

## Effectiveness of Implementation and Learning Management Strategies in Improving Santri Learning Achievement

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**Abstract:** This study aims to confirm the effectiveness of learning management strategies in improving students' learning achievement at Darussalam Buntet Islamic Boarding School. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, direct observation, and documentation studies of learning activities at various levels of dirosah classes. The results showed that the learning strategies applied by teachers, such as the use of yellow books according to level, sorogan and bandongan methods, and active deliberation proved successful in creating a conducive learning atmosphere and increasing santri involvement in the learning process. Teachers do not only act as material deliverers, but also as facilitators who encourage active participation, provoke santri ideas, and reward their achievements. The implementation of this strategy is proven to improve memorization, understanding of the material, and the ability of students to retell lessons independently. Learning evaluations are carried out periodically to measure santri achievements and improve the methods used. Obstacles such as the low motivation of some students are overcome through a disciplinary approach, strengthening communication, and emotional support from the board. This study confirms that structured and adaptive learning management can significantly improve students' learning achievement. This finding makes an important contribution to the development of a pesantren education system that is more effective and responsive to the needs of students.

**Keyword :** Learning Management, Spirituality Character Education, Kitab Kuning

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### Introduction

Over the past decade, growing attention has been directed toward the quality of value-based education, particularly within traditional institutions such as *pesantren*. These institutions are increasingly recognized for their potential to address the moral crisis emerging in modern education systems that often prioritize cognitive achievement over character formation (Asiah & Desky, 2025). Rooted in spiritual and ethical foundations, Islamic education offers a holistic alternative to secular paradigms by integrating intellectual, moral, and emotional dimensions of learning (Nahwiyah & Syarif, 2025). Central to the pesantren philosophy is the concept of *insan kamil* the ideal of a complete human being who embodies intellectual depth, emotional balance, and spiritual maturity. This ideal aligns with the principles of humanistic education, which emphasize the development of the whole person (Kim et al., 2019). In practical terms, pesantren implement this vision through *adab*- and wisdom-based pedagogies that foster discipline, ethical awareness, and moral responsibility as integral parts of the learning process

(Asiah & Desky, 2025). Research by Mustakim (2021) shows that pesantren develop various learning strategies such as sorogan, bandongan, deliberation, and active learning, which last for 24 hours and allow high flexibility in classroom management. These strategies allow pesantren to retain their identity while adopting contemporary pedagogical approaches that are more participatory and reflective (Krupakar & Suneela, 2024). The novelty of this approach lies in the ability of pesantren to combine traditional methods with digital technologies, such as the use of e-learning and interactive media, which are proven to increase learning effectiveness (Muis et al., 2024). This digitalization not only expands access to learning resources, but also reinforces spiritual values such as sincerity and simplicity in the learning process (Shet, 2024).

The phenomenon that emerges from this transformation is the increasing public interest in pesantren education as a holistic education model rooted in local values (Nahwiyah & Syarif, 2025). Pesantren is considered capable of providing more meaningful education because it combines academic aspects with moral and spiritual development (Krupakar & Suneela, 2024). Historically, pesantren have been a pillar of Islamic education in Indonesia since the 18th century, with Pondok Pesantren Darussalam Buntet as one example of an institution that combines traditional and modern approaches in its learning system (Mustakim, 2021). The dirosah system applied in this pesantren includes various grade levels with customized subject matter, such as fiqh, tawhid, hadith, nahwu, and balaghoh (Muis et al., 2024).

The main problem faced is how to manage learning effectively amid limited resources and the pressure of modernization, especially in terms of teachers' pedagogical and digital competencies (Kim et al., 2019). Many pesantren teachers have not had adequate training in the use of technology and active learning strategies, so the learning process tends to be monotonous and less interactive (Shet, 2024). According to Razali & Nasri (2023), teachers who apply innovative methods and understand the characteristics of learners are able to significantly increase motivation and learning achievement. Therefore, continuous training for pesantren teachers is an urgent need in facing the challenges of modern education (Krupakar & Suneela, 2024).

How can Learning Development Strategies be optimized to improve student achievement without compromising the values of traditional boarding schools? Able to integrate technology harmoniously with classical methods such as sorogan and bandongan? What is the role of teachers in facilitating adaptive and value-based learning in the digital age (Muis et al., 2024).

The contribution of this research is to offer a contextualized, flexible, and value-based learning management strategy model that can be implemented in pesantren to enhance educational outcomes and institutional quality (Mustakim, 2021). This model integrates traditional pedagogical approaches with modern technological innovations and positions teachers as active facilitators in guiding and supporting the learning process (Kim et al., 2019). Furthermore, this study contributes to the global discourse on value-based education by demonstrating that pesantren hold great potential as laboratories for moral and spiritual education relevant to the challenges of the 21st century (Asiah & Desky, 2025). In this regard, pesantren serve not only as centers for religious instruction but also as hubs for character formation, leadership cultivation, and digital literacy development grounded in Islamic values (Nahwiyah & Syarif, 2025). Through the implementation of effective learning management strategies such as integrative curriculum design, continuous teacher professional development, the use of contextually relevant learning media, and holistic assessment practices pesantren can foster deeper learning engagement and sustainable educational transformation (Krupakar & Suneela,

2024). These strategies should also take into account students' social, psychological, and spiritual conditions to ensure that the learning process remains comprehensive and meaningful (Shet, 2024).

## Methodology

This research was conducted using a descriptive qualitative approach (Creswell 2014), which aims to describe in depth the learning management strategies implemented at the Darussalam Buntet Islamic Boarding School in improving santri learning achievement. This approach was chosen because it is able to capture the dynamics of learning contextually, as well as provide space for rich interpretations of educational practices based on values and traditions. The research location is within the Darussalam Buntet Islamic Boarding School, Cirebon, West Java, which is known as one of the oldest and most active Islamic boarding schools in developing a yellowclassical book-based learning system. The research was conducted during the period April to July 2023, involving teachers (asatidz), boarding school administrators, and santri as the main informants. The selection of informants was done purposively, based on the consideration of their direct involvement in the learning process and the management of dirosah classes.

Data collection is done through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies (Sugiyono 2019). Observations were made to understand the patterns of interaction between teachers and students, as well as the learning atmosphere created in the classroom. Interviews were conducted with teachers and boarding school administrators to explore the strategies, constraints, and evaluations they carry out in the learning process. Meanwhile, documentation was used to examine the dirosah schedule, the list of books used, and the results of santri evaluations. The data obtained were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model, which consists of three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction is done by filtering relevant information and grouping findings based on themes. Data presentation was done in narrative and visual form (mind map), to facilitate interpretation and understanding. Conclusions were drawn gradually, taking into account patterns that emerged from observations and interviews.

To maintain data validity, researchers applied source and method triangulation techniques, and conducted member checks with informants to ensure that the interpretations made were in accordance with the reality in the field (Sugiyono 2010). Internal validity was strengthened through the direct involvement of researchers in the observation process and social interaction in the pesantren environment. With this approach, the research not only produces a description of the learning strategy, but also provides a deep understanding of how Islamic values and local traditions are integrated in the educational process. The learning management strategies found are not merely technical in nature, but reflect the philosophy of pesantren education that places teachers as spiritual guides and santri as active subjects in the search for knowledge.

## Result and Discussion

### 1. Finding

#### **Implementation and Learning Management Strategies in Islamic Boarding Schools**

Learning management strategies at Darussalam Buntet Islamic Boarding School are carried out in a structured and tiered manner. Planning is carried out through regular meetings of ustadz and kyai to determine the yellowclassical

books that are in accordance with the level of the dirosah class. Ustadz Fikri Rafsanjani stated, "Teaching materials have been adjusted to each level of dirosah through meetings of the kyai and ustadz." The implementation of learning uses sorogan, bandongan, deliberation, and memorization methods. Teachers provoke santri ideas through open discussions and insert inspirational stories to build enthusiasm for learning. "I often insert stories of previous scholars in the middle of the lesson, or close the session with a short question and answer session," added Ustadz Fikri.



**Figure 1:** Implementation & Learning Management Strategy

Evaluation is carried out periodically, both weekly and semesterly, to measure the understanding and memorization of students. Teachers also provide rewards as a form of motivation. Ustadz Syafeq emphasized, "I give praise or small gifts to active students. It makes them feel appreciated and encourages others to excel."

### **Teachers' Efforts in Improving Students' Learning Achievement at Pondok Pesantren**

Teachers at Pondok Pesantren Darussalam play an active role in guiding students academically and spiritually. They not only deliver the material, but also create a supportive learning atmosphere. Ustadz Syafeq explained, "I approach quiet students, I encourage them to speak up." Learning programs such as dirosah, sorogan, bandongan, and memorization deposit are carried out with a disciplinary and motivational approach. Ustadz Ade Royani revealed, "I make internal rules, for

example, those who do not deposit memorization cannot participate in certain activities. That is quite effective."



**Figure 2:** Teachers' efforts to improve learning achievement

Teachers also conduct weekly evaluations to monitor the development of students. Ustadz Fikri said, "We evaluate every week. Santri who can explain the lesson back in front of the class is an indicator that they really understand."

### **Implementation and Learning Management Strategies in Improving Student Learning Achievement in Islamic Boarding Schools**

The implementation of learning management strategies has proven to have a positive impact on student learning achievement. Teachers apply methods that are in accordance with the characteristics of the students and the class level, and make language adjustments so that the material is easier to understand. Ustadz Zihan Ali Hakim stated, "The meaning of the yellow book uses ancient Javanese. I help with explanations using Indonesian so that they can follow." The sorogan, bandongan, and memorization programs are carried out with a flexible and adaptive approach. Ustadz Fikri added, "Santri who can explain the lesson back in front of the class is an indicator that they really understand."



**Figure 3:** implementation of learning management strategies

The synergy between teachers, boarding school administrators, and students is the key to the success of this strategy. Ustadz Syafeq emphasized, "We always coordinate with the boarding school administrators. If there are students who lack discipline, we ask the administrators to assist them." As a result, students show improvement in memorization, understanding of material, and the ability to retell lessons independently. This strategy not only improves academic achievement, but also shapes the character and confidence of the students.

## 2. Discussion

The learning management strategy at Pondok Pesantren Darussalam Buntet shows a systematic and value-based approach, which not only focuses on academic achievement but also on the formation of santri character. As emphasized by Giannoukos (2024), "Constructivist learning environments encourage learners to actively construct knowledge through social interaction and contextual experience." Learning planning is carried out through deliberations between teachers and kyai to determine the yellow classical books that are suitable for the dirosah class level. This reflects the principle of flexibility of community-based curriculum, as described by Alam (2025), "Collaborative learning communities improve educational relevance and effectiveness by integrating multiple stakeholders in the learning process."

The learning methods used include sorogan, bandongan, deliberation, and memorization, all of which emphasize direct interaction between teachers and students. This approach is in line with the findings of Brunetti et al. (2024) that "Narrative-based learning allows learners to connect emotionally and cognitively with the material, fostering deeper engagement and long-term retention." In the sorogan method, santri offer individual readings to the teacher, which allows learning to be personalized and reflective. According to Ambler et al. (2024),

“Narratives in teaching help learners reflect on their own experiences and build meaningful connections with the subject matter.”

Bandongan as a classical method provides space for the teacher to explain the meaning of the text collectively, strengthening shared understanding within the learning community. This supports the idea that “Shared learning experiences enhance social cohesion and deepen conceptual understanding” (Brunetti et al., 2024). Deliberation is used to train the ability to think critically and express opinions argumentatively, which is part of dialog-based learning. Urhahne & Wijnia (2023) stated that “Open dialogue between teachers and students fosters intrinsic motivation and critical thinking.” Teachers in pesantren do not only deliver material, but also act as spiritual guides and learning facilitators.

As explained by Urhahne & Wijnia (2023), “Teachers who build positive relationships and understand students' emotional needs significantly enhance intrinsic motivation and academic achievement.” Giving rewards such as praise and small gifts is used to motivate students to be more active in learning. This is in line with the principle of reinforcement in behavioristic theory, where “Positive reinforcement increases desired learning behaviors and engagement” (Giannoukos, 2024).

Evaluations are conducted periodically to assess memorization, comprehension, and the ability to retell lessons. According to Brunetti et al. (2024), “Continuous assessment helps learners monitor progress and reinforces long-term retention.” Students who show progress are given the opportunity to perform in front of the class, which strengthens self-confidence and communication skills. Ambler et al. (2024) emphasize that “Empowering students to share their learning publicly builds confidence and deepens mastery.”

This strategy has a real impact on students' learning achievement, both in cognitive and affective aspects. As explained by Urhahne & Wijnia (2023), “Motivated learners demonstrate higher academic performance and emotional resilience.” Santri become more active, confident, and able to internalize Islamic values in their daily lives. Brunetti et al. (2024) stated that “Value-based education shapes identity and promotes lifelong learning attitudes.”

The challenges faced by teachers include the low motivation of some students in participating in memorization and *sorogan* programs. To address this, teachers apply a disciplinary approach combined with intensive and responsive communication. In the context of pesantren, such communication plays a crucial role in maintaining students' engagement within traditional learning methods that rely heavily on personal teacher-student interaction. Alam (2025) asserts that “Effective learning environments require consistent structure and responsive communication,” a principle that aligns closely with the *sorogan* method, where direct feedback and structured repetition are key to mastery. Another challenge is the language barrier, particularly among *santri* from outside Java who struggle to comprehend the meanings of *kitab kuning* (classical Islamic texts). To overcome this, teachers provide supplementary explanations in Indonesian to ensure all

students can access the material effectively. This practice reflects Ambler et al.'s (2024) view that "Language adaptation in instruction ensures inclusivity and equitable access to learning," highlighting how pesantren educators integrate traditional teaching with adaptive linguistic strategies to promote inclusive learning environments.

The synergy between teachers, boarding school administrators, and students is the key to the success of the learning strategy. As explained by Alam (2025), "Educational success is rooted in collaborative efforts across institutional roles." Thus, the learning management strategy at Pondok Pesantren Darussalam Buntet not only improves the learning achievement of students, but also forms their character and spirituality as a whole. Brunetti et al. (2024) concluded that "Holistic education integrates knowledge, values, and personal growth into a unified learning experience."

## Conclusion

This research examines the learning management strategy at Darussalam Buntet Islamic Boarding School which is systematic and rooted in Islamic values. Planning is carried out through deliberations between teachers and kyai, with the selection of yellowclassical books according to class level. Learning methods such as sorogan, bandongan, deliberation, and memorization not only strengthen students' understanding of classical texts, but also shape their character and spirituality. Teachers act as knowledge conveyors, spiritual guides, and facilitators, creating a conducive learning atmosphere through personal approaches, motivation, and periodic evaluation. This strategy has proven to be effective in improving the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects of santri. Despite limitations, such as the focus on one pesantren and qualitative data that depends on the researcher's interpretation, these findings are still relevant. Practically, this strategy can be an alternative model for character and spirituality education. Theoretically, this research strengthens the constructivism and humanism approaches in Islamic education. The results can serve as a basis for teacher training policies and technology integration in kitab kuning learning, as well as demonstrate the role of pesantren in shaping a knowledgeable and moral generation in the modern era.

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