

Improving the Quality of Students' Religious Psychology Through School-Based Management Systems and Islamic Boarding School-Based Management

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ABSTRACT

In the context of education in Indonesia, the psychological aspect of religion is an important dimension that needs to be developed continuously. This study aims to analyze the improvement of students' religious psychology through the implementation of School-Based Management (SBM) and Pesantren-Based Management (PBM), as well as to formulate an integrated model of both systems in strengthening students' religious character. Religious psychology is understood as a psychological dimension reflected in spiritual awareness, religious attitudes, emotional control, and social behavior grounded in religious values. This research employed a descriptive qualitative approach and was conducted at SMK Darul Ulum Rangkasbitung and Al-Hikam Islamic Boarding School Pasir Nangka. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation, and analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings indicate that SBM has strengths in systematic and structured educational management; However, religious psychological development tends to be formal and less intensive. In contrast, PBM is more effective in fostering students' religious psychology holistically through religious habituation, the exemplary role of the kyai, and a supportive spiritual environment, although it remains limited in formal evaluation and documentation. The integration of SBM and PBM shows strong potential to create a balanced educational management model that combines academic excellence with spiritual depth, thereby enhancing students' religious psychology in a sustainable manner.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the main instruments in shaping the personality, character and psychological qualities of students (Mulyadi & Adriantoni, 2021). In the context of education in Indonesia, the psychological aspect of religion is an important dimension that needs to be developed continuously

(Daradjat, 2016). The psychology of religion is not only concerned with cognitive understanding of religious teachings, but also concerns the formation of attitudes, behavior and personality based on spiritual values (Mulyadi & Adriantoni, 2021). Therefore, improving the quality of students' religious psychology is an urgent need so they can face the challenges of the times while adhering to solid moral and ethical principles. The above explanation emphasizes that religious education is not simply a transfer of knowledge, but rather a process of internalizing values that impacts students' mental and spiritual health.

Psychology comes from the words *psyche* (soul) and *logos* (science), so that psychology is understood as a science that studies the processes and dynamics of the human psyche which are reflected in behavior through a scientific approach (Linda, Shofiyani, & Maskhuliah, 2024). The psychology of religion is a branch of psychology that studies the psychological aspects of humans in relation to religious beliefs, attitudes, and experiences. Experts such as (Jalaludin, 2024) And (Rozalina, 2021) emphasizes that the psychology of religion examines how religion influences an individual's behavior, emotions, motivation, and mental balance. In the context of education, the psychology of religion plays a vital role in shaping the character, moral values, spiritual awareness, and mental health of students.

The quality of students' religious psychology is reflected in several key indicators, such as spiritual awareness and relationship with God, religious attitudes in daily life, the ability to manage emotions based on religious values, and attitudes of tolerance and empathy toward others. This is in line with the theory of moral development (Piaget, Kohlberg, Maslow, & Rogers, 2025). Spirituality is seen as an essential part of self-actualization and the formation of moral identity. Thus, education that integrates the psychology of religion can shape students who are not only intellectually intelligent but also emotionally and spiritually mature.

School-Based Management (SBM) is a decentralized approach to educational management that gives schools autonomy to manage resources, curriculum, and learning strategies according to local needs (Sabil, 2022). MBS emphasizes strategic planning, participatory leadership, stakeholder engagement, transparency, accountability, and a focus on improving educational quality. In its implementation, teachers play a role not only as instructors but also as curriculum designers, class leaders, decision-makers, learning evaluators, and agents of change. The curriculum in MBS is flexible and contextual, including integrating spiritual values and character education into the learning process.

Islamic boarding schools are traditional and indigenous Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia that emphasize the development of morals, spirituality, and the practice of Islamic teachings in a comprehensive manner (Ramadhani, Wahyuni, & Ariani, 2025). The Islamic boarding school education system is characterized by charismatic leadership from *kyai* (Islamic religious leaders), study of the yellow texts (*kitab kuning*), dormitory life, and 24-hour guidance. *Pesantren* based management focuses on cultivating worship habits, spiritual strengthening, discipline, simplicity, independence, and Islamic brotherhood. *Pesantren* traditions such as studying the yellow texts (*ngaji kitab kuning*), *sorogan*, *bandongan*, congregational *dhikr* (remembrance of God), and socio religious activities serve as the primary means of shaping the religious and noble personalities of students.

Conceptually, the SBM and Islamic boarding school management systems have different approaches, yet they complement each other. SBM excels in systematic, performance-based management, and broad participation, while Islamic boarding schools are strong in the internalization of spiritual values and holistic character development. Integration of the two systems can be achieved through collaborative curricula, spiritual development programs, and strengthening the psychology of religion approach in formal and non-formal education. Previous research has shown that an appropriate, values-based educational management approach can significantly improve the quality of students' religious psychology, both spiritually, morally, and socially.

In practice, the educational management system plays a strategic role in determining the direction and quality of students' religious psychology development. Meanwhile, the school-based management

system emphasizes structured, systematic educational management, and adherence to the national curriculum. Schools, as formal institutions, have administrative staff, teaching staff, and infrastructure to support the learning process. Through school-based management, students are guided to develop cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects in a balanced manner. However, in the context of religious psychology development, schools often face limitations, particularly in terms of spiritual deepening and consistent worship practices. This requires synergy with other educational systems that place greater emphasis on religiosity.

On the other hand, Islamic boarding schools, as traditional educational institutions, have unique characteristics in shaping the psychological qualities of their students. They emphasize the habituation of worship, the appreciation of religious values, and the emotional closeness between students and their *kyai* (teachers) (Mastuhu, 1994). The Islamic boarding school-based management system emphasizes a personal approach, character development, and spiritual strengthening through direct practice in daily life. With an intensive parenting style, Islamic boarding schools are able to create an environment conducive to the development of students' religious psychology. Values such as sincerity, simplicity, discipline, and obedience become integral parts of the students' lives, directly shaping their religious personalities.

Integration between school-based management systems and Islamic boarding schools is a strategic alternative in improving the quality of students' religious psychology (Nata & Yakub, 2023). Schools with modern management excellence and a national curriculum can provide a broad foundation of knowledge, while Islamic boarding schools, with their strong traditions and religious practices, can deepen spiritual aspects. The synergy between the two is expected to produce students who are not only academically intelligent but also spiritually and emotionally mature. Thus, students will possess the balance between intellectual and spiritual intelligence that is so essential for navigating the dynamics of modern life.

In addition, improving the quality of students' religious psychology through school-based and Islamic boarding school management systems also has broad social implications (Ali & Jalaluddin, 2025). Students with strong religious psychology will be better able to control themselves, build harmonious social relationships, and contribute positively to society. They will become a generation with character, noble morals, and a strong fighting spirit in facing the challenges of globalization (Fathih & Muhlis, 2023). Education that integrates these two management systems will ultimately produce a generation that not only excels in academics, but also has spiritual resilience as a moral fortress in life (Mas'ud, 2020).

Thus, this confirms that improving the quality of students' religious psychology is an urgent need that must be addressed through a comprehensive educational management approach. Synergy between school-based management systems and Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) is a strategic solution for developing students with character, noble morals, and a balance between intellectual and spiritual intelligence. Therefore, this research is expected to make a tangible contribution to the development of an educational model capable of sustainably improving the quality of students' religious psychology, so that they are prepared to face the challenges of the times while adhering to solid religious values.

Based on the background that has been explained above, with this research can clarify the focus of the research and direction of analysis, then the problem to be studied in this research is to find out how the condition of the quality of students' religious psychology in school-based educational institutions and Islamic boarding schools is currently, how the application of school-based management systems in improving the quality of students' religious psychology, how the application of Islamic boarding school-based management systems in improving the quality of students' religious psychology, what are the supporting and inhibiting factors in the application of the two management systems and how the integration model between school-based and Islamic boarding school management systems in an effort to improve the quality of students' religious psychology.

From the research focus and direction of the analysis above, this study has objectives that explain the direction to be achieved from this study. In general, this study aims to analyze and find strategies to improve the quality of students' religious psychology through the integration of school-based and Islamic boarding school management systems. Specifically, the objectives of this study are to describe the condition of the quality of students' religious psychology in school-based and Islamic boarding school educational institutions, to analyze the application of school-based management systems in improving the quality of students' religious psychology, to analyze the application of Islamic boarding school-based management systems in improving the quality of students' religious psychology, to identify supporting and inhibiting factors in the implementation of both management systems and to formulate an integration model of school-based and Islamic boarding school management systems as a strategy to improve the quality of students' religious psychology.

The benefits of research on "Improving the Quality of Student Religious Psychology Through School-Based Management Systems and Islamic Boarding School-Based Management" are expected to provide benefits both theoretically, practically and policy. So theoretically, it contributes to the development of educational science, especially in the study of student religious psychology, becomes an academic reference for further research related to the integration of school-based and Islamic boarding school management systems, enriches the literature on strategies for improving the quality of religious psychology through a comprehensive educational management approach and offers a conceptual model that can be used as a basis for the development of an integrative curriculum between schools and Islamic boarding schools. And the practical benefits for schools are providing insight into the importance of strengthening the psychological aspects of religion in formal education management, so that schools can design programs that are more balanced between academic and spiritual, for Islamic Boarding Schools, namely as input in more systematic educational management, so that Islamic boarding schools not only emphasize the spiritual aspect but are also able to integrate modern management, for Teachers and Educators, namely as a guideline in designing learning strategies that are able to improve the quality of students' religious psychology through a more holistic approach, for Students, namely providing a more complete learning experience, so that they can develop intellectual intelligence as well as spiritual intelligence in a balanced manner and for society, namely giving birth to a generation of character, noble morals, and able to contribute positively in social life, so as to create a harmonious and religious society. While the benefits of policy are providing recommendations for educational policy makers in formulating strategies for integrating schools and Islamic boarding schools, becoming the basis for consideration in the preparation of national education policies that emphasize the balance between academic and spiritual aspects and helping the government and educational institutions in designing sustainable student religious psychology development programs.

2. METHODS

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with the aim of understanding in depth how school-based and Islamic boarding school-based education management systems contribute to improving students' religious psychology. This approach was chosen because it can explore students' spiritual meanings, values, and experiences within the context of Islamic education (Lexy, nd). The research was conducted in two types of educational institutions, namely secondary schools and equivalents such as vocational schools or Islamic schools that implement school-based management (SBM) and Islamic boarding schools that implement a pesantren-based management system (Miles, 2014). The research subjects in this study include secondary school students (SMP/SMA/SMK/MA), school principals and leaders of Islamic boarding schools, religious teachers and ustadz, and parents of students (as additional informants).

As for data collection techniques to obtain comprehensive data, several techniques are used, namely observation, by observing spiritual development activities, student interactions, and implementation of educational management, in-depth interviews, which are conducted with school principals, Islamic

boarding school leaders, teachers, and students to explore their perceptions and experiences, and documentation studies, by reviewing curriculum documents, religious programs, educational management policies, and questionnaires (optional), namely media to measure students' perceptions of religious psychology development (Sugiyono, 2019).

And the data analysis technique obtained was analyzed using the thematic analysis method, namely data reduction by filtering information relevant to the research focus, data presentation by compiling data in the form of narratives, tables, or diagrams, and drawing conclusions by formulating findings based on emerging patterns and themes. And the validity of the data to ensure the validity and reliability of the data, using source triangulation techniques, namely by comparing data from students, teachers, and institutional leaders, technical triangulation, namely by combining observation, interviews, and documentation, and member check, namely by confirming the results of the interview to the informant. So this Research Ethics upholds ethical principles, namely maintaining the confidentiality of the informant's identity, asking for consent before the interview, and avoiding bias and data manipulation.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Observations and interviews indicate that SMK Darul Ulum has implemented a school-based management system quite effectively, particularly in strategic planning, which is based on academic data and student needs. This planning is reflected in the development of learning programs and supporting activities aimed at improving both academic quality and student character. This approach demonstrates that the school is not solely focused on cognitive achievement but also strives to adapt its educational program to the students' contextual conditions and potential.

In its implementation, Darul Ulum Vocational School also integrates religious programs into the school curriculum through Religious Education subjects and regular religious activities, such as group prayers and spiritual studies. Teacher and parent involvement in student character development is quite high, particularly in supporting students' discipline and religious attitudes within the school environment. However, research has found that limited learning time and the pressures of academic demands prevent spiritual development from being carried out intensively and sustainably.

Unlike formal schools, Al-Hikam Islamic Boarding School implements a pesantren-based management system that emphasizes comprehensive and continuous spiritual development. Daily religious activities, such as congregational prayer, religious study, and moral development, are an integral part of the students' lives. The leadership of the kyai (Islamic cleric) plays a central role, not only directing the pesantren's policies but also serving as a primary role model in shaping the students' character and religious attitudes.

The environment of the Al-Hikam Islamic Boarding School has proven highly conducive to the holistic development of religious psychology in students, thanks to the continuous inculcation of religious habits in daily life. However, the study also identified challenges in the form of a lack of formal documentation and evaluation systems related to the psychological and religious development of students. This has resulted in the lack of systematic documentation of the monitoring of development outcomes, as is the case in formal schools.

Based on the results of interviews and questionnaires, the quality of religious psychology of students at the two institutions showed quite significant differences. Students at Al-Hikam Islamic Boarding School had a more consistent level of spiritual awareness and religious practice, while students at Darul Ulum Vocational School demonstrated a good understanding of religion but their practice tended to be situational. These findings confirm that environmental factors, the exemplary behavior of leaders and educators, and the intensity of religious guidance are the main determinants of the quality of students' religious psychology, which was further synthesized in a comparative form in the research results table.

Table 1. Comparison and Synthesis

| Aspect | School (MBS) | Islamic boarding school |
|--|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Management Approach | Formal, data-based and structured | Traditional, value and figure based |
| Spiritual Guidance | Integrated in the curriculum | Comprehensive and intensive |
| Figure Involvement | Teachers and principals | Kyai and Ustadz |
| Evaluation of the Psychology of Religion | Through achievements and attitudes | Through observation and habituation |

Based on observations at Darul Ulum Vocational High School and Al-Hikam Islamic Boarding School, this study found that the implementation of the School-Based Management (SBM) and Islamic Boarding School-Based Management (SMBP) systems was influenced by various supporting and inhibiting factors. The main supporting factors include the strong commitment of institutional leaders in directing educational policies and character development, the involvement of parents who play an active role in supporting the student development process, and a spiritually conducive educational environment that is able to foster awareness and practice of religious values sustainably. Meanwhile, inhibiting factors found include the high academic load that limits the time and intensity of religious psychology development, the lack of teacher training in implementing a professional and integrated approach to religious psychology, and the still minimal collaboration between schools and Islamic boarding schools that should be able to complement each other in optimizing the formation of the quality of religious psychology of students.

Discussion

This study found that internal institutional factors, such as leadership commitment, significantly determine the success of implementing a management system at both Darul Ulum Vocational School and Al-Hikam Islamic Boarding School. Leadership commitment plays a role in establishing the vision, policies, and resource allocation for student character development, in line with research. (Aminah, Asrin, Hakim, Mustari, & Wilian, 2025) which states that visionary and participatory leaders are able to create a strong school culture. This is also consistent with research findings by (Suryadi, Pamungkas, Wahyudi, & Setiawan, 2023). This demonstrates a positive correlation between effective leadership and improved learning quality and student character development. With full commitment from leadership, the process of integrating spiritual values can proceed systematically despite persistent challenges from within the institution.

Parental involvement as an important supporting factor reflects the ecological elements of education revealed in research (Humairo & Widayat, 2025) that the relationship between family and school has a major influence on children's psychological development. Research (Tsakila & Basri, 2025) confirms that school-parent collaboration strengthens the implementation of moral and religious values at home and school, so that students experience consistent character education. Findings at Darul Ulum Vocational School indicate that parental involvement enhances social support for students, but needs to be expanded to include more intensive spiritual development planning for a more significant impact.

On the other hand, a spiritually conducive environment such as that which occurs at the Al-Hikam Islamic Boarding School is the main capital in the formation of the religious psychology of students, supporting research (Hidayati, 2024) which emphasizes the importance of modeling and habituation in internalizing behavior. The Islamic boarding school environment, which is filled with daily worship

activities and religious study, provides a concrete example of religious behavior, which, according to research (Purwanti, Dhevi, Janiasih, Parmiyanti, & Widastri, 2025) It has been shown to strengthen the internalization of spiritual values compared to formal school contexts that place greater emphasis on academics. This explains why Islamic boarding school students demonstrate consistency in their religious practice, while formal school students tend to be situational in their practice.

This study also found a number of obstacles, such as the high academic load at Darul Ulum Vocational School, which is in line with the findings of previous research from (Warlim, Rozak, & Revalina, 2025) The demands of the academic curriculum often shift the focus of schools from character development to solely academic achievement. The lack of teacher training in the psychology of religion approach also weakens the effectiveness of character management, as without adequate pedagogical competence, teachers will find it difficult to integrate spiritual aspects pedagogically and psychologically. This is supported by research showing that teacher training is a key factor in the success of character and religiosity learning (Wandi, Pebriyenni, Sumiarti, Priyono, & Afrita, 2024).

Finally, the lack of collaboration between schools and Islamic boarding schools indicates that the two systems have not yet synergized optimally, even though according to studies of educational system theory (Wulandari, 2024) Cross-institutional integration can create a more effective educational ecosystem in supporting students' holistic development. Several relevant studies (Kholiq, Ristianah, & Yustikasari, 2024) noted that Islamic boarding school partnerships can complement each other in terms of curriculum and character development if supported by sound policies and communication. These findings underscore the importance of strengthening inter-institutional networks and collaboration as a strategy to overcome barriers and sustainably improve students' religious psychology.

The novelty of this research lies in its comparative and integrative efforts in analyzing the implementation of two different educational management systems, namely School-Based Management (SBM) at Darul Ulum Vocational High School and the Pesantren-Based Management System (SMBP) at Al-Hikam Islamic Boarding School, with a particular focus on the quality of students' religious psychology. The novelty of this research lies not only in mapping the supporting and inhibiting factors of each system, but also in the synthesis of findings that show that the intensity of guidance, exemplary leadership, and a structured spiritual environment have a stronger influence on the consistency of religious practice than the integration of a formal religious curriculum. Thus, this research provides theoretical and practical contributions in the form of an understanding model that strengthens students' religious psychology requires synergy between formal school management and the religious culture of Islamic boarding schools.

The limitations of this study lie in its scope, which involved only one school and one Islamic boarding school, making the findings difficult to generalize broadly to various educational institutions with varying characteristics. Furthermore, this study emphasized a qualitative approach through observation, interviews, and simple questionnaires, so the measurement of students' religious psychology was not supported by standardized and longitudinal psychometric instruments. Another limitation is the suboptimal data collection from the perspectives of policymakers and alumni, which could have enriched the analysis of the sustainability of the management system's impact on the development of students' religious psychology.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that the school-based management system has advantages in a systematic and measurable management structure in fostering students, but the spiritual approach applied still tends to be formal and less intensive so that it has not fully touched the psychological aspects of religion in depth, while the Islamic boarding school-based management system has proven to be more effective in shaping the religious psychology of students through a value approach, exemplary behavior, and habituation supported by an integrated and sustainable religious environment. The research findings show that the quality of students' religious psychology will be

more optimal if the guidance is carried out intensively, consistently, and based on values, with the support of a conducive environment and strong role models. Therefore, this study recommends the need for integration between the school system and Islamic boarding schools as an ideal educational model that combines the managerial strength of schools with the depth of spiritual development of Islamic boarding schools, through increasing the intensity of reflective religious activities in schools, involving spiritual figures, and developing integrated spiritual management programs in the curriculum. On the other hand, Islamic boarding schools need to strengthen the documentation, evaluation, and managerial capacity systems through collaboration with formal institutions, while the government and policy makers are expected to encourage school-Islamic boarding school collaboration, formulate policies supporting the integration of spiritual values, provide teacher training in the psychology of religion approach, and allocate resource support. For further researchers, it is recommended to conduct quantitative studies and develop an integrative spiritual-based educational management model in various regional contexts.

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