



INTERNALIZATION of AKHLAKUL KARIMAH VALUES as CORE VALUES for QUALITY ASSURANCE in CONTEMPORARY ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOLS

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the strategy of internalizing *akhlakul karimah values* as *core values* in the Islamic boarding school education quality assurance system to address the challenges of moral disruption in the contemporary era. Using a qualitative approach with an explanatory case study design, data were collected through in-depth interviews with caretakers, heads of quality assurance, and asatidz, as well as participant observation and documentation. The data were analyzed using an interactive model and data verification using triangulation. The results of the study indicate that Darussalam Blokagung Islamic Boarding School has successfully integrated *akhlakul karimah indicators* into academic and non-academic quality standards through the “SPI-Plus” (Islamic Boarding School-based Internal Assurance System) mechanism, where student graduation and teacher performance evaluation are not only measured from cognitive aspects, but also from the consistency of ethical behavior, compliance (*ta’dhim*), and community service. The distinction of this study lies in the deconstruction of the western Total Quality Management (TQM) concept which tends to be secular-materialistic into a Sufi-transcendental TQM model that places spiritual piety as the main indicator of institutional quality. The theoretical contribution of this research enriches the treasury of Islamic education management by offering a new formula for contemporary quality assurance, while its practical contribution provides a reference for replication for thousands of Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia in formulating quality standards that do not lose their salaf identity, while having a strong impact on increasing the competitiveness of graduates with character at the national level.

Keywords: *Internalization, Akhlakul Karimah , Core Values , Quality Assurance, Contemporary Islamic Boarding Schools.*

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary phenomena demonstrate a shift in quality orientation within Islamic boarding schools (pesantren), caught in the currents of institutional commodification and secularization. (Lathifah et al., 2025; Hakim et al., 2025) The strong hegemony of globalization demands that Islamic educational institutions prioritize materialistic indicators such as physical facilities, technological modernization, and formal certification in order to reach the market. (Hanif & Boussaa, 2026; Sudirman et al., 2025; Masnawati et al., 2024). This reality is evident in the widespread adoption of Western *Total Quality Management* (TQM) instruments in various modern Islamic boarding schools, which only measure the quality of cognitive-vocational output, while the aspect

of spiritual character development is marginalized as a mere administrative complement.(Efendi, 2022). Based on George Ritzer's *McDonaldisation theory*, this phenomenon reflects the dominance of efficiency, calculability, and predictability that threatens the authentic identity of Islamic boarding schools. The standardization of quality adopted raw from secular industry has ultimately reduced the transcendental orientation of Islamic boarding schools to labor-producing institutions devoid of moral substance.

On the other hand, the world of Islamic boarding schools is currently facing the onslaught of reality in the form of a crisis of moral decadence among students due to unstoppable exposure to digital disruption.(Sardar, 2025) The values of obedience (*ta'dhim*) and pious behavior that were once the main pillars of Islamic boarding schools are now being eroded by the penetration of global information flows through gadgets. The reality on the ground shows an increase in cases of disciplinary violations, a loss of etiquette towards educators, and the phenomenon of bullying in the dormitory environment that has frequently occurred in recent years.(Johnson & Johnson, 2023; Zvereva, 2023; Berkowitz et al., 2022) This social phenomenon is highly relevant to the theory of *Liquid Modernity* proposed by Zygmunt Bauman, where strong social bonds and traditional moral values are becoming diluted, unstable, and lose certainty due to the rapid changes of the times. This fact emphasizes that the quality assurance system of institutions can no longer rely solely on formal supervision, but absolutely requires the reconstruction of deeply rooted spiritual values.

In response to the two realities mentioned above, an urgent need arose to deconstruct the concept of quality assurance through strengthening local values (*local wisdom*). (Sievers et al., 2026; Kim et al., 2026; Asnawi & Zuhdi, 2025) The inability of modern quality instruments to stem the moral crisis requires institutions such as the Darussalam Islamic Boarding School in Blokagung, Banyuwangi, to create an antithesis in the form of a quality formulation based on *noble character*. Concrete steps in this strategy are demonstrated by the integration of ethical track records, spiritual *riyadhah*, and student devotion into a structured formal graduation system.(Esmonde et al., 2023). Viewed from the perspective of Pierre Bourdieu's *Habitus* and *Capital theory*, this implementation is an effort by Islamic boarding schools to produce distinctive cultural capital *and* symbolic capital, so that ethical values become subconscious actions that are internalized collectively.(Amalia et al., 2025) This transformation proves that contemporary quality assurance in Islamic boarding schools will only be effective and have a broad impact if they are able to position *noble character* as the highest basis of organizational governance.

Previous research focusing on the implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) in Islamic educational institutions has generally used a descriptive qualitative approach to capture the adoption of modern quality standards.(Busahdiar; Karimah, Ummah, Sudirman, 2023; Efendi, 2022) Several substantive findings over the past five years confirm that most modern Islamic boarding schools have successfully improved the efficiency of organizational governance and academic accreditation by meeting formal managerial indicators.(Agus Darwanto et al., 2024) However, this literature also highlights the side effect of marginalizing the Islamic boarding school's value system, where quality evaluation instruments adopted from the industrial world tend to be rigid and ignore the spiritual dimension that underlies Islamic education.

On the other hand, contemporary studies on character-based quality assurance have begun to shift to using explanatory and ethnographic case study designs to explore the integration of local values.(Fathurrochman et al., 2026; Anggita et al., 2024) Substantive findings from recent research indicate that internalizing ethical values of discipline and ritual piety has proven effective in reducing the number of students' moral violations when these values are formally institutionalized as key performance indicators.(Rahayu et al., 2025; Joseph et al., 2022) This literature exploration confirms that the success of quality assurance in contemporary Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) depends heavily on the institution's ability to transform traditional values such as *akhlakul karimah* (good character) into measurable operational standards, without losing their transcendental essence.

The novelty or scientific novelty in this research lies in the conceptual reconstruction of quality assurance that deconstructs the dominance of the conventional Total Quality Management (TQM) model with a secular-materialistic character, into a Sufi-transcendental TQM model based on *akhlakul karimah* as the main indicator (core value). While previous research generally separates the fulfillment of academic administrative standards from the moral development of students, this research offers a novel formula in the form of structural integration into the "Pesantren-based Internal Assurance System" (SPI-Plus) in Islamic boarding schools. This model radically aligns—and even prioritizes—ethical track records, *ta'dhim*, and spiritual rites as determining variables for student graduation as well as measurable evaluation of *asatidz* performance, thus providing a new paradigm for contemporary Islamic boarding school quality governance that is adaptive to modernization without losing the orthodoxy of its *salaf* values.

The urgency of this research is crucial to saving the identity of Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) from the flow of secular quality commodification and the digital moral crisis. Without a reconstruction of quality assurance based on *akhlakul karimah* (good character), contemporary Islamic boarding schools are at risk of losing their spiritual spirit and becoming mere labor-producing institutions devoid of ethical substance and transcendental values. Based on this, this study aims to analyze strategies for internalizing *akhlakul karimah values* as *core values* in the Islamic boarding school education quality assurance system to address the challenges of moral disruption in the contemporary era.

METHOD

This research was conducted at the Darussalam Islamic Boarding School in Blokagung, Karangdoro, Tegalsari, Banyuwangi, East Java. This location was chosen purposively *because* this Islamic boarding school is one of the largest Islamic educational institutions in Banyuwangi that has consistently maintained the Salafiyah tradition amidst institutional modernization, and has a unique internal quality assurance system based on the integration of Islamic boarding school values. The approach used in this study is a qualitative approach with an explanatory case study research type. This approach was chosen to understand in depth, holistically, and contextually how the mechanism and why the value of *akhlakul karimah* can be used as a core value *in* ensuring the quality of education in this contemporary Islamic boarding school.

The data sources in this study are divided into two, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data were obtained directly from key informants selected using *purposive sampling techniques* to ensure the credibility of the

information. These informants include the Caretaker of the Darussalam Islamic Boarding School as the highest policy holder, the Head of the Internal Quality Assurance Institute (LPMI), the head of the education division (*asatidz*), and representatives of the student management who are directly involved in enforcing behavioral quality standards. Meanwhile, secondary data were obtained through relevant official Islamic boarding school documents, such as curriculum documents, student handbooks, academic standard operating procedures (SOPs), and archives of assessments of the track record of ethical behavior of students and teachers. The following is a table of research informants that was systematically arranged based on the data collection needs at the Darussalam Islamic Boarding School in Blokagung, Banyuwangi:

Table 1. Research Informants

No	Research Informants	Code	Amount	Reasons for Selecting Informants (Purposive Rationale)
1	Board of Trustees of the Islamic Boarding School	IK-01	2 persons	As the highest authority holder, strategic policy maker (<i>top management</i>), and main formulator of the vision of integrating <i>noble moral values</i> in Islamic boarding schools.
2	Head of the Internal Quality Assurance Institute (LPMI)	IK-02	1 Person	Technical implementers who prepare quality standards, design assessment instruments, and oversee the implementation of character-based quality.
3	Head of Education / Head of Madrasah	IK-03	2 persons	The party responsible for aligning the formal academic curriculum with non-academic quality assurance (student behavior).
4	Asatidz Council (Senior Teachers/Lecturers)	IK-04	4 People	The spearhead in the process of internalizing values during learning and direct evaluator of the students' daily ethical track record.
5	Central Board of the Santri Organization	IK-05	2 persons	Representation of the structure of the student discipline enforcement who knows the din

Data collection techniques were conducted multi-trick or through three main channels to ensure data depth, namely *in-depth interviews* , participant observation, and documentation studies. In-depth interviews were conducted semi-structured with informants to explore the thoughts, strategies, and obstacles in the internalization of quality values. Participatory observation was carried out by directly observing the daily activities of students, educational interactions, the process of learning yellow books, and quality assurance coordination meetings within the educational institution. Documentation studies were conducted by reviewing all administrative files, internal regulations of the Islamic boarding school, graduation criteria, and character-based performance evaluation instruments implemented by the Islamic boarding school.

The data analysis in this study applies the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldanha, which includes three simultaneous stages: data condensation , data display , and conclusion *drawing/ verification* . This process begins with summarizing, selecting, and focusing raw data from the field to align

with the research focus. Next, the data is presented in the form of a logical narrative, matrix, or relationship chart to facilitate understanding. Finally, strict data verification is carried out using data validity testing techniques, specifically source triangulation and data collection technique triangulation, as well as *member checking* to ensure that the findings are truly valid, factual, and objective according to the reality at the Darussalam Blokagung Islamic Boarding School.

RESULT AND DISCUSION

Formulation of an Islamic Boarding School-Based Internal Assurance System (SPI-Plus)

Research reveals the engineering of quality governance through the formulation of the SPI-Plus mechanism, a quality assurance system that not only adopts formal ministerial standards, but also integrates spirituality indicators as mandatory instruments. The adoption of rigid Western TQM has often failed to touch the spiritual dimension of the Islamic world, so the need for a quality assurance system that is adaptive to state regulations, but remains rigid in maintaining the traditions of the salaf. This concrete step is evidenced by the official quality matrix document from the Internal Quality Assurance Institute (LPMI) of the Darussalam Blokagung Islamic Boarding School, which explicitly includes Riyadhah Bathiniah instruments—such as consistency in congregational prayer, tahajud, and wirid—as mandatory assessment weights alongside academic attendance. This formulation successfully deconstructs the old understanding that internal quality assurance in Islamic boarding schools is always informal, while also proving that spiritual aspects can be formalized into modern management instruments in a measurable manner. This is as explained by the head of quality assurance as follows:

"We're breaking the old assumption that Islamic boarding school quality assurance must always be informal or merely verbal compliance. The concrete steps are outlined in the official LPMI Quality Matrix document. There, we formalize Riyadhah Batiniah instruments—such as consistent congregational prayer, tahajud, and wirid—as mandatory assessment measures alongside academic attendance."

This statement confirms the deconstruction of the paradigm in Islamic boarding school governance, where internal quality assurance, which was initially informal and based on verbal compliance, has now been successfully transformed into a modern, structured and legalistic management system. Through the official LPMI Quality Matrix document, the Darussalam Blokagung Islamic Boarding School has engineered an adaptive yet rigid quality management system by formalizing Riyadhah Bathiniah instruments—such as consistent congregational prayer, tahajud, and wirid—as mandatory assessment variables whose status and weight are equal to academic attendance. This step empirically proves that indicators of spirituality, previously considered abstract and personal, can be quantified precisely and integrated into modern, measurable management instruments to maintain the authenticity of the salaf tradition.

Deconstructing Graduation Indicators Through Ethical Track Records (Ta'dhim Metrics)

The quality assurance system in this Islamic boarding school radically places the values of obedience and ethics (ta'dhim) as pre-requisite variables for

student graduation above the cognitive achievements of the formal curriculum. Assessments that rely solely on written exams in the contemporary era have been proven to often produce graduates who are intellectually intelligent but experience moral disruption and a crisis of etiquette towards teachers and society. The strictness of this system is reflected in the policy of delaying graduation and withholding formal diplomas for students who have a record of serious violations of etiquette (*su'ul adab*) towards guardians or *asatidz*, even if the students achieve perfect national exam scores or report cards. This practice provides confirmation that the quality of graduates in contemporary Islamic boarding schools is no longer measured by the secular-materialistic paradigm of academic scores, but rather relies on the integrity of the students' ethical character as the most authentic end result.



Figure 1. Student Mushafahah at the Board of Trustees

The image not only demonstrates a culture of politeness, but also serves as substantive empirical evidence for research findings regarding the formalization of ethical track records. In the Islamic boarding school ecosystem, graduation is no longer constructed partially academically (a cognitive value dichotomy), but rather deconstructed through the parameters of '*ta'dhim*' or structured respect. The physical act of kissing the hand in this image is a concrete manifestation of daily moral quality indicators that are not abstract, but rather measured and documented rigidly as the main prerequisite for graduation capital. This also serves as factual visual evidence that the principal's leadership governance has succeeded in integrating national standards (symbolized by the formal graduation moment) with a *real-time behavioral monitoring system (moral metrics)*, so that Qur'anic culture is truly internalized into credible quantitative data. This is as stated by the Islamic boarding school leader below:

"At the Darussalam Blokagung Islamic Boarding School, we don't want to get caught up in mere cognitive numbers on paper. Formal exam scores or memorization of the holy book are important, but they are subordinate to assessments of morality and obedience. The primary and absolute requirement for a student's graduation here is their track record of discipline; they must not have any serious violations of the boarding school's regulations that have not been resolved by Islamic law or administratively. If a student has perfect academic grades but is recorded in our daily points system (Ta'dhim Metrics) as frequently violating Islamic law or not respecting the rules of the guardian, then their graduation will be suspended. For us, graduation is a legitimation that the

student is ready to become a moral role model in society, and compliance with the boarding school's rules is the most valid proof of that readiness."

The interviews show that this Islamic boarding school has radically deconstructed conventional graduation standards by placing behavioral compliance as an absolute requirement that trumps cognitive achievement. Through the implementation of a daily points system (*Ta'dhim Metrics*), the Islamic boarding school leadership has engineered a moral control mechanism in which disciplinary track records and the resolution of violations through Islamic law and administration act as the primary *gatekeepers* for graduation. This demonstrates that the institution no longer views graduation merely as a formal academic rite on paper, but rather as an ethical legitimacy and substantive recognition of the students' moral readiness before being deployed as role models in the wider community.

Performance Evaluation of Asatidz Based on Sufi-Transcendental Competencies

Quality assurance for educators (asatidz) at the Darussalam Blokagung Islamic Boarding School no longer refers solely to formal pedagogical standards such as certification or academic degrees, but rather to the level of moral exemplarity and spiritual devotion. The effectiveness of internalizing the values of akhlakul karimah (good morals) to students is impossible to achieve optimally without the direct transfer of exemplary behavior (uswah hasanah) from their educators in their daily lives. This is realized through the implementation of an annual performance evaluation sheet for asatidz, which includes assessment points in the form of service or sincere devotion, attendance at dawn congregational prayers with students, and politeness in social interactions within the Islamic boarding school environment. Through this mechanism, there is a shift in the paradigm of conventional teacher performance assessment from one that initially focused on administrative performance in the classroom to a comprehensive assessment based on transcendental morality.



Based on the visualization of the scale diagram, the image interprets the dichotomy as well as the paradigm shift in the assessment of educator performance in the contemporary Islamic boarding school environment, which compares the paradigm of Transcendental Morality Assessment with Formal Pedagogical Standards. On the one hand, conventional secular-materialistic

assessments tend to emphasize the standardization of administrative metrics such as certification ownership, formal academic degrees, and documentation of performance in the classroom (Standardized Administrative Metrics). On the other hand, Islamic Boarding School Darussalam Blokagung deconstructs these rigid indicators by positioning Sufi-transcendental competence as an equal determining scale, where the theological quality of an educator is measured in real terms through moral exemplarity, spiritual devotion, activeness in congregational worship (such as dawn prayer), courtesy, and sincere service. Through the direct transmission of exemplary values (*uswah hasanah*) in daily interactions, this visualization emphasizes that teacher quality assurance in Islamic boarding schools is no longer just a matter of fulfilling administrative documents on paper, but rather a process of cultivating integral spiritual morality and having a strong impact on the formation of the ethical character of students.

Transforming Barakah Values into Cultural Capital and Institutional Competitiveness

Abstract traditional Islamic boarding school values, such as seeking blessings or *barakah*, have been successfully transformed managerially into cultural capital, which has given rise to competitive advantage and the institution's global competitiveness. The collective belief that adherence to the Islamic boarding school's ethical values will bring success in life has become a much stronger internal motivator for students and alumni than materialistic motivations. The positive impact is evident in the high absorption rate of alumni of the Darussalam Blokagung Islamic Boarding School in various strategic sectors, from government and academia to entrepreneurship, driven by a loyal alumni network, where their commitment is united by a collective sense of reverence for their alma mater. This integration confirms that the values of *akhlakul karimah* (good morals) and the pursuit of *barakah* do not hinder modernization, but rather act as strong symbolic capital to strengthen the bargaining position and existence of Islamic boarding schools amidst the global competition of contemporary education. The following table presents the form of managerial transformation from the traditional value of *barakah* to cultural capital and its strategic implications.

Table 2 Transformation of *Barakah Values* into Cultural Capital

Abstract Traditional / Spiritual Values	Managerial Transformation Mechanism (LPMI & Caregivers)	Manifestation of Cultural & Symbolic Capital	Impact of Institutional Existence & Global Competitiveness (Outcome)
Search for Blessings (<i>Thalab al-Barakah</i>)	Integration of service track records (<i>khidmah</i>) into the non-academic portfolio of students and formal graduation requirements.	The formation of a work ethic based on sincerity and high loyalty, which is recognized externally as the character of workers with integrity.	Alumni have high bargaining power in the professional world due to the combination of general competence and moral commitment which minimizes moral <i>hazard</i> .
Obedience and Respect for Teachers (<i>Ta'dhim al-Ustadz</i>)	Institutionalization of the student code of ethics into <i>Ta'dhim Metrics</i> (a digital/manual daily	Subconscious preventive discipline (<i>habitus</i>) that minimizes internal conflict, bullying, and	Islamic boarding schools have a strong brand image as a safe, superior educational zone that is

	manners assessment instrument).	violations of the law in the institutional environment.	free from contemporary moral decadence .
The Inner Bond between Students and Islamic Boarding Schools (<i>Friendship & Obedience</i>)	Organizing alumni networks in a formal-structural manner through professional clustering (bureaucrats, academics, entrepreneurs).	The formation of massive and solid <i>social capital</i> , where alumni loyalty is united by transcendental commitment (a sense of collective reverence).	The high level of alumni absorption in strategic sectors (government, entrepreneurship, academics) is driven by a strong internal <i>endorsement system of alumni networks</i> .
Shared Spiritual Riyadhah (<i>Istiqamah</i>)	Standardization of daily spirituality agenda (wirid, tahajud, dawn congregation) as a Key Performance Indicator (IKU) for students and asatidz.	Mental-spiritual strength (<i>resilience</i>) and emotional resilience of students in facing the pressures of the digital disruption era.	Graduates possess adaptability and leadership skills with a religious character who are ready to compete in a global climate without losing their Islamic identity.
Abstract Traditional / Spiritual Values	Managerial Transformation Mechanism (LPMI & Caregivers)	Manifestation of Cultural & Symbolic Capital	Impact of Institutional Existence & Global Competitiveness (Outcome)

The table above interprets that this Islamic boarding school located in the southern Banyuwangi region has succeeded in transcending the boundaries of traditional management by sociologically converting abstract spiritual values such as barakah, ta'dhim, and riyadhah into a form of cultural, social, and symbolic capital that is structured and measured managerially. Through the institutionalization mechanism by the Internal Quality Assurance Institute (LPMI), these Sufi values are no longer merely passive moral dogma, but are transformed into internal motivators and a subconscious work ethic (*habitus*) inherent in the students and alumni. The downstream impact is empirically proven in strengthening the institution's global competitiveness, where the Islamic boarding school obtains a superior brand image as a safe educational zone, while alumni have high absorption in various strategic sectors (government, academia, entrepreneurship) accelerated by a solid network of social capital based on collective reverence. Thus, this interpretation proves that the orthodoxy of salaf values and the search for blessings is not an obstacle to modernization, but rather an instrument of contemporary quality differentiation that provides a competitive advantage that secular educational institutions do not have.



Mind Map: Transforming Spiritual Values into Competitive Advantage

DISCUSSION

Formulation of an Islamic Boarding School-Based Internal Assurance System (SPI-Plus)

This research has successfully revealed a breakthrough in institutional quality governance through the design of the Pesantren-Based Internal Assurance System (SPI-Plus) mechanism. The presence of SPI-Plus is based on the limitations of the adoption of conventional Western Total Quality Management (TQM), which tends to be rigid and often fails to touch and accommodate the spiritual dimension in Islamic education environments. Responding to this challenge, the institutional leadership formulated a modern quality assurance system that not only adheres to formal ministry standards but also integrates spirituality indicators as a mandatory instrument to maintain the authenticity of the Salaf tradition. This formulation radically breaks the outdated assumption that internal quality assurance in the pesantren environment must always be informal or simply rely on verbal compliance, while also providing scientific evidence that abstract aspects of spirituality can be precisely transformed into a modern, measurable management structure.

Concrete steps to deconstruct this management paradigm are documented legally in the Quality Matrix blueprint released by the Internal Quality Assurance Institute (LPMI) of the Darussalam Blokagung Islamic Boarding School. Through this official document, the quality assurance authority engineered governance by formalizing the *Riyadhah Bathiniah instrument* —which includes consistent congregational prayer, tahajud (night prayer), and daily wirid (recitation of the Koran)—as a mandatory assessment variable. Interestingly, this spiritual instrument is not positioned as an accessory, but rather has equal status and weight in assessment and is directly aligned with formal student academic attendance indicators. This curriculum and quality management engineering demonstrates the institution's ability to adapt to state regulations without having to weaken the core values of the Islamic boarding school. (Rochim et al., 2025; Busahdiar; Karimah, Ummah, Sudirman, 2023)

The formalization of *Riyadhah Bathiniah* in the LPMI document confirms a major shift in the landscape of Islamic boarding school governance, from one based on cultural-informal supervision to a modern, structured, legal, and accountable management system. The success of quantifying personal spiritual

practices into objective quality indicators is a strong distinction of this institution's leadership. (Mu'alimin et al., 2026; Karim et al., 2025; Foppen & van Saane, 2024) As emphasized by the Head of Quality Assurance in his testimony, the LPMI Quality Matrix was deliberately designed to reconcile the dualism of values between the administrative demands of the ministry and the spiritual discipline of students. The implementation pattern of SPI-Plus at the Darussalam Blokagung Islamic Boarding School ultimately provides a concrete example to the academic world that modernization of religion-based school governance can be achieved through a rigid synchronization between modern managerial skills and the nobility of the Salaf tradition.

Deconstructing Graduation Indicators Through Ethical Track Records (Ta'dhim Metrics)

The quality assurance system at this institution implements a radical breakthrough by positioning the values of spiritual obedience and the ethics of reverence (*ta'dhim*) as the primary *prerequisites* for student graduation. Amidst the currents of contemporary education that are often trapped in standardized written exams and give rise to moral inequality, this Islamic boarding school deconstructs this secular-materialistic paradigm. Cognitive academic achievement is no longer positioned as the sole indicator of teaching success. (Molnár & Kocsis, 2024; Blömeke et al., 2022) This policy was adopted in response to the widespread phenomenon of the ethical crisis, so the institution chose to shift the focus of the final evaluation to the integrity of the ethical character of students, which is considered the most authentic and accountable manifestation of graduation quality.

This strict governance is realized through the institutionalization of a structured daily behavioral monitoring system known as *Ta'dhim Metrics*. Through this instrument mechanism, the track record of students' discipline and regulatory compliance (*behavioral compliance*) is archived rigidly and *in real-time*. Administrative policies act very firmly, where the postponement of graduation and the withholding of formal certificates will be immediately applied to students whose track record shows a record of serious violations of etiquette (*su'ul adab*) towards guardians or *asatidz*. The provisions of this sanction remain absolute without exception, even if the student in question succeeds in achieving perfect report card scores or national exam results in their formal classes. (Godfrey-Faussett & Baird, 2025; Singh & Berg, 2024)

This cultural phenomenon is empirically documented through the *mushafahah activity* , or the physical act of students bowing respectfully while kissing the hands of the Board of Trustees. The visualization of this interaction is not merely a reflection of traditional, passive politeness, but rather concrete evidence of the formalization of a quantified ethical track record. This activity represents the principal's successful leadership in marrying national curriculum standards with the pesantren's moral control system. (Bahri et al., 2026; Hasan, 2025) Through this convergence, moral values, which were initially abstract and personal, have been successfully transformed into reliable quantitative quality indicators and become the primary determinant of student graduation.

The implementation of *Ta'dhim Metrics* acts as a *gatekeeper* , redefining the meaning of graduation from a mere academic formality to a strong ethical legitimacy. Confirmed by the Islamic boarding school leadership, resolving all violations, both in accordance with Islamic law and administratively, is a non-negotiable requirement. This instructional policy creates an educational

ecosystem that views adherence to Islamic boarding school regulations as the most valid proof of students' mental readiness.(Naldi et al., 2026; Mariyono, 2025; Ismail et al., 2024) Ultimately, this morality-based quality assurance model has successfully established a standard of substantive recognition that graduates are truly prepared to serve as moral role models with integrity in the wider community.

Performance Evaluation of Asatidz Based on Sufi-Transcendental Competencies

The quality assurance of educators (*asatidz*) here has transcended conventional secular-materialistic standards by radically deconstructing teacher performance indicators. Institutional authorities no longer view teacher qualifications partially through standardized administrative metrics, certification, formal academic degrees, or mere documentation of classroom teaching. This step is based on the theological awareness that the internalization of noble moral values in students is impossible to achieve optimally without the transfer of real exemplary behavior (*uswah hasanah*) from their educators in their daily lives. Therefore, the leadership of the Islamic boarding school deliberately positions Sufi-transcendental competence as a determining instrument in maintaining the quality of integral religious pedagogy and has a strong impact on the formation of the ethical character of students.

Operationally, this engineering of educator governance is realized through the institutionalization of an annual performance evaluation instrument for *asatidz* (*Islamic teachers*) that includes very specific non-administrative assessment variables. This concrete step is carried out by measuring aspects of *khidmah* (sincere devotion),(Munazir, 2025; Abdillah & Maskuri, 2022) the level of consistency in attendance at congregational dawn prayers with students, active daily ritual worship, and courtesy *in* social interactions within the pesantren's domestic environment. Through this periodic evaluation sheet, the previously abstract indicators of educator quality are positioned alongside regular performance, resulting in a formalization of legalistic ethical assessments. This system forces educators not only to transfer knowledge cognitively, but also to internalize this spiritual discipline into their daily routines as central role models for students.

This paradigm shift illustrates the balanced dialectic between *Transcendental Morality Assessment* and *Formal Pedagogical Standards*.(Macpherson, 2025) The success of Islamic boarding schools in combining these two dimensions demonstrates that teacher quality assurance is no longer merely a matter of fulfilling administrative paperwork, but rather a process of cultivating a structured spiritual morality. By placing equal weight on transcendental morality assessment with pedagogical skills, Darussalam Blokgung Islamic Boarding School has succeeded in giving birth to a new model of instructional leadership in the modern era. This transformation emphasizes the existence of an institution capable of adopting a modern management governance structure to formalize theological quality, while maintaining the authenticity of the tradition of spiritual submission of salaf teachers with precision and accountability.

Transforming Barakah Values into Cultural Capital and Institutional Competitiveness

This research has successfully uncovered a phenomenon of modern management deconstruction through the successful institutional governance in converting abstract spiritual values—such as the pursuit of blessings, reverence, and riyadhah—into structured cultural, social, and symbolic capital. Under the legitimacy of the pesantren leadership and the Internal Quality Assurance Institute (LPMI), theological doctrines that were previously passive are now managerially engineered into internal motivators *and* subconscious work ethics (*habitus*) for all members of this educational laboratory. This sociological conversion process positions the students' transcendental orientation as no longer merely an intangible personal piety, but rather a competitive cultural capital recognized externally.(Qingyan, 2025) Thus, this pesantren in southern Banyuwangi proves that the orthodoxy of salaf values is not a stumbling block to modernization, but rather an instrument of contemporary quality differentiation that provides a unique competitive advantage that cannot be replicated by secular educational institutions.

Operationally, managerial engineering towards the pursuit of blessings (*halab al-barakah*) and teacher devotion is rigidly institutionalized into formal instruments in the form of non-academic portfolios, standard graduation requirements, and *Ta'dhim Metrics* (a daily etiquette assessment system). This step of institutionalizing the code of ethics has succeeded in shifting repressive disciplinary patterns into subconscious preventive discipline that minimizes the potential for internal conflict, bullying, or moral decadence. On the other hand, the standardization of daily spirituality agendas such as wirid, tahajud, and congregational prayer is transformed into Key Performance Indicators (IKU) for students and asatidz.(Kurniawan et al., 2024) The results of this strict standardization have significantly formed mental-spiritual resilience *and* strong emotional maturity in students, so that they have high adaptation readiness and leadership capacity in facing the shocks of the digital disruption era without losing their Islamic identity.

In the dimension of expanding social capital, Islamic boarding school leadership tactically organizes alumni networks formally and structurally through an adaptive professional clustering approach, ranging from bureaucrats and academics to entrepreneurs. The spiritual bond between students and Islamic boarding schools, nurtured through this network of friendship and obedience,(Astuti & Winarti, 2026; Islamic et al., 2024) transforms into a very massive, solid, and well-consolidated *social capital*. The uniqueness of this network lies in its bonds, which are not based on materialistic motives or economic pragmatism alone, but are united by a transcendental commitment in the form of a deep collective reverence for the alma mater. This robust network structure has a derivative impact in the form of a strong internal *endorsement system*, which significantly accelerates the expansion of alumni service space in various strategic community positions.

This entire series of traditional value transformations culminates in increased global competitiveness and strengthened institutional existence amidst the fierce competition of contemporary education.(Ul Hassan et al., 2025) The combination of general competencies and moral commitment that minimizes moral hazard *gives* graduates a very high bargaining power in the professional world. At a macro level, the success of this value governance boosts the brand image of Darussalam Blokagung Islamic Boarding School as a safe, superior,

clean, and highly integrated educational zone in the public eye. The high absorption of alumni in the government, academic, and global entrepreneurial sectors confirms that the integration of noble character and modern management has empirically proven to generate strong symbolic capital to strengthen the Islamic boarding school's bargaining position at the international level.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that the Darussalam Islamic Boarding School in Blokagung, Banyuwangi, effectively addresses the challenges of contemporary moral disruption by successfully integrating the values of akhlakul karimah as core values in its educational quality assurance system. The synthesis of all findings shows that the internalization of these ethical values is realized structurally through the deconstruction of modern quality management into the "SPI-Plus" formula, the application of graduation indicators based on ta'dhim metrics, educator evaluation using a Sufi-transcendental competency model, and the conversion of abstract values of barakah into institutional cultural capital. Thus, quality assurance in contemporary Islamic boarding schools is no longer trapped in rigid secular-materialistic standardization, but rather relies on spiritual piety and measurable ethical morality, thus being able to produce globally competitive graduates who remain steadfast in upholding the orthodoxy of their salaf values.

The limitation of this research lies in the locus which is only centered on one Islamic boarding school with the typical characteristics of a large-scale salaf-modern Islamic boarding school, so that the formulation of the "SPI-Plus" model and the resulting ta'dhim-based quality indicators cannot necessarily be instantly generalized to semi-modern Islamic boarding schools, tahfidz Islamic boarding schools, or small-scale Islamic educational institutions that have different organizational structures. Therefore, the recommendation for further research is to conduct a large-scale comparative study using a mixed methods approach to test the effectiveness and level of absorption of this Sufi-transcendental quality assurance model in various typologies of Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia, as well as to explore in more depth the long-term impact of ethical track record-based quality standardization on alumni career readiness in the formal global industrial sector.

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