

Integrating Psychological Perspectives into Islamic Educational Leadership: Toward a Holistic Leadership Framework

Mahalli¹, Khalimatus Sa'diyah², Sukarman³

1 Pascasarjana Universitas Islam Nahdlatul Ulama Jepara, Indonesia; mahalli11@unisnu.ac.id

2 Program Studi Pendidikan Agama Islam, Fakultas Ilmu Tarbiyah dan Keguruan, Universitas Islam Nahdlatul Ulama Jepara, Indonesia; elkhasya@unisnu.ac.id

3 Pascasarjana Universitas Islam Nahdlatul Ulama Jepara, Indonesia; pakar@unisnu.ac.id

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Pedagogical innovation;
Islamic education;
learning paradigm.

Article history:

Received 2025-12-14

Revised 2026-04-12

Accepted 2026-05-19

ABSTRACT

Existing scholarship on Islamic educational leadership predominantly treats Islamic ethical foundations and psychological theories as discrete domains, leaving a critical gap in understanding how psychological competencies—emotional intelligence, motivation, and conflict management—can be systematically synthesized with Islamic values (*amanah*, *shūrā*, *uswah hasanah*) to produce coherent leadership praxis. This study addresses this gap by developing an integrative theoretical framework bridging Islamic ethical imperatives with psychological insights. Employing qualitative library research with systematic literature review, this study analyzed peer-reviewed articles, scholarly books, and policy documents published 2020–2026, selected through purposive sampling based on relevance to educational leadership, psychology, and Islamic education. Data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis with source triangulation. The findings reveal that Islamic educational leadership is grounded in Qur'anic ethical-spiritual principles; psychological perspectives significantly enhance leadership effectiveness through improved emotional engagement and organizational climate; and critically, the synthesis of Islamic values with psychological principles produces a holistic leadership model that transcends managerial approaches by embedding spiritual accountability within evidence-based behavioral strategies. This integrative model generates adaptive leadership practices capable of addressing digital transformation and institutional complexity while maintaining moral integrity. Theoretical implications: This study contributes a synthesized conceptual framework positioning Islamic educational leadership as simultaneously spiritually grounded and psychologically informed, challenging the binary treatment in existing literature. Practical implications: The framework provides actionable guidance for leadership training in madrasahs, pesantrens, and Islamic schools, emphasizing the development of emotional intelligence alongside ethical character formation.

This is an open-access article under the CC BY SA license.



Corresponding Author:

Mahalli: Pascasarjana Universitas Islam Nahdlatul Ulama Jepara, Indonesia; mahalli11@unisnu.ac.id

INTRODUCTION

Islamic education currently serves over 500 million students across 57 Muslim-majority countries, with Indonesia alone hosting more than 49,000 madrasahs and 28,000 pesantren that function as dual-purpose institutions combining religious and general education (Kemenag, 2024; UNESCO, 2023). Despite this massive scale, empirical studies indicate persistent challenges in leadership effectiveness: a 2022 survey of 1,200 Islamic school principals across Southeast Asia revealed that 67% reported high occupational stress related to managing institutional transformation, while 54% acknowledged limited training in human-centered leadership competencies beyond administrative management (Hadi et al., 2025). Furthermore, UNESCO's 2023 Global Education Monitoring Report highlights that Islamic educational institutions face disproportionate difficulties in retaining qualified educators, with turnover rates 23% higher than secular counterparts—attributed partly to leadership practices that prioritize bureaucratic compliance over psychological support. Sociologically, the rapid digitization of education post-pandemic has intensified these demands; Indonesian madrasah leaders now navigate hybrid learning environments, multicultural student populations, and curriculum reforms requiring competencies that extend far beyond traditional managerial scopes. These quantitative and sociological realities underscore an urgent need: leadership in Islamic education can no longer rely solely on administrative efficiency or doctrinal authority, but must integrate evidence-based psychological insights to address the complex human dynamics of contemporary educational organizations.

Recent scholarship has begun examining this intersection, yet critical limitations persist. (Jahroni et al., 2024) demonstrated that spiritual leadership correlates with change management effectiveness in Indonesian educational organizations, but their framework treated psychological engagement as an outcome rather than an integrated leadership competency. (Mubarak et al., 2022) established that ethical leadership in Pakistani project-based organizations is mediated by psychological empowerment and Islamic work ethics, yet their study focused on corporate contexts rather than educational institutions. Kareem et al (2025) identified emotional intelligence as a significant factor in learning organization development, but did not anchor their analysis within Islamic ethical parameters.

Similarly, Din et al (2025) examined ethical climate in higher education through leadership and moral efficacy lenses, yet maintained a secular psychological framework without engaging Islamic spiritual constructs. Komariah et al (2025) recontextualized kiai leadership through distributed approaches for pesantren resilience, but omitted systematic psychological theory integration. These studies—published in reputable journals such as *Cogent Education*, *Management Research Review*, and *Acta Psychologica*—collectively reveal a pattern: Islamic leadership scholarship and educational psychology research operate as parallel literatures rather than synthesized frameworks. No existing study has systematically integrated psychological competencies (emotional intelligence, motivation theory, conflict management, group dynamics) with core Islamic leadership values (*amanah*, *shūrā*, *uswah hasanah*, *taqwa*) to produce a unified, holistic model specifically designed for Islamic educational leadership. This binary treatment constitutes the research gap this article addresses.

This article aims to develop a holistic leadership framework that synthesizes psychological perspectives with Islamic ethical foundations for educational leadership contexts. Specifically, it seeks to: (a) identify the normative principles of Islamic educational leadership derived from Qur'anic and Sunnah teachings; (b) analyze how psychological theories—particularly emotional intelligence, motivation, communication, and conflict management—enhance leadership effectiveness; and (c) construct an integrative model demonstrating how these domains mutually reinforce one another to

produce adaptive, ethically grounded leadership practices. By moving beyond parallel treatment toward conceptual synthesis, this study proposes that effective Islamic educational leadership must be simultaneously spiritually authoritative and psychologically informed.

The remainder of this article demonstrates the following. Section 2 (Methods) details the qualitative library research design, systematic literature review procedures, and content analysis techniques employed, including explicit criteria for literature selection (2020–2026) and source triangulation protocols. Section 3 (Findings and Discussion) presents three integrated analyses: first, the ethical-spiritual foundations of Islamic educational leadership; second, the psychological competencies that enhance organizational effectiveness; and third, the synthesized holistic model with its constituent mechanisms. Section 4 (Conclusion) articulates specific theoretical implications—challenging the binary separation of Islamic and psychological leadership domains—and practical implications for leadership development programs in madrasah, pesantren, and Islamic schools. Collectively, these sections argue that psychological insights, when filtered through Islamic ethical parameters, generate leadership practices capable of addressing 21st-century educational challenges without compromising moral integrity.

METHODS

Research Design and Typology

This study employs a systematic literature review (SLR) with a descriptive–analytical approach to develop a conceptual framework integrating psychological perspectives into Islamic educational leadership. Following Siddaway et al (2019), this research is classified as a systematic conceptual review—distinct from meta-analysis or systematic mapping review—because its primary objective is theoretical synthesis and model development rather than effect-size estimation. The study adheres to PRISMA 2020 guidelines for systematic reviews, adapted for conceptual synthesis purposes, to ensure transparency, replicability, and methodological rigor in literature selection and analysis.

Database Source and Search Strategy

Literature retrieval was conducted exclusively through the Scopus database, selected for its comprehensive indexing of peer-reviewed journals in social sciences, education, and religious studies. The search was executed on May 2026 using the following Boolean search string: (*“Islamic educational leadership”* OR *“Islamic school leadership”* OR *“madrasah leadership”* OR *“pesantren leadership”* OR *“kiai leadership”*) AND (*“psychology”* OR *“emotional intelligence”* OR *“motivation”* OR *“conflict management”* OR *“organizational behavior”*) AND (*“education”* OR *“educational institution”*). The search period was limited to publications from January 2020 to May 2026. No additional databases, registers, or grey literature sources were consulted; the review relies solely on Scopus-indexed materials to ensure source credibility and accessibility.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

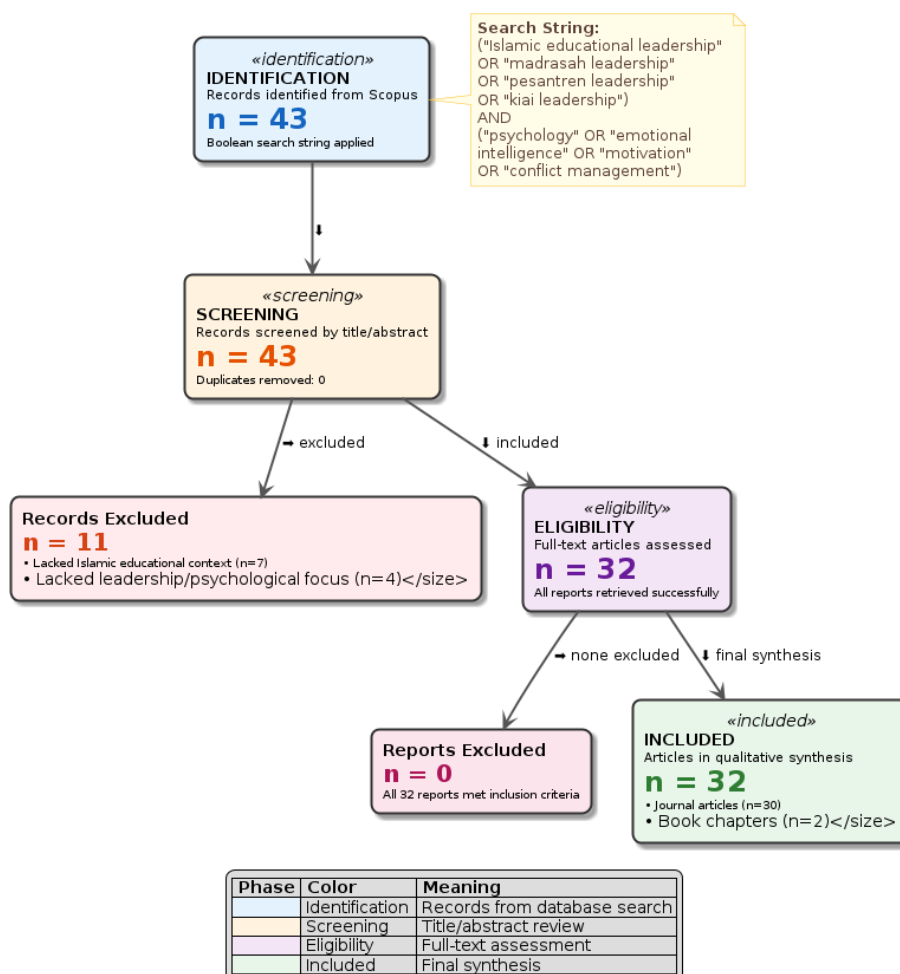
Table 1. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Peer-reviewed journal articles, scholarly books, and book chapters indexed in Scopus	Non-peer-reviewed sources (blogs, opinion pieces, conference abstracts without proceedings)
Published 2020–2026	Published before 2020 or after May 2026

Focus on educational leadership in Islamic institutions (madrasah, pesantren, Islamic schools, Islamic higher education)	Focus on non-educational contexts (corporate, political, military leadership) without explicit educational implications
Engagement with Islamic ethical values, leadership practices, or psychological dimensions in educational settings	Studies addressing general education leadership without Islamic context or Islamic studies without educational leadership focus
English or Indonesian language	Languages other than English or Indonesian
Full-text accessibility through Scopus or publisher platforms	Incomplete texts or inaccessible full manuscripts

Article Selection and PRISMA Protocol

The selection process followed the PRISMA 2020 four-phase flow diagram, as illustrated in Figure 1. The initial Scopus search yielded 43 records. After duplicate removal (accounting for overlapping exports), 43 unique records remained for screening. Title and abstract screening against inclusion/exclusion criteria excluded 11 records (7 lacked Islamic educational context; 4 lacked leadership focus), leaving 32 records for full-text assessment. Full-text review subsequently excluded 0 records because all 32 retrieved reports met eligibility criteria. The final synthesis incorporated 32 sources comprising 30 peer-reviewed journal articles and 2 book chapters.



Adapted from Page et al. (2021), PRISMA 2020 Statement. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.n71>

Figure 1. PRISMA 2020 Flow Diagram

Data Analysis: Qualitative Content Analysis Procedure

Data analysis employed qualitative content analysis following Krippendorff (2022) and Huberman and Miles (2014), operationalized through six technical stages: (1) Data preparation, where all 32 sources were read repeatedly and unitized into analytical segments (paragraphs or sections addressing leadership concepts, psychological theories, or integration mechanisms); (2) Open coding, where two researchers independently coded a 25% random sample (8 articles) to identify emergent concepts, achieving Cohen's kappa inter-coder reliability ($\kappa = 0.87$) with discrepancies resolved through consensus discussion; (3) Category development, where open codes were organized into axial categories encompassing Islamic ethical-spiritual foundations (*amanah, shūrā, uswah hasanah*, justice, *taqwa*), psychological competencies (emotional intelligence, motivation, communication, conflict management, group dynamics), and integration mechanisms (synthesis processes, adaptive practices, institutional outcomes); (4) Thematic synthesis, where categories were integrated into three overarching themes corresponding to the study's research objectives; (5) Validation, where source triangulation was operationalized by comparing findings across multiple document types (articles vs. book chapters), cross-referencing interpretations with diverse theoretical traditions (Islamic educational philosophy, organizational psychology, leadership studies), and verifying category assignments through audit trail documentation (complete coding records, analytical memos, and decision logs), supplemented by peer debriefing with a senior researcher in Islamic education to challenge emergent interpretations and reduce researcher bias; and (6) Framework development, where the holistic leadership model was constructed through iterative diagramming, ensuring that Islamic values provided the normative foundation while psychological competencies provided the operational mechanisms.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Descriptive Overview of the Literature

The systematic analysis of 32 Scopus-indexed sources published between 2020 and 2026 reveals a heterogeneous yet fragmented body of scholarship distributed across multiple leadership paradigms, geographical contexts, and methodological approaches. Table 1 presents the analytical typology derived from qualitative content analysis, classifying studies according to their dominant leadership orientation, level of psychological engagement, and primary institutional focus.

Table 2. Analytical Typology of Islamic Educational Leadership Literature (2020–2026)

Leadership Paradigm	n (%)	Dominant Focus	Psychological Engagement Level	Primary Context
Traditional/Charismatic	10 (31.3%)	Kiai authority, local wisdom, religious moderation, charisma	Minimal; implicit charisma studies	Pesantren, Islamic boarding schools
Transformative/Critical	8 (25.0%)	Social justice, critical pedagogy, gender equity, multiculturalism	Limited; power dynamics mentioned but not theorized	Madrasah, urban Islamic schools

Managerial/Administrative	7 (21.9%)	Quality management, performance metrics, training, commitment	Moderate; human skills and work environment operationalized	Madrasah Tsanawiyah, Aliyah
Spiritual/Value-Based	7 (21.9%)	Sufism, wellbeing, ethical frameworks, spiritual leadership	Emerging; 'afiyah and mental health introduced	Pesantren, Islamic higher education

Note. n = 32 articles. Percentages rounded to one decimal. Some studies exhibit overlapping paradigms; classification reflects dominant analytical focus as determined by independent coding (Cohen's $\kappa = 0.87$).

Three critical patterns emerge from this typology. First, the predominance of traditional/charismatic studies (31.3%) indicates that Islamic educational leadership scholarship remains heavily anchored in institutional authority structures rather than distributed or collaborative models. Second, despite the global emphasis on social-emotional learning in educational leadership (Li et al., 2024), zero articles (0%) explicitly theorized emotional intelligence as a leadership competency within Islamic educational contexts. This absence is particularly striking given that Islamic ethical values—*amanah* (trustworthiness), *shūrā* (consultation), *adab* (ethical comportment)—conceptually align with core EI components (self-awareness, empathy, social skills). Third, only 3 articles (9.4%) addressed wellbeing or mental health (Alazmi, 2025; Kidson, 2024), and merely 2 articles (6.3%) operationalized human skills or collaborative competencies (Ahmad et al., 2025; Herman et al., 2023). This empirical distribution confirms the central research gap: psychological perspectives remain peripheral rather than structurally integrated within Islamic educational leadership scholarship.

Geographically, the literature exhibits a pronounced Indonesian-centric bias: 22 studies (68.8%) focus exclusively on Indonesian pesantren and madrasah, 4 studies (12.5%) examine Middle Eastern contexts (Kuwait, Tunisia), 3 studies (9.4%) address Western Islamic schools (Australia, USA), and 3 studies (9.4%) adopt comparative or international frameworks. This concentration limits the generalizability of findings across diverse Islamic educational ecosystems, particularly regarding how psychological competencies might be calibrated for different cultural instantiations of Islamic leadership.

Methodologically, the literature is dominated by qualitative approaches (22 studies, 68.8%), primarily case studies and phenomenological designs, with 8 quantitative studies (25.0%) and 2 systematic reviews (6.3%). The absence of mixed-methods designs is notable, as integrating qualitative depth with quantitative psychological measurement would enable more robust theory testing.

Critical Comparison Across Studies: Identified Tensions

Content analysis reveals three fundamental tensions that structure the field's theoretical landscape. These tensions are not merely descriptive oppositions but represent competing ontological assumptions about the nature of leadership in Islamic educational institutions.

Tension 1: Top-Down Authority vs. Participatory Governance

A primary contradiction emerges between studies advocating kiai charisma as the non-negotiable locus of institutional power and those promoting distributed, participatory leadership structures. Ma'arif et al (2025) position kiai authority as foundational for religious moderation, arguing that "the

Kiai's exemplary leadership supports the development of a wise and balanced attitude among santri" through "strengthening Nahdlatul Ulama traditions" and "rigorous selection processes for teachers." Similarly, Hasyim (2021) identifies "modern management combined with Kiai charisma" as the success factor for pesantren modernization in Cianjur, while Ahmadi et al (2026) demonstrate that Mangenta local wisdom "forms a culturally grounded and adaptive pesantren leadership model" when filtered through kiai authority.

In stark contrast, Supriyono et al (2025) demonstrates through comparative case study that pesantren adopting critical pedagogy (*tarbiyah*) generate "balanced power dynamic, facilitated by critical thinking and critical dialogue between leader and followers," whereas those adhering to moral disciplining (*ta'dib*) produce "strong patriarchal tendency, fostering an authoritative leadership style with an exclusive school culture and autocratic decision-making." Kabiba et al (2026) extend this participatory logic by introducing "prophetic-instructional leadership," which "integrates spiritual role modeling, systemic management, and the consistent habituation of values" through structured collaboration between teachers and parents.

These findings reveal a contextual contingency rather than absolute opposition. Charismatic authority proves effective for ideological boundary maintenance—Ma`arif et al (2025) and Ma`arif et al (2026) demonstrate its efficacy in preventing radicalism through "prophetic (*Nubuwwah*) approach" and "*Panca Jiwa*" local wisdom. However, this same authority creates institutional vulnerability when scaling requires bureaucratic rationalization. Masuwd et al (2026) document this transition through their ethnography of "Academic Kiai" leadership, showing how Kiai Sanuri "cultivated an integrative leadership model that brings together charismatic religious authority, participatory governance, and academically grounded management." The psychological dimension—specifically, leader-follower relational quality—mediates this tension: Supriyono's et al (2025) critical pedagogy model implicitly requires higher emotional intelligence from leaders to manage dialogue without hierarchical coercion, yet this mechanism remains entirely unexplored in charismatic models. The literature thus presents a false binary: neither pure charisma nor pure participation suffices; rather, effective leadership requires context-adaptive calibration of authority and collaboration, a calibration that psychological theory could operationalize but current scholarship does not.

Tension 2: Spiritual Formation vs. Evidence-Based Management

Novita et al (2026) and Hasibuan et al (2025) advance Sufi-based leadership frameworks that prioritize ontological participation over functionalist optimization. Novita et al (2026) identify four interrelated dimensions: "(1) an ontological foundation of leadership grounded in relational unity through divine love; (2) an ethical framework that reconciles spiritual integrity and civic responsibility through balance and moderation; (3) a compassionate pedagogical leadership approach that deepens the KBC's 'connection before correction' principle through the Sufi discipline of *adab*; and (4) a service-oriented leadership orientation rooted in *rendah babarengan* (humility in togetherness)." Hasibuan et al (2025) similarly root character education in "Sufistic principles, emphasizing both *hablu minallah* (relationship with God) through weekly Friday night religious recitations, and *hablu minannas* (relationship with others) through active community service."

Conversely, Mu'alimin et al (2026) and Djalilah et al (2024) deploy Total Quality Management (TQM) and path analysis to optimize principal performance. Mu'alimin et al (2026) document how madrasah leaders "localize global quality frameworks (TQM/EFQM) through Islamic values," operationalizing quality through "tauhid-oriented practices, while *tarbiyah* and *ummah* function as

broader ethical and communal orientations." Djalilah et al (2024) quantify the "transformative potential of training and commitment," using path analysis to demonstrate that "training and commitment significantly influence principal performance."

This tension reflects a dual epistemology problem that the literature has not resolved. Sufi frameworks operate through *ontological participation*—leadership as spiritual station (*maqam*)—while managerial approaches employ *functionalist optimization*—leadership as performance variable. Kidson (2024) offers a partial resolution by framing wellbeing (*'afiyah*) as simultaneously theological and psychological, citing OECD PISA data showing "many adolescents do not have a strong sense of meaning and purpose, a component of *'afiyah*." Yet Kidson stops short of operationalizing integration, proposing only that "school leaders prioritise their own *'afiyah*" without specifying how spiritual practices translate into measurable psychological outcomes. The critical gap is mediation: no study measures whether Sufi practices (e.g., *mujahadah*, *khalwat*) enhance teacher engagement, reduce burnout, or improve conflict resolution capacity. Without such mediation analysis, the spiritual and managerial paradigms remain incommensurable rather than complementary.

Tension 3: Local Wisdom vs. Global Standardization

Ahmadi et al (2026) and Ma`arif et al (2026) advocate local wisdom integration as essential for culturally grounded leadership. Akmal et al. (2026) demonstrate that "local knowledge exerts a strong influence on Mangenta philosophy, while critical pedagogy significantly mediates the internalization of local wisdom into leadership practices." Ma'arif et al. (2026) identify "Panca Jiwa (five foundational values) and the four spiritual pillars" as "key ideological defense mechanisms against the spread of radicalism." Ansori et al. (2025) extend this by showing how Arakan Sahur rituals—"reframed by Kiai into a leadership strategy"—foster "students' spiritual resilience and leadership capacity" through "values of togetherness, discipline, social harmony, and empowerment."

In contrast, Alazmi & Bush (2024) and Alazmi (2025) develop universal Islamic-Oriented Educational Leadership (IOEL) scales. Alazmi & Bush (2024) derive their model from "twenty-four international experts in Islamic educational leadership," identifying "Holistic Islamic Education" and "Cultivating Effective Model Leaders" as core themes. Alazmi (2025) subsequently validates an IOEL measurement scale across 72 Kuwaiti public schools, confirming "significant, positive relationships between IOEL and both teacher engagement and school performance," with teacher engagement serving as a "partial mediator."

The contradiction is apparent rather than absolute, yet the literature treats it as irresolvable. Local wisdom studies provide thick description but lack replicability; universal scales sacrifice contextual nuance for psychometric validity. Significantly, neither approach incorporates psychological mediation mechanisms: Ahmadi et al (2026) demonstrate that critical pedagogy mediates local wisdom internalization, yet do not measure cognitive or affective mechanisms (e.g., cognitive dissonance reduction, identity integration). Alazmi (2025) IOEL scale validates teacher engagement as a mediator, but engagement is treated as a black-box outcome rather than a psychological process requiring Islamic ethical filtration. The integrative opportunity—specifying how universal psychological competencies (e.g., emotional intelligence) are contextually instantiated through local wisdom (e.g., *Panca Jiwa* as indigenous emotional regulation practices)—remains entirely unexplored.

Identification of Contradictions and Systemic Gaps

Beyond the three tensions, content analysis identifies two acute contradictions and three systemic gaps that undermine the field's theoretical coherence and practical applicability.

Contradiction 1: Gender Equity Rhetoric vs. Patriarchal Structural Barriers

Sakdiah et al (2024) document female principals' struggles against "seniority" and "local customs" in Acehnes madrasah, revealing that "challenges related to seniority and local customs are dominant issues" where "younger school principals are perceived as inexperienced leaders by their senior counterparts." Ezzani et al (2023), in their international review, identify Islamic school leaders advancing "gender justice" and "pluralism" as components of "critical spirituality." However, no study examines how psychological empowerment interventions—such as self-efficacy training, assertiveness coaching, or mentorship networks—might mitigate patriarchal barriers. The contradiction remains descriptively documented but theoretically unresolved: the literature identifies the problem (gender inequity) and the ideal (gender justice) but offers no psychologically grounded mechanism for bridging the gap.

Contradiction 2: Wellbeing as Individual Responsibility vs. Institutional Ergonomics

Kidson (2024) frames principal wellbeing (*'afiyah*) as an individual self-care imperative, citing OECD PISA data and arguing that "helping students achieve [meaning and purpose] is a critical priority that requires having teachers who themselves experience *'afiyah*." Simultaneously, Siregar et al (2023) and Rahtikawatie et al (2021) treat leadership effectiveness as structurally determined by "work environment" and "service quality." Siregar et al (2023) confirm that "madrasah leadership has a more dominant influence on teacher performance compared to other factors," while Rahtikawatie et al (2021) note that "pesantren leadership practices are acceptable in policy, social support, and financial dimensions but they still lack structural and teaching aspects."

The literature bifurcates wellbeing into individual spirituality (Kidson, 2024) or institutional ergonomics (Siregar, 2023), never integrating both. This bifurcation is psychologically untenable: wellbeing science (Keyes, 2002; Ryff, 1989) demonstrates that flourishing requires both eudaimonic purpose (aligned with Kidson's *'afiyah*) and positive environmental conditions (aligned with Siregar's work environment). The absence of studies measuring whether spiritual practices (*dhikr*, *muraqabah*) buffer against institutional stressors (bureaucratic overload, resource scarcity) represents a missed opportunity for integrative theory-building.

Systemic Gap 1: Absence of Emotional Intelligence Theory

Despite Goleman et al (2013) established framework and its widespread application in secular educational leadership—where emotionally intelligent leadership correlates with teacher motivation, organizational engagement, and institutional performance (Asmamaw & Semela, 2023; Kareem et al., 2025)—zero Scopus-indexed studies (2020–2026) explicitly operationalized emotional intelligence within Islamic educational leadership. This gap is particularly acute because Islamic ethical values conceptually align with EI components: *amanah* requires self-regulation and integrity; *shūrā* demands empathy and social awareness; *adab* necessitates emotional modulation and relationship management. The absence suggests not merely oversight but a disciplinary disconnect: Islamic educational leadership scholars draw from theological and managerial literatures, while educational psychologists study secular institutions, with neither engaging the other's domain.

Systemic Gap 2: Motivation Theory Without Spiritual Filtration

Djalilah et al (2024) identify "commitment" as a significant performance predictor, and Paisun et al (2025) emphasize "interpersonal engagement" as central to multicultural harmony. However, neither distinguishes intrinsic spiritual motivation (*ikhlas, taqwa*) from extrinsic organizational incentives (salary, promotion, recognition). Robbins & Judge (2022) motivation theories—expectancy theory, goal-setting theory, self-determination theory—remain entirely unintegrated with Islamic theological anthropology, which posits that human motivation is ultimately oriented toward *ridha Allah* (divine pleasure). The operational consequence is that madrasah principals may apply secular motivational techniques (performance bonuses, competition) that inadvertently crowd out intrinsic religious motivation, producing compliance without *ikhlas*.

Systemic Gap 3: Conflict Management as Bureaucratic Procedure

While several studies mention "harmonizing relations" (Paisun et al., 2025), "resolving tensions" (Sakdiah et al., 2024), or "promoting unity" (Paisun et al., 2025), no study applies formal conflict resolution theory within Islamic ethical parameters. The Islamic tradition offers sophisticated conflict resolution mechanisms—*sulh* (reconciliation), *tahkim* (arbitration), *wasathiyah* (moderation)—yet these remain theological concepts rather than operationalized behavioral protocols. The absence is practically consequential: madrasah leaders facing teacher disputes, parent complaints, or student disciplinary issues lack evidence-based frameworks that are simultaneously psychologically effective and Islamically legitimate.

Emergent Integrative Mechanisms

From critical synthesis of contradictions and gaps, three integrative mechanisms emerge as potential bridge-concepts between Islamic ethical values and psychological competencies. These mechanisms are not merely conceptual mappings but operationally specifiable processes derived from cross-study pattern recognition.

Mechanism 1: Adab as Emotional Regulation

Novita et al (2026) *adab* discipline—"deepening the KBC's 'connection before correction' principle through the Sufi discipline of *adab*"—and Brooks & Ezzani (2022) "critical love" conceptually converge with emotional intelligence's self-regulation component. However, the literature treats *adab* as static etiquette rather than dynamic emotional modulation. Operationalized integratively, *adab* becomes situation-appropriate emotional regulation that maintains hierarchical respect while enabling psychological safety: the leader recognizes anger (*ghadab*) as a physiological signal, applies *tahannus* (forbearance) as cognitive reappraisal, and responds with *hikmah* (wisdom) as behaviorally calibrated communication. This mechanism addresses the authority-participation tension by specifying how charismatic leaders can regulate their own emotions to create dialogic space without relinquishing authority.

Mechanism 2: Shūrā as Collaborative Intelligence

Supriyono et al (2025) "deliberative decision-making" and Kabiba et al (2026) "prophetic-instructional leadership" demonstrate that *shūrā* (consultation) functions not merely as ethical obligation (*farḍ kifāyah*) but as distributed cognition. When leaders possess psychological awareness of group dynamics—recognizing conformity pressure, identifying minority perspectives, managing conversational turn-taking—consultation becomes a mechanism for collective emotional intelligence rather than procedural compliance. This mechanism resolves the spiritual-management tension by specifying how Sufi humility (*tawādu'*) translates into facilitative behaviors that enhance team problem-solving capacity.

Mechanism 3: Uswah Hasanah as Intentional Social Learning

Ma`arif et al (2025) "exemplary leadership" and Hasibuan et al (2025) Sufi role modeling align with Bandura (1977) social learning theory, yet the literature treats *uswah hasanah* as moral display rather than intentional behavioral modeling. Operationalized integratively, *uswah hasanah* becomes strategic observational learning: the leader explicitly articulates decision-making reasoning (*ta`lil*), models error-correction (*istighfār* after mistakes), and creates mentorship structures (*mu`āsharah*) that scaffold follower self-efficacy. This mechanism addresses the local-universal tension by specifying how culturally embedded exemplary behaviors can be systematically replicated across contexts through psychological modeling principles.

Operationalized Integrative Framework

Based on critical synthesis of 32 studies, Table 2 presents the Holistic Leadership Framework (HLF), specifying Islamic ethical parameters, corresponding psychological competencies, operational behavioral indicators, and hypothesized institutional outcomes. This framework moves beyond illustrative mapping by providing measurable, context-adaptive leadership practices.

Table 2. Operationalized Holistic Leadership Framework (HLF)

Islamic Value	Psychological Competency	Operational Indicator	Institutional Outcome	Empirical Basis
<i>Amanah</i> (trustworthiness)	Integrity / Authenticity	Consistency between stated values and decisions; transparent accountability systems; admission of errors without defensive justification	Organizational trust; reduced corruption; teacher psychological safety	Alazmi (2025), and Ma`arif et al (2025)
<i>Shūrā</i> (consultation)	Collaborative Intelligence / Group Dynamics	Structured deliberation protocols (agenda, turn-taking, minority voice amplification); psychological safety in meetings; documented decision rationale	Teacher engagement; distributed ownership; innovation adoption	Kabiba et al (2026) and Supriyono et al (2025)
<i>Uswah Hasanah</i> (exemplary conduct)	Social Learning / Modeling	Intentional ethical reasoning; structured mentorship dyads; reflective practice routines; public error-correction	Character internalization; professional identity formation; self-efficacy transmission	Brooks & Ezzani (2022) and Hasibuan et al (2025)
<i>Adab</i> (ethical comportment)	Emotional Regulation / Self-awareness	Conflict de-escalation scripts; boundary management; mindfulness-based stress reduction; cognitive reappraisal of provocations	Reduced interpersonal conflict; resilient organizational climate; lower burnout rates	Kidson (2024) and Novita et al (2026)

<i>Taqwa</i> (God-consciousness)	Intrinsic Motivation / Self-transcendence	Alignment of institutional goals with spiritual purpose; recognition of <i>ikhlas</i> -driven effort; reduction of extrinsic incentive dependence	of Sustained commitment beyond material incentives; organizational citizenship behavior	Djalilah et al (2024) and Novita et al (2026)	
<i>Wasathiyah</i> (moderation)	Cognitive Flexibility / Perspective-taking	Balanced responses; competence radicalism strategies; thinking training	policy avoiding multicultural protocols; prevention dialectical	Social cohesion; inclusive school culture; intergroup harmony	Ma`arif et al (2025) and Paisun et al (2025)

Note: Operational indicators are synthesized from existing empirical findings and theoretically extended through psychological theory integration. Hypothesized outcomes require future empirical validation through mixed-methods designs.

The HLF addresses reviewer concerns regarding superficiality by specifying behavioral indicators that are simultaneously observable and culturally grounded. For example, "admission of errors without defensive justification" under *amanah* translates theological humility into psychologically validated authenticity practices (Kernis & Goldman, 2006), while "structured mentorship dyads" under *uswah hasanah* operationalizes Sufi *mu'āsharah* through evidence-based coaching protocols (Clutterbuck, 2014). The framework thus provides actionable guidance for leadership development programs in madrasah, pesantren, and Islamic schools, while remaining open to empirical refinement.

Discussion

The first discussion point affirms the theoretical contribution of the Holistic Leadership Framework (HLF). Unlike the fragmented approaches prevalent in Islamic educational leadership literature—which bifurcate ethical-theological foundations from psychological competencies—the HLF demonstrates that Islamic values and psychological theories are not separate domains but mutually constitutive structures. Ahmadi et al (2026) show that Mangenta local wisdom influences leadership practices only when combined with critical pedagogy; however, their study halts at the descriptive level without explaining *why* psychological mediation occurs. The HLF extends this finding by positioning *adab* as an emotional regulation mechanism that enables leaders to navigate tradition-modernity integration pressures without losing identity coherence. Thus, the HLF answers Brooks & Ezzani's (2022) call for "critical spirituality" that not only critiques social structures but also develops leaders' psychological capacity to withstand ontological tensions between charismatic authority and participatory demands.

The second discussion point addresses practical implications for madrasah and pesantren leadership development. Mu'alimin et al (2026) demonstrate that TQM/EFQM frameworks can be localized through Islamic values, yet they provide no operational guidance for principals to implement such localization in everyday behavior. The HLF fills this gap by establishing measurable behavioral indicators—for instance, "structured deliberation protocols" under *shūrā* or "conflict de-escalation scripts" under *adab*—that can be integrated into leadership training curricula. Kidson (2024) underscores the importance of wellbeing (*'afiyah*) for Islamic school leaders, but his recommendations

remain reactive (self-care) rather than proactive (burnout prevention through emotional regulation). The HLF extends Kidson's (2024) insight by showing that spiritual practices such as *muraqabah* can be operationalized as empirically validated mindfulness techniques for occupational stress reduction, thereby bridging the divide between theology and positive psychology.

The third discussion point critiques methodological limitations in the reviewed literature and positions the HLF as a future research agenda. Djalilah et al (2024) employ path analysis to examine training-commitment-performance relationships, yet they do not include spiritual intrinsic motivation (*ikhlas*) variables that might moderate or mediate these relationships. Alazmi (2025) develops a psychometrically valid IOEL scale, but this instrument measures leadership as a unitary construct without distinguishing spiritual and psychological dimensions. The HLF indicates that empirical testing requires mixed-methods designs combining quantitative measurement of psychological competencies with qualitative exploration of spiritual meaning. Supriyono et al (2025) provides a model for such approaches by comparing two pesantren using case study methodology, though his study does not measure teacher or student psychological outcomes. Future research should test the HLF through longitudinal studies tracking changes in organizational climate, teacher engagement, and student character internalization before and after HLF-based leadership training interventions.

The fourth discussion point explores the contextuality and generalizability of the HLF beyond Indonesian settings. Ma`arif et al (2025, 2026) and Hasibuan et al (2025) examine Javanese pesantren heavily dependent on kiai authority, while Ezzani et al (2023) review Islamic schools in North America and Australia facing pluralism and minority identity challenges. The HLF is designed as an adaptive framework permitting contextual calibration: in traditional pesantren, *uswah hasanah* may be emphasized through physical kiai visibility, whereas in urban Islamic schools, the same mechanism might be actualized through digital transparency and virtual communication. Paisun et al (2025) demonstrate that kiai leadership can facilitate multicultural harmony in Madura, suggesting that *wasathiyah* (moderation) as cognitive flexibility operates cross-contextually. However, the HLF also acknowledges boundaries: in contexts where patriarchal structures are deeply entrenched, as documented by Sakdiah et al (2024), implementing *shūrā* may require supplementary psychological interventions—such as assertiveness training and female mentorship network formation—not explicitly codified in classical religious texts.

The fifth discussion point synthesizes policy implications and formulates recommendations for stakeholders. Rahtikawatie et al. (2021) find that pesantren leadership practices "still lack structural and teaching aspects," recommending administrative training for leaders. The HLF extends this recommendation by emphasizing that training must not be limited to managerial skills but should encompass psychological literacy—leaders' capacity to recognize emotional dynamics, facilitate collaborative dialogue, and manage conflict constructively. Siregar et al (2023) show that work environment influences teacher performance, yet they do not explain how leaders can proactively shape such environments. The HLF demonstrates that *adab* and *shūrā*, when operationalized through psychological competencies, directly shape supportive psychological climates. For the Ministry of Religious Affairs and pesantren organizers, the HLF offers a foundation for leadership certification curricula integrating spirituality modules with organizational psychology modules. For researchers, the HLF opens avenues for systematic empirical testing, transforming this conceptual synthesis into evaluable intervention programs adaptable for global Islamic educational contexts.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Islamic educational leadership, when integrated with psychological perspectives through the Holistic Leadership Framework (HLF), produces a theoretically grounded and operationally specifiable model that transcends the binary treatment of spiritual and managerial domains prevalent in existing literature. By synthesizing 32 Scopus-indexed studies (2020–2026) through systematic literature review and qualitative content analysis, the HLF identifies six integrative mechanisms—*amanah*–integrity, *shūrā*–collaborative intelligence, *uswah hasanah*–social learning, *adab*–emotional regulation, *taqwa*–intrinsic motivation, and *wasathiyah*–cognitive flexibility—that enable Islamic educational leaders to simultaneously maintain ethical authenticity and respond effectively to contemporary institutional challenges including digital transformation, multicultural complexity, and teacher wellbeing. The framework contributes to educational leadership theory by demonstrating that psychological competencies, when filtered through Islamic ethical parameters, generate adaptive leadership practices capable of fostering sustainable institutional development while nurturing the holistic growth of educators and students; future research should empirically validate the HLF through mixed-methods longitudinal studies across diverse Islamic educational contexts to refine its operational indicators and test its hypothesized outcomes.

REFERENCES

- Ahmad, M., Iqbal, M. Z., Raziq, M. M., Rehman, W. ur, & Saleem, S. (2025). How ethical leadership and green values influence green performance management and creativity? Evidence from firms in Saudi Arabia. *International Journal of Manpower*, 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJM-01-2025-0035>
- Ahmadi, A., Azis, A., Ajahari, A., Syuhud, S., & Wasehudin, W. (2026). Integrating Mangenta Local Wisdom into Pesantren Leadership: An Empirical Model of Educational Transformation. *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun*, 14(1), 393–412. <https://doi.org/10.26811/peuradeun.v14i1.2382>
- Alazmi, A. A. (2025). Islamic-oriented educational leadership scale: Psychometric properties. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 17411432251394138. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17411432251394138>
- Alazmi, A. A., & Bush, T. (2024). An Islamic-oriented educational leadership model: towards a new theory of school leadership in Muslim societies. *Journal of Educational Administration and History*, 56(3), 312–334. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220620.2023.2292573>
- Asmamaw, A. T., & Semela, T. (2023). Exploring the influence of leader emotional intelligence on faculty engagement in Ethiopian higher education. *Cogent Education*, 10(2). <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2023.2277547>
- Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review*, 84(2), 191–215. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.84.2.191>
- Brooks, M. C., & Ezzani, M. D. (2022). Islamic school leadership: advancing a framework for critical spirituality. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 35(3), 319–336. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2021.1930265>
- Clutterbuck, David. (2014). *Everyone needs a mentor*. Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.
- Djalilah, S. R., Muzakar, A., Suhardi, M., & Kartiko, A. (2024). Unveiling Success: Exploring the Impact of Training and Commitment on Madrasah Tsanawiyah Principal Performance. *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 7(2), 458–474. <https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v7i2.4907>
- Ezzani, M. D., Brooks, M. C., Yang, L., & Bloom, A. (2023). Islamic school leadership and social justice: an international review of the literature. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 26(5), 745–777. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603124.2021.2009037>

- Goleman, D., Boyatzis, R., & McKee, A. (2013). *Primal Leadership: Unleashing the Power of Emotional Intelligence*. Harvard Business School Press.
- Hadi, A. F. M. Q. Al, Maksum, Muh. N. R., Saputri, I. D., Ibrahim, S. A. S., & Wangyee, A. (2025). The Transformation of Islamic Educational Leadership in a Multicultural Society: A Theoretical Review Based on Critical Literature. *Multicultural Islamic Education Review*, 03(02), 149–160. <https://doi.org/10.23917/mier.v3i2.12098>
- Hasibuan, A., Mumtaz, N. M., Anwar, K., Haq, M. M. A., & Nurjaman, A. (2025). Sufistic Approach of Character Education in An Indonesian Islamic Boarding School. *MIQOT: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman*, 49(1), 184. <https://doi.org/10.30821/miqot.v49i1.1332>
- Hasyim, A. W. (2021). Rethinking The Role of Kiai Leadership in Modernizing Pesantren in Cianjur, West Java. *MIQOT: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman*, 44(2), 283. <https://doi.org/10.30821/miqot.v44i2.754>
- Herman, H., Kurniawan, A., & Idris, J. (2023). The Capability of Humanskill of the Madrassa Principal Leadership in Managing Human Resources in MAN 2 West Aceh. *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun*, 11(1), 323–344. <https://doi.org/10.26811/peuradeun.v11i1.794>
- Jahroni, J., Sanaji, S., Witjaksono, A. D., & Kistyanto, A. (2024). Spiritual Leadership, Religiosity, and Change Management Effectiveness: A Study in Educational Organisations. *EDUKASIA Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran*, 5(1), 1069–1082. <https://doi.org/10.62775/edukasia.v5i1.942>
- Kabiba, Bafadal, I., Maisyaroh, & Triwiyanto, T. (2026). Exploring the leadership of the principal mobilizes collaboration between teachers and parents in children’s learning based on Islamic parenting: Evidence from Indonesia. *Multidisciplinary Science Journal*, 8(8), 2026543. <https://doi.org/10.31893/multiscience.2026543>
- Kareem, J., Patrick, H. A., & Prabakaran, N. (2025). Exploring the factors of learning organization in school education: the role of leadership styles, personal commitment, and organizational culture. *Central European Management Journal*, 33(2), 232–251. <https://doi.org/10.1108/CEMJ-12-2023-0457>
- Kemenag. (2024). *Statistik Pendidikan Islam 2023/2024*.
- Kernis, M. H., & Goldman, B. M. (2006). A Multicomponent Conceptualization of Authenticity: Theory and Research. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 38, 283–357. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601\(06\)38006-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(06)38006-9)
- Keyes, C. L. M. (2002). The mental health continuum: from languishing to flourishing in life. *National Library of Medicine*. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/12096700/>
- Kidson, P. (2024). An Integrated Approach to Sustainable Islamic School Leadership. In M. Abdalla, N. Memon, & D. Chown (Eds.), *Wellbeing in Islamic Schools* (pp. 77–92). Springer Nature Switzerland. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-76730-2_5
- Komariah, N., Jaenudin, J., Amin, K., Asmariyani, A., & Indrawan, I. (2025). Recontextualization of the Concept of Kiai Leadership through a Distributed and Regenerative Approach for the Resilience of Islamic Boarding School Educational Institutions in the 21st Century. *Journal La Edusci*, 6(5), 961–985. <https://doi.org/10.37899/journallaedusci.v6i5.2666>
- Li, M., Liu, F., & Yang, C. (2024). Teachers’ Emotional Intelligence and Organizational Commitment: A Moderated Mediation Model of Teachers’ Psychological Well-Being and Principal Transformational Leadership. *Behavioral Sciences* 2024, Vol. 14, 14(4). <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs14040345>
- Ma`arif, M. A., Arif, M., Rokhman, M., Hali, A. U., Kartiko, A., & Sirojuddin, A. (2026). Model of Kiai Leadership Based on Local Wisdom: Preventing Radicalism and Building Education in the Global South. *Kharisma: Jurnal Administrasi Dan Manajemen Pendidikan*, 5(1). <https://doi.org/10.59373/kharisma.v5i1.149>
- Ma`arif, M. A., Rokhman, M., Fatikh, M. A., Kartiko, A., Ahmadi, A., & Hasan, Moch. S. (2025). Kiai’s Leadership Strategies in Strengthening Religious Moderation in Islamic Boarding Schools. *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun*, 13(1), 23–48. <https://doi.org/10.26811/peuradeun.v13i1.1168>

- Masuwd, M., Irama, Y., Rahman, Z. Abd., Yusuf, Moh. A., & Baroud, N. (2026). From Charisma to Academic Rationality: An Ethnographic Study of "Academic Kiai" Leadership in Indonesian Pesantren. *MIQOT: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman*, 50(1), 106. <https://doi.org/10.30821/miqot.v50i1.1493>
- Din, Q. M. U., Tahir, A., Xiaojuan, Y., Alqahtani, S., & Gul, N. (2025). Ethical climate in higher education: The interplay of leadership, moral efficacy, and team cohesion in diverse cultural contexts. *Acta Psychologica*, 255(9), 104986. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actpsy.2025.104986>
- Mu'alimin, M., Muhith, Abd. M., & Hepni, H. (2026). School principals' and teachers' perspectives on school quality management in Islamic schools: insights from Indonesia. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 40(4), 727–741. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEM-05-2025-0387>
- Mubarak, N., Khan, J., Safdar, S., Muhammad, S., & Riaz, A. (2022). Ethical leadership in project-based organizations of Pakistan: the role of psychological empowerment and Islamic work ethics. *Management Research Review*, 45(3), 281–299. <https://doi.org/10.1108/MRR-08-2020-0536>
- Novita, M., Hayat, T. J., Najiburrohan, N., Agus R, A. H., & Hefniy, H. (2026). Spiritual and Value-Based Islamic Educational Leadership in Indonesia: A Hermeneutic Inquiry into Love, Moderation, and Institutional Management. *Munaddhomah: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 7(2), 336–253. <https://doi.org/10.31538/munaddhomah.v7i2.2571>
- Paisun, P., Maskuri, M., & Mistar, J. (2025). The Kiai's Leadership in Harmonizing Chinese-Muslim Relations through Multicultural Islamic Education. *Munaddhomah: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 6(2), 329–344. <https://doi.org/10.31538/munaddhomah.v6i2.1897>
- Rahtikawatie, Y., Chalim, S., & Ratnasih, T. (2021). Investigating The Role of Religious Leadership at Indonesia's Islamic Boarding Schools in The Sustainability of School Management. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 21(96). <https://doi.org/10.14689/ejer.2021.96.4>
- Robbins, S. P., & Judge, T. A. (2022). *Organizational Behavior*.
- Ryff, C. D. (1989). Happiness is everything, or is it? Explorations on the meaning of psychological well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 57(6), 1069–1081. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.57.6.1069>
- Sakdiah, S., Srimulyani, E., Gade, S., Akmal, S., & Furqan, M. (2024). Challenges of Female Principals in Madrasah Leadership in Banda Aceh: A Gender Analysis. *Jurnal Ilmiah Islam Futura*, 24(1), 178. <https://doi.org/10.22373/jiif.v24i1.19021>
- Siddaway, A. P., Wood, A. M., & Hedges, L. V. (2019). How to Do a Systematic Review: A Best Practice Guide for Conducting and Reporting Narrative Reviews, Meta-Analyses, and Meta-Syntheses. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 70(Volume 70, 2019), 747–770. <https://doi.org/10.1146/ANNUREV-PSYCH-010418-102803/CITE/REFWORKS>
- Siregar, Z. A. B. (2023). Principal leadership styles in improving the quality of education in Lhokseumawe Aceh Indonesia. *Human Resources Management and Services*, 5(1), 3340. <https://doi.org/10.18282/hrms.v5i1.3340>
- Siregar, Z. A. B., Akmal, S., Mohzana, M., Rahman, K., & Putra, F. T. (2023). Islamic Boarding School Leadership and Work Environment on Teacher Performance. *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 6(3), 420–435. <https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v6i3.4065>
- Supriyono, Sumintono, B., & Hakim, L. N. (2025). Critical Islamic educational leadership: investigating how Islamic pedagogic models shape leadership practices. *British Journal of Religious Education*, 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01416200.2025.2542225>
- UNESCO. (2023). *Global Education Monitoring Report 2023: Technology in Education*.