

Integrating Entrepreneurship Education in Islamic Boarding Schools: Strategies for Empowering Students' Entrepreneurial Spirit

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Abstract:

The purpose of this study was to synthesise the concept of entrepreneurial leadership, identify the independence program of Islamic boarding schools, and analyse leadership strategies in developing the entrepreneurial spirit of students. This study employs a qualitative approach, utilising a case study design, where data are collected through interviews, observations, and documentation. The data are then analysed in three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. The results of the study indicate that Islamic boarding schools integrate entrepreneurship education into their curriculum to equip students with practical skills that can be applied after graduation. Entrepreneurship programs, such as Job Training Centres and Cooperatives, as well as other economic sectors, aim to increase the financial independence of students, create jobs, and reduce unemployment. This approach to integrating religious education and entrepreneurship allows students to make positive contributions to society after graduation. This study suggests that fostering an entrepreneurial spirit in Islamic boarding schools can be an effective alternative educational model for enhancing students' economic independence. The integration of religious education and entrepreneurship prepares students to become entrepreneurial leaders who are economically prosperous and have spiritual values.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurial Leadership, Economic Independence, Entrepreneurship Education*

Abstrak:

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mensintesis konsep *entrepreneurial leadership*, mengidentifikasi program kemandirian pondok pesantren, dan menganalisis strategi kepemimpinan dalam pengembangan jiwa wirausaha santri. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan studi kasus, di mana data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis dengan tiga tahapan: reduksi data, pemaparan data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pondok pesantren mengintegrasikan pendidikan kewirausahaan dalam kurikulumnya untuk membekali santri dengan keterampilan praktis yang dapat diterapkan setelah lulus. Program kewirausahaan seperti Balai Latihan Kerja, Koperasi, dan sektor ekonomi lainnya bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kemandirian ekonomi santri, menciptakan lapangan kerja, dan mengurangi pengangguran. Pendekatan integrasi antara pendidikan agama dan kewirausahaan ini memungkinkan santri untuk

memberikan kontribusi positif kepada masyarakat setelah lulus. Penelitian ini memberikan implikasi bahwa pengembangan jiwa wirausaha di pondok pesantren dapat menjadi model pendidikan alternatif yang efektif untuk meningkatkan kemandirian ekonomi santri. Integrasi pendidikan agama dan kewirausahaan mempersiapkan santri menjadi pemimpin wirausaha yang sukses secara ekonomi sekaligus memiliki nilai-nilai spiritual.

Kata Kunci: *Entrepreneurial Leadership, Kemandirian Ekonomi, Pendidikan Kewirausahaan*

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INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship is one of the primary pillars in enhancing the economic well-being of the community (Maurer et al., 2022; Gashi et al., 2024; Omri, Omri, & Abbassi, 2025). In Indonesia, many young people have difficulty accessing decent employment (Endrawati, 2022; Ngadi et al., 2023; Padillah & Saputra, 2024). This makes entrepreneurship a promising alternative. One educational institution that can play a significant role in fostering entrepreneurship is Islamic boarding schools. Islamic boarding schools, as religious-based educational institutions, have the potential to instill entrepreneurial values in students, which can in turn foster the development of competitive entrepreneurs (Suhandi et al., 2023; Yahya et al., 2024). Thus, this study is important for exploring the potential of Islamic boarding schools in producing entrepreneurs who possess both spiritual and economic qualities. The results of this study can contribute to society by introducing effective religious-based entrepreneurship education.

One of the primary challenges facing Indonesian society is the high unemployment rate, particularly among graduates of Islamic boarding schools. Although many Islamic boarding schools have taught religious education well, many have not integrated entrepreneurship optimally into their curriculum. This makes it difficult for students to apply the knowledge they gain in the real world, particularly when it comes to creating their jobs. Therefore, it is essential to identify and analyze how Islamic boarding schools can optimize the development of the entrepreneurial spirit in students through leadership that is oriented towards business development and economic independence.

Previous studies have shown that the development of entrepreneurship in Islamic boarding schools has excellent potential to help students overcome their economic problems (Awaluddin et al., 2023; Irfan et al., 2024). Segaf (2022) and Hafidloh (2025) stated that entrepreneurial leadership applied in Islamic boarding schools can integrate religious values and business management principles. In addition, Hasyim (2020) and Hasan & Yurista (2025) highlighted the importance of social entrepreneurship in Islamic boarding schools, with a focus on the management of cooperatives, agriculture, and the processing of products from Islamic boarding schools. However, although numerous studies have discussed this topic, research on entrepreneurial leadership strategies that integrate religious and economic aspects in Islamic boarding schools remains limited. Therefore, this study has relevance to fill this gap.

Several other studies, such as those conducted by Yusuf & Al-Mubarak (2020) and Warda et al. (2024) have revealed that entrepreneurship education in Islamic boarding schools can help students develop the skills required in the business world, encompassing both hard and soft skills. However, many Islamic boarding schools have not optimized entrepreneurial leadership to support the maximum business development and economic independence of their students. This study focuses on the Darul Ishlah Islamic Boarding School, which has attempted to integrate entrepreneurship education into its curriculum. However, the impact of implementing entrepreneurial leadership in this Islamic boarding school on the economic independence of students still requires further research.

This study examines the knowledge gap by exploring entrepreneurial leadership in Islamic boarding schools, particularly in terms of leadership practices rooted in Islamic values, and its impact on the economic independence of these schools and the development of student character. This study aims to synthesise the Concept of Entrepreneurial Leadership, identify Islamic Boarding School Independence Programs, and analyse the concept and strategy of leadership in developing the entrepreneurial spirit of students at Islamic boarding schools in Lampung. Thus, the results of this study are expected to contribute to the development of entrepreneurial leadership theory in the context of Islamic education, providing recommendations for Islamic boarding schools on optimising leadership roles for business development and student empowerment.

Through an in-depth analysis of the entrepreneurship programs at Islamic Boarding School, this study aims to provide comprehensive recommendations for other Islamic boarding schools in developing an entrepreneurship education model based on religious values. With this approach, it is expected to create entrepreneurs who not only possess reliable business skills but also have strong, independent characters, enabling them to compete effectively in the global market. The implementation of this model is expected to have a positive impact, both by increasing the economic independence of students and contributing to the broader empowerment of society.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study is a field research project aimed at examining symptoms or events that occur in community groups, employing a descriptive qualitative approach (Fadli, 2021). In this case, the researchers collected the information directly from the source, Darul Ishlah Islamic Boarding School, Lampung Province, Indonesia.

The data sources are divided into two. There are primary and secondary data sources. Primary data sources are information obtained directly from research participants by the intended informants (Rukajat, 2018). In this study, the participants include leaders, ustadz, students, and the surrounding community of the Darul Ishlah Islamic boarding school. Secondary data sources refer to data obtained from other parties or indirectly through third parties related to the research topic. The secondary data sources in this study include library books, theses, journals, news, newspapers, and research-related documents that support the research process.

Furthermore, interviews, observation, and documentation were utilised to collect the data. The interview technique is a method of collecting data by conducting direct questions and receiving answers from the object being studied or from an intermediary who is familiar with the object's problems. Observation technique is a data collection method that involves observing the target object and recording its condition or behaviour. Documentation technique is a method used to obtain data by collecting data from journals, transcripts, notebooks, or other information related to the research (Achjar & Henny, 2023).

Moreover, data analysis was conducted through data reduction, data display, and conclusion (Huberman & Saldana, 2014). Data Reduction was utilised to filter all the data obtained. Data Display is a collection of structured information and the ability to conclude (Salmona & Kaczynski, 2024; Muthmainna & Siroj, 2025). It is carried out to further improve understanding of the case being studied. Conclusion Drawing is the focus of research, which aims to answer the case being studied or researched based on the results of data analysis. The conclusion is presented in the form of a descriptive research object based on the research study (Kaharudin, 2020).

In addition, to test the validity of the data, the researchers used data triangulation by matching observation data, interviews, and documents to strengthen research data. The triangulation method helps to identify different views from various types of information on the same problem (Cole, 2024).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The Concept of Entrepreneurial Leadership

This study presents several findings related to the application of the concept of Entrepreneurial Leadership at the Darul Ishlah Islamic Boarding School. Entrepreneurial Leadership is defined as the ability of a leader to create, develop, and utilize business opportunities and encourage others to innovate and become entrepreneurs. An effective leader in this context must be creative, innovative, can explore opportunities, possess strong internal control, and dare to take risks in the face of challenges. Based on interviews with the head of the Islamic boarding school and several students, it was found that the head of the Islamic boarding school possesses extraordinary abilities in identifying opportunities and creating businesses that benefit both the students and the surrounding community. The head of the Islamic boarding school teaches students to think creatively in the face of various challenges. A Ustadz said, "Students here are taught not only to accept the situation, but to find innovative solutions to every problem that arises." This demonstrates that the Islamic boarding school incorporates the principle of entrepreneurship into the daily lives of its students. In addition, the head of the Islamic boarding school also develops businesses based on local wisdom, such as processed products that have high selling value. Thus, Islamic boarding schools not only teach entrepreneurial theory, but also directly practice and integrate it into everyday life.

During the observation period, researchers noted that Islamic boarding schools have a proactive approach in identifying business opportunities. For example, through careful market research, Islamic boarding schools have

successfully developed superior products based on local wisdom that effectively address consumer needs. In further observations, it was found that Islamic boarding schools are also actively establishing partnerships with various external parties, including the government and non-governmental organizations, to expand their product marketing networks. This indicates that Islamic boarding schools have a strong orientation towards sustainable business development and can adapt to dynamic market changes.

The data shows that this Islamic boarding school has not only succeeded in creating new business opportunities but also demonstrated resilience in facing economic challenges. The Leadership applied in this Islamic boarding school supports the creativity and innovation of the students, and gives them the freedom to experiment without fear of failure. This confirms that the leaders of this Islamic boarding school have a clear vision to build economic independence for students and the surrounding community through entrepreneurship education grounded in religious values.

The Islamic Boarding School integrates entrepreneurial values with a highly structured and targeted approach. The patterns that emerge from the data reveal the integration of religious education and entrepreneurship undertaken by the leaders of the Islamic boarding school. The leaders of the Islamic boarding school can explore local economic potential, adapt to changing times, and create business opportunities that benefit the students. These initiatives not only provide economic benefits but also develop entrepreneurial character based on solid religious principles.

Islamic Boarding School Independence Program

This study identified several key sub-findings related to the implementation of the independence program at the Darul Ishlah Islamic Boarding School. These sub-findings include the development of a community economic center, a creative economy, the Santripreneur program, collaboration with the surrounding community, and fostering an entrepreneurial spirit among students. All of these sub-findings focus on the application of entrepreneurial principles in creating an ecosystem that supports the economic independence of students, the development of technical and entrepreneurial skills, and positive contributions to the surrounding community. The concept of entrepreneurial leadership applied in Islamic boarding schools aims to foster creativity, innovation, and independence among students.

Tabel 1. Islamic Boarding School Independence Program

Interview	Indicators	Informant
"The development of the Community Economy Hub at the Darul Ishlah Islamic Boarding School creates an independent and sustainable economic ecosystem."	Community Economic Development	Head of Islamic Boarding School
"The Islamic boarding school teaches creativity in managing used materials into high-value products such as handicrafts and processed foods."	Creative Economy	Islamic Boarding School Administrator

"The Santripreneur program aims to create a generation of students who not only master religious knowledge, but also have entrepreneurial skills."	Santripreneur Program	Teacher
"Collaboration with the community and various institutions helps students gain entrepreneurial skills that are relevant to market needs."	Community Collaboration	Islamic Boarding School Community
"Students actively promote their products through social media and participate in product exhibitions to introduce their work."	Entrepreneurial Spirit Development	Santri

Based on the data in Table 1, it is evident that the Islamic boarding school employs a comprehensive approach to developing students' economic independence through various entrepreneurship programs. The development of the Community Economy Hub is tangible evidence of how the Islamic boarding school creates a mutually supportive and sustainable economic ecosystem. By integrating creativity into the management of used materials to produce high-value products, the Islamic boarding school not only enhances the technical skills of its students but also teaches them to innovate. The Santripreneur program, which aims to create students who not only master religious knowledge but also entrepreneurial skills, creates opportunities for students to contribute to society through business.

Collaboration with various parties, such as the community, non-governmental organizations, and other institutions, expands networks and increases market opportunities for students' products. This program also helps the Islamic boarding school adapt to changing market needs, while fostering students' self-confidence in running their businesses. The active involvement of students in promoting products through social media and exhibitions shows that they not only learn theory, but also directly apply the entrepreneurial knowledge they have acquired.

Entrepreneurial activities in this Islamic boarding school extend beyond economic aspects to include significant social involvement. For example, the Santripreneur program has succeeded in creating quality products that are sold not only in the pesantren environment, but also on the broader market. The process of producing products, such as processed foods and handicrafts, continues to improve in quality, indicating a continuous learning process. These products are not only produced by students but also marketed through collaboration with various parties, including social media and product exhibition activities, which expand the market reach and increase the competitiveness of the pesantren at both local and national levels. This Islamic boarding school has successfully implemented the concept of entrepreneurial leadership, effectively developing the economic independence of its students. The development of the Community Economy Hub and the creative economy based on used materials is clear evidence that the pesantren integrates entrepreneurship into the daily lives of students. The Santripreneur program offers students a platform to develop business and social skills that are relevant to market needs. Through collaboration with the community and various related parties, opportunities and market reach for student-produced products are expanded.

The Islamic boarding school's approach demonstrates that it integrates entrepreneurship development among students. This approach involves developing various programs that combine religious education, technical skills, and entrepreneurship. In addition, the Islamic boarding school also focuses on social empowerment, where students are encouraged not only to become entrepreneurs for personal interests, but also to create jobs for the surrounding community. This demonstrates that the Islamic boarding school has a clear vision for developing the entrepreneurial potential of its students, which focuses not only on economic aspects but also on social and environmental empowerment.

Concept and Strategy of Leadership in Developing the Entrepreneurial Spirit of Students

The concept and strategy of leadership at the Darul Ishlah Islamic Boarding School focus on the application of technology to support the development of entrepreneurial skills among students. In this case, the leadership in question refers to the Islamic boarding school leader's ability to create a conducive environment for the development of students' entrepreneurial skills by utilizing technology, facilities, and entrepreneurial programs that directly involve students in real-world practice. This leadership concept encompasses the use of technological tools, including mobile phones, standard factory equipment, and internet access, that support entrepreneurial learning grounded in both theory and direct practice.

Based on an interview with one of the teachers, it was found that the Islamic boarding school had designed a highly structured entrepreneurship training program, which involved students in hands-on activities. "This training is not only limited to theory, but also prioritizes direct practice. Students are given the opportunity to be actively involved in various entrepreneurship projects, such as managing the Islamic boarding school cooperative (UIBS1)." This demonstrates that the entrepreneurship program in the Islamic boarding school effectively integrates theoretical and practical aspects, enabling students to develop their managerial, marketing, and financial skills.

Based on the statements of other teachers, it was found that the Islamic boarding school cooperative plays a central role in shaping the entrepreneurial spirit of students. "Students are not only members, but are also actively involved in decision-making and management of the cooperative (UIBS2)." This finding shows that the cooperative not only functions as a business run by the Islamic boarding school, but also as a platform for students to apply their business ideas in real practice. Through this program, students gain valuable experience in collaborating, sharing risks, and achieving mutual benefits.

The data show that the Islamic boarding school has successfully implemented an entrepreneurial leadership strategy that directly involves students in the entrepreneurship program. The entrepreneurship training program implemented not only teaches theory, but also provides opportunities for students to practice by getting involved in various business projects. The Islamic boarding school cooperative is a real-life example where students not only learn to manage a business but also learn to make decisions and manage risks directly. This program provides invaluable experience for students in developing their

entrepreneurial spirit. Darul Ishlah Islamic Boarding School integrates technology, adequate facilities, and entrepreneurship programs that involve students in direct practice. The leadership at this Islamic boarding school has successfully created an entrepreneurial ecosystem that supports the development of students' skills through the use of technological tools, such as mobile phones and internet access, as well as their involvement in cooperatives and other entrepreneurial projects. The pattern observed is that students are not only given theoretical knowledge but also practical experience that can hone their skills to compete in the business world and society. Thus, the Islamic boarding school has succeeded in creating entrepreneurs who are not only skilled in the field of religion but also economically independent and able to contribute to society.

Discussion

This study found that the concept of entrepreneurial leadership has been successfully implemented by utilizing technology in developing the entrepreneurial spirit of students. These results align with findings in the literature, which show that creative and innovative leaders in educational institutions can foster an environment that supports the development of entrepreneurship (Aithal & Aithal, 2023; Meung, 2023; Hojeij, 2024). However, this study highlights that it not only focuses on the use of technology to improve technical and managerial skills, but also provides opportunities for students to practice directly in entrepreneurship programs, such as cooperatives and locally-based economic projects. This difference demonstrates that this approach not only relies on theory but also prioritizes practical experiences that encompass all aspects of Islamic boarding school life. In addition, this study found that the use of technology, such as mobile phones and Wi-Fi access, has supported students in accessing information and entrepreneurship training. This aligns with the concept proposed, which emphasises the importance of innovation and stakeholder involvement in entrepreneurial development (Attanasio et al., 2022; Iglesias-Sánchez et al., 2022; Kujala et al., 2022). Internet access and digital applications allow students to learn more effectively, access online business courses, and market their products. This finding has practical implications that are highly relevant to the development of the business world, which is increasingly dependent on technology, especially in the digital era.

A more profound impression was found in the managed cooperative program. This study found that cooperatives are not only a means to manage businesses, but also a place for students to hone skills in decision-making, resource management, and risk and profit sharing. This aligns with the literature, which states that effective entrepreneurial leadership in religious-based education can encourage students' active participation and involvement in business management (Edy & Haryanti, 2023; Giacomini et al., 2023; Moya & Toledano, 2024). In this case, cooperatives not only function as businesses that are run, but also as a platform for students to apply their business ideas in real practice. Through this program, students gain valuable experience in collaborating, sharing risks, and achieving mutual benefits.

Related to the concept of internal locus of control applied by leaders, this study shows that leaders have a high level of self-confidence in making decisions

related to entrepreneurship programs. Leaders with an internal locus of control tend to be more proactive in facing challenges and changes, as they recognize that the success or failure of a business is primarily a result of their actions and decisions (Anam et al., 2022). The results of this study align with the theory that leaders with an internal locus of control have a greater ability to create positive change in organizations (Sinaga et al., 2022; Hamzah & Othman, 2023; Qurrahtulain et al., 2022). The practical implication is that leaders with an internal locus of control can create an environment that supports innovation and continuous learning for students.

On the other hand, this study demonstrates that it has successfully created a conducive entrepreneurial climate, with various activities involving students in product creation, marketing, and financial training. These findings support the assertion that effective entrepreneurship programs must incorporate both theoretical learning and, more importantly, practical experience that can prepare students to confront real economic challenges (Baggen et al., 2022; Valencia-Arias et al., 2022; Weng et al., 2022). The theoretical implication of this finding is the importance of integrating aspects of entrepreneurial practice into the educational curriculum, which can enrich students' learning experiences and provide them with skills more relevant to the job market's demands.

Finally, based on the findings of this study, the program has successfully developed an entrepreneurship curriculum that combines religious education with practical skills relevant to the business world. The approach taken has made a significant contribution to the economic empowerment of students and the surrounding community. The practical implication of this finding is that Islamic boarding schools can serve as a model for other educational institutions in integrating entrepreneurship with religious values to produce independent, creative, and innovative entrepreneurs. As a theoretical implication, this study enriches the understanding of entrepreneurial leadership in the context of religious-based education, while also providing new insights into the importance of technology and direct involvement in entrepreneurship programs in creating sustainable social and economic impacts.

CONCLUSION

The most significant finding of this study is that the application of the concept of entrepreneurial leadership in Islamic boarding schools, through the integration of entrepreneurship education into the curriculum, has made a substantial contribution to the development of students' entrepreneurial spirit. Through well-designed programs, such as cooperatives, business training, and locally based economic projects, students not only gain practical skills but also learn to think creatively, independently, and adapt to global financial developments. This program demonstrates that religious education and entrepreneurship can complement each other, mutually strengthening the creation of entrepreneurs who possess not only technical skills but also strong spiritual values.

The strength of this paper lies in its contribution to enriching the literature on the application of entrepreneurial leadership in religious-based education, as well as providing new insights into the importance of technology, practical

engagement, and community-based approaches in developing students' entrepreneurial skills. Although this study has revealed many positive aspects, its scope has limitations, as it focuses on only one Islamic boarding school. Therefore, further research with a broader and more diverse sample can provide a more comprehensive picture. Future research is expected to dig deeper into the external factors that influence the success of entrepreneurship programs and the role of alums in developing Islamic boarding school businesses.

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