opportunities and challenges of quality control in Islamic boarding schools. The conclusion drawing stage was carried out through a comprehensive interpretation of the research findings to produce a complete and in-depth picture of the phenomenon being studied.

The validity of the data in this study was maintained through the application of source triangulation, namely by comparing various primary and secondary literature such as key reference books, scientific journal articles, and relevant research reports from the last ten years. In addition, the researcher's diligence was demonstrated through critical review and in-depth selection of each source of literature so that only data that was accurate and relevant to the research context was used. The validity of the findings is also strengthened through discussions with peers to test the consistency of interpretations and enrich the analytical perspective (Rahim, 2020).

4. Results and Discussion

Results

The results of this study were obtained through an in-depth review of various empirical and conceptual studies discussing human resource management, organizational commitment, and the quality of education in Islamic boarding schools. In general, the findings show that improvements in the quality of education in Islamic boarding schools are largely determined by the quality of human resource management, which is supported by strong organizational commitment from all elements of the institution.

Firstly, in terms of human resource planning, most studies show that Islamic boarding schools with systematic HR planning tend to be better able to maintain and improve the quality of their education. HR planning is carried out through an analysis of the needs for teaching and educational staff based on the number of students, workload, and the vision and mission of the Islamic boarding school. At the Utsman Bin Affan Islamic Boarding School in Batam, for example, HR planning is carried out routinely every academic year by involving the principal, the head of the boarding school, and the foundation's personnel department. This pattern allows the *pesantren* to place teaching staff according to their competencies and the needs of the institution, so that the learning process can run more effectively and purposefully (Witono, 2023).

Secondly, in terms of HR recruitment and placement, the results of the study show that Islamic boarding schools generally apply selection based on academic values, character, and moral integrity. Recruitment does not only consider intellectual abilities, but also the commitment of prospective educators to Islamic boarding school values. This practice strengthens the affective commitment of human resources to the organization, because individuals who are recruited from the outset already understand the culture, values, and goals of the *pesantren* (Witono, 2023).

The third aspect is training and human resource development. The results of the study show that Islamic boarding schools that consistently conduct training, such as in-house training on learning methodologies, classroom management, and strengthening spiritual values, experience a significant improvement in the quality of learning. The training not only improves the professional competence of teachers but also fosters a sense of belonging and responsibility towards the institution. However, several studies also note that the implementation of training still faces obstacles, particularly time constraints and the *pesantren*'s busy schedule, so that the effectiveness of training is not yet fully optimal (Witono, 2023).

Fourth, in terms of performance evaluation and supervision, the results of the study show that *pesantren* that implement a periodic evaluation system whether monthly, mid-semester, or end-of-year are better able to maintain consistent educational quality. Performance evaluations are conducted objectively through learning supervision, activity reports, and direct

monitoring by *pesantren* and foundation leaders. This evaluation system not only functions as a control tool but also as a means of reflection and continuous improvement for educators and educational staff (Witono, 2023).

Fifth, the results of the study also reveal that the organizational commitment of human resources in Islamic boarding schools is reflected in the work ethic, loyalty, and willingness of educators to carry out dual roles, both as teachers and character builders for students. This commitment grows strong because Islamic boarding schools are not only seen as a place of work but also as a space for service and worship. In this context, religious values play an important role in strengthening the intrinsic motivation of human resources, so that they remain committed and contribute despite facing limitations in facilities or material compensation (Maskar, 2025).

Overall, the results of the study show that the quality of *pesantren* education cannot be separated from the quality of human resource management and the level of organizational commitment of educators and educational staff. *Pesantren* that prioritize human resources as strategic assets, manage them professionally, and foster commitment rooted in Islamic values, have proven to be more adaptive, competitive, and sustainable in addressing educational challenges in the modern era.

Discussion

The discussion in this study is based on library research, which involves reviewing and analyzing various sources such as scientific journals, books, and previous research findings relevant to human resource organizational commitment and the quality of Islamic boarding school education. This approach allows researchers to gain a deep conceptual and theoretical understanding of the relationship between HR commitment and improving the quality of Islamic boarding school education based on the empirical findings of previous researchers.

The results of the literature review show that Islamic boarding schools as Islamic educational institutions have characteristics that are unique compared to other formal educational institutions. *Pesantren* not only function as places for the transfer of knowledge, but also as institutions for shaping the character, morals, and spirituality of students. Dawam Rahardjo emphasizes that *pesantren* are not merely classical educational institutions, but socio-religious institutions with their own value systems and cultures that are greatly influenced by the figure of the kiai and classical Islamic scholarly traditions (Mundiri, 2015).

In this context, the quality of *pesantren* education is not only measured by academic achievement but also by the *pesantren*'s success in instilling Islamic values and shaping the students' personalities as a whole. Sudarwan Danim states that the quality of education covers four main aspects, namely input quality, process, output, and outcome (Mundiri, 2015). The quality of input is largely determined by the quality of human resources, including the head of the institution, teachers, and educational staff (Mundiri, 2015).

Based on a review of the literature, improving the quality of *pesantren* education is greatly influenced by the level of organizational commitment of human resources. Organizational commitment is understood as an individual's belief in and attachment to an organization, which encourages work behavior consistent with the organization's goals. Tasmara defines commitment as a bond of belief (aqad) that drives a person's behavior towards a direction they believe in (Mundiri, 2015). In the context of Islamic boarding schools, this commitment is not only professional but also religious and moral.

A literature review shows that educators and educational staff with high organizational commitment tend to show strong dedication, loyalty, and responsibility towards educational tasks. This can be seen from their willingness to carry out teaching tasks, guide students, and develop the institution despite facing limitations in facilities and welfare. These findings are in line with research results stating that HR commitment is the main driver in creating a productive work ethic in Islamic boarding schools.

From a theoretical perspective, Meyer and Allen divide organizational commitment into three dimensions, namely affective commitment, normative commitment, and continuance commitment (Jaros, 2007). Affective commitment relates to an individual's emotional attachment to the organization, normative commitment relates to a moral awareness to remain loyal to the organization, while continuance commitment relates to rational considerations for remaining in the organization.

The results of the literature study show that these three dimensions of commitment are highly relevant in the context of Islamic boarding schools. Affective commitment is reflected in the sense of belonging and love of educators for Islamic boarding schools and the values they uphold. Normative commitment arises from religious awareness that serving in Islamic

boarding schools is part of worship and a mandate that must be carried out with full responsibility. Meanwhile, sustained commitment is evident in the desire of human resources to continue to contribute and develop together with Islamic boarding schools in the long term.

In addition to individual commitment, the literature reviewed also emphasizes the importance of leadership and organizational culture in strengthening the organizational commitment of human resources. Visionary, participatory, and Islamic-based leadership in Islamic boarding schools can create a conducive working climate and enhance a sense of togetherness among all elements of the Islamic boarding school. This condition is in line with the concept of Total Quality Management (TQM) in education, which emphasizes the involvement of all members of the organization in continuous quality improvement efforts.

Mulyadi emphasizes that TQM is a systemic approach that involves all elements of the organization, from leaders to implementers, to make continuous improvements to processes, services, and human resources. In Islamic boarding schools, the application of TQM principles supported by organizational commitment of human resources will encourage improvements in the quality of learning, institutional management, and educational services as a whole.

Thus, based on the results of the literature study that has been analyzed, it can be concluded that improving the quality of Islamic boarding school education through the organizational commitment of human resources is a very fundamental factor. Strong commitment from human resources both in the affective and cognitive dimensions is essential for the implementation of TQM principles in Islamic boarding schools.

5. Conclusions

Based on the results of research conducted through library research by reviewing various scientific journals, books, and relevant previous research results, it can be concluded that improving the quality of Islamic boarding school education is greatly influenced by the organizational commitment of human resources. *Pesantren* as Islamic educational institutions not only function as centers for the transfer of knowledge, but also as institutions for shaping the character, morals, and spirituality of students. Therefore, the quality of *pesantren* education cannot be separated from the quality and commitment of the human resources who manage them.

The results of the literature review show that human resources, especially educators and educational staff, have a strategic role in determining the success of *pesantren* education. Human resources with high organizational commitment tend to show dedication, loyalty, responsibility, and great concern for the quality of the educational process and outcomes. This commitment encourages educators to carry out their duties optimally, consistently, and with a focus on achieving the educational goals of the *pesantren*.

Based on organizational commitment theory, it can be concluded that affective commitment, normative commitment, and sustained commitment are relevant and complementary dimensions of commitment in the context of Islamic boarding schools. Affective commitment is reflected in the emotional attachment and sense of belonging of educators to the Islamic boarding school. Normative commitment arises from moral and religious awareness that service at the *pesantren* is a mandate that must be carried out. Meanwhile, sustained commitment is seen in the desire of human resources to remain and develop together with the *pesantren* in the long term. These three dimensions of commitment simultaneously contribute to improving the quality of *pesantren* education.

In addition, the results of the literature review also conclude that *pesantren* leadership and organizational culture play an important role in building and strengthening the organizational commitment of human resources. Visionary, participatory leadership based on Islamic values can create a conducive working climate and foster a sense of togetherness in the *pesantren* environment. A strong, quality-oriented organizational culture will encourage human resources to work professionally, with discipline and responsibility, thereby having a positive impact on the quality of *pesantren* education in a sustainable manner.

Thus, it can be concluded that the organizational commitment of human resources is a key factor in improving the quality of *pesantren* education. Efforts to improve the quality of *pesantren* education need to be directed at strengthening human resource commitment through effective management, value-oriented leadership, and the creation of a conducive organizational culture. This strengthening of organizational commitment is expected to enable *pesantren* to become Islamic educational institutions that are of high quality, adaptive to the times, and remain steadfast in their Islamic values.

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