

**Integration of Da'wah and Public Policy in Advancing Pesantren  
Educational Autonomy: An Analysis of the Roles of the Government  
and the Indonesian Ulama Council**

Siti Nuri Nurhaidah  
Universitas Islam as Syafi'iyah Jakarta Indonesia  
e-mail: sitinurinurhaidah.fai@uia.ac.id

Damrah Mamang  
Universitas Islam as Syafi'iyah Jakarta Indonesia  
e-mail: damrahmamang.fh@uia.ac.id

Beni Pramula  
Universitas Muhammadiyah Jakarta Indonesia  
e-mail: pramulabeni@gmail.com

Sofia Fahrany  
Universitas Islam as Syafi'iyah Jakarta Indonesia  
e-mail: sofiafahrany.fai@uia.ac.id

Muhammad Yudi Ali Akbar  
Universitas Al Azhar Indonesia  
e-mail: yudi\_ali@uai.ac.id

Abstrac: Islamic boarding schools (pesantren), recognized as Indonesia's oldest indigenous educational institutions, confront multidimensional challenges encompassing chronic funding constraints, institutional governance deficiencies, and uneven technological adoption. This study addresses a pressing scholarly gap: the absence of an integrative analytical framework capable of operationalizing the complementary roles of state actors and religious authorities in fostering sustainable pesantren autonomy. Accordingly, the article examines how the convergence of da'wah functions and public policy instruments channeled through strategic synergy between the Indonesian government and the Indonesian Ulama Council (Majelis Ulama Indonesia, MUI) can catalyze the transformation of pesantren into self-reliant, adaptive, and internationally competitive educational

institutions. Employing a qualitative methodology grounded in systematic library research and descriptive-analytical inquiry, the study draws upon academic literature, statutory regulations, official institutional documents, and relevant prior scholarship. Findings reveal that governmental contributions operate across three principal dimensions: regulatory frameworks anchored in the Pesantren Law of 2019, targeted fiscal allocations, and capacity-building initiatives encompassing economic empowerment and digital transformation programs. Concurrently, MUI functions as a moral-religious authority whose institutional legitimacy reinforces da'wah credibility and advances Islamic moderation within pesantren ecosystems. The convergence of these two actors when structured around transparent coordination mechanisms demonstrates substantial potential for driving the structural evolution of pesantren from conventionally managed traditional institutions toward highly competitive centers of Islamic education.

Keywords: Da'wah; Public Policy; Pesantren Autonomy; Indonesian Government; Indonesian Ulama Council

Abstrak: Pesantren sebagai lembaga pendidikan Islam tertua di Indonesia menghadapi tantangan serius berupa keterbatasan pendanaan, lemahnya tata kelola kelembagaan, serta kesenjangan adaptasi teknologi di era modern. Urgensi penelitian ini didasari oleh kebutuhan mendesak untuk memformulasikan pendekatan integratif yang mampu memperkuat kemandirian pesantren secara berkelanjutan. Artikel ini bertujuan menganalisis bagaimana integrasi fungsi dakwah dan kebijakan public melalui sinergi antara pemerintah dan Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI) dapat mendorong transformasi pesantren menjadi lembaga pendidikan yang mandiri, adaptif, dan kompetitif. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi pustaka dan analisis deskriptif, dengan sumber data berupa literatur akademis, regulasi pemerintah, dokumen kelembagaan, serta hasil penelitian terdahulu yang relevan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pemerintah berperan melalui regulasi berbasis Undang-Undang Pesantren, bantuan keuangan, program

pemberdayaan ekonomi, dan digitalisasi; sementara MUI berperan sebagai otoritas moral-keagamaan yang memperkuat legitimasi dakwah dan moderasi Islam. Sinergi keduanya terbukti mampu mendorong transformasi struktural pesantren dari lembaga tradisional menuju institusi pendidikan Islam yang berdaya saing tinggi.

Kata Kunci: Dakwah; Kebijakan Publik; Kemandirian Pesantren; Pemerintah; Majelis Ulama Indonesia

## INTRODUCTION

Pesantren occupy a distinctive position within the Indonesian educational landscape as institutions whose origins predate national independence. Rooted deeply in indigenous Islamic traditions, these establishments have contributed immeasurably to national character formation, the consolidation of religious values, and grassroots community empowerment across the archipelago. According to the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (2023), more than 36,000 pesantren currently operate throughout the country, collectively serving a population exceeding four million students a figure that underscores their systemic importance within the national educational ecosystem.<sup>1</sup>

Contemporary developments characterized by accelerating globalization, the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and pervasive digital transformation have exposed pesantren to increasingly multifaceted challenges.<sup>2</sup> These challenges manifest along both internal and external

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<sup>1</sup> Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, *Peta Jalan Pendidikan Pesantren 2023–2028*, Direktorat Jenderal Pendidikan Islam, 2023.

<sup>2</sup> Akmalun Najmi and Ismail Ismail, "Eksplorasi Makna Hidup Anak Gen Z Di Era Digital," *Abdurrauf Journal of Education and Islamic Studies* 2, no. 1 (2025): 25–35.

axes. Internally, pesantren grapple with insufficient qualified human resources, organizational management weaknesses, and restricted access to information and communication technologies. Externally, they face intensifying competition from formal educational institutions, demands for national curriculum standardization, and continuously shifting socioeconomic dynamics. This confluence of pressures raises fundamental questions regarding how pesantren can sustain their existence while simultaneously elevating institutional quality and long-term autonomy.

The question of pesantren autonomy acquires heightened relevance when situated within broader discourse on community-based Islamic educational empowerment.<sup>3</sup> Autonomy, in this context, extends well beyond financial self-sufficiency to encompass institutional self-governance, curricular adaptability, and productive social and economic network development. Within this conceptual framework, da'wah transcends its conventional interpretation as mere religious propagation to become an instrument of social transformation one possessing the intrinsic capacity to generate structural change within societal arrangements.

Scholarly attention to pesantren development has produced a growing body of literature. Fikri and Shaleh (2021) examined models for strengthening pesantren institutional capacity through contemporary management approaches, finding that most pesantren continue to operate under conventional decision-making structures concentrated in the authority of the kiai figure, rendering leadership succession and

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<sup>3</sup> Moh Wardi et al., "Digital Transformation of Islamic Boarding School Financial System; Formulation, Implementation and Evaluation," *Munaddhomah: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 5, no. 4 (2024): 461–82.

management regeneration persistently unresolved concerns.<sup>4</sup> Mansur and Arifin (2022) assessed the policy effectiveness following the enactment of Law Number 18 of 2019 on Pesantren, revealing that despite the law's establishment of a stronger juridical foundation, field implementation remains encumbered by bureaucratic obstacles and budgetary limitations.<sup>5</sup> Zubaidi and Fauzi (2023) investigated MUI's role in pesantren development, concluding that the organization's contributions tend toward the normative and ceremonial rather than the substantive and transformative.<sup>6</sup>

A careful synthesis of prior scholarship reveals three significant research gaps. First, no comprehensive study has systematically analyzed the synergistic relationship between the government and MUI as co-actors in promoting pesantren autonomy; existing research tends to examine each party in isolation without accounting for collaborative dynamics. Second, the dimension of da'wah as an instrument of public policy for institutional strengthening remains insufficiently theorized within academic literature, despite the fact that the integration of da'wah values and policy tools potentially yields outcomes more holistic and durable than fragmented

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<sup>4</sup> A. R. Fikri, M., & Shaleh, "Penguatan Kapasitas Kelembagaan Pesantren Melalui Manajemen Modern Berbasis Nilai Islam," *Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 9, no. 2 (2021): 145-162.

<sup>5</sup> Z. Mansur, A., & Arifin, "Efektivitas Implementasi Undang-Undang Nomor 18 Tahun 2019 Tentang Pesantren: Kajian Kebijakan Dan Tantangan Birokrasi," *Jurnal Hukum Islam*, 20, no. 2 (2022): 213-232.

<sup>6</sup> M. Zubaidi, A., & Fauzi, "Kontribusi MUI Dalam Pembinaan Pesantren: Kajian Kritis Terhadap Pola Hubungan Antara Otoritas Ulama Dan Lembaga Pendidikan Islam," . . *Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah*, 43, no. 1 (2023): 44-63.

interventions. Third, descriptive accounts predominate over analytical models capable of informing future policy formulation.

In response to these gaps, this study pursues three interconnected objectives to conduct an in-depth analysis of the government's role in advancing pesantren autonomy through public policy instruments, to examine the functions and contributions of MUI as a moral-religious authority in strengthening institutional da'wah within pesantren and to formulate an integrative model uniting da'wah and public policy as a synergistic strategy for pesantren transformation toward sustainable self-reliance. Theoretically, the study aspires to enrich scholarship at the intersection of Islamic education management, public policy, and da'wah studies. Practically, its findings are intended to yield actionable policy recommendations for relevant stakeholders, including the Ministry of Religious Affairs, MUI, pesantren management organizations, and the academic community.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Methods this study adopts a qualitative methodology employing a library research design. This methodological orientation is grounded in the conceptual and contextual nature of the research object, which is more appropriately examined through rigorous literary analysis than through empirical field data collection.<sup>7</sup> The research type is descriptive-analytical,

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<sup>7</sup> Akmalun Najmi, "PERAN KESABARAN PENDIDIK DALAM MENCIPTAKAN KEPERIBADIAN SISWA BERKUALITAS PSIKOLOGI PENDIDIKAN ISLAM," *Istifkar* 4, no. 2 (2024): 200-212.

systematically characterizing the phenomenon under investigation before submitting it to theoretically informed interpretation.

Data sources are organized into two categories. Primary sources encompass pesantren-related statutory legislation, Ministerial policy documents from the Ministry of Religious Affairs, and official MUI fatwas and guidelines.<sup>8</sup> Secondary sources include peer-reviewed articles indexed in Sinta, Scopus, and Google Scholar databases, reference texts in Islamic education management and public policy, reports from relevant research institutions, and pertinent doctoral dissertations and theses.

Data collection was conducted through systematic documentation in literature was identified, classified, and analyzed via structured bibliographic database searches, filtered by source relevance and credibility, followed by extraction of substantively significant material.<sup>9</sup> Data analysis combined content analysis with comparative techniques across a three-stage process is data reduction to distill the most relevant informational content, structured narrative presentation of findings and interpretive synthesis and conclusion-drawing based on patterns emerging from the literary analysis. Data validity was secured through source triangulation cross-referencing and corroborating findings across multiple independent sources.

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<sup>8</sup> Ahmad Irfan et al., "Optimizing Cyber Media as an Islamic Education and Da'wah Tool: A Case Study of Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI) DKI Jakarta," *Jurnal Studi Pendidikan Agama Islam* 2, no. 1 (2026): 42–50.

<sup>9</sup> Ismail Ismail and Moh Wardi Moh Wardi, "Transforming Elementary School Students' Science Literacy through Scratch-Based E-Modules Integrated with Islamic Value," *International Journal of Elementary Education* 9, no. 2 (2025): 237–47.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. The Role of Government in Advancing Pesantren Autonomy Through Public Policy

The relationship between the Indonesian state and pesantren has traversed a lengthy and complex historical trajectory. During the colonial period, pesantren occupied a marginalized position, frequently subjected to suppression by ruling authorities. Following national independence, this relationship gradually evolved toward a more constructive partnership, though normative tensions between religious and general education persisted across several decades. The most pivotal development came with the enactment of Law Number 18 of 2019 on Pesantren, which for the first time accorded pesantren comprehensive juridical recognition as legitimate educational institutions on par with their secular counterparts.<sup>10</sup>

According to Dunn (2018), public policy constitutes a set of governmental decisions and actions directed at collectively addressing public problems requiring coordinated responses.<sup>11</sup> In the pesantren context, effective public policy must simultaneously address three core problem dimensions the regulatory dimension providing legal certainty, the fiscal dimension ensuring resource availability and the capacity dimension enhancing human and institutional quality.<sup>12</sup> These

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<sup>10</sup> Edy Setyo Utomo, *Rekonstruksi Regulasi Pengembangan Ekonomi Pesantren Menuju Kesejahteraan Masyarakat Yang Berbasis Nilai Keadilan* (Universitas Islam Sultan Agung (Indonesia), 2022).

<sup>11</sup> William N Dunn, *Public Policy Analysis: An Integrated Approach* (Routledge, 2015).

<sup>12</sup> Moh Wardi and Ismail Ismail, "Following The Prophet Muhammad Character Through Ngabuleh Tradition in Pondok Pesantren Darul Ulum Banyuanyar Pamekasan," *El Harakah* 20, no. 1 (2018): 49.

three dimensions constitute the principal evaluative framework for assessing the extent to which government policy has succeeded in promoting pesantren autonomy.<sup>13</sup>

From a regulatory standpoint, the 2019 Pesantren Law has created extensive opportunities for institutional development. The law not only recognizes pesantren as educational institutions but also grants them latitude to construct their own curricula grounded in classical Islamic texts (*kitab kuning*) and distinctive pesantren traditions.<sup>14</sup> Additionally, it codifies governmental obligations to provide proportionate funding support a historically significant provision given that pesantren had previously been compelled to self-finance their operations for decades. As Wahid (2020) observes, juridical recognition of pesantren represents not merely a formal administrative achievement but an acknowledgment of a system of values and scholarly tradition proven over centuries.<sup>15</sup>

On the fiscal dimension, the government has implemented multiple financing schemes for pesantren development. The Outstanding Student Scholarship Program (PBSB), administered by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, constitutes one concrete expression of the

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<sup>13</sup> Akmalun Najmi, Habibah Habibah, and Mahfida Inayati, "Peningkatan Kecerdasan Spritual Melalui Konsep 'Ikhlas Dan Ridha' Atas Pengabdian Kepada Keluarga Guru (Kyai) Pondok Pesantren," *JURNAL LENTERA: Kajian Keagamaan, Keilmuan Dan Teknologi* 24, no. 1 (2025): 264-76.

<sup>14</sup> Moh Wardi et al., "Implementation of Religious Moderation Values through Strengthening Diversity Tolerance in Madrasah," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 9, no. 2 (2023): 241-54.

<sup>15</sup> M. Wahid, "Rekognisi Yuridis Pesantren Dan Implikasinya Terhadap Sistem Pendidikan Nasional Pasca Undang-Undang Nomor 18 Tahun 2019," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 9, no. 1 (2020): 1-20.

government's commitment to enhancing human capital within pesantren. Similarly, the Special Allocation Fund (DAK) for pesantren infrastructure rehabilitation has produced tangible improvements in physical conditions across numerous pesantren throughout Indonesia. Ministry of Religious Affairs data (2022) indicate that since the Pesantren Law's passage, budget allocations for pesantren development have grown consistently year-on-year, although aggregate values remain below actual field requirements.<sup>16</sup>

The capacity dimension represents the most complex and demanding area, requiring the most comprehensive approach. The Ministry of Religious Affairs has accordingly developed diverse programs, from institutional management training for pesantren leaders and madrasah teacher certification to the "Digital Pesantren" initiative launched in 2021.<sup>17</sup> Widodo and Kusuma (2022) affirm that digital transformation is an imperative for pesantren seeking to remain relevant in the information technology era, while cautioning that such transformation must preserve the authentic character and scholarly identity of pesantren.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, *Statistik Pendidikan Islam 2022*, Direktorat Jenderal Pendidikan Islam, 2022.

<sup>17</sup> Akmalun Najmi and Abd Fattah, "IMPLEMENTASI PEMANFAATAN TEKNOLOGI DALAM PENDIDIKAN FORMAL DI PESANTREN (STUDY KASUS DI SMP MATHLAUL ULUM TAMBUKO SUMENEP)," *As-Sulthan Journal of Education* 1, no. 4 (2025): 816-22.

<sup>18</sup> B. A. Widodo, T., & Kusuma, "Digitalisasi Pesantren Dan Tantangan Transformasi Kelembagaan: Studi Terhadap Pesantren Di Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta," *Jurnal Teknologi Pendidikan Islam*, 7, no. 2 (2022): 95-115.

Economic empowerment programs for pesantren constitute another critical policy pillar.<sup>19</sup> Through the business incubation program for pesantren developed by the Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs, numerous pesantren have successfully established productive business units that simultaneously generate institutional revenue and equip students with entrepreneurial competencies. Business models including entrepreneurship-oriented pesantren, agribusiness pesantren, and creative industry-based pesantren have demonstrably enhanced institutional financial independence. Hasan and Rasyid (2022) confirm that pesantren operating productive business units exhibit greater financial autonomy and improved educational service quality compared to those dependent entirely on student tuition fees.<sup>20</sup>

Nevertheless, the implementation of these policies is not without persistent challenges. First, the gap between central-level policy and regional-level implementation remains substantial; policies that appear comprehensive in design frequently undergo distortion during execution owing to local government capacity deficits, divergent budgetary priorities, and inadequate inter-agency coordination. Second, the institutional capacity of pesantren themselves varies enormously large establishments with thousands of students possess resources fundamentally different from small pesantren with mere dozens,

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<sup>19</sup> Ismail Ismail, "Politik Pendidikan Islam Di Daerah: Analisis Kebijakan Pemerintah Provinsi Jawa Timur Dalam Pengembangan Madrasah Diniyah [Disertasi]," *UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya*, 2017.

<sup>20</sup> M. Hasan, N., & Rasyid, "Kemandirian Finansial Pesantren Melalui Pengembangan Unit Usaha Produktif: Studi Multi-Kasus Di Jawa Timur," *Jurnal Ekonomi Islam*, 13, no. 1 (2022): 78-95.

rendering uniform policy approaches frequently ineffective. Third, residual resistance to modernization within certain pesantren communities constitutes a cultural challenge that cannot be overlooked. Effective public policy for pesantren autonomy must therefore be designed with deliberate attention to the contextual diversity and differentiated needs across the pesantren landscape.

#### **B. The Role of MUI as a Moral-Religious Authority in Institutional Da'wah**

The Indonesian Ulama Council (MUI), as the representative body of Islamic scholars from diverse Muslim organizations across Indonesia, occupies a highly strategic position within the country's religious and societal landscape.<sup>21</sup> Since its establishment in 1975, MUI has consistently functioned as a bridge between the ulama community and state institutions, and simultaneously as a custodian of moderate and inclusive Islamic values. Within the framework of pesantren development, MUI possesses a unique institutional capacity as a moral-religious authority capable of conferring legitimacy and providing normative guidance throughout the pesantren ecosystem.

The concept of da'wah, as employed in this study, draws upon an expansive definition that transcends conventional notions of religious speech or tabligh. Following the theoretical framework articulated by Aziz (2017), da'wah is conceptualized as a system of activities encompassing the dimensions of tabyin (elucidation), tarbiyah

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<sup>21</sup> Daud Rasyid and Siti Nuri Nurhaidah, "Konsep Toleransi Dalam Dakwah M. Natsir Dan Implementasinya Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Da'wah: Risalah Merintis, Da'wah Melanjutkan* 7, no. 2 (2024): 17-43.

(education), taghyir (social transformation), and tamkin (empowerment).<sup>22</sup> Under this formulation, da'wah constitutes a systematic and intentional process of social transformation rather than a spontaneous, individualistic act. Accordingly, MUI's role in pesantren development may be understood as an integral component of institutional da'wah strategy oriented toward fortifying the spiritual, intellectual, and socioeconomic foundations of pesantren.

With respect to legitimacy reinforcement, MUI commands authority widely recognized within Indonesia's Muslim community. Its fatwas function not merely as religious guidelines but as significant influences on social and economic behavior. In the pesantren context, MUI's endorsement of various development programs provides robust legitimacy within Muslim communities, thereby facilitating the mobilization of social and financial support.<sup>23</sup> MUI's religious rulings regarding the obligation to support Islamic education, for instance, have served as a basis for mobilizing waqf and zakat resources toward pesantren development.

MUI's role in community guidance is equally vital to pesantren development. Through its extensive network reaching district/city and even sub-district levels, MUI can access communities constituting the social base of pesantren. MUI-developed community programs including family guidance based on Islamic values, women's

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<sup>22</sup> Moh Ali Aziz, *Ilmu Dakwah Edisi Revisi* (Prenada Media, 2024).

<sup>23</sup> Muhammad Hanif et al., "Integrated Dakwah Model: How Mosques, Pesantrens, and Campuses Become Islamic Preaching Centers in Bogor," *Progresiva: Jurnal Pemikiran Dan Pendidikan Islam* 12, no. 01 (2023): 85-102.

empowerment through religious education, and sharia-based economic assistance indirectly reinforce the social ecosystem sustaining pesantren viability. Ridwan and Hamidi (2021) found that pesantren maintaining strong relational ties with local MUI branches tend to possess broader social networks and more cohesive community support.<sup>24</sup>

MUI's contributions in the domains of social assistance and community economic development also generate positive impacts for pesantren. Through various zakat, infaq, and sadaqah programs managed by institutions under MUI's institutional umbrella, numerous pesantren have received significant financial support for infrastructure development and educational programming. Additionally, MUI actively promotes sharia economic development within pesantren environments through partnership programs with Islamic banks and mosque- and pesantren-based microfinance institutions.

The promotion of religious moderation stands as one of MUI's most strategically consequential agendas for contemporary pesantren development. Amid intensifying unfiltered information flows and the threat of digital radicalization, pesantren serve as critical bulwarks of Islamic moderation.<sup>25</sup> Through its moderate religious education programs, MUI has made demonstrable contributions toward strengthening pesantren commitment to values of Islam as a universal

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<sup>24</sup> N. Ridwan, M., & Hamidi, "Jaringan Sosial MUI Dan Dampaknya Terhadap Pengembangan Pesantren: Analisis Relasional Di Provinsi Banten," *Jurnal Sosiologi Islam*, 11, no. 1 (2021): 32-51.

<sup>25</sup> Husaini Husaini and Athoillah Islamy, "Harmonization of Religion and State: Mainstreaming the Values of Religious Moderation In Indonesian Da'wah Orientation," *Al-Adalah: Jurnal Hukum Dan Politik Islam* 7, no. 1 (2022): 51-73.

mercy (rahmatan lil 'alamin). Nawawi and Fathullah (2023) affirm that the synergy between pesantren and MUI in advancing moderate Islam constitutes a key strategy for maintaining social cohesion and preventing fragmentation within Indonesia's Muslim communities.<sup>26</sup>

Notwithstanding these contributions, the effectiveness of MUI's role in pesantren development confronts notable limitations. Uneven institutional capacity across MUI's regional branches, the potential politicization of ulama roles, and internal organizational dynamics that occasionally generate divergent positions are factors capable of attenuating MUI's effectiveness. Accordingly, strengthening MUI's institutional capacity at all levels, enhancing organizational transparency and accountability, and consolidating internal coordination mechanisms represent priority agenda items for optimizing MUI's contributions to pesantren development.

### **C. An Integrative Model of Da'wah and Public Policy as a Strategy for Pesantren Transformation**

The integration of da'wah and public policy is a concept requiring robust theoretical justification before it can be received constructively by both academic communities and practitioners. Theoretically, this integration may be understood through the pluralist governance framework advanced by Rhodes (2020), which conceptualizes modern governance as a process of negotiation and collaboration among diverse actors including the state, religious organizations, and civil society in the

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<sup>26</sup> M. Nawawi, A., & Fathullah, "Peran MUI Dalam Mempromosikan Islam Wasathiyah Di Lingkungan Pesantren: Perspektif Dakwah Kelembagaan," *Jurnal Dakwah Dan Komunikasi*, 8, no. 1 (2023): 55-74.

management of public affairs.<sup>27</sup> Within this perspective, government is not the sole actor responsible for pesantren advancement; rather, that responsibility is distributed proportionally among the state, the ulama institution, and the pesantren community itself.

The integrative model proposed in this study rests upon three foundational pillars. The first pillar encompasses regulation and legitimacy, including the legal framework conferring certainty for pesantren operations, recognition of ulama religious authority in pesantren guidance, and formal coordination mechanisms between government and MUI in policy development. The second pillar addresses capacity and resources, incorporating programs for pesantren human capital development, physical and digital infrastructure development, and the strengthening of pesantren-based productive business units. The third pillar encompasses da'wah and social transformation, including empowerment-oriented da'wah programs, the strengthening of pesantren alumni networks as agents of social change, and development of digital da'wah content responsive to the needs of younger generations.<sup>28</sup>

Implementing this integrative model requires clearly defined coordination mechanisms between government and MUI. Sulastri and Kamil (2022) demonstrate that the effectiveness of government-religious organization partnerships is largely determined by communication

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<sup>27</sup> R. A. W. Rhodes, "Recovering the Craft of Public Administration," *Public Administration Review*, 80, no. 4 (2020): 597-610.

<sup>28</sup> Wardi et al., "Digital Transformation of Islamic Boarding School Financial System; Formulation, Implementation and Evaluation."

quality, clarity in role and responsibility allocation, and the existence of transparent and accountable evaluation mechanisms.<sup>29</sup> In the pesantren context, this necessitates the establishment of regular coordination forums involving the Ministry of Religious Affairs, MUI, and pesantren associations such as Rabithah Ma'ahid Islamiyah (RMI) and Forum Pondok Pesantren (FPP), serving as platforms for joint planning, implementation, and evaluation of development programs.

The pesantren entrepreneurship development program represents perhaps the most concrete and measurable expression of da'wah-public policy integration. Collaboratively developed business models involving government, MUI, and pesantren not only generate direct economic benefits but simultaneously constitute an effective medium of da'wah, demonstrating the compatibility of Islam with economic progress and modernity. Nurhayati and Fauzan (2021) report that entrepreneurship-based pesantren have achieved average revenue increases of approximately 40 percent while simultaneously enhancing their appeal to younger generations increasingly oriented toward pragmatic values.<sup>30</sup>

Curriculum strengthening aligned with contemporary demands represents another critical arena for da'wah-public policy synergy. The ideal modern pesantren curriculum integrates classical Islamic textual

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<sup>29</sup> M. Sulastri, H., & Kamil, "Kemitraan Pemerintah Dan Organisasi Keagamaan Dalam Kebijakan Pendidikan Islam: Pelajaran Dari Program Pengembangan Pesantren Nasional," *Jurnal Administrasi Publik*, 18, no. 2 (2022): 167-185.

<sup>30</sup> A. Nurhayati, S., & Fauzan, "Model Pesantren Wirausaha Dan Implikasinya Terhadap Kemandirian Kelembagaan: Studi Kasus Di Jawa Barat," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 10, no. 2 (2021): 189-208.

studies the hallmark scholarly heritage of traditional pesantren with digital literacy, entrepreneurial competencies, and the twenty-first-century skills required by contemporary labor markets. The government, through the Ministry of Religious Affairs, can provide flexible national curriculum frameworks that do not erode pesantren distinctiveness, while MUI can ensure that curricular development remains grounded in authentic and moderate Islamic values.

Community-based da'wah networks also constitute a key component of this integrative model. Pesantren possess enormous potential as social network hubs connecting diverse community constituencies agricultural communities, small entrepreneurs, women, and youth. Supported by governmental policy and MUI guidance, pesantren can optimize this social network potential to construct comprehensive and sustainable community empowerment ecosystems. The concept of "pesantren as centers of civilization," advanced by several Islamic education thinkers, reflects the ambition to position pesantren not merely as educational institutions but as engines of socioeconomic transformation within their communities.

Digitalization of pesantren has attracted growing attention within the framework of da'wah-public policy integration. In the post-pandemic era, pesantren capable of leveraging digital technologies demonstrate greater capacity to sustain educational continuity while simultaneously expanding the reach and influence of their institutional da'wah. The "One Pesantren One Digital Product" program emerging in various regions illustrates how technological integration can function

simultaneously as an effective da'wah instrument and as an alternative income source. Hermawan and Sari (2023) note that pesantren successfully integrating digital technologies into their da'wah and educational processes tend to exhibit higher student retention rates and more active alumni engagement.<sup>31</sup>

Evaluating the effectiveness of this integrative model requires a long-term temporal framework. The institutional transformation of pesantren is an extended process demanding sustained commitment from all parties involved. However, preliminary indicators of success include: growth in the number of pesantren achieving national accreditation; increases in independent pesantren revenue from productive business units; greater numbers of students advancing to higher education; and expanded pesantren engagement in local community empowerment initiatives. These indicators collectively reflect the comprehensive dimensions of pesantren autonomy that constitute the primary objective of the da'wah-public policy integration model formulated in this study.

## CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the integration of da'wah and public policy constitutes the most comprehensive and sustainable approach to promoting pesantren autonomy in Indonesia. The government, through regulatory, fiscal, and capacity-building instruments, has established a strong policy foundation, while MUI, through its moral-religious authority, fortifies the legitimacy and value orientation of the entire pesantren

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<sup>31</sup> N. P. Hermawan, D., & Sari, "Transformasi Dakwah Digital Pesantren: Antara Peluang Dan Tantangan Di Era Post-Pandemi," *Jurnal Komunikasi Islam*, 13, no. 1 (2023): 112-130.

development enterprise. The synergy between these two principal actors when constructed upon transparent and accountable coordination mechanisms carries substantial potential to generate a pesantren development ecosystem considerably more effective than the fragmented interventions that have historically predominated.

Pesantren autonomy is ultimately not primarily a matter of financial resources or physical infrastructure but rather of institutional maturity, social network strength, curricular relevance, and the depth of values constituting the foundation of pesantren movement. Accordingly, future policy directions should concentrate on fortifying these non-material dimensions, repositioning pesantren not as passive objects of policy but as active subjects who co-formulate and co-implement their own development strategies. Empirical field research is strongly recommended to validate the integrative model proposed here and to identify contextual factors shaping its effectiveness across Indonesia's diverse regional settings.

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