

# OPTIMIZATION OF WORK PLAN DEVELOPMENT FOR ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOLS ANALYSIS OF STEPS, CHALLENGES, AND IMPLEMENTATION SOLUTIONS

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*Received: 15 December 2025*

*Revised: 18 December 2025*

*Accepted: 18 December 2025*

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## **Abstract:**

The main objective of this study is to formulate a systematic, measurable work planning model that is in line with the characteristics of Islamic boarding schools in order to improve the effectiveness of institutional management. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the work planning process in Islamic boarding schools. Data was collected through in-depth interviews with caregivers, managers, teachers, and administrative staff to explore existing management patterns. Direct observations were conducted to observe planning practices, internal meetings, and program implementation. In addition, document analysis such as annual programs, vision and mission statements, and activity reports were used to assess the consistency of planning with implementation. The data was analyzed through reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing to produce an ideal and applicable work planning model. The results of this study conclude that the quality of pesantren governance is greatly influenced by the existence of structured work planning, human resource competence, and the management culture applied. Many Islamic boarding schools still compile work plans spontaneously and without documentation, thereby hindering program evaluation and continuity. The low level of human resource understanding of modern management, such as needs analysis, performance indicator development, and evaluation, also weakens the planning process. However, when Islamic boarding schools begin to adopt systematic and documented planning, activities become more focused, effective, and accountable. This is in line with modern management theory, which emphasizes the importance of planning in improving organizational performance. Therefore, strengthening human resource competencies and habituating structured planning practices are key to reforming Islamic boarding school management.

**Keywords:** *Islamic Boarding School Planning, Education Management, Development Strategy*

## **Abstrak**

Tujuan utama dari kajian untuk merumuskan model perencanaan kerja yang sistematis, terukur, dan sesuai dengan karakteristik pesantren agar dapat meningkatkan efektivitas tata kelola lembaga. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif untuk memahami secara mendalam proses penyusunan rencana kerja di pesantren. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dengan pengasuh, pengelola, ustadz, dan staf administrasi untuk menggali pola manajemen yang berjalan. Observasi langsung dilakukan untuk melihat praktik perencanaan, rapat internal, dan pelaksanaan program. Selain itu, analisis dokumen seperti program tahunan, visi-misi, dan laporan kegiatan digunakan untuk menilai konsistensi perencanaan dengan pelaksanaan. Data dianalisis melalui reduksi, penyajian, dan penarikan kesimpulan untuk menghasilkan model

perencanaan kerja yang ideal dan aplikatif. Hasil dari penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa kualitas tata kelola pesantren sangat dipengaruhi oleh adanya perencanaan kerja yang terstruktur, kompetensi SDM, dan budaya manajemen yang diterapkan. Banyak pesantren masih menyusun rencana kerja secara spontan dan tanpa dokumentasi, sehingga evaluasi dan kesinambungan program menjadi terhambat. Rendahnya pemahaman SDM terhadap manajemen modern seperti analisis kebutuhan, penyusunan indikator kinerja, dan evaluasi juga memperlemah proses perencanaan. Namun, ketika pesantren mulai mengadopsi perencanaan yang sistematis dan terdokumentasi, kegiatan menjadi lebih terarah, efektif, dan akuntabel. Hal ini sejalan dengan teori manajemen modern yang menekankan pentingnya perencanaan dalam meningkatkan kinerja organisasi. Oleh karena itu, penguatan kompetensi SDM dan pembiasaan praktik perencanaan terstruktur menjadi kunci reformasi manajemen pesantren.

**Kata Kunci :** *Perencanaan Pesantren, Manajemen Pendidikan, Strategi Pengembangan*

## INTRODUCTION

In the context of the development of Islamic education in Indonesia, the preparation of work plans for Islamic boarding schools has become an increasingly urgent social need. Facts on the ground show that many Islamic boarding schools still rely on traditional management systems that run spontaneously without structured planning documents (Hijazi 2025) . This causes several activities to run inconsistently, be difficult to evaluate, and be unable to respond to the increasingly diverse needs of students.

In addition, technological developments, curriculum demands, and 21st-century competency requirements mean that Islamic boarding schools must adapt in order to remain relevant. In many regions, Islamic boarding schools also face social challenges such as limited funding, uneven human resource competencies, and low access to managerial training (Siahaan and Rustam n.d.) . This situation creates a gap between advanced Islamic boarding schools and small ones that are still developing. However, other social facts show that Islamic boarding schools have great potential in character building, community empowerment, and value-based education development (Mediawati 2023) . Therefore, the development of a systematic work plan is an important solution to improve governance quality, encourage collaboration with the community, and ensure that educational programs and santri development run more effectively and sustainably (Dewi et al. 2025) . With proper planning, pesantren can adapt and make more significant contributions to social progress.

Previous studies on pesantren management generally show that work planning plays an important role in improving the effectiveness of institutional governance (Ikbal 2024) . A number of studies on Islamic education management emphasize that Islamic boarding schools that systematically implement strategic planning, including needs analysis, priority program setting, and periodic evaluation, are able to achieve more significant development than Islamic boarding schools that still rely on traditional patterns Saputra, Bahri, and

Hidayatulah (2025) . Another study on strengthening the quality of Islamic boarding schools also found that many institutions face challenges such as a lack of human resources who understand modern management, limited funding, and a lack of collaboration with the community and government Siregar and Romadhon (2025) .

Research on the implementation of performance-based management in Islamic boarding schools shows that the preparation of measurable work plans can help determine the direction of institutional development more clearly, including in terms of curriculum, student guidance, and improving the competence of teaching staff (Maskar 2025) . In addition, several studies on the transformation of Islamic boarding schools in the digital era emphasize that without a well-thought-out work plan, Islamic boarding schools find it difficult to adapt to the needs of the times, especially in relation to technology integration and organizational capacity building (Mukaromah 2025) . In general, previous studies agree that the preparation of a work plan is not only an administrative requirement but also the key to maximizing the potential of Islamic boarding schools in education, social issues, and community empowerment.

The novelty of this research lies in its approach, which views Islamic boarding schools not only as traditional educational institutions, but also as institutions that must be able to read modern social dynamics and adaptively adjust their internal management . Unlike previous studies that emphasized the importance of planning in general, this discussion highlights the need to integrate the distinctive values of Islamic boarding schools with more structured and data-driven modern management practices.

The purpose of this study is to formulate a systematic, measurable work planning model that is in line with the characteristics of Islamic boarding schools in order to improve the effectiveness of institutional management. This objective is based on the argument that many Islamic boarding schools still rely on traditional management patterns that operate spontaneously, making it difficult to properly direct and evaluate educational programs, student development, and community empowerment.

Amidst social changes and increasingly complex competency demands, Islamic boarding schools need planning guidelines that can bridge Islamic values with modern managerial approaches. With a well-structured work plan, Islamic boarding schools can set program priorities, identify resource needs, improve accountability, and strengthen coordination between caregivers, teachers, and students. Furthermore, this objective is important because good planning is the foundation for Islamic boarding schools to adapt to technological developments and community dynamics, so that they remain relevant and competitive in advancing Islamic education in Indonesia.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research method is a descriptive qualitative approach because this study seeks to explore in depth the work planning process in Islamic boarding schools, the obstacles that arise, and the solutions that can be applied in accordance with the characteristics of the institution. This approach allows researchers to understand phenomena naturally and contextually in accordance with the social reality of Islamic boarding schools. Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews with caregivers, managers, teachers, and administrative staff of the Islamic boarding school to gain an understanding of the existing management patterns and the need for work planning Rabbaniyah and Roidah Lina (2023) .

In addition, direct observation was used to observe program planning activities, internal meetings, and activity management mechanisms at the pesantren. This observation is important to see the extent to which planning is carried out in a structured manner or is still spontaneous ( Haryadi 2024) . The study also used document analysis, such as annual programs, vision and mission statements, activity reports, and evaluation notes, to assess the consistency between planning and implementation (Sarmigi et al. 2023) .

The collected data was then analyzed using data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing techniques to obtain a complete picture of the ideal steps for preparing a work plan, the main challenges faced, and solution strategies in line with the objectives of pesantren development ( Satibi and Najitama 2021) . Through this method, the research is expected to produce a work planning model that is not only applicable but also in line with the values of Islamic boarding schools and capable of improving institutional governance in a sustainable manner (Sarnoto and PdI 2025) .

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Research Findings

#### **Work Plan Development Remains Spontaneous and Undocumented**

One important finding in research on the preparation of work plans for Islamic boarding schools is that many boarding schools still carry out activities spontaneously without clear planning documents. This condition reflects a long-standing pattern of traditional management, in which decisions are often made based on sudden needs rather than on prior planning. As a result, Islamic boarding schools find it difficult to evaluate their programs because there are no written references that can be used to compare plans and actual results. This narrative illustrates how irregular planning has a direct impact on program continuity and the effectiveness of institutional management.

To reinforce these findings, an interview was conducted with one of the boarding school administrators involved in planning activities. He explained that the system in place was still simple and undocumented. In the interview, he said,

*"We usually plan activities on the spur of the moment, according to what we consider important at the time. To be honest, we don't have a written work plan that can be used as a reference each year."*

This quote clearly illustrates how spontaneous planning has become a culture that is difficult to change. The overall results of the interviews confirm that most administrators feel the need for a more structured work plan, but limited managerial knowledge and a lack of habit of documenting programs are major obstacles. These findings reinforce the urgent need to develop a systematic work plan to improve pesantren governance.

### **Lack of Understanding of Modern Management Among Human Resources**

One important finding in research on the preparation of work plans for Islamic boarding schools is the low level of understanding of human resources (HR), particularly among managers and administrative staff, of modern management concepts. Many Islamic boarding school administrators still rely on traditional work patterns that pay little attention to the principles of strategic planning, needs analysis, and performance-based management. This condition causes the work plan development process to not run optimally because it is not supported by adequate technical capabilities ( ). These limitations also make it difficult for Islamic boarding schools to set program priorities, develop success indicators, and conduct measurable evaluations. These findings indicate that increasing HR capacity is a crucial aspect in building a more professional planning system.

To reinforce these findings, an interview was conducted with one of the administrative staff involved in program planning. During the interview, he admitted that understanding of modern management was still limited. He said,

*"We actually want to make our planning more organized and focused, but we don't really understand how to develop strategic plans or set performance indicators."*

This quote clearly illustrates that a lack of technical competence is a real obstacle in the planning process. Overall, the interview results show that most administrators feel the need for management training, especially in relation to work plan preparation, program evaluation, and the use of modern planning tools. They realize that without improved understanding, Islamic boarding schools will find it difficult to develop and adapt to the demands of changing times. These findings emphasize the need to strengthen human resource capacity as a first step

in developing a more structured and effective work planning system for Islamic boarding schools.

### **Islamic boarding schools have great potential if they adopt structured planning**

One of the important findings in this study shows that Islamic boarding schools have great potential for development if they are able to adopt structured and well-documented work planning. When Islamic boarding schools begin to implement a planning process that includes needs analysis, program prioritization, and periodic evaluation, the quality of institutional management improves significantly. This change is not only evident in the implementation of educational activities, but also in the development of students' competencies and the overall professionalism of pesantren management. This finding confirms that targeted planning is the main foundation that can maximize the potential of pesantren, especially in the modern era, which requires educational institutions to be more adaptive and accountable.

To reinforce these findings, interviews were conducted with one of the boarding school administrators who had implemented a structured planning system. He said that changes began to be felt when the boarding school started to develop written and consistent work plans. He said,

*"After we started making clear work plans and evaluating them annually, the boarding school's activities became more focused, and the results were much more visible, both in terms of discipline and program quality."*

This quote is clear evidence that the implementation of structured planning has a positive impact on institutional performance. Overall, the results of interviews with administrators show that the adoption of systematic work planning helps Islamic boarding schools to be more focused, efficient, and able to measure the success of programs more objectively. They also emphasize that good work plans not only improve internal management, but also increase public trust in Islamic boarding schools as modern, professional educational institutions oriented towards sustainable development.

## **Discussion Results**

### **Work Plan Development Remains Spontaneous and Undocumented**

The findings regarding the preparation of work plans for Islamic boarding schools, which are still spontaneous and undocumented, indicate that the management of Islamic boarding schools is still at a traditional stage, where work patterns rely more on intuition and experience than systematic strategic planning (Hijazi 2025) . The absence of planning documents makes activities difficult to evaluate because there are no achievement standards that can be used as a reference. The interpretation of these findings confirms that the main problem is

not only the absence of work plan documents, but also an organizational culture that does not yet place planning as an important function in management.

This situation is in line with the view that planning is a basic management function that must be carried out before the functions of organizing, directing, and supervising can run effectively Arifudin, Sholeha, and Umami (2021) . Fayol emphasizes that "*Planning is forecasting and determining the best course of action,*" meaning that without clearly formulated planning, organizations will find it difficult to determine a consistent course of action. Field findings on decisions that are often made suddenly are also related to George R. Terry's theory, which states that planning requires a rational process of setting goals, developing strategies, and determining measurable steps. When Islamic boarding schools neglect the planning function, the monitoring and evaluation processes cannot run well because there are no benchmarks on which to base assessments. The overall interpretation shows that a culture of spontaneity hinders the professionalization of pesantren management and needs to be changed through managerial training and the habit of preparing planning documents so that pesantren can improve the effectiveness of their governance in a sustainable manner.

### **Lack of Understanding of Modern Management Among Human Resources**

Findings regarding the low level of understanding of modern management among pesantren human resources indicate that the main weakness in work plan preparation lies not only in the absence of planning documents, but in the lack of managerial competence, which is the foundation for strategic planning. The interpretation of these results confirms that Islamic boarding schools are in a transitional stage between traditional work patterns and the demands of modern educational management. Without sufficient understanding of needs analysis, performance indicator formulation, and evaluation mechanisms, the work plans that are developed tend to be normative, unmeasurable, and difficult to implement consistently (Suryadi 2023) .

This condition is in line with the competency management theory from Nursalim and Anshori (2024) which explains that organizational success is greatly influenced by individual competencies consisting of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. When managerial knowledge is lacking, the planning process cannot run effectively (Fathurrochman et al. 2022) . This finding is also relevant to Drucker's opinion that "*Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things.*" In the context of Islamic boarding schools, the lack of understanding of management among human resources makes it difficult for administrators to do both of these things – they are not only inadequate in managing processes (doing things right), but also unable to determine strategic steps (doing the right things).

In addition, the theory of strategic planning (Budiono et al. 2022) emphasizes that organizations need analytical skills to identify goals, strategies, and indicators of success. Research findings show that this capability is still weak in Islamic boarding schools, so that work plans often lack clear direction. Overall, this interpretation reinforces the urgency of improving human resource capacity through management training, technical assistance, and mastery of modern planning tools as an important foundation for realizing more effective and professional Islamic boarding school governance.

### **Pesantren Have Great Potential if They Adopt Structured Planning**

The findings of this study indicate that Islamic boarding schools have great potential for development when they are able to implement structured and documented work plans. Interpretation of these findings suggests that a systematic planning process is not merely an administrative tool, but rather a managerial foundation that plays an important role in improving the quality of Islamic boarding school management. When Islamic boarding schools begin to develop work plans with steps such as needs analysis, priority setting, targeted implementation, and periodic evaluation, the direction of the institution's development becomes clearer, more measurable, and more sustainable .

The improvement in discipline, program effectiveness, and management professionalism that emerged after the implementation of structured planning shows that Islamic boarding schools actually have a high capacity to adapt to the demands of educational modernization (Sofa et al. 2025) .

This finding is in line with George R. Terry's (1972) view that planning is a basic management process that determines organizational goals and the best methods to achieve them. Terry emphasizes that without planning, organizational activities are reactive and difficult to evaluate Supriyadi and Zaharuddin (2023) . In addition, Strategic Management theory Munthe, Winaya, and Prabawati (2023) also supports the findings, namely that organizations that develop targeted plans are better able to respond to environmental changes and significantly improve performance. In the context of Islamic boarding schools, interview quotes stating that activities became more focused after the introduction of written work plans are evidence of the practical application of this theory.

Thus, the overall interpretation confirms that the adoption of structured planning not only improves internal efficiency but also strengthens the image of Islamic boarding schools as modern, accountable educational institutions that are ready to face the challenges of the times.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of the research and discussion, it can be concluded that the quality of pesantren governance is greatly influenced by the existence of

structured work planning, human resource competencies, and the management culture applied in the pesantren environment. The first finding shows that the pattern of work plan preparation is still spontaneous and undocumented, thereby hampering the evaluation process and program sustainability. This condition reflects a traditional organizational culture that does not yet place planning as a key managerial function. The second finding shows that the limited understanding of human resources regarding modern management is an important factor that weakens the planning process. Low competence in needs analysis, performance indicator development, and evaluation results in work plans that are not measurable and difficult to implement effectively.

However, the third finding shows that Islamic boarding schools actually have great potential for development if they are able to adopt more systematic work planning. When Islamic boarding schools begin to implement well-documented planning, activities become more focused, efficient, and accountable. This is in line with management theories such as Fayol, Terry, and Bryson, which emphasize the importance of planning in improving organizational performance.

Overall, this study confirms that reforming pesantren management can begin with two key steps: strengthening human resource capacity and establishing the habit of developing structured work plans. In this way, pesantren can develop into modern, professional educational institutions capable of responding to the demands of changing times.

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