
THE POWER OF RELIGIOUS LEADERS TO FOSTER ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT IN ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi, memetakan, dan menganalisis secara empiris sumber-sumber spesifik Kekuatan Kiai baik kekuatan posisi maupun kekuatan personal dalam membangun komitmen organisasi di lingkungan Pondok Pesantren, sebagai respons terhadap kesenjangan mengenai mekanisme kekuasaan Kiai. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi multi-kasus pada Kiai Abdullah Syam (PRAA) dan KH Soleh Bahruddin (PN), penelitian ini mengumpulkan data melalui wawancara mendalam dan observasi partisipatif dan dokumen. Temuan utama menunjukkan bahwa kekuatan Kiai untuk mendorong komitmen organisasi bersumber dari lima dimensi unik: Karisma, Spiritual, Moral, Sosial, dan Instrumental. Secara komparatif, Kekuatan Kiai Syam didominasi oleh kekuatan lintas batas (boundary-spanning power) melalui modal sosial grassroots dan intervensi masalah komunitas, sementara Kekuatan Kiai Bahruddin dominan pada kedalaman spiritual dan institusional melalui sanad tarekat dan aset formal. Dampaknya, kekuatan ini secara kolektif menghasilkan komitmen melalui dua mekanisme: loyalitas afektif atau komitmen moral (didorong oleh karisma, spiritual, moral) dan komitmen kalkulatif (didorong oleh sosial dan instrumental). Kontribusi studi ini adalah memberikan pemahaman mendalam mengenai tipologi kepemimpinan Kiai yang multidimensi, menawarkan kerangka kerja berbasis bukti tentang mekanisme pengaruh kepemimpinan di pesantren, dan menyajikan rekomendasi praktis untuk menjaga kohesi organisasi di tengah tuntutan profesionalisasi manajerial.

Kata Kunci: Sumber Kekuatan Kiai, Komitmen Organisasi, Pondok Pesantren.

Abstract

This study aims to empirically identify, map, and analyze the specific sources of Kiai Power encompassing both Position Power and Personal Power that foster organizational commitment within the Islamic Boarding School environment, thereby addressing a research gap concerning the precise mechanisms of Kiai Power. Employing a qualitative approach with a multi-case study design focusing on Kiai Abdullah Syam (PRAA) and KH Soleh Bahruddin (PN), the research collected data through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documents. The key findings reveal that the Kiai's power to drive organizational commitment stems from five unique dimensions: Charismatic, Spiritual, Moral, Social, and Instrumental Power. Compared with Kiai Syam, Kiai Bahruddin's power is dominated by Boundary-Spanning Power through grassroots social capital and real community intervention, whereas Spiritual Depth and Institutional Power dominate Kiai Syam's power via *Tarekat sanad* and formal assets. Consequently, these forces collectively generate commitment through two mechanisms: affective loyalty or moral commitment

(driven by charismatic, spiritual, moral power) and calculative commitment (driven by social and instrumental power). The contribution of this study is to provide a profound understanding of the multidimensional religious leadership typology, to offer an evidence-based framework for leadership influence mechanisms in Islamic Boarding Schools, and to present practical recommendations for maintaining organizational cohesion amid demands for managerial professionalization.

Keywords: Religious Leadership Power, Organizational Commitment, Islamic Boarding School.

INTRODUCTION

Islamic boarding schools play a fundamental and historical role in Indonesia's national education system, extending far beyond conventional formal education. Islamic boarding schools function as religious, social, and cultural institutions that shape the nation's collective identity and moral fabric. These institutions serve as a core center for the transmission of spiritual knowledge (*Turāth*) and are primary producers of human resources for the public and private sectors. In the contemporary context, Islamic boarding schools remain a crucial object of study due to their vital role in maintaining national resilience and fortifying cultural identity amidst the currents of globalization (Husen & Husni, 2025). The unique quality of the Islamic boarding schools as a community with high social control that serves as a guardian of tradition necessitates its selective adaptation to modernization, including through innovation in education and digitalization (Rachman & Hosnan, 2025).

In the leadership structure of Islamic boarding schools, the Kiai occupies a central position and holds the highest authority, which is key to organizational stability and cohesion. Kiai leadership is a unique blend of spiritual, intellectual, and managerial dimensions. The Kiai not only acts as a resource manager but also as a spiritual authority and a charismatic role model. The Kiai's power transcends bureaucratic hierarchy, being grounded in the legitimacy of religious knowledge and lineage, which fosters voluntary compliance across the entire Islamic boarding schools community. This central position ensures that all agendas for change, educational values, and the cultivation of organizational commitment remain centered on the Kiai's leadership, even as the relationship between the santri (Islamic students) and the Kiai itself undergoes change in the context of modernization.

Despite the widespread recognition of the Kiai's central role, a significant research gap persists, particularly in analyzing the mechanisms of power and its influence on organizational behavior, specifically commitment. Most existing studies focus on sociological and religious dimensions but fail to comprehensively examine the specific power bases used by the Kiai namely Position Power vs. Personal Power (Faix & Kisgen, 2024). The phenomena of modernization and the need for professional management (Rachman & Hosnan, 2025) pose challenges to

the traditional system, potentially shifting sources of loyalty among members of the Islamic boarding schools' community. Therefore, an empirical study is necessary to examine how the Kiai's power bases (charismatic, expert, and legitimacy) specifically influence and sustain organizational commitment amid environmental changes, particularly since leadership style has been shown to affect organizational commitment significantly. For a successful leader, the ability to appropriately acquire and use position power and personal power is crucial because both serve as determining forces that can create organizational conditions fostering experimental approaches and initiative or, conversely, implementing systems that inhibit creative thinking, where the innovation potential highly depends on the method used by the leader (Tariq, 2025). Without a strong ability to influence, leaders cannot achieve the intellectual stimulation that encourages critical thinking and challenges the status quo, both key mechanisms for fostering creativity (Celestin & Sujatha, 2024).

In leadership, several sources of power that leaders can use to influence behavior in the work environment include official power, informational power, charismatic power, reward power, and coercive power. Although official power is essential for providing orders and structure, data shows that personal influence is far more effective in motivating followers and encouraging job satisfaction than relying solely on formal power (Al Badi & Abdelfattah, 2025). Therefore, effective leadership requires a strategic balance between formal power derived from position and personal influence grounded in the leader's characteristics and credibility.

Given the identified gap in the limited in-depth study of the Kiai's power and its influence on organizational commitment, this research aims to analyze and empirically test the specific influence of the Kiai's power sources within the Islamic boarding school environment. Specifically, this research has three main objectives: (1) to identify and map the Kiai's power typology encompassing Position Power and Personal Power within the operational context of the pesantren. (2) to describe the influence of each power source on the dimensions of organizational commitment within the Islamic boarding schools community. (3) To provide evidence-based recommendations on the most effective leadership strategies for maintaining organizational cohesion and high loyalty in the pesantren environment amid demands for managerial professionalization and changes in the Kiai-santri relationship.

This study aims to identify and analyze the sources of power used by the Kiai in building organizational commitment among followers in the cases of Kiai Abdullah Syam (Sumberpucung, Malang) and Kiai Sholeh Bahruddin (Prwosari, Pasuruan).

METHODS

This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach with a multi-case study design focusing on Rakyat Al Amin Islamic boarding schools and Ngalah Islamic boarding schools, aiming to analyze the sources of the power of Kiai Abdullah Syam and Kiai Soleh Bahruddin in building organizational commitment. Primary data were collected through in-depth interviews with Kiais, administrators, *ustadz*, Islamic students and community leaders. They were supplemented by participatory observation of leadership interactions and religious rituals within the Islamic boarding school environment. The research procedures and data analysis followed the Marshall & Rossman qualitative methodological framework (Marshall & Rossman, 2000) which included the phases of planning, data collection, data management, thematic coding for identifying sources of Power, and narrative interpretation to produce accurate descriptions of how that Power influences commitment in both institutions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, Kiai's sources of Power for building organizational commitment were identified as five types: charismatic, spiritual, social, moral, and instrumental.

Charismatic Power

First, Kiai Abdullah Syam's charismatic power (Rakyat Al Amin Islamic Boarding Schools). Kiai Abdullah Syam's charismatic Power derives from the community's perception that his personal abilities exceed reasonable limits, as evidenced by social interactions and supernatural demonstrations. His charisma is recognized not only among the *santri* community but also by the non-*santri* community, including marginalized groups. Kiai Abdullah Syam's charisma grew from events considered to have supernatural significance. One of the strongest narratives was during a local arts activity. As one of the pesantren administrators stated,

"During the Bantengan event, many Bantengan players who are usually 'possessed' or have immunity, suddenly cannot use their strength. Suddenly everyone drowned. It happened in front of Kiai Syam. Since then, people have been convinced that Kiai Syam has a power that surpasses the others."

This event demonstrates that his charisma is not merely rhetoric but is believed to be a spiritual or magical Power that can neutralize or control other forces.

Kiai Syam's charisma is also evident in his diverse interactions. These include: first, Kiai Syam is active in Social visit (*Jagong Maton*) activities that cross social boundaries. He is respected by the *santri* community, *abangan* society, and even the underworld community, showing universal acceptance of his personal authority. Second, Demonstration of Expertise: Through martial arts

demonstrations, he presents a powerful physique and skills, further reinforcing his image as a figure possessing qualities that others lack.

Second, KH Soleh Bahruddin's Charismatic Power (Ngalah Islamic Boarding Schools). The charisma of K.H. Soleh Bahruddin is rooted in his followers' belief in a deep spiritual dimension, primarily related to *karomah* (miracle) and *do'a* (prayer). His charismatic Power is manifested in emotional calmness and universal wisdom. Kiai Soleh Bahruddin's charisma is perceived through the spiritual power of his prayers. Followers believe that he is endowed with *karomah* that can exert a positive influence, including healing. As Ngateman expressed,

"We believe that Kiai Soleh's prayers are efficacious. Many people come here with physical or spiritual illnesses, and after being prayed for by him, they feel better. This is not merely medicine, but our conviction in his *karomah* (blessing/miracle) which becomes the source of tranquility."

This belief fosters high obedience and commitment, as followers perceive tangible personal and spiritual benefits from the Kiai's presence. Second, Leadership Style: Smiles and Peace. Kiai Soleh's charisma is evident in his communication style and demeanor when confronting contradictory views. (1) Observation of Attitude: In the researcher's observation, when Kiai Soleh responded to views opposing his commitment to pray and to be a public speaker in all places of worship of other religions, he demonstrated extraordinary calmness. (2) Non-Emotional Response: He only responded with a smile and light jokes without showing emotion or aggressively defending himself.

Researcher's Observation Description, than guests challenged his religious practices, which were considered 'deviating from the established tradition' by some circles, Kiai Soleh smiled and offered light jokes. There was no trace of emotion visible on his face. This very response quieted the guest and ultimately created a sense of peace. This serves as evidence of a calming, charismatic power. This attitude underscores Kiai Soleh's charisma as a wise, peaceful leader with high self-control, a quality often regarded as 'superhuman' in conflict management.

Charismatic leadership is traditionally characterized by the leader's captivating personality and vision, which serve as the primary sources of inspiration and motivation for followers. Charisma creates a strong emotional bond, fosters loyalty, and spurs commitment, which ultimately encourages increased performance and organizational success (Pereira & Yahiaoui, 2025). Charismatic leaders excel at communication and emotional expression, thereby articulating a clear vision, making charisma a highly valued leadership attribute in organizational practice. Nevertheless, the definition of charisma itself has shifted from merely follower attribution or an indicator of leader-follower relations to a measurable communication strategy, which risks simplifying the phenomenon.

The impact of charismatic leadership on organizational performance includes, first, Increased performance (Liegl et al., 2024). Charismatic leadership is associated with increased organizational performance, including higher task performance (Pereira & Yahiaoui, 2025). Second, citizenship behavior, and overall group or organizational success. Third, Motivation and Engagement: Followers of charismatic leaders are often more motivated and engaged, resulting in higher levels of job satisfaction and commitment (Liegl et al., 2024). Fourth, Innovation and Change: Charismatic leaders are effective at driving change and innovation within organizations, often transforming organizational culture and routines (Moon & Lim, 2025). Fifth, Charismatic leadership positively affected affective commitment to change directly and by resilience as a partial mediator (Mangundjaya et al., 2024)

Charismatic leadership is highly effective leadership, marked by the leader's ability to articulate a compelling vision and to communicate and express emotions effectively, supported by self-confidence, a willingness to take risks, and sensitivity to followers' needs. Its primary impact on the organization is very positive, including increased performance, motivation, engagement, innovation, and prosocial behavior. Nevertheless, charismatic leadership entails risks, including follower dependence and superficial practices. Therefore, the long-term success of charismatic leadership requires a balanced approach that integrates charisma with ethical considerations and contextual adaptation. Charismatic power is the primary source of inspiration and motivation and fosters a strong emotional bond with followers. Charisma is derived from the perception that personal ability exceeds reasonable limits. Charismatic Power fosters loyalty and high Commitment, encouraging increased task performance and motivation.

Spiritual Power

Spiritual Power is the fundamental dimension that unifies the sources of Expert Power and Genealogical Power. This Power derives from deep religious knowledge and the validity of the chain of transmission (*sanad*). Both Kiai's are experts (*ulama*) in their respective fields; Kiai Syam excels in the harmonization of Islamic tradition and local culture (For example, combining the art of gamelan with shalawat), while KH Soleh Bahruddin is known as a *Mursyid Tariqat* with a sanad of knowledge extending to Syekh Abdul Qodir Al Jailani. This legitimacy is reinforced by the Genealogy of Knowledge and Family, in which Kiai Soleh specifically links his principle of pluralism to the sanad of his teachers and his lineage (*nasab*). Follower obedience, especially in the Sufi context, becomes totalizing because it rests on the belief that the leader's instructions constitute part of the legitimate spiritual path to God, thereby making spiritual authority the primary guide for behavior.

The essence of authentic Islamic leadership rests on the conviction that the leader's *Tazkiyatun Nafs* (purification of the soul) functions as a mirror and a

magnetic force that determines the spiritual and moral quality of the entire following (*Ummah*). The leader's innate capacity to achieve *Ihsan* (spiritual perfection) serves as a living role model (*uswah hasanah*) that directly influences the followers' readiness to uphold *Tawhid* and implement justice in their collective lives. Therefore, the impact of the leadership (Khilafah) is measured not merely by the success of governance, but by the extent to which the leader's spiritual enlightenment can inspire *Ukhuwah Islamiyah* (Islamic brotherhood) among the followers, raising them to a higher level of collective consciousness and commitment, while simultaneously making social justice a manifestation of the leader's internal perfection (Adeoye, 2024).

For modern and transitional societies that are often exposed to high levels of life pressure, rapid information flows, and social fragmentation, adopting a spiritual lifestyle offers a crucial counterbalance to physical and mental health (Bhagwandas et al., 2025). Spiritual practices such as meditation, reflection, and communal rituals function as natural buffers against stress and anxiety by providing a cognitive pause and strengthening emotional resilience. By fostering a sense of meaning in life and belonging, spirituality helps overcome alienation and isolation often experienced in urban and industrial environments. Its impact extends beyond the physical: it has been shown to lower stress hormones (e.g., cortisol) and to increase immune function, thereby helping individuals in this fast-moving society maintain a holistic balance vital for long-term endurance and productivity.

Spiritual Power is not limited to a single tradition but is found across religious and cultural contexts, indicating the potential for interfaith dialogue and harmonious understanding through mystical consciousness. Even art can evoke spiritual and existential questions, making individuals more open to transcendence. Overall, spiritual Power is a multifaceted concept that significantly influences health, well-being, organizational dynamics, and personal growth, making it a valuable area of study and application across various contexts. Spiritual Power results in Moral Commitment because the leader's instruction is believed to be part of the legitimate spiritual path to God. Furthermore, spirituality acts as a buffer, enhancing followers' emotional resilience to social pressure.

Moral Power

Moral Power is a highly effective form of Personal Power. The leader achieves it through ethical integrity, noble character, and consistent behavior, which serve as examples. This Power is rooted in Referent Power, which derives from followers' respect for and attraction to the leader's positive characteristics. In the context of the pesantren, the Kiai's Moral Power operates through the formation of social and ethical norms, where followers are encouraged to adopt the leader's attitudes and values.

The Moral Power of Kiai Abdullah Syam and KH Soleh Bahruddin is manifested in four main aspects: morals, religious knowledge, leadership, and dedication to the community. (1) Ethical Integrity: The Kiai becomes an example because he displays a good, polite, and compassionate personality. Kiai Abdullah Syam demonstrates his morality through a high level of social concern for real problems in the community, such as the loan-shark (usurer) problem, water-source problems, and the formation of mutual-aid teams. [Observation, 20 April 2024]. (2) Emotional Control: KH Soleh Bahruddin demonstrates the highest moral authority through emotional control and compassion when facing criticism, such as when he always responded to insults by saying, "Ignore it. This integrity is also reinforced by his openness to receiving guests at any time, from anyone, even from non-Muslim groups. (Observation, [29 April, 2024]).

Leaders' moral behavior significantly affects followers' openness to ethical influence. This relationship is mediated by the congruence of ethical values between leaders and followers (Bhagwandas et al., 2025). The moral identities of leaders and followers influence followers' perceptions of ethical leadership. Leaders with a strong moral identity are considered more ethical, especially by their followers, who also have a high moral identity (Bhagwandas et al., 2025).

The power held by a formal leader, derived from their structural position, title, or legal mandate, represents only procedural legitimacy, which is often temporary and limited (Adeoye, 2024). The decisive force that shapes behavior and secures loyalty, even within formal leadership, is moral authority. This authority is built on uncompromising integrity, with the consistency between stated values and actual actions serving as the primary measure. When a formal leader, be it a CEO, a General, or a Head of State, makes principled decisions, demonstrates transparency, and is willing to take accountability for mistakes, they establish a deep reservoir of trust. The obedience they receive shifts from fear of sanction to voluntary commitment driven by respect, setting an ethical behavioral standard that permeates the entire organization or community, transforming functional duties into a shared mission.

The impact of moral power on the behavior and loyalty of formal leaders can be analyzed through psychological and sociological mechanisms. Firstly, at the individual level, moral strength fosters moral courage; a principled formal leader often has to make difficult choices, setting aside personal gain or political expediency for a higher purpose. This principled behavior is intrinsically more appealing to followers because it signals that the leader is not merely self-serving. Affective Loyalty followers are not only compliant with rules but also emotionally tied to the values the leader represents. Secondly, moral power functions as Social Capital; in times of uncertainty, the ethical leader provides an anchor of moral stability. The loyalty earned is not a result of manipulation but a collective acknowledgment that the authority is morally legitimate, which ultimately

becomes the most resilient resource for a formal leader to sustain power, influence policy, and navigate crises.

The moral Power of leaders is a multifaceted concept that significantly influences followers' perceptions, behaviors, and ethical standards. Leaders who demonstrate ethical behavior, foster positive moral emotions, and align their actions with moral foundations can effectively guide their followers toward ethical behavior and organizational commitment. This underscores the importance of moral leadership in creating an ethical organizational culture and achieving long-term success.

Social Power

Moral Power is a form of Personal Power that is rooted in ethical integrity, character, and noble behavior made into an example (Referent Power). This Power encourages followers to adopt the Kiai's attitudes and values. The resulting obedience is Moral Involvement. (1) Manifestation (Morals and Compassion): Both Kiai show good, polite, and compassionate morals. (2) Kiai Abdullah Syam: His Moral Power is rooted in a high level of social concern for real community problems. He demonstrates his morality by taking steps to address the usury problem (by forming a savings-and-loan cooperative) and the water-source problem. [Observation, 21 April 2024]. (3) KH Soleh Bahruddin: His Moral Power is seen in emotional control and compassion when facing criticism. He always responds to insults by saying, Ignore it. This integrity is reinforced by his openness to receiving non-Muslim guests and answering damaging accusations about his pluralism idea with knowledge and scientific works. [Observation, 29 April 2024].

Social power is a fundamental force in human interaction, driving collective behavior and decision-making. This power is defined as the potential for an agent, an individual, or a group to influence the attitudes, beliefs, or actions of others, or the followers. Its urgency lies in its ability to maintain order, mobilize resources, and direct shared goals within a social system. The impact of social power on follower behavior is significant and multi-dimensional. Legitimate power and reward power often elicit external compliance, in which followers modify their actions but may not change their internal beliefs. Conversely, referent power, which is based on the follower's respect for and identification with the leader, or expert power, which stems from specialized knowledge, tends to lead to deeper internalization, resulting in long-term changes in attitudes and genuine loyalty (Martorana et al., 2025).

The impact of social power does not merely affect obedience; it can radically alter followers' motivation and morale. Officially instituted power (e.g., a formal position) may primarily elicit extrinsic motivation in followers who act to obtain rewards or avoid punishment. However, types of power that are more rooted in interpersonal relationships and the leader's personal characteristics tend to elicit intrinsic motivation among followers, thereby enhancing job satisfaction,

creativity, and initiative (Brown, 2025). This behavior is far more stable and productive than simple compliance. Conversely, the excessive use of coercive power can have negative consequences, triggering resistance, reducing performance, and even encouraging unethical or defensive behavior from followers seeking to avoid penalty, thereby undermining cohesion and long-term loyalty.

An analysis of the urgency and impact of social power reveals that the stability of a social system is critically dependent on the *type* of power predominantly employed. When a leader relies on coercive and positional power, they create vulnerable relationships based on power transactions; these relationships collapse when supervision is removed or rewards are withdrawn. Conversely, the use of referent and expert power fosters transformational relationships that cultivate a sense of ownership and leadership among followers. This shift is crucial because it ensures the moral and performance continuity of the organization; followers who internalize the leader's values out of respect will continue to act in accordance with those values even in the formal leader's absence, ultimately making social power a potent tool for achieving group cohesion and sustained leadership legitimacy.

Social power is a complex and pervasive social element, extending far beyond formal authority to influence interactions, hierarchies, and individual behaviors. A comprehensive understanding of its strength requires acknowledging its multifaceted nature, not merely as coercion or reward, but also as referent, expertise, and legitimacy. The ethical implications of this power are profound, as the manner in which it is used determines whether it yields superficial compliance, internalized loyalty, or genuine attitude change. Ultimately, by synthesizing these dimensions and integrating diverse theoretical perspectives, we can better appreciate the central role of social power in shaping collective dynamics and profoundly influencing individual choices and behaviors within society.

Instrumental Power

Mechanism of Instrumental Power in the Kiai. Instrumental Power here is evident in the Kiai's ability to control the flow of resources and benefits to followers, thereby triggering Calculative Commitment. Second, Kiai Abdullah Syam: He controls the aid and advocacy system. Instrumental examples include: Utilizing his strategic position as coordinator of the Family Hope Builders of Sumberpucung Sub-district to gain wider access to help the community in the form of government policy advocacy. This is an example of using governmental machinery or systems to exert influence. Managing the system of rotating Umrah assistance, family empowerment program, and renovating houses for the poor, which is in control of the system of material reward exchange. [20 April 2024]

While KH Soleh Bahruddin: His Instrumental Power focuses on controlling the system of spiritual exchange. Through the religious rite of *dzikiran*, he controls

the spiritual mechanism that the community believes can guide them toward spiritual well-being. Instrumental Power is also manifested through control over social norms and group identity, which is highly relevant to social control in a globalized society. Such as Kiai Abdullah Syam: He controls the identity narrative by creating "*Pesantren Rakyat*" with the motto "Where There is a People's Pesantren, It is Forbidden for There to Be Poor, Uneducated, and Powerless People". This identity fosters a positive perception and binds followers who care about marginalized groups.

KH Soleh Bahrudin leverages his strong affiliation with Tarekat annahdliyah and with KH Abdurrahman Wahid to shield his pluralism from negative criticism. This identity is a mechanism for social and political protection for Pesantren Ngalah [28 April 2024]. Instrumental Power functions as a crucial resource-based capital for any leader, representing a specific component of the broader spectrum of Leader Power investigated in research. This power is defined by the leader's ability to mobilize tangible assets, such as financial backing, political connections, or extensive lobbying networks, in order to influence the external environment, particularly government regulations and policies. Leaders with high instrumental capital gain significant leverage to make more strategic and assertive decisions involving large-scale resource allocation and the resolution of external conflicts. Thus, Instrumental Power provides the material foundation that reinforces a leader's overall authority, enabling them to operate beyond the internal boundaries of their organization to actively shape the external "rules of the game" in the organization's interest (Rosita et al., 2023).

In the context of the study linking leader power, decision-making, and organizational development, Instrumental Power contributes significantly to the finding that Leader Power and Decision-Making have a substantial impact. Analytically, Instrumental Power is the catalyst that transforms potential power into tangible action; it provides the resources necessary to support and finance key development decisions. Instrumental capital enables the leader to overcome external hurdles that might otherwise impede organizational development, such as securing regulatory permits or ensuring access to funding channels. Therefore, this resource ensures that strategic decisions (a vital mediator) can be translated quickly and effectively into concrete outcomes, which explains why overall Leader Power exerts a substantial direct effect and reinforces the entire organizational development process.

The Instrumental Power of Kiai Abdullah Syam at Pesantren Rakyat Al Amin (PRAA) primarily stems from social capital and grassroots legitimacy, rather than substantial financial assets or formal elite connections. The Kiai mobilizes unique tangible resources: community trust, active participation from the local populace, and the measurable social impact of their empowerment programs. This instrumental capital enables the Kiai to secure a social license to operate and

attract support from small- to medium-sized donors, while also influencing local-level policy (e.g., favorable permitting or cooperation with village programs). Although this capital may seem small compared to major banks, it is highly effective in a grassroots environment, providing the Kiai with leverage to make strategic decisions focused on sustainability and community self-reliance. The empowerment movement is based on the principle that, where there is Pesantren Rakyat, the existence of poor people is forbidden, as Kiai Abdullah Syam explained in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Pesantren Rakyat of Kiai Abdullah Syam

Conversely, the Instrumental Power at Pesantren Ngalah (PN), led by Kiai Sholeh Bahruddin, is grounded in formal institutional capital and access to centralized elite networks. The strength of the PN leader stems from their ability to mobilize substantial institutional assets (such as extensive property, buildings, and operational scale) and from establishing connections with political figures, government officials, and major donors. This power is deployed to secure large-scale project funding (e.g., modern facility construction), obtain formal grants, and influence macro-level regulations to create a stable operational environment. PN's instrumental capital enables its leader to make strategic decisions focused on expansion, modernization, and securing institutional sustainability through formal channels and established access to power. The role of KH M. Sholeh Bahruddin's spiritual and instrumental strength in initiating interfaith dialogue and harmony within the Islamic boarding school environment is illustrated in Figure 2.



Figure 2. The role of KH M. Sholeh Bahruddin's Spiritual and Instrumental Strength in Initiating Interfaith Dialogue and Harmony Within the Islamic Boarding School Environment

Instrumental Power is a crucial resource for leaders, defined as the ability to mobilize and use tangible resources (such as finance, lobbying networks, and information) to influence the external environment, particularly government policy and regulation. This power allows a leader to actively shape the external "rules of the game" in the interest of their organization, rather than merely being subject to them. The case of the Argentine Credit Unions (Spognardi, 2024) highlights this resource in contrast: while the politically connected banks possessed significant instrumental capital and were able to exert regulatory pressure on the CUs, the CUs' subsequent survival demonstrates that instrumental capital, though vital, is not always the sole or final determinant of business power, as it must be considered alongside Structural Power. This Instrumental Power functions effectively because the controlled system (namely, the social network and organization around the Kiai) operates well.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The core leadership power of the Kiai, which is essential for building organizational commitment, originates from five interconnected dimensions: charismatic power, spiritual power, Moral Power, Social Power, and Instrumental Power. Kiai Abdullah Syam and KH Soleh Bahruddin exhibit distinct configurations of these sources; Kiai Syam relies more on boundary-spanning power, while Kiai Bahruddin relies more on Institutional and Spiritual Depth (*Tarekat sanad*, formal assets, and elite networks), demonstrating that Leader Power is a unique blend of personal, spiritual, and instrumental authority. The combination of these five power sources collectively exerts a potent impact on follower commitment and loyalty through two primary mechanisms. First, charismatic, spiritual, and moral powers together forge internal, affective loyalty (*Affective Loyalty*), where followers are emotionally bound and internalize the Kiai's values because they perceive the authority as spiritually sound (*uswah hasanah*) and ethical. This results in Moral Commitment, in which followers commit because they perceive it as part of the correct spiritual path. Second, Social and Instrumental Powers establish calculative commitment and obedience through the exchange of tangible benefits, either material aid or spiritual benefits. By controlling both mechanisms, the Kiai successfully transforms temporary compliance into stable, long-lasting organizational commitment.

Suggestions for further research are based on the novelty of this study's findings, which identify the Kiai's Power as a unique multidimensional model; therefore, it is recommended to conduct a comparative quantitative study to statistically measure the extent to which Genealogi or *Sanad* and identity power of the Kiai can predict the level of Moral. Furthermore, an in-depth qualitative study is needed to test the effectiveness of the Kiai's Moral power as a check-and-balance mechanism against the potential weaknesses of Charismatic Power, and to

analyze how the Kiai's Instrumental power, particularly in the form of government policy advocacy, can be used as strategic social capital in influencing the allocation of public resources for the benefit of religious organizations

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