

# Transforming Sustainable Human Resource Development Management for Generation Z: Integrating Islamic Pedagogy and Vocational Skills

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## Keywords:

Human Resource Development, Islamic Boarding School, Vocational Skills, Generation Z, Sustainable Management.

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## Abstract

This study addresses the growing need to integrate spiritual values with professional competencies in Islamic educational settings, particularly in response to the evolving expectations of Generation Z. It explores how a sustainable human resource development management model can be established by incorporating Islamic pedagogy with vocational training within the context of pesantren (Islamic boarding schools). Using a qualitative case study approach, the research involved in-depth interviews with pesantren administrators and students to understand current practices and management strategies. The findings indicate that a structured curriculum, technology-based training, and active engagement in professional sectors significantly improve students' employability while preserving their religious identity. The study concludes that integrating vocational education with Islamic values fosters holistic development and offers a transformative model for preparing Generation Z for both spiritual fulfillment and modern workforce demands.

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## Kata kunci:

Pengembangan Sumber Daya Manusia, Pesantren, Keterampilan Vokasional, Generasi Z, Manajemen Berkelanjutan

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## Abstrak

Studi ini membahas kebutuhan yang semakin meningkat untuk mengintegrasikan nilai-nilai spiritual dengan kompetensi profesional dalam lingkungan pendidikan Islam, khususnya sebagai respons terhadap ekspektasi yang berkembang dari Generasi Z. Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi bagaimana model manajemen pengembangan sumber daya manusia yang berkelanjutan dapat dibangun dengan menggabungkan pedagogi Islam dan pelatihan vokasional dalam konteks pesantren. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan studi kasus kualitatif, penelitian ini melibatkan wawancara mendalam dengan pengelola dan santri pesantren untuk memahami praktik dan strategi manajemen yang diterapkan. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kurikulum yang terstruktur, pelatihan berbasis teknologi, dan keterlibatan langsung dalam sektor profesional secara signifikan meningkatkan daya saing kerja santri sekaligus menjaga identitas keagamaan mereka. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa integrasi pendidikan vokasional dengan nilai-nilai Islam mendorong perkembangan pribadi secara holistik dan menawarkan model transformatif dalam mempersiapkan Generasi Z untuk meraih keberhasilan spiritual maupun profesional di era modern.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The development of sustainable human resources (HR) has become a critical issue in the digital era, particularly concerning Generation Z, which is known for its adaptability to technology and dynamic learning behavior (Shabib, Saberi, & Wadi, 2021; Popaitoon, 2022). Although this generation demonstrates high engagement with digital tools and online platforms, several studies have shown that they often struggle with job readiness, leadership, and social adaptability, leading to a disconnect between education and employment (Johnston, 2018). These challenges underscore the urgent need for educational institutions—especially those based on religious foundations—to develop learning models that effectively integrate spiritual values with professional competencies.

Pesantren, as traditional Islamic educational institutions, have long focused on character building and moral education rooted in religious teachings. However, the demands of the modern workforce require a transformation in educational approaches that incorporate relevant vocational skills (Musaddad, 2024; Mashuri, Futaqi, & Sulhan, 2024). Conventional pesantren models have been criticized for inadequately preparing graduates with practical work skills, thereby creating a gap between religious knowledge and real-world professional demands (Pakhtusova, Podmareva, & Samsonova, 2021). In response, some pesantren have begun integrating vocational training into their educational systems. Nonetheless, academic studies that specifically analyze the effectiveness of these integrative approaches remain limited.

One notable innovation in pesantren education is the model developed by Masjid Ismuhu Yahya. This institution implements a structured approach that combines religious education with vocational skills such as digital literacy, leadership, entrepreneurship, and public speaking (Isnawati & Yusuf, 2021). Additionally, it actively collaborates with various organizations to channel graduates into the workforce. Despite its promising design, the effectiveness of such management strategies has yet to be comprehensively examined in scholarly literature. Most existing studies still focus on general aspects of Islamic education without addressing the direct relationship between Islamic pedagogy, vocational training, and graduate employability (Sulistiani & Yulianto, 2019; Cholid et al., 2023).

Addressing this research gap, the primary objective of this study is to explore sustainable human resource development management within the pesantren context by integrating Islamic pedagogy with vocational training. This study aims to complement prior research by examining how a structured approach can develop Generation Z santri who are both spiritually committed and professionally competent. It also seeks to identify the challenges and opportunities in implementing a sustainable talent development model in pesantren and to assess the effectiveness of management strategies in producing holistic graduates. As such, this study occupies a vital position in the discourse on transformative Islamic education and offers a meaningful contribution to policy formulation for human resource development within contemporary pesantren institutions.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study employs a qualitative research approach with a case study design, as proposed to gain an in-depth understanding of sustainable human resource development management within pesantren-based education. A case study approach allows researchers to explore complex social phenomena within their real-life context,

making it particularly suitable for examining how Islamic pedagogy and vocational training are integrated into pesantren education (Busetto, Wick, & Gumbinger, 2020; Williams, 2020). The research was conducted at Pesantren Ismuha Yahya in Pontianak, Indonesia, over a period of six months from March 2024 to February 2025. This institution was selected due to its unique model of combining Islamic education with vocational skill development, which aligns with the study's focus on analyzing structured management strategies in preparing Generation Z santri for both religious and professional roles (Purnomo, Anantanyu, Saptaningtyas, & Mangunjaya, 2024).

The data collection process involved semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and document analysis, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the research problem (Achmad et al., 2024). Interviews were conducted with key informants, including pesantren administrators, program coordinators, vocational trainers, and santri (students) actively engaged in the program. These interviews aimed to explore pedagogical approaches, curriculum structure, and the challenges faced in integrating vocational education within pesantren learning. Observations were carried out during classroom sessions, leadership training, and hands-on vocational activities, providing firsthand insights into teaching methodologies and practical skill acquisition. Additionally, document analysis was used to examine curriculum guidelines, student assessment records, program reports, and strategic planning documents, offering a deeper institutional perspective on pesantren-based human resource development (Prastyo, Rinda, & Wahyudi, 2024).

For data analysis, this study utilized thematic analysis as outlined by Braun and Clarke, which involves identifying patterns and themes within qualitative data (Campbell et al., 2021; Lochmiller, 2021). The process included transcribing interviews, coding key themes, triangulating findings across multiple data sources, and drawing conclusions based on emerging patterns. To ensure credibility and validity, the study employed data triangulation, comparing perspectives from different informants and data sources to construct a holistic view of the pesantren's talent development model. Findings from the analysis were then compared with existing literature on Islamic education, vocational training, and sustainable workforce development, contributing to a contextualized discussion on the role of pesantren in shaping Generation Z's professional and religious competencies (Muhardi, Nurdin, & Irfani, 2019).

## **RESULT AND DISSCUSSION**

### **Result**

#### **The Integration of Islamic Pedagogy with Vocational Training**

Pesantren Ismuha Yahya has implemented an innovative educational model that integrates Islamic studies with structured vocational training, enabling students to deepen their religious knowledge while simultaneously acquiring practical skills relevant to the modern labor market. This integrated system is delivered through a well-balanced curriculum that combines daily Qur'an memorization, classical Islamic learning, and hands-on vocational education tailored to meet industry demands.

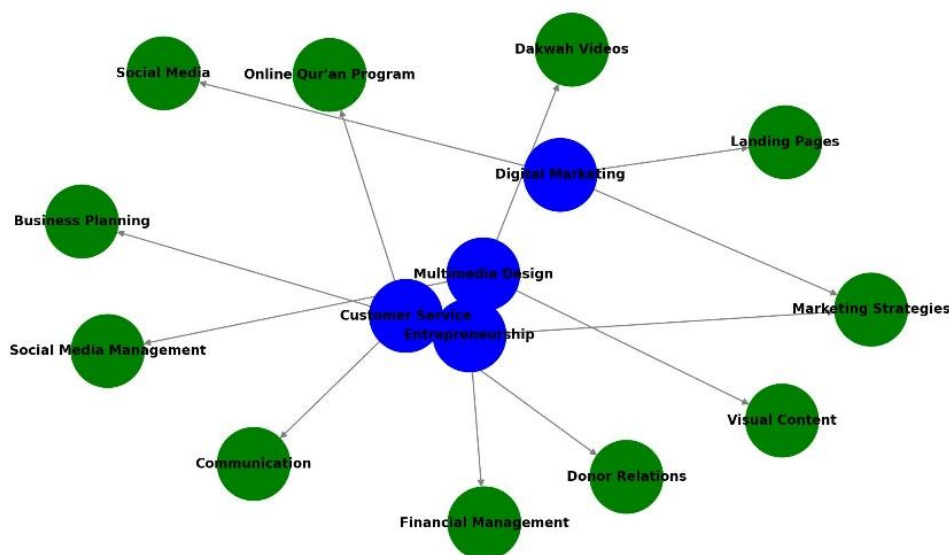
Based on direct interviews with the pesantren’s leadership, students begin their mornings with Qur’anic memorization sessions, after which they are placed in specialized departments according to their interests and aptitudes. As explained by Heri Khairiansyah, one of the pesantren administrators.

*“Each student is guided into a unit that fits their talent – be it multimedia, administration, or entrepreneurship. This helps them grow both spiritually and professionally”* (Interview, May 2025).

In addition to traditional religious instruction, Pesantren Ismuhu Yahya has established various skills development programs aimed at enhancing students’ employability. These programs cover diverse fields such as digital advertising, marketing, customer service, multimedia design, and entrepreneurship. Field interviews with participating students revealed that the skills they gain are directly applied to real-world tasks.

For instance, Fatin Syakira Nurkhalisa, a senior student, shared her experience: *“I manage the pesantren’s Instagram and design promotional content for our herbal products. Everything I’ve learned here – design apps, customer response, marketing – is something I apply every day”* (Interview, May 2025).

Other students reported similar involvement in activities such as donor communication, digital content production, and business strategy planning. These findings confirm that the vocational integration implemented at Pesantren Ismuhu Yahya effectively bridges the gap between religious learning and professional readiness. This model reflects a holistic approach to education, fostering both spiritual commitment and real-world competencies among santri.



**Figure 1.** Training Areas Pesantren

In the digital marketing program, students gain an understanding of online promotional strategies, ranging from creating landing pages and managing social media to planning digital-based marketing strategies. Those involved in customer service

receive specialized training to manage communications with participants of online Qur'an programs and handle relations with donors and the broader community. Meanwhile, students interested in multimedia design are responsible for creating visual content, managing the pesantren's social media, and producing dakwah videos and promotional materials. Students with an interest in entrepreneurship receive training in business planning, marketing strategies, and financial management to oversee the pesantren's business units, including halal food production and digital businesses. Pesantren Ismuhu Yahya emphasizes four pillars in its educational approach: militancy, Qur'an addiction, public speaking, and skill competence. These pillars aim to produce Qur'an-oriented and professionally skilled students (Direct observations at Pesantren Ismuhu Yahya, 2025; Interview with Artika Mutiara Ramadhani, 2025).

In addition to classroom-based skills training, Pesantren Ismuhu Yahya adopts a practical, experience-oriented approach by involving students directly in various institutional departments such as education, social services, and business units. This hands-on learning model is designed to bridge theory with practice, allowing students to apply their knowledge in real-life contexts. Some students are assigned to the digital marketing team, where they are responsible for managing promotional campaigns and marketing pesantren-based products online. Others work in the customer service division, handling participant inquiries for online Qur'an classes and maintaining communication with donors.

Lilis Santia, one of the program coordinators, explained in an interview:

*"We believe students should not only learn in the classroom but also experience the realities of professional work. That's why we rotate them through departments where they can apply their skills in actual workflows, under the guidance of mentors"* (Interview, May 2025).

A similar point was emphasized by Heri Khairiansyah, who stated:

*"We train students to handle digital communication, manage customer data, and respond to donors with professionalism. These are the kinds of skills that give them an edge after graduation"* (Interview, May 2025).

Student observations further support this approach. One participant assigned to the donor relations unit shared,

*"At first, I was nervous speaking to donors, but after a few weeks I became more confident and learned how to communicate respectfully and clearly"* (Interview, May 2025).

These direct experiences reflect the pesantren's commitment to preparing students not only with strong religious foundations but also with the interpersonal and technical competencies needed in the modern workforce.

To enhance the effectiveness of learning, Pesantren Ismuhu Yahya has established partnerships with various external institutions, including digital marketing companies, educational institutions, and social organizations. Through these collaborations, students receive additional training from professionals in diverse fields and have opportunities to intern at institutions relevant to their skills. The pesantren's management emphasizes that one of the main strategies to broaden students' horizons is by inviting national figures and professionals from various sectors to provide direct

training. This approach ensures that students gain a broader understanding of the professional world and the career opportunities available to them in the future (Documentation of Pesantren Ismuhu Yahya, 2025).

Pesantren Ismuhu Yahya's innovative approach of integrating Islamic values with professional skills demonstrates that pesantren can serve as educational institutions producing highly competitive graduates in both religious and professional domains. This model has proven effective in enhancing students' job readiness, as evidenced by a survey of 50 students who participated in the training program. The students reported that the practice-based skills programs and mentorship support from the pesantren significantly aided them in honing job-related skills aligned with modern industry needs (Muhardi, Nurdin, & Irfani, 2019).

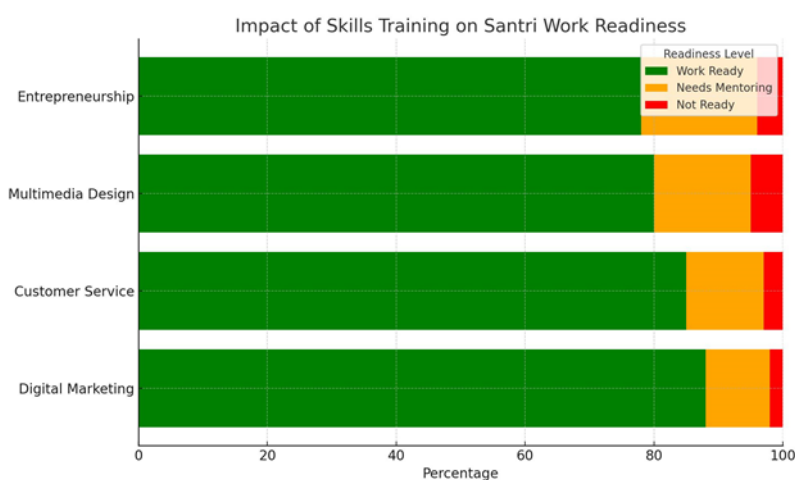


Figure 2. Impact of Skill Training on Santri Work Reading

A survey conducted among students participating in the skills training programs at Pesantren Ismuhu Yahya revealed that the majority felt more confident about entering the workforce after completing the training. Specifically, 88% of students in the Digital Marketing program reported job readiness, with 10% indicating the need for additional guidance, and only 2% feeling unprepared. Similarly, the Customer Service program yielded positive outcomes, with 85% of students expressing readiness to work, 12% requiring further mentorship, and 3% not yet prepared for employment. Participants in the Multimedia Design and Entrepreneurship programs also demonstrated high levels of preparedness, with 80% and 78% respectively stating they were ready to work, although some still sought additional support to further develop their skills (Survey results from 50 students of Pesantren Ismuhu Yahya, 2025).

These findings indicate that the integration of Islamic education with vocational training at Pesantren Ismuhu Yahya has successfully developed human resources capable of competing across various modern industries. This integrated approach not only enhances students' faith and understanding of Islam but also equips them with professional skills aligned with labor market demands. By combining religious studies

with practical skills, students gain a broader perspective on applying Islamic values within professional environments.

This experiential learning approach not only strengthens students' individual competencies but also contributes to creating a more self-sufficient and productive pesantren ecosystem. By equipping students with practical skills in areas such as digital marketing, customer service, multimedia design, and entrepreneurship, the institution is able to establish professionally managed business units operated by trained santri.

According to Heri Khairiansyah, one of the pesantren administrators:

*"We don't just want our students to be job seekers – we want them to be job creators. With the right skills, they can manage pesantren enterprises or even build their own businesses after graduation"* (Interview, May 2025).

Lilis Santia added that these skill-based programs also help sustain the pesantren financially:

*"When students are involved in managing our business units – like the herbal shop, design services, or digital media – they learn to generate income while contributing to the pesantren's operational needs"* (Interview, May 2025).

Several graduates have already taken these skills into the professional world. One alumnus who now runs a small digital printing business shared:

*"Everything I learned about branding, customer interaction, and digital tools at the pesantren became the foundation for my own business"* (Interview, May 2025).

These accounts illustrate how vocational integration within the pesantren not only prepares students for diverse career paths but also empowers them to become independent and impactful contributors to their communities.

### **Effectiveness of Structured Human Resource Management Strategies in Pesantren-Based Human Resource Development**

The human resource development management at Pesantren Ismuhu Yahya is implemented through a structured and systematic process that includes initial recruitment, student placement based on individual interests and talents, and continuous evaluations to ensure the effectiveness of the program. This model adopts a competency-based framework that blends Islamic values with practical professional skills, aiming to produce well-rounded graduates who are spiritually grounded and professionally capable.

According to Heri Khairiansyah, one of the pesantren's administrators:

*"Our system is designed to recognize each student's potential. We don't randomly assign them; instead, we assess their interests and direct them into specific departments like multimedia, marketing, or teaching. But first, they must complete a strong foundation in Qur'anic studies"* (Interview, May 2025).

Fatin Syakira Nurkhalisa, a senior student, also shared her personal experience:

*"At the beginning, we focus on memorizing the Qur'an and understanding Islamic studies. After that, I was placed in the multimedia division because I showed interest in design and video editing. It felt like the pesantren really saw what I was good at and helped me grow there"* (Interview, May 2025).

This integrative management system reflects the pesantren's commitment to nurturing talent through an approach that is both value-based and competency-oriented, ensuring that students develop holistically – both in faith and in their readiness to enter the professional world.

The student selection process at Pesantren Ismuhu Yahya is designed not only to evaluate academic or Islamic competencies but also to identify students' latent talents that can be further nurtured. The admission process includes assessments in basic Islamic knowledge, general skills tests, and motivational interviews to evaluate applicants' readiness to engage in a dual-track program that emphasizes both religious commitment and professional skill-building.

According to one of the division managers interviewed:

*"We're not just looking for students who are already strong in religion. Some come with minimal Islamic education, but show strong motivation and creative potential. That's what we're looking for – those who are willing to grow"* (Interview, May 2025).

Interview data also revealed that students accepted into the program come from a variety of educational backgrounds, including public schools, madrasas, and other pesantrens. Many of them enroll with the intention of deepening not only their religious knowledge but also their practical competencies. One division mentor explained:

*"There are students who initially struggle with Islamic studies but have sharp skills in communication or business. Over time, we help them develop both aspects in parallel"* (Interview, May 2025).

This inclusive and growth-oriented recruitment model reflects the pesantren's holistic vision of education—focusing on unlocking students' full potential and preparing them to become both spiritually grounded and professionally capable individuals.

Upon acceptance, students at Pesantren Ismuhu Yahya are assigned to specific divisions according to their individual talents and interests, which span across various skill-based areas such as digital marketing, multimedia production, customer service, education, and entrepreneurship. Each division offers practical learning tailored to real-world applications. For instance, students in the digital marketing division are trained in content creation, social media management, and basic digital marketing strategies. In contrast, those in the multimedia division focus on graphic design, videography, and the development of Islamic-themed visual content.

Students placed in the customer service division are tasked with supporting participants of online programs and managing external communications with donors and the broader community. Meanwhile, those assigned to the education division gain experience by teaching online Qur'an classes and mentoring junior students. For students with an interest in business, the entrepreneurship division provides opportunities to manage the pesantren's various business units, including halal food production, herbal product distribution, and digital enterprises.

According to Artika Mutiara Ramadhani, one of the division coordinators:

*"Before students are fully integrated into their assigned units, they go through a structured three-month training phase. During this period, they are given real tasks that*

*mirror professional responsibilities – whether it's managing social media, editing videos, teaching, or handling customer service requests” (Interview, May 2025).*

This division-based training system ensures that students not only receive religious education but also develop tangible work experience, preparing them to transition smoothly into the professional world after graduation.

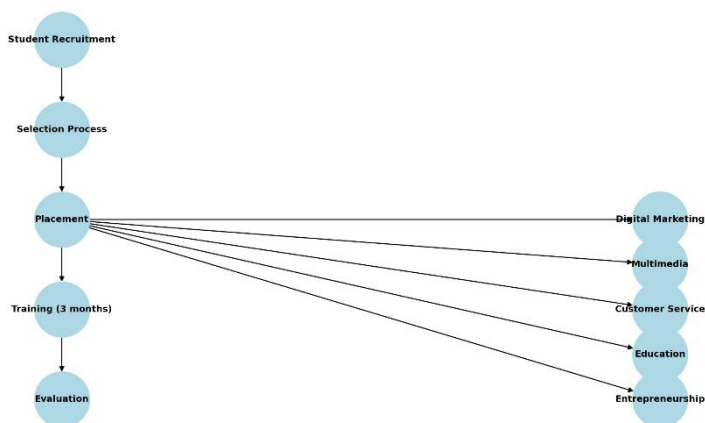


Figure 3. Human Resources Development Flowchart

This program is designed to provide students with experiences that closely mirror real-world work environments, assigning them genuine responsibilities beyond theoretical learning. Students are treated as professionals, required to perform their tasks in accordance with industry standards. This system enhances their confidence in facing the workforce upon completing their education at the pesantren (Internal documentation of Pesantren Ismuhu Yahya, 2025).

To ensure the program's sustainability, Pesantren Ismuhu Yahya conducts quarterly evaluations using several methods. These evaluations assess students' performance based on their acquired skills, level of discipline, and contributions within their respective divisions. Additionally, the pesantren holds feedback interviews, providing students with opportunities to reflect on their learning experiences and discuss challenges faced during training. Mentors and administrators also play a role in reviewing students' progress to ensure each receives optimal guidance (Internal documentation of Pesantren Ismuhu Yahya, 2025).

Based on a survey conducted among 50 students who participated in this program, the following data were obtained: (Survey results of students participating in the skills training program at Pesantren Ismuhu Yahya, 2025).

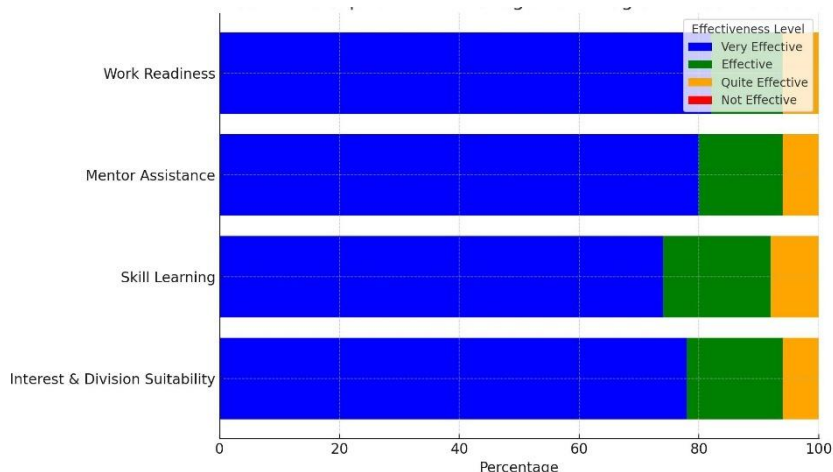


Figure 4. Santri Perception of HR Management Program Effectiveness

The results of this study indicate that the majority of students are very satisfied and benefited from the implementation of the division-based human resource management system at Pesantren Ismuha Yahya. Survey data shows that 78% of students feel that the division allocation aligns with their interests, while 80% state that mentor assistance is highly effective in guiding them. Additionally, 82% of students feel more prepared to face the working world after participating in this program, with the remainder still requiring additional guidance.

Students who initially focused solely on Qur’anic recitation and memorization have now begun to explore and develop their potential in broader fields such as digital marketing, multimedia design, customer service, and entrepreneurship. Through structured placement in specialized divisions, students are encouraged to discover new competencies that complement their religious foundation.

In interviews with several participants involved in the digital marketing division, students shared that the program allowed them to move beyond theoretical understanding and engage in meaningful, hands-on practice. One student explained:

*“I used to only concentrate on memorizing the Qur’an, but after joining the digital division, I learned how to create da’wah content that looks professional – videos, posters, even Instagram reels. It feels like I can now spread religious messages in a more creative and modern way”* (Interview, May 2025).

Another student added:

*“We’re trusted to manage the pesantren’s official social media accounts. From planning content to designing visuals and writing captions, we do it all. I also learned how to target different audiences and measure engagement using analytics tools”* (Interview, May 2025).

These experiences demonstrate how the integration of vocational training into the pesantren setting enables students to acquire real-world digital skills while reinforcing their religious mission. The digital marketing division, in particular, serves as a platform for students to translate Islamic messages into content that resonates with today’s digital audience.

Students involved in the customer service training program at Pesantren Ismuhi Yahya have reported significant personal and professional growth, particularly due to the mentorship provided throughout the training process. Guided by experienced mentors, students gained firsthand insight into the realities of professional work environments. Several participants shared that the experience greatly enhanced their self-confidence and prepared them to handle real challenges commonly faced in the customer service industry.

One student reflected on the impact of the training:

*“At first, I was nervous about responding to complaints or answering donor messages. But with guidance from mentors, I learned how to speak clearly, remain calm, and maintain good communication ethics. It really changed how I see myself and my abilities”* (Interview, May 2025).

Some graduates of this program have already begun securing employment opportunities with institutions affiliated with the pesantren, showing that the training is not only theoretical but has real-world application and outcomes.

The success of Pesantren Ismuhi Yahya’s human resource development strategy has also drawn attention from external stakeholders. Several partner companies and organizations have begun recruiting students even before they complete the training program, impressed by their skills and work ethic. Heri Khairiansyah, from the pesantren’s business unit marketing management team, explained:

*“Companies see our students as ready-to-work talent – not just technically skilled, but also disciplined, honest, and grounded in Islamic values. That’s something many workplaces are looking for today”* (Interview, May 2025).

These developments indicate that the pesantren’s structured and value-based approach to student development is not only enhancing internal capacity but also building strong professional pathways for its graduates. The combination of practical skills and ethical grounding makes them highly attractive to employers in various sectors.

These findings indicate that the division-based human resource management model implemented at Pesantren Ismuhi Yahya has successfully created an educational ecosystem that not only enhances students’ Islamic capacities but also boosts their competitiveness in the job market. Through practice-based training systems and continuous mentor guidance, this pesantren has effectively become a human resource development center aligned with modern industry demands, while steadfastly upholding Islamic values as the foundation for student character formation (M., Tjahjono, Hamami, & Suud, 2025).

### **Challenges and Opportunities in Implementing a Sustainable Model**

The pesantren-based human resource development model implemented at Pesantren Ismuhi Yahya has proven effective in shaping students who are not only competent in religious aspects but also possess professional skills applicable in the workforce. However, in its implementation, the pesantren faces various challenges that require adaptive strategies to maintain and enhance the effectiveness of the programs.

The main challenges include balancing religious education with vocational training, limited resources and facilities, and preparing students to meet the demands of an increasingly competitive job market.

One of the key challenges encountered in implementing the integrated education model at Pesantren Ismuha Yahya is ensuring that students can maintain optimal religious observance while simultaneously developing their professional competencies. Several students have expressed difficulties in balancing their time between Qur'an memorization routines and the demands of their vocational assignments.

Students with strong technical abilities occasionally experience a decline in the consistency of their religious practices, while those who are deeply engaged in religious activities sometimes find it challenging to adapt to the fast-paced, task-oriented structure of professional training. This tension reveals the need for a more personalized mentoring system that is responsive to individual student needs.

As highlighted by Heri Khairiansyah, one of the pesantren's administrators:

*"It's not easy for all students to maintain the balance. Some get carried away with their technical projects and start neglecting their worship. Others are so focused on religious learning that they find it hard to meet deadlines or work with a team. That's why we need targeted mentoring – so each student is monitored and supported in both aspects"* (Interview, May 2025).

This insight underscores the importance of a holistic mentoring framework in pesantren-based human resource development – one that not only builds skills but also preserves the integrity of students' spiritual commitments. By addressing this balance through individualized guidance, the pesantren can better ensure that its graduates embody both professional excellence and religious devotion.

Additionally, the pesantren faces challenges related to limited resources and facilities, particularly in providing infrastructure to support vocational training. As a developing pesantren, the available facilities are not yet fully adequate, especially in terms of computer laboratories, multimedia rooms, and necessary equipment to support more advanced skills training. As a result, some training programs are still conducted using basic equipment, which inevitably impacts the optimization of student learning (Internal report of Pesantren Ismuha Yahya, 2025). To overcome these challenges, the pesantren strives to establish collaborations with various external parties to secure financial assistance and training facilities. Furthermore, the use of digital technology has become an alternative for conducting certain skills training programs online, enabling students to continue developing their competencies without being constrained by physical facility limitations.

Another notable challenge faced by Pesantren Ismuha Yahya is ensuring students' mental readiness and discipline in meeting the high expectations of the professional world. Not all students are fully prepared to adapt to the demanding work pace, productivity standards, and level of independence commonly required in industry settings. Some students find it difficult to adjust to expectations that demand self-management, accountability, and consistent task execution without close supervision.

According to Lilis Santia, one of the training program coordinators:

*“We noticed that while students are enthusiastic, some of them struggle when placed in environments where they need to take full responsibility – especially when there are tight deadlines or tasks that require initiative. That’s why soft skills training is crucial”* (Interview, May 2025).

To address these challenges, the pesantren has implemented a range of preparatory strategies, including targeted soft skills development programs. These cover essential competencies such as time management, effective communication, problem-solving, and teamwork. Additionally, early-stage work simulation programs are offered to help students gradually adapt to professional norms and expectations before they fully transition into the workforce.

These interventions are designed not only to bridge the skills gap but also to cultivate a sense of discipline, resilience, and adaptability – key traits that are essential for success in modern professional environments. The pesantren’s proactive approach highlights its commitment to producing graduates who are not only spiritually grounded but also mentally prepared to meet real-world challenges.

Despite facing various challenges, Pesantren Ismuhu Yahya has several strategic opportunities to ensure the sustainability of its human resource development programs. A key opportunity lies in collaborating with external institutions from both the education and industry sectors. Such partnerships enable students to gain hands-on work experience through internships and projects. These collaborations not only provide access to training from industry practitioners but also open up employment opportunities for students upon completing their programs at the pesantren (Documentation of collaboration between Pesantren Ismuhu Yahya and industry partners, 2025).

The integration of digital technology plays a vital role in ensuring the sustainability and relevance of the human resource development program at Pesantren Ismuhu Yahya. The pesantren has identified the strategic importance of incorporating social media and digital marketing into the student training curriculum as a way to enhance both professional competencies and da’wah effectiveness. Through this approach, students not only develop essential skills in digital communication and marketing but also learn how to use technological platforms to disseminate Islamic teachings in a more accessible and impactful manner.

Heri Khairiansyah, one of the pesantren’s administrators, explained:

*“Digital literacy is not just an added bonus – it’s a necessity. By mastering social media and online platforms, our students can be part of the global conversation while maintaining their Islamic identity. They can promote da’wah through digital content that’s relevant and far-reaching”* (Interview, May 2025).

This sentiment was echoed by Fatin Syakira Nurkhalisa, a student active in the multimedia division:

*“The skills I’ve learned – like content creation and managing social media – aren’t just useful for pesantren projects. I can also freelance or work remotely in the future. It gives me options while staying true to pesantren values”* (Interview, May 2025).

By leveraging technology, the pesantren equips students with the tools needed to engage in remote work and digital entrepreneurship after graduation. This not only broadens their career opportunities but also allows them to continue embodying and promoting Islamic principles within a modern, tech-driven professional landscape.

The increasing demand for pesantren-based human resources from various external institutions presents a significant opportunity for the sustainability of this model. More companies and social organizations are becoming interested in recruiting pesantren graduates, recognizing their strong work ethic, discipline, and skills that align with industry needs. This demonstrates that the human resource development model implemented at Pesantren Ismuha Yahya has successfully produced graduates who not only possess technical competencies but also uphold Islamic values in the workplace.

Overall, despite the challenges in implementing this program, Pesantren Ismuha Yahya has effectively developed adaptive strategies to overcome existing obstacles and leverage available opportunities. With strong collaborations with external partners, the utilization of digital technology, and the growing interest from industries in pesantren graduates, this model has great potential for continued growth. It can serve as an example for other pesantren in Indonesia in integrating Islamic values with professional skills within their educational framework.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **The Integration of Islamic Pedagogy with Vocational Training**

The integration of Islamic pedagogy with vocational training at Pesantren Ismuha Yahya reflects a holistic approach to education, which not only emphasizes spiritual development but also equips santri with practical skills relevant to today's industrial needs. This approach aligns with Al-Attas's (1993) perspective, which asserts that Islamic education must encompass both intellectual and practical development to shape well-rounded individuals. Previous research indicates that traditional pesantren often lack structured vocational programs, which limits their graduates' job opportunities. However, Pesantren Ismuha Yahya has successfully integrated vocational training into its curriculum, allowing santri to develop skills required in the workforce without compromising their spiritual growth. This integration has proven effective in enhancing the employability of santri, as reflected in a survey of 50 santri who participated in the vocational training program, showing a significant increase in their confidence and readiness for the job market (Mujahid, 2021).

The experiential learning approach implemented in the pesantren also supports Vygotsky's (1978) constructivist learning theory, which emphasizes that effective learning occurs through direct engagement in real-world situations. By providing santri with opportunities to participate in practical activities such as digital marketing, multimedia design, and entrepreneurship, the pesantren not only enhances their technical skills but also fosters soft skills such as communication, problem-solving, and adaptability (Kong, 2021).

Moreover, the Islamic career guidance program applied at the pesantren plays a crucial role in preparing santri for the workforce. This approach integrates Islamic values into career decision-making, ensuring that santri can navigate the complexities of the modern job market while maintaining their commitment to religious principles. A study at SMK Binamitra Cikarang Timur revealed that Islamic career guidance has a significant positive impact on students' job readiness, with a determination coefficient of 63.1% (Sutin & Indra, 2020).

The success of Pesantren Ismu Yuha in integrating religious education with vocational training has also attracted the attention of various external institutions. Several companies and partner organizations have begun recruiting santri even before they complete the training program, recognizing their competence and preparedness. This demonstrates that the division-based human resource management model implemented at the pesantren has created an educational ecosystem that not only strengthens the Islamic foundation of santri but also enhances their competitiveness in the job market.

Overall, the integration of Islamic pedagogy with vocational training at Pesantren Ismu Yuha has established an effective learning model for developing competent and ethical human resources. This approach not only enhances individual competencies but also contributes to building a self-sufficient and productive pesantren, in line with modern industrial demands while upholding Islamic values (Mujahid, 2021; Natsir, Hanani, & Sesmiarni, 2023; Nabila et al., 2024).

### **Effectiveness of Structured Human Resource Management Strategies in Pesantren-Based Human Resource Development**

The implementation of structured human resource management (HRM) strategies at Pesantren Ismu Yuha has played a crucial role in ensuring the effectiveness of its educational system. This study found that a systematic approach to recruitment, skill mapping, and performance evaluation is essential for optimizing the potential of santri. These findings align with previous research, which suggests that educational institutions that implement structured HRM practices tend to achieve better student outcomes.

Specifically, the competency-based placement system adopted by the pesantren ensures that santri are assigned to skills-based divisions such as digital marketing, multimedia design, customer service, and entrepreneurship. This is consistent with Human Capital Theory, which posits that investment in skill development leads to higher productivity and economic benefits (Becker, 1964; Männasoo, Hein, & Ruubel, 2018; Mayilyan & Yedigaryan, 2022; Hussien, 2020).

The evaluation process at Pesantren Ismu Yuha, which includes mentor reviews, performance tracking, and structured student feedback, further reinforces its HRM approach. Previous studies highlight that continuous assessment and mentoring significantly enhance student engagement and learning outcomes. The structured

feedback mechanism implemented at the pesantren ensures that santri receive targeted guidance for both academic and professional growth (Sutin & Indra, 2020).

Moreover, the success of Pesantren Ismu Yuha's HRM model challenges the notion that pesantren lack structured workforce development programs. The findings suggest that when pesantren adopt modern HRM techniques, they can produce graduates who are not only spiritually grounded but also professionally competent. This indicates that integrating structured HRM strategies in pesantren education can bridge the gap between religious learning and workforce readiness, ultimately creating a holistic educational ecosystem that caters to both spiritual and economic development.

### **Challenges and Opportunities in Implementing a Sustainable Model**

Implementing a sustainable human resource development model within Islamic educational institutions, such as Pesantren Ismu Yuha, involves addressing several key challenges and leveraging strategic opportunities. One primary challenge is balancing religious education with vocational training. Many Islamic institutions struggle to integrate workforce training without compromising religious instruction. However, structured scheduling and mentoring programs can enable students to cultivate both religious discipline and job skills (Shaikh & Alam, 2021).

Another significant challenge is the availability of resources and infrastructure, as pesantrens often lack access to modern training facilities. Collaborations with external institutions can significantly enhance the sustainability of vocational programs within pesantrens. For instance, partnerships with digital companies and business organizations have helped bridge resource gaps while providing real-world exposure to students (Miskiah, Suryono, & Sudrajat, 2019).

The growing demand for pesantren graduates in professional fields presents substantial opportunities. Companies now recognize the unique qualities of pesantren alumni, such as a strong work ethic, discipline, and adaptability. This supports the argument that integrated Islamic education models can address moral and economic challenges in the modern workforce (Imamah, 2023; Rouf, Syukur, & Maarif, 2024).

To further enhance the sustainability of this human resource development model, several strategies can be implemented. Curriculum development should align vocational training with industry needs while preserving core religious education components. Investing in training educators to effectively deliver integrated curricula that combine religious and vocational education is also crucial. Additionally, seeking funding and partnerships to improve training facilities ensures students have access to necessary resources. Establishing partnerships with industries to provide internships and job placements enhances students' practical experience. Implementing regular assessments allows the program to adapt to evolving educational and industry trends (Ma'arif et al., 2023; Ruhayat, Saepudin, Syafrin, & Handrianto, 2024; Asrin, Nahar, & Nurmawati, 2024).

By addressing these challenges and leveraging available opportunities, pesantrens like Ismu Yuha can continue to produce graduates who are both

religiously grounded and professionally competent, contributing positively to the workforce and society (Mayasafira, 2025).

## CONCLUSION

The most significant finding of this study is the success of Pesantren Ismuhi Yahya in developing a structured and sustainable human resource management model that integrates Islamic pedagogy with vocational training to prepare Generation Z santri for both spiritual and professional excellence. Surprisingly, this model challenges the common assumption that pesantren graduates are ill-prepared for the workforce. The study demonstrates that a systematic and integrated skills development program within Islamic education can produce highly competitive individuals in the modern job market. Furthermore, the competency-based placement system, continuous mentoring, and external collaborations have proven effective in enhancing the competitiveness of pesantren graduates without compromising their religious commitment.

In terms of scholarly contribution, this research not only confirms the importance of integrating religious education with vocational skills as highlighted in previous literature but also offers a new perspective by presenting a structured human resource management model and systematic mentoring practices within the pesantren context. This approach broadens the scope of Islamic education studies by incorporating managerial variables and industry collaboration as key factors in the successful development of pesantren human resources.

However, the study has several limitations. It was conducted in a single pesantren institution, which limits the generalizability of the findings to other pesantren with different management structures. Additionally, the focus was limited to specific vocational training programs, leaving other skill development areas relevant to the modern labor market unexplored. The sample size was also restricted to santri currently enrolled in the program, without investigating the long-term career success of alumni that could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the model's impact. Considering these limitations, future research is recommended to expand the scope to multiple pesantren with diverse educational models for a broader perspective on the effectiveness of Islamic vocational education. Moreover, a longitudinal approach tracking graduates' career trajectories and the integration of Islamic values in professional settings is needed. Such comprehensive findings are expected to assist policymakers and educators in formulating more effective pesantren-based human resource development strategies, ensuring that Islamic education remains relevant in the evolving global economy.

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