

MODEL BEYOND PUNISHMENT LEADERSHIP: INTEGRATION OF ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL VALUES AND SCHOOL WELL-BEING PARADIGM

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ABSTRACT

*This study aims to describe the reorientation of school leadership toward a youth-friendly school environment within an Islamic boarding school context. The persistence of punitive disciplinary practices highlights the need for a paradigm shift from authoritarian leadership toward a humanistic approach. The research was conducted at SMKNU Darussalam Rejoagung Srono, Banyuwangi, selected for its unique characteristics as a vocational school integrated with a pesantren system that blends religious values with modern formal education. This context provides a distinctive setting to explore the leadership transformation in managing adolescent students under the traditional pesantren discipline culture. The study employed a qualitative case study design. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation, then analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive model. The findings reveal that the principal has reoriented leadership practices by emphasizing dialogue, empathy, and student participation as the foundation of positive discipline. This transformation fosters a supportive learning climate that promotes adolescents' psychological well-being while integrating pesantren values such as *uswah* (exemplary conduct), *rahmah* (compassion), and *tarbiyah bil hikmah* (educating with wisdom) into modern leadership practices. The novelty of this study lies in the development of a "Beyond Punishment Leadership" model that integrates pesantren-based spiritual values with the school well-being paradigm as a framework for building youth-friendly schools in Islamic educational contexts.*

Keywords: *Beyond Punishment Leadership; Pesantren Values; Paradigm; School Well-Being; Leadership*

A. Introduction

The phenomenon of still strong punishment practices in the Indonesian education world, especially in pesantren-based schools,

shows that there are serious challenges in realizing a youth-friendly learning climate (Islamic et al., 2024; Nuryana & Asmorojati, 2021; Sabaruddin & Mastur, 2023). Many principals still consider physical or verbal punishment to be an effective way to enforce discipline, even though such an approach can have a negative impact on students' psychology (Aziz et al., 2021). This is because the leadership paradigm in schools is often rooted in an authoritarian model that emphasizes obedience, not self-awareness. On the other hand, adolescents have psychosocial developmental needs that demand space for expression, appreciation, and involvement in decision-making. Based on initial observations at SMKNU Darussalam Rejoagung Srono, it was found that traditional forms of discipline that rely on sanctions began to cause student resistance. This condition shows the need to reorient the principal's leadership from the paradigm punishment Towards the Paradigm empowerment and the psychological well-being of students. Thus, leadership transformation is not just a change in managerial style, but a shift in basic values in managing adolescent education in the context of pesantren.

Principal's leadership plays a central role in shaping a healthy, inclusive, and productive school culture (Khaleel et al., 2021; Plaku & Leka, 2025). Effective leadership is able to instill collaborative values and a positive learning climate in the school environment. Various studies show that transformational and humanistic leadership styles have a positive correlation with student well-being and a supportive learning climate (Alves et al., 2025; Heinla & Kuurme, 2024; Karakus et al., 2024; Peng & Wang, 2025). Transformational leaders encourage students' intrinsic motivation and build empathic relationships with teachers and learners. Approach beyond punishment emerged as a new paradigm that rejected the pattern of punishment-based discipline and replaced it with

awareness-based coaching, reflection, and relational recovery (restorative practice) (Müller & Kenney, 2021). This paradigm places mistakes as opportunities for social and moral learning, not just transgressions. On the other hand, the concept school well-being developed by the OECD (2022) confirms that the emotional and social well-being of students is the main indicator of the success of modern schools (Kaya & Erdem, 2021; Schmitz, 2024). Schools that pay attention to students' emotional well-being tend to produce more stable academic and moral achievements. In the context of Islamic boarding schools, spiritual values such as *Rahmah, Uswahand Tarbiyah bil hikmah* has long been the basis of moral education (Bambang Triyono & Elis Mediawati, 2023; Jubba et al., 2021). However, the integration between the values of the Islamic boarding school and the principles school well-being leadership is still rarely researched, especially in vocational schools affiliated with Islamic boarding schools such as SMKNU Darussalam Rejoagung Srono. This gap opens up space for leadership innovation that blends spirituality and adolescent psychosocial well-being.

This research presents a novelty that lies in the effort to develop a leadership model of school principals that integrates the spiritual values of pesantren with the paradigm school well-being. If previous research had highlighted more transformational leadership in public schools (Ambawani et al., 2024; Faruq & Supriyanto, 2021), so this study focuses on the contextualization of the model Beyond Punishment Leadership in a semi-modern Islamic boarding school environment. The urgency of this research is strengthened by the increasing cases of academic stress, bullying, and interpersonal conflict among school adolescents, especially in vocational schools, which shows the need for a leadership approach based on empathy and psychological well-being (WHO, 2023) (Rus et al., 2024; Stark et al., 2021). SMKNU Darussalam Rejoagung Srono has

unique characteristics because it seeks to balance the discipline values typical of pesantren with the demands of formal education that emphasizes student autonomy and creativity. Thus, this research is important to expand the understanding of religious values-based educational leadership that is relevant to the psychosocial challenges of today's adolescents.

Based on this background, this study aims to describe and analyze the reorientation of the principal's leadership in realizing a youth-friendly school in the pesantren environment. In particular, this study seeks to: (1) identify the form of transformation of leadership style from a punishment orientation to a restorative and humanistic approach, (2) reveal the principal's strategy in integrating pesantren values with the principles of school well-being, and (3) explain the implications of leadership change on school culture and student psychological well-being. The results of the research are expected to make a theoretical contribution to the development of the Beyond Punishment Leadership model in Islamic education, as well as become a practical reference for school principals in the pesantren environment in building a school culture that is friendly, healthy, and oriented towards the welfare of adolescents.

B. Metode Penelitian

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study type, because it aims to deeply understand the phenomenon of reorientation of school principals in a typical social and cultural context. This approach allows researchers to explore the meaning, values, and dynamics that occur in the pesantren-based school environment, where leadership policies and actions cannot be separated from the inherent religious value system. The location of the research is at SMKNU Darussalam Rejoagung Srono, Banyuwangi

Regency, which was chosen purposively because it has a unique character as a vocational school under the auspices of Islamic boarding schools that are transforming towards a modern leadership pattern based on spiritual values. This school represents a tangible form of integration efforts between the traditional education system and a humanistic approach in student management, especially in facing the challenges of adolescent development in the digital era.

The data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained directly from in-depth interviews with school principals, teachers, and students involved in the process of character development and the implementation of discipline policies. Meanwhile, secondary data was collected from various school documents such as the institution's vision-mission, rules, activity reports, and internal policy archives related to leadership strategies. The combination of these two types of data helps researchers build a comprehensive understanding of the school's evolving leadership patterns.

The data collection process is carried out through three main techniques, namely participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observations were carried out to understand the behavior, interaction, and leadership practices of school principals in daily activities in the school environment and Islamic boarding schools. Semi-structured interviews were used to explore the views of the research subjects in a reflective manner regarding the change in leadership paradigm, especially in the application of the principle of Beyond Punishment Leadership. Documentation is used as a complement to confirm observation and interview data through administrative evidence and official school records. By combining these three techniques, researchers obtained rich and layered data, both from a policy perspective and empirical experience in the field.

Interview Data Source

Primary data in this study was obtained through in-depth interviews with six informants selected by purposive sampling, namely those who were considered to have direct involvement and a deep understanding of the dynamics of leadership and school policies in the pesantren environment. The informants consisted of the principal, BK teacher, religious teacher, homeroom teacher, student council president, and one dormitory resident student. The selection of these six informants is intended to get a comprehensive view from various levels, both from the managerial, pedagogical side, and the experience of students as policy recipients. The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner to allow an in-depth exploration of leadership practices, restorative systems, and the application of school well-being principles at SMKNU Darussalam.

The following table presents the identity and role of informants who are the main sources of research data. Each informant was selected purposively according to their involvement and relevance to the focus of the research, so that the data obtained reflected diverse and in-depth views on the dynamics of policy implementation in the pesantren environment:

Table 1. List of Research Informants at SMKNU Darussalam Rejoagung Srono.

Yes	Informant Code	Position/Role	Background	Interview Focus	Interview Time
1	KS	Principal	Islamic Education, 10 years of managerial experience	Leadership policies and beyond <i>punishment approach</i>	August 12, 2025
2	BK	BK Teacher (Counseling Guidance)	Educational Psychology	Implementation of restorative systems and student welfare	August 14, 2025
3	GR	Religious Teacher	Graduates of Salaf Islamic Boarding Schools	Integration of pesantren values in learning	August 16, 2025
4	OS	Student Council President	Grade XII students, dormitory students	Students' perception of the empathic approach of teachers and principals	August 17, 2025

Yes	Informant Code	Position/Role	Background	Interview Focus	Interview Time
5	WL	Homeroom Teacher	Productive Teacher, 8 years of teaching experience	Effectiveness of mentoring and positive discipline	August 18, 2025
6	SN	Student Resident Hostel	Class XI, living in a pesantren	Direct experience in <i>Life Balance Islamic Boarding School activities</i>	August 20, 2025

Information:

The informant code is disguised to maintain the confidentiality of participants' identities in accordance with qualitative research ethics (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014).

Based on data from the informants, various information was obtained related to the principal's leadership style, conflict resolution strategies, and forms of integration of pesantren values into student welfare policies. The results of the interviews were then analyzed and categorized into three main themes that were the focus of the findings of this study.

Data analysis was carried out simultaneously from the collection stage to the final interpretation using the Miles and Huberman model, which included data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. The reduction process was carried out to select data that were relevant to the focus of the research, while the data presentation was arranged in the form of a descriptive narrative to facilitate the identification of key themes such as leadership strategies, pesantren values, and adolescent-friendly school principles. Conclusions are drawn iteratively by conducting repeated verification to ensure consistency and integrity of the meaning of the field findings.

To maintain the validity of the data, this study applied four credibility test criteria as suggested by Moleong (2021), namely credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility is maintained through triangulation of sources and techniques, by comparing the results of

observations, interviews, and documentation. Transferability is ensured through a detailed description of the research context so that the results can be applied to similar contexts. Dependability and confirmability are maintained through an audit of the research process and the researcher's reflection on the data collected, to ensure that the resulting interpretation is objective and scientifically accountable.

With the design of this method, the research is expected to be able to present a deep understanding of the leadership practices of school principals that move beyond punishment, as well as show how pesantren values can be integrated with the school well-being paradigm in forming a youth-friendly school in a modern pesantren environment.

C. Results and Discussion

A Paradigm Shift in Discipline Towards Empathetic Leadership

In the context of modern education, disciplinary practices in Indonesian schools are undergoing changes as awareness of the importance of mental health and emotional well-being of students increases. (Ekawati et al., 2025; Kaligis et al., 2021; Wiguna et al., 2020). Various cases of verbal and physical violence in law enforcement have begun to question their effectiveness. Society and educators are now demanding a more humane approach, where teachers and principals play the role of mentors, not punishers (Feigenbaum, 2024; Warnick & Scribner, 2020). This shift marks the emergence of a new paradigm in educational leadership—empathetic leadership that emphasizes dialogue, understanding, and character building through positive interpersonal relationships.

The phenomenon of changing the discipline paradigm at SMKNU Darussalam Rejoagung Srono arises from the increasing awareness of the importance of students' emotional well-being in the educational process. Previously, the practice of discipline in this school tended to emphasize the aspects of punishment and formal compliance. Students who are late or

break the rules often get physical punishment or reprimands in public. However, in the last two years, this pattern has shifted significantly. The principal began to apply an empathetic approach by emphasizing two-way communication and moral reflection. These changes are not without cause—observations show an increase in cases of mild stress and a decrease in motivation to learn due to the old repressive model of discipline. This phenomenon demands a new approach that is more humane and in accordance with the character of Islamic boarding school teenagers who need guidance, not just commands.

To gain a deeper understanding of managerial policies and practices in schools, researchers conducted interviews with school principals as key informants. From the results of the interview with the principal, the statement was obtained:

"We no longer punish students like we used to. Now, if someone violates, we talk to them, find out the reason, and then work together to find a solution." (KS)

The principal's statement shows a change from a pattern of punishing discipline to a dialogical and educational approach. Now, students are invited to talk and find solutions together, so that the enforcement of discipline emphasizes more on character development and responsibility than the provision of sanctions. BK teachers also added that the involvement of students in behavioral reflection makes them more open to guidance. Based on observations on August 15, 2025, it can be seen that there is a weekly forum called the Disciplinary Reflection Council, where students who violate are given the opportunity to explain their motives and feelings in front of classmates. The school's documentation shows a revision to the Student Code of Conduct (2024) that changed the term "punishment" to "coaching action." Triangulative data from interviews, observations, and documentation show that paradigm change is not just policy rhetoric, but has become an

internalized institutional culture.

These findings show a shift from the model disciplinary control towards empathetic leadership based on emotional awareness. Warnick & Scribner, (2020) affirms that the Beyond Punishment Leadership see transgression as an opportunity for moral education, not a violation of authority (Curren, 2020; Dion, 2020). In the context of Islamic boarding schools, this value is in accordance with the principles of Ta'dib and Rahmah that glorifies human beings as subjects of education (Tambak et al., 2021). However, critically it can be observed that this empathic approach still requires the reflective capacity of school principals and teachers so as not to be trapped in permissiveness or leniency of discipline. That is, empathy here does not mean leniency towards transgressions, but rather strict in guidance based on compassion and moral responsibility. This approach enriches transformational leadership theory with spiritual and affective nuances typical of Islamic boarding schools.

The final synthesis of these findings shows that empathetic leadership at SMKNU Darussalam presents a new model of discipline management that combines modern rationality with the wisdom of Islamic values. The principal no longer only performs a control function, but plays the role of a moral facilitator who activates students' self-awareness through dialogue and reflection. This makes a scientific contribution to the integration of the concept of Beyond Punishment Leadership with the value of Islamic boarding schools, resulting in a contextual empathetic-transformational leadership model for Islamic educational institutions. In other words, discipline is no longer understood as a form of power, but rather as a process of character formation based on compassion and social responsibility.

Application of the Restorative System in Student Conflict Resolution

The increasing cases of conflict between students in the context of Indonesian education is a serious concern for many institutions, especially in

pesantren based schools that have complex social dynamics (Hastasari et al., 2022; Kosim et al., 2023; Shiddiq et al., 2024). The punitive conflict resolution model is now considered less effective because it often has a psychological impact and worsens social relations between students (Amemiya et al., 2020; McAuliffe et al., 2025). Therefore, there is a push to implement a more constructive approach, namely a restorative system. This approach emphasizes dialogue, personal responsibility, and the restoration of social relationships, in line with the values of character education that place empathy and deliberation as the basis for problem solving.

Adolescent life in a pesantren based school environment is often colored by interpersonal conflicts, both between students and teachers and between students (Hastasari et al., 2022; Mau, 2024). At SMKNU Darussalam, cases such as petty bullying, violations of group discipline, and misunderstandings between friends had increased in 2023. Based on the records of counseling guidance, there were 27 reports of social violations during the odd semester of 2023/2024. The pattern of conflict resolution in the past is still hierarchical—the teacher determines the punishment, and the student is obliged to accept without dialogue. This pattern creates emotional tension and does not touch the root of the problem of student behavior. Realizing this condition, the principal then initiated restorative system, namely a dialogue and shared responsibility conflict resolution mechanism. The system is intended to shift the paradigm from "punishing the perpetrators" to "restoring social relations" among the parties involved.

As a concrete form of changing the paradigm of conflict resolution in the school environment, school principals take strategic steps by implementing a restorative system in a structured manner. The implementation of this approach does not only stop at the concept level, but is realized through institutional policies involving various parties. One of these concrete steps is the establishment of a Youth Assistance Team (TPR) which functions as a

facilitator in the mediation process and the restoration of students' social relationships. This team consists of BK teachers, student council representatives, and two homeroom teachers. In an interview, the BK teacher said:

"If in the past children were wrongly punished, now we invite them to sit together. They talk to each other, listen to each other, and agree on how to improve their relationship." (BK)

This quote shows a change in the relational paradigm between teachers and students. The teacher is no longer a punishment-making authority, but rather a moral facilitator who helps students understand the social impact of their actions. The observation on August 15, 2025 reinforces this: in a meeting of the Restorative Assembly, dissenting students are given space to express their feelings and responsibilities openly. This pattern builds moral awareness through direct experience, not coercion. Behavioral changes can also be seen from the decrease in students' resistance to teacher guidance; Follow-up interviews showed that 8 out of 10 students felt more "listened to" in the problem-solving process.

Table 2. Recapitulation of Violations and Case Settlement of SMKNU Darussalam Students (2023–2025).

Academic Year	Number of Cases	Settled with Punishment	Restoratively Resolved	Decrease in Cases (%)
2022/2023	27	25	2	–
2023/2024	18	7	11	33.3%
2024/2025	12	3	9	33.4%

The data in the table shows a decline in infringement cases by more than 50% in the past two years, along with an increase in restorative settlement practices. This pattern reinforces the interpretation that the mechanism not only has an administrative impact, but also improves the school culture to be more supportive and communicative.

These findings confirm that the restorative approach is a concrete form

of implementation Beyond Punishment Leadership at the micro level. This approach is in line with the theory Restorative Justice in School (Braithwaite, 2020), which emphasizes that social mediation is able to strengthen empathy and moral responsibility (Braithwaite, 2021; Hong et al., 2022; Jiang et al., 2021). In the context of Islamic education, this system represents the value of *Islah* (peace) and *Ukhuwah* (brotherhood), two important principles in building harmonious relationships. However, critically, this approach requires high emotional competence from teachers so as not to make dialogue limited to symbolism. If not managed properly, restorative approaches have the potential to lose their moral significance (Kirkwood, 2022; Lanni, 2021; Wailling et al., 2022). Therefore, school principals must ensure that every mediation process always ends with a real action plan as a form of social learning.

The restorative system at SMKNU Darussalam is not just a method of conflict resolution, but a leadership innovation based on moral restoration. The principal succeeded in instilling the principle that every violation is an opportunity to learn, not a reason to punish (Freitas dos Santos et al., 2023; Köster et al., 2022). It is hoped that these findings can provide the formulation of a Restorative-Ta'dib Leadership conceptual model, which combines modern restorative justice with the principles of Ta'dib (adab education) typical of Islamic boarding schools. This model expands the theory Beyond Punishment Leadership by adding a dimension of social spirituality, making it relevant to the context of contemporary Islamic education.

Integration of Islamic Boarding School Values and School Well-Being Principles

In general, Islamic boarding school-based educational institutions in Indonesia now face challenges in balancing traditional religious values with the demands of students' psychological well-being in the modern era (Islamic

et al., 2024; Salim et al., 2024). The phenomenon of increasing awareness of the importance of school well-being encouraging schools to not only focus on academic and moral aspects, but also on students' mental health, sense of security, and social connectedness. In this context, the integration of Islamic boarding school values such as ta'dib, rahmah, and ukhuwah becomes relevant as a spiritual foundation that can strengthen a school culture that is healthy, harmonious, and oriented towards the holistic welfare of students.

As a school under the auspices of Islamic boarding schools, SMKNU Darussalam has a value system that is rich in spiritual and moral dimensions. However, the social reality of students from various backgrounds makes school principals face challenges in maintaining a balance between the discipline typical of pesantren and the psychosocial needs of modern adolescents. Students need a safe space to express themselves, while pesantren still demand order and manners. In this situation, the principal develops an integrative strategy based on participatory and empathetic leadership to adapt the values of ta'dib, rahmah, and ukhuwah into the school's welfare policy. This effort shows that the leadership at SMKNU is no longer oriented towards strict supervision, but rather on creating a welfare ecosystem rooted in spirituality.

To understand the impact of the implementation of the Pesantren Value Integration policy for Student Welfare on students' learning and social lives, researchers conducted interviews with several students living in the dormitory environment. One of the students of grade XII of Computer and Network Engineering expressed his personal experience as follows:

"Now the atmosphere in the dormitory is calmer and more comfortable. If there is a friend who has a problem, we are accompanied to chat with the ustaz or supervisor. There are no more harsh reprimands like before. We became more open and felt appreciated, especially since every week there is a reflection activity with friends." (S)

The student's statement reflects that the school's integrative policies have succeeded in creating a supportive and emotionally well-being-oriented environment. The Islamic boarding school value-based approach combined with the principles of school well-being has been proven to foster a sense of security, openness, and empathy between students. This transformation shows the success of the principal in shifting the culture of rigid discipline to an educational culture based on compassion and spiritual assistance, so that the social and moral welfare of students develops in a balanced manner.

In addition, based on the results of the interviews, since the beginning of 2024 the principal has implemented a gradual policy model called "Integration of Islamic Boarding School Values for Student Welfare." The program has four main components: (1) the revitalization of the compassion-based dormitory culture, (2) student well-being facilitator training for teachers, (3) the strengthening of spiritual mentoring, and (4) the development of weekly reflective activities that foster students' social empathy. BK teachers called this policy a "new culture that is more humane," because it emphasizes mentoring rather than punishment.



Figure 1. Diagram-Mind Map of the Integration of Islamic Boarding School Values and School Well-Being

Based on this integrative visualization, the principal's leadership pattern displays a transformative-empathetic leadership model, which is leadership that balances moral and psychological dimensions in education policy. The principal no longer acts as a sole regulator, but as a catalyst that channels the values of the pesantren into the welfare system. From the managerial side, the diagram shows that the integration process starts from the value level (spiritual) to policy practice (structural), and leads to changes in student behavior (psychosocial).

Analysis of interview results and observations showed that integrative leadership at SMKNU Darussalam succeeded in creating a more supportive school atmosphere and reducing students' academic stress levels. As many as 82% of students feel more "comfortable and understood" after the program runs one semester, signaling a shift in the school climate from control to participation. These findings are in line with the theory Self-Determination (Deci et al., 2017) which emphasizes the importance of meeting the needs of autonomy, competence, and connectedness for individual welfare (Martela et al., 2023; Olafsen et al., 2025; Tang et al., 2020). In this context, the leadership of the principal based on dialogue and empathy has fulfilled these three aspects, thereby fostering a sense of security, meaning, and togetherness in the learning process. Thus, this spiritual- and humanistic-based leadership model shows how the values of pesantren can be actualized within the framework of school well-being, making the welfare of students not only physical but also psychological and moral.

The third finding strengthens that the success of the principal's leadership at SMKNU Darussalam lies in his ability to transform the values of the pesantren into policies that humanize students. This integration is not just the unification of two value systems, but the process of managerial translation of spirituality into the framework of school welfare policies. These findings provide a view to the "Spiritual Transformative Leadership for

School Well-Being" model, which places the principal as a moral agent that connects the religious and psychosocial dimensions of education. This model expands on the theory of Beyond Punishment Leadership by adding a contextual perspective typical of pesantren that emphasizes well-being based on manners and empathy.

D. Conclusion

This study concludes that the reorientation of the leadership of the principal at SMKNU Darussalam Rejoagung Srono shows a paradigm shift from a punishment-based discipline approach to a beyond punishment model that emphasizes empathy, dialogue, and character development. This approach has proven to be effective in creating a youth-friendly school climate and strengthening the integration of Islamic values of pesantren with modern education management principles. In addition, adaptation to digital technology and learning innovations also strengthens the role of Islamic boarding schools as institutions that are relevant to the challenges of the disruption era.

Based on these results, it is recommended that school principals and teachers in the pesantren environment continue to strengthen humanist leadership practices through continuous professional training and reflection. Islamic educational institutions also need to develop policies and supporting facilities that encourage the realization of a safe, empathetic, and participatory learning environment for adolescents. Further research can extend this study to various types of pesantren to enrich the restorative leadership model in the context of contemporary Islamic education.;

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