

ISLAMIC LEADERSHIP AND HYBRID ECONOMIC ECOSYSTEM FOR SUSTAINABLE PESANTREN-BASED RELIGIOUS TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN INDONESIA

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Abstract

This study analyzes how Islamic leadership shapes a hybrid economic ecosystem in sustainable pesantren-based religious tourism. Pesantren are usually examined as educational and religious institutions, while their role as integrated economic actors remains less developed in current scholarship. This research addresses that gap by examining Pondok Pesantren An-Nur II Al-Murtadlo, Malang, Indonesia, as a single qualitative case. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and institutional document analysis during six months of fieldwork from January to June 2025. The findings show that the pesantren builds economic sustainability through five connected elements: Islamic values, kyai-led governance, multi-sector business integration, resource-sharing mechanisms, and community-oriented tourism outcomes. Cooperatives, transportation services, fuel station operations, educational services, and tourism facilities function as interdependent units rather than separate businesses. This integration supports cross-subsidization, strengthens institutional resilience, and expands community participation. The study proposes the Pesantren Hybrid Islamic Economic Ecosystem model as a conceptual contribution to Islamic economics, social enterprise, institutional governance, and religious tourism studies. The model shows that faith-based institutions can pursue economic resilience without weakening religious, educational, and social missions

Keywords: Hybrid Economy; Islamic Economic Ecosystem; Islamic Leadership; Pesantren; Religious Tourism.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini menganalisis peran kepemimpinan Islam dalam membentuk ekosistem ekonomi hibrida pada pengembangan wisata religi berbasis pesantren yang berkelanjutan. Selama ini pesantren lebih sering dikaji sebagai lembaga pendidikan dan keagamaan, sedangkan perannya sebagai aktor ekonomi terintegrasi belum banyak dijelaskan secara sistematis. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus tunggal di Pondok Pesantren An-Nur II Al-Murtadlo, Malang, Indonesia. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi partisipatif, dan analisis dokumen kelembagaan selama enam bulan, dari Januari hingga Juni 2025. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa keberlanjutan ekonomi pesantren dibangun melalui lima unsur yang saling terkait, yaitu nilai-nilai Islam, tata kelola berbasis kepemimpinan kyai, integrasi unit usaha multisektor, mekanisme berbagi sumber daya, serta luaran wisata yang berorientasi pada masyarakat. Koperasi, transportasi, SPBU, layanan pendidikan, dan fasilitas wisata berfungsi sebagai unit yang saling menopang. Integrasi tersebut mendukung subsidi silang, memperkuat ketahanan kelembagaan, dan memperluas partisipasi masyarakat. Penelitian ini menawarkan model Pesantren Hybrid Islamic Economic Ecosystem sebagai kontribusi bagi kajian ekonomi Islam, kewirausahaan sosial, tata kelola kelembagaan, dan wisata religi.

Kata kunci: ekonomi hibrida; ekosistem ekonomi Islam; kepemimpinan Islam; pesantren; wisata religi

A. INTRODUCTION.

The search for sustainable and socially responsible development models has encouraged scholars to revisit the role of faith-based institutions in economic life. Religious institutions no longer operate only as spaces of worship, moral formation, or spiritual instruction. In many local contexts, they also organize education, social welfare, business activities, community services, and tourism-related initiatives. This shift matters because contemporary development requires institutions that can combine economic performance with ethical responsibility, community trust, and long-term social value. Islamic institutions offer a distinctive setting for this discussion because Islamic economics places justice, trustworthiness, collective benefit, and accountability at the center of economic practice (Chapra, 2000) (Hudaefi & Heryani, 2019a).

Pesantren, or Islamic boarding schools, represent one of the most influential Islamic institutions in Indonesia. Historically, pesantren have served as centers of religious learning, character formation, cultural transmission, and social cohesion (Azra & A, 2014) (Dhofier, 2019). Their authority does not only come from formal organization. It also grows from community trust, the moral position of the kyai, alumni networks, and long-standing relationships with surrounding society. This institutional position enables pesantren to mobilize resources that are often unavailable to purely commercial organizations. The same position also creates

responsibility because pesantren must protect religious legitimacy while responding to changing social and economic needs.

Recent scholarship shows that pesantren increasingly participate in economic development through cooperatives, micro-enterprises, agricultural businesses, transport services, retail units, Islamic finance initiatives, and tourism-based activities (Anggadwita et al., 2021) (Hidayat & Syamsudin, 2020) (Zaki et al., 2022). In this development, pesantren do not simply imitate conventional business organizations. They adapt economic practice to a value system rooted in amanah, barakah, mutual help, and community welfare. This value orientation makes pesantren relevant to social enterprise debates because they pursue financial sustainability while maintaining educational and social missions (Austin et al., 2006) (Defourny & Nyssens, 2017).

At the same time, religious tourism has become an important field of sustainable development. Religious sites attract visitors, stimulate local businesses, create employment, and preserve cultural memory. However, tourism may also produce unequal benefits, environmental pressure, commercialization of sacred spaces, and weak community participation when institutions fail to manage it carefully (Choe, 2025; Romanelli et al., 2021; Shinde, 2022). Recent studies on religious tourism in Indonesia emphasize stakeholder engagement, community response, and sustainability as key issues in destination governance (Hardinie et al., 2024) (Mubasyaroh et al., 2024) (Noer et al., 2024). These studies provide useful insights, yet they rarely explain the internal economic system that enables religious institutions to manage tourism as part of a broader ecosystem.

The existing literature therefore remains fragmented. Studies on pesantren entrepreneurship often focus on one unit, such as a cooperative, business incubator, or microfinance initiative. Studies on religious tourism often focus on visitors, destination image, cultural preservation, or local economic effects. Studies on Islamic leadership usually focus on educational management, teacher commitment, and institutional culture (Ifani & Kartiwi, 2024) (Kholisin & Na'im, 2022) (Sholehah & Suwadi, 2024). Few studies connect these strands into a single framework that explains how leadership, governance, business diversification, religious tourism, and community welfare operate together within one pesantren institution.

This gap is important because sustainability in pesantren does not depend on one economic sector alone. It depends on the ability of the institution to connect multiple units, circulate resources, coordinate actors, and align commercial activities with religious and educational purposes. A cooperative can support santri needs, transportation can support visitor mobility, a fuel station can generate stable cash flow, educational services can produce human capital, and tourism facilities can expand public engagement. These activities become more meaningful when they operate as a coordinated system rather than as separate projects.

This study addresses that gap by proposing the concept of a Pesantren Hybrid Islamic Economic Ecosystem, hereafter PHIEE. The concept positions pesantren as an integrated faith-based ecosystem in which Islamic leadership, institutional governance, multi-sector business activities, resource circulation, and community participation shape economic resilience. The concept differs from conventional approaches that treat pesantren business units as additions to religious education. It argues that economic, educational, social, and religious functions may form a single organizational architecture when guided by value-based governance.

The case of Pondok Pesantren An-Nur II Al-Murtadlo in Malang, East Java, offers a relevant empirical setting. The pesantren has developed educational services, cooperatives, transportation, fuel station activities, tourism facilities, and community engagement programs. These units show how a religious educational institution can participate in the local economy while preserving its core mission. The research asks how Islamic leadership and institutional governance integrate these economic units, how the integration supports sustainability, and how the pesantren's model contributes to religious tourism and community welfare.

The novelty of this article lies in three points. First, it conceptualizes pesantren as a hybrid economic ecosystem rather than as a school with supporting businesses. Second, it explains the mechanisms that connect leadership, governance, business integration, resource sharing, and cross-subsidization. Third, it links pesantren-based tourism to Islamic economics and social enterprise theory. The article contributes to Islamic economics by showing how religious values operate as productive resources. It contributes to institutional theory by explaining how economic activity becomes embedded in religious and social structures. It also contributes to sustainable tourism by showing that religious tourism can be strengthened through internal institutional integration.

This article is organized into five sections. The introduction explains the problem, gap, novelty, and objective of the study. The research method section describes the qualitative case study design, research site, informants, data collection, analysis, and trustworthiness procedures. The results section presents the main empirical themes. The discussion section interprets the findings in relation to Islamic leadership, hybrid organization, institutional governance, social enterprise, and religious tourism literature. The conclusion summarizes the contribution, practical implications, limitations, and future research agenda.

Table 1. Alignment Between Manuscript Structure and LENS Self-Evaluation

Self-evaluation aspect	Revision response in this manuscript
Title and abstract	The revised title contains 14 words. The English abstract contains background, objective, method, findings, conclusion, and implication.
Article length	The manuscript is expanded to the target range of 8,000 to 10,000 words including references.

Method	The method section explains design, site, informants, instruments, data collection, analysis, trustworthiness, and ethics in paragraph form.
Results and discussion	Results and discussion are separated. The largest portion of the manuscript is allocated to findings interpretation and discussion.
Tables and figures	Tables and figures are numbered, titled, placed near the relevant discussion, and cited in the text.
References	References are arranged in APA 7 style and supported by a RIS file for Mendeley import.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a qualitative research approach with a single case study design. This design was selected because the research examined a complex organizational phenomenon within its real institutional context, namely the formation of a hybrid Islamic economic ecosystem in pesantren-based religious tourism. A qualitative case study enables researchers to explore meanings, practices, relationships, and governance processes that cannot be reduced to numerical indicators alone (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) (Yin, 2018). The case study approach was also appropriate because the boundaries between the pesantren as an educational institution, a religious authority, a social actor, and an economic organization are closely connected in daily practice.

The research was conducted at Pondok Pesantren An-Nur II Al-Murtadlo, Bululawang, Malang Regency, East Java, Indonesia. The fieldwork took place for six months, from January to June 2025. The site was selected purposively because it represents a pesantren that has developed multiple economic units while maintaining a strong educational and religious identity. The study focused on the interaction among Islamic leadership, institutional governance, business diversification, religious tourism, and community participation. This focus made An-Nur II a strategic case for developing a conceptual model of faith-based economic resilience.

Data sources included institutional leaders, managers of economic units, tourism coordinators, administrative personnel, alumni representatives, community members, and selected santri involved in educational and economic programs. Informants were chosen through purposive sampling because they had direct knowledge of the pesantren's governance, economic activities, or tourism practices. Snowball sampling was then used to identify additional participants who could clarify emerging themes. The researchers treated participants as knowledge holders who could explain not only what the pesantren does, but also how and why the institution connects religious values with economic action.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews explored leadership practices, governance mechanisms, business unit coordination, community participation,

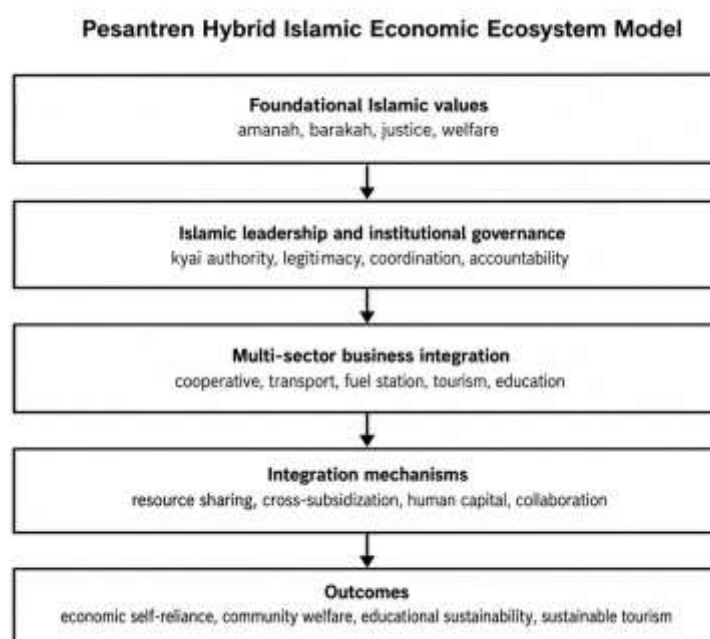
tourism development, resource sharing, and sustainability outcomes. Participant observation focused on institutional activities, interactions among actors, operation of selected economic units, tourism-related practices, and community engagement. Document analysis examined institutional profiles, planning documents, organizational notes, public information, tourism materials, and available records related to pesantren development. These three techniques allowed the researchers to compare narratives, practices, and documentary evidence.

The main research instruments were interview guides, observation protocols, document review forms, field notebooks, and audio recording devices. The interview guide was developed from Islamic economics, institutional theory, social enterprise, and religious tourism literature. The questions were open-ended to allow informants to explain their experience in their own terms. Observations were recorded in field notes that contained descriptions of events, actors, places, and preliminary analytical reflections. Document review forms helped the researchers classify information about governance, business units, educational programs, and tourism activities.

Data analysis followed thematic analysis as developed by (Braun et al., 2014). The researchers first read transcripts, field notes, and documents repeatedly to become familiar with the data. They then generated initial codes related to leadership, values, governance, business integration, resource circulation, community participation, and tourism outcomes. Similar codes were grouped into themes. Themes were reviewed by comparing interview evidence, observation notes, and institutional documents. The final themes were interpreted through Islamic economics, social enterprise, institutional theory, and sustainable tourism literature.

The trustworthiness of the study was strengthened through credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability procedures (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Credibility was supported through triangulation across interviews, observations, and documents. Member checking was conducted by confirming preliminary interpretations with selected informants. Transferability was supported through detailed descriptions of the research context. Dependability was strengthened through systematic documentation of data collection and analysis. Confirmability was maintained by keeping an audit trail of field notes, coding decisions, analytical memos, and document review records. Ethical principles were observed by explaining the purpose of the study, obtaining voluntary participation, and protecting information used for academic analysis.

Figure 1. Pesantren Hybrid Islamic Economic Ecosystem Mode



Source: Developed by the authors based on field analysis, 2025.

Table 2. Research Design and Data Sources

Component	Description	Function in the study
Design	Qualitative single case study	Explains complex institutional and economic integration within one pesantren context
Site	Pondok Pesantren An-Nur II Al-Murtadlo, Malang	Provides an empirical setting for pesantren-based religious tourism and economic ecosystem analysis
Informants	Leaders, managers, coordinators, alumni, community members, and selected santri	Captures perspectives from actors involved in governance, operations, and community engagement
Data collection	In-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis	Supports triangulation and reduces dependence on one source of evidence
Analysis	Thematic analysis	Develops themes related to leadership, governance, integration, resource circulation, and outcomes

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

The results show that Pondok Pesantren An-Nur II operates as more than a religious school with several supporting businesses. The institution demonstrates an integrated economic architecture in which leadership, governance, business units, educational services, religious tourism, and community participation interact. Five empirical themes emerged from the data: Islamic leadership as ecosystem direction, institutional governance as coordination structure, multi-sector business integration as economic base, resource sharing and cross-subsidization as resilience mechanisms, and community-based tourism as social outcome. These themes are summarized in Table 2 and illustrated in Figure 1.

Table 3. Main Empirical Themes

Theme	Empirical meaning	Ecosystem contribution
Islamic leadership	Kyai leadership gives moral direction, legitimacy, and strategic orientation	Aligns economic activities with education, da'wah, and social welfare
Institutional governance	Central direction combines with delegated operational management	Maintains coordination, accountability, and coherence among units
Business integration	Cooperatives, transport, fuel station, tourism, and education operate as connected units	Creates diversified income and operational synergy
Resource circulation	Infrastructure, human resources, surplus, trust, and networks move across units	Supports resilience through sharing and cross-subsidization
Community tourism outcomes	Tourism connects visitors, local actors, and pesantren programs	Expands welfare, learning, and local economic participation

Islamic Leadership as Ecosystem Direction

The first finding concerns the role of Islamic leadership as the main source of ecosystem direction. The kyai's leadership provides moral legitimacy, strategic orientation, and institutional coherence. Economic activities do not stand apart from the pesantren's mission. Managers and participants understand business units as instruments for supporting education, da'wah, social welfare, and institutional independence. This orientation shapes the way economic opportunities are selected, developed, and evaluated. The pesantren does not treat profit as the only measure of success. It also assesses whether an activity strengthens santri development, supports community needs, and maintains public trust.

This leadership role is visible in the way organizational priorities are communicated. Economic activities are framed as part of service to the pesantren community and surrounding society. The language of amanah, barakah, khidmah, and collective welfare appears repeatedly in institutional narratives. Such language does not function as decoration. It becomes a moral filter that guides action. The study therefore identifies Islamic leadership as an ecosystem orchestrator. It connects actors, regulates priorities, and protects the institution from mission drift. In this context, leadership creates value alignment across education, business, tourism, and community programs.

Institutional Governance and Organizational Coordination

The second finding shows that governance mechanisms allow diverse units to work within one institutional frame. Decision-making remains connected to central leadership, while daily operations are delegated to responsible managers and coordinators. This arrangement creates a balance between strategic control and operational flexibility. Centralized direction protects the pesantren's values and long-term mission, while delegated management enables each unit to respond to practical needs. Governance therefore reduces fragmentation among business units.

The governance structure also supports accountability. Economic units are not managed as fully independent businesses with disconnected objectives. They report, coordinate, and align their activities with the broader pesantren agenda. This coordination helps the institution avoid competition among internal units, duplication of resources, and uncontrolled commercialization. The structure also enables the pesantren to respond to financial pressure because managers can identify which units generate surplus, which units require support, and how resources should circulate. The field evidence indicates that governance works as a bridge between moral authority and managerial practice.

Multi-Sector Business Integration

The third finding is the integration of multiple economic sectors. The pesantren's economy includes cooperatives, transport services, fuel station activities, tourism facilities, educational services, and supporting enterprises. These units perform different functions, but they serve one institutional ecosystem. The cooperative supports daily needs and internal circulation. Transportation services support mobility for students, visitors, and institutional activities. The fuel station provides a more stable commercial base. Tourism facilities connect the pesantren to wider society and generate visitor-based economic activity. Educational services remain the central mission and also produce human capital for the ecosystem.

The key feature is not diversification alone, but integration. Many organizations diversify income sources, yet their units remain separate. In this case, the units are connected through governance, shared infrastructure, human resources, and mission orientation. This integration reduces dependence on one revenue stream. It also creates operational synergy because one unit can support

another. For example, tourism activity can increase demand for transport, retail, food, and visitor services. Educational programs can produce disciplined human resources for institutional operations. Business income can support educational and social functions. These interactions make the ecosystem hybrid because it combines commercial, social, religious, and educational logics.

Resource Sharing and Cross-Subsidization

The fourth finding concerns resource sharing and cross-subsidization. The ecosystem works through the circulation of tangible and intangible resources. Tangible resources include infrastructure, facilities, vehicles, business space, and financial surplus. Intangible resources include trust, religious legitimacy, alumni networks, managerial experience, and santri participation. These resources move across units rather than staying in one department. This circulation strengthens institutional resilience because the pesantren can use stronger units to support weaker but socially important functions.

Cross-subsidization is central to this process. Profitable activities can support educational, religious, and social programs that may not generate direct financial return. The mechanism helps the pesantren maintain affordability, continuity, and social contribution. It also shows why the ecosystem should not be evaluated only through business profitability. Some units are valuable because they provide service, training, legitimacy, or community benefit. Others are valuable because they generate surplus. The resilience of the institution grows from the relationship among these functions. Table 3 presents the main integration mechanisms identified in the study.

Community-Based Religious Tourism Outcomes

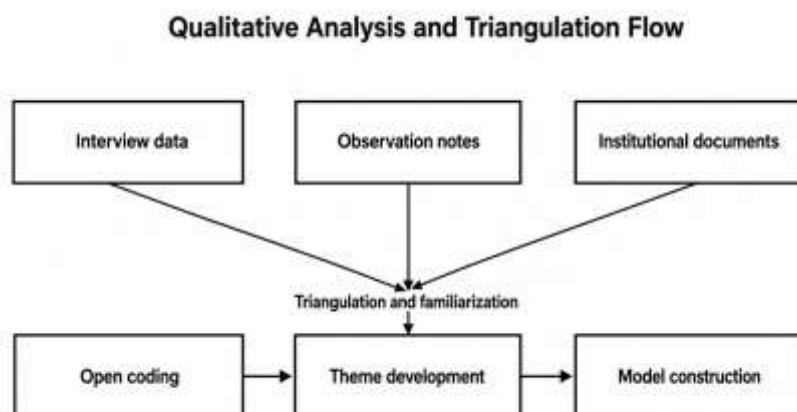
The fifth finding relates to religious tourism and community welfare. Tourism activities around the pesantren do not operate only as commercial visitor services. They become a channel for public engagement, cultural introduction, spiritual learning, and local economic participation. Community members benefit through employment, small-scale business opportunities, service provision, and increased interaction with visitors. The pesantren also gains a wider public role because tourism makes its educational and religious identity visible beyond the internal community.

The field evidence suggests that sustainable tourism depends on more than destination attractiveness. It requires governance, local participation, service coordination, and value alignment. In An-Nur II, tourism activity connects with transport, retail, education, religious events, and community relations. This connection creates a development pathway in which visitors support local economic circulation, while the pesantren maintains moral and educational control over the tourism experience. Figure 3 presents this pathway as a movement from leadership and governance toward economic resilience and social welfare.

Table 4. Integration Mechanisms in the Pesantren Economic Ecosystem

Mechanism	How it works	Sustainability effect
Resource sharing	Facilities, staff, santri participation, and institutional networks support more than one unit	Improves efficiency and reduces operational fragmentation
Cross-subsidization	Surplus from stronger units supports educational, religious, or social functions	Protects social mission during financial pressure
Institutional coordination	Managers coordinate with central leadership and align operations with pesantren objectives	Maintains accountability and value consistency
Human capital development	Santri and alumni participate in learning, service, and business activities	Builds skills, discipline, and ethical entrepreneurship
Community participation	Local residents and small businesses join tourism and service activities	Expands local welfare and strengthens social legitimacy

Figure 2. Qualitative Analysis and Triangulation Flow



Source: Developed by the authors based on (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and field procedure.

D. DISCUSSION

The discussion interprets the findings in relation to Islamic economics, institutional theory, social enterprise, hybrid organization, and sustainable religious tourism. The central argument is that An-Nur II does not merely add businesses to a pesantren structure. It organizes economic activities through a faith-based ecosystem logic. This logic differs from conventional market logic because the institution seeks revenue, legitimacy, welfare, education, and spiritual continuity at the same time. The discussion therefore focuses on the

importance of leadership, governance, integration mechanisms, tourism, community welfare, and theoretical contribution.

Islamic Leadership as an Ecosystem Orchestrator

The findings strengthen the argument that Islamic leadership plays a strategic role in pesantren transformation. Previous studies have shown that spiritual and value-based leadership can strengthen organizational commitment, religiosity, and institutional culture in Islamic educational organizations (Ifani & Kartiwi, 2024) (Ramadania et al., 2023). Studies in LENS I also emphasize the importance of leadership in shaping pesantren morality, educational quality, and institutional planning (Kholisin & Na'im, 2022) (Sholehah & Suwadi, 2024). This study extends those discussions by showing that Islamic leadership also coordinates economic diversification and religious tourism.

The kyai's role in this ecosystem combines moral authority and institutional entrepreneurship. Moral authority gives legitimacy to economic activities because community members believe that business initiatives serve a broader religious and educational mission. Institutional entrepreneurship appears when leadership identifies economic opportunities, mobilizes resources, delegates management, and maintains strategic direction. This combination is important because economic activity can create tension in religious institutions. Without moral control, commercial logic may dominate. Without entrepreneurial capacity, religious institutions may remain dependent on donations or tuition. The An-Nur II case shows that Islamic leadership can combine both dimensions.

This finding also contributes to institutional theory. (Scott, 2014) argues that institutions rest on regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive pillars. The pesantren ecosystem contains all three pillars. Formal rules and management structures provide regulative support. Islamic values provide normative direction. Shared beliefs about kyai authority, barakah, and service provide cultural-cognitive legitimacy. The economic ecosystem becomes stable because these pillars reinforce one another. Economic action is not treated as morally neutral. It becomes embedded in the pesantren's moral order.

The leadership role also helps explain why trust becomes an economic resource. Conventional organizations often rely on contracts, incentives, and formal control. Pesantren-based organizations rely heavily on trust, reputation, obedience, and collective commitment. These features lower coordination costs because actors share a moral vocabulary and institutional identity. Yet this trust also requires accountability. The institution must ensure that trust does not become personal dependency or opaque management. The findings show that governance mechanisms are needed to translate moral authority into accountable economic coordination.

Hybrid Governance and Institutional Resilience

The governance pattern observed in this case can be understood as hybrid governance. It combines religious authority, managerial delegation, social accountability, and economic coordination. This structure differs from

conventional corporate governance because the pesantren does not only answer to owners or shareholders. It answers to santri, parents, alumni, local communities, religious norms, and the long-term continuity of the institution. The governance objective is therefore multidimensional. It must protect educational quality, religious legitimacy, financial sustainability, and community benefit.

This finding supports the literature on hybrid organizations. (Battilana & Dorado, 2010) explain that hybrid organizations combine different institutional logics, while (Pache & Santos, 2013) show that organizations may selectively couple elements from competing logics. In An-Nur II, the pesantren combines religious, educational, social, and commercial logics. It does not eliminate the tension among these logics. It manages them through leadership, institutional mission, and resource circulation. This process confirms (Smith & Lewis, 2011) view that organizations can maintain dynamic balance when they recognize and manage paradoxes rather than deny them.

Institutional resilience emerges because the pesantren avoids dependence on a single source of income. Many educational institutions face vulnerability when they rely only on tuition, donations, or external funding. A diversified ecosystem reduces this risk. Cooperatives, transport, tourism, fuel station operations, and educational services create different financial flows. When one unit faces pressure, another unit may provide support. This structure resembles the logic of sustainable business model literature, which stresses the need to create value through multiple stakeholder relationships rather than only through narrow profit extraction (Bocken et al., 2014) (Dyllick & Muff, 2016) (Geissdoerfer et al., 2017).

However, the pesantren case adds a specific contribution. Sustainable business model literature often discusses environmental innovation, circular economy, and stakeholder value in corporate contexts. The pesantren ecosystem shows that religious legitimacy, social capital, and educational mission can also become central components of sustainability. The economy is not separate from culture. It is embedded in shared meaning and communal responsibility. This supports Polanyi's idea that economic activities are embedded within social relations and moral arrangements. The implication is clear: the success of pesantren economic development depends not only on business skill, but also on the institution's capacity to protect trust and align action with Islamic values.

Business Integration, Resource Circulation, and Cross-Subsidization

The integration of business units is the most visible economic feature of the An-Nur II model. Previous studies on pesantren empowerment and entrepreneurship show that pesantren can develop business units, train santri, and support surrounding communities (Anggadwita et al., 2021) (Hidayat & Syamsudin, 2020) (Zaki et al., 2022). The specific contribution of this study is the shift from a unit-based view to an ecosystem-based view. A unit-based view asks whether a cooperative, micro-enterprise, or tourism facility succeeds. An

ecosystem-based view asks how these units interact, how resources move among them, and how they support the institution's mission.

This shift matters because economic sustainability cannot be reduced to the profitability of one unit. A cooperative may generate modest profit but provide essential services and learning opportunities. A tourism facility may generate visitor-based revenue and improve public visibility. A fuel station may produce stable cash flow. Educational services may not be measured in profit terms, yet they produce human capital, legitimacy, and long-term community support. The pesantren's strategic strength lies in the ability to connect these different values. This connection is the core of the PHIEE model.

Cross-subsidization plays a crucial role in maintaining this connection. In a purely commercial organization, resources normally flow toward the most profitable activity. In this pesantren ecosystem, resources also flow toward activities that serve educational and social purposes. This mechanism reflects maqasid-oriented economic logic. Wealth is not treated only as private accumulation. It becomes a means to protect religion, knowledge, welfare, and social continuity. This finding supports (Hudaefi & Heryani, 2019b) argument that Islamic economic development should be assessed through welfare and maqasid contribution, not only financial indicators.

The role of santri involvement also deserves attention. Santri are not only learners. They can become participants in economic activities, service delivery, and institutional routines. This involvement provides practical learning about entrepreneurship, discipline, responsibility, and teamwork. It also helps reproduce the pesantren's value system in business practice. Entrepreneurship education in this setting is not only about market skill. It includes ethical formation. This point connects with recent LENS studies on the relevance of traditional Islamic learning and leadership for modern educational quality (Luqman & Karim, 2025) (Mas'ud et al., 2025).

The mechanism of resource circulation also strengthens community relations. Local residents can participate as workers, suppliers, vendors, service providers, and partners. Alumni networks can support promotion, trust, and institutional reputation. Visitors can become consumers and supporters of the pesantren's social mission. These relationships show that the ecosystem creates value beyond its formal organizational boundary. (Ostrom, 2010) work on polycentric governance helps explain this pattern because complex systems often require coordination among multiple actors rather than control by one actor alone. The pesantren remains central, but the ecosystem depends on relationships across internal and external stakeholders.

Religious Tourism as a Sustainable Development Mechanism

Religious tourism in this study functions as a development mechanism rather than a mere tourism product. Earlier literature explains that religious tourism has grown as a diverse field involving pilgrimage, sacred places, cultural memory, spirituality, and visitor experience (Choe, 2025) (Shinde, 2022). More

recent studies emphasize that religious tourism must be managed through sustainability principles because it affects local communities, cultural heritage, social relations, and environmental conditions (Romanelli et al., 2021) (Shinde, 2022). The An-Nur II case confirms this view but adds an internal institutional dimension. Tourism becomes sustainable when supported by a strong governance and economic ecosystem.

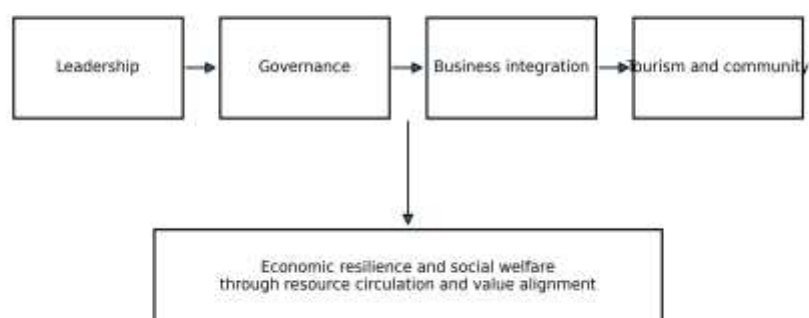
The comparison with Indonesian religious tourism studies is useful. (Hardinie et al., 2024) show that religious tourism can support local identity and economic development when it follows a sustainable paradigm. (Mubasyaroh et al., 2024) emphasize that community participation and stakeholder coordination are necessary for sustainable religious tourism at sacred sites. (Noer et al., 2024) show that sustainability in religious tourism must consider economic, social, cultural, and environmental factors. This study supports those findings. It also extends them by showing that stakeholder participation becomes more stable when a religious institution has internal economic integration.

The pesantren-based tourism model has several advantages. First, it gives tourism a clear moral and educational frame. Visitors do not only consume a destination. They encounter a living educational and religious institution. Second, it improves the local multiplier effect because tourism connects with transport, retail, food services, community enterprises, and santri activities. Third, it protects institutional identity because leadership can define acceptable tourism practices. Fourth, it creates learning opportunities for santri and managers. These advantages make pesantren-based religious tourism different from commercial religious destinations that may prioritize visitor numbers without deeper institutional development.

At the same time, the model contains risks. Tourism can produce crowding, commercialization, uneven benefits, and symbolic simplification of religious life. The pesantren must manage these risks by setting clear governance rules, involving communities fairly, maintaining educational priorities, and evaluating social impact. Sustainable tourism is not achieved automatically because a site is religious. It requires planning, accountability, and coordination. This is why the PHIEE model places tourism at the outcome layer, not at the foundation layer. Tourism becomes sustainable only when values, governance, business integration, and resource-sharing mechanisms operate properly.

Figure 3. Ecosystem Integration Pathway in Pesantren-Based Tourism

Ecosystem Integration Pathway in Pesantren-Based Tourism



Source: Developed by the authors based on field analysis, 2025.

Community Welfare and Maqasid-Oriented Economic Development

The findings show that the pesantren's economic ecosystem contributes to community welfare through employment, local service opportunities, small business participation, social cohesion, and educational continuity. This welfare orientation is consistent with Islamic economic principles that place human well-being and justice at the center of development (Chapra, 2000). It also resonates with maqasid al-shariah because the ecosystem supports religion, knowledge, wealth, life, and social continuity. The economic system does not only generate income. It supports the conditions that allow education, worship, and community life to continue.

Community welfare appears in direct and indirect forms. Direct benefits include work opportunities, service provision, business cooperation, and visitor-based income. Indirect benefits include stronger local trust, institutional stability, access to educational services, and the presence of a respected religious institution that supports social order. The pesantren's economic independence also reduces vulnerability because educational programs can continue even when external support fluctuates. This continuity benefits students, families, and surrounding communities.

The finding strengthens social enterprise literature. Social enterprise studies often analyze how organizations balance financial and social missions (Austin et al., 2006) (Defourny & Nyssens, 2017). The pesantren case shows that some social enterprises also operate with explicit religious commitments. This creates a third mission dimension. The organization must balance economic sustainability, social welfare, and religious legitimacy. This three-dimensional balance is more complex than the usual dual mission of social and commercial value. It also explains why leadership and governance become crucial.

The PHIEE model therefore proposes that faith-based economic development should be evaluated through four connected outcomes: institutional resilience, educational sustainability, community welfare, and responsible tourism development. These outcomes are not isolated. Institutional resilience supports education. Education produces human capital. Human capital supports business and community development. Community welfare strengthens legitimacy. Legitimacy supports tourism and public trust. This circular relationship explains why the ecosystem can sustain itself when managed carefully.

Theoretical Contribution of the PHIEE Model

The main theoretical contribution of this study is the formulation of the Pesantren Hybrid Islamic Economic Ecosystem model. The model consists of five layers. The first layer is foundational Islamic values, including amanah, barakah, justice, mutual help, and collective welfare. The second layer is Islamic leadership and institutional governance, which provide legitimacy, coordination, and accountability. The third layer is multi-sector business integration, which includes cooperatives, transport, fuel station activities, tourism, education, and supporting enterprises. The fourth layer is integration mechanisms, such as resource sharing, cross-subsidization, human capital development, and strategic collaboration. The fifth layer is outcomes, including economic self-reliance, community empowerment, educational sustainability, institutional resilience, and sustainable tourism.

This model contributes to Islamic economics by showing that values can function as economic resources. Values guide decisions, build trust, regulate behavior, and connect actors. They are not only ethical constraints. They become productive assets when embedded in governance and organizational routines. The model contributes to institutional theory by showing how religious, educational, social, and commercial logics can be integrated within one faith-based institution. It contributes to social enterprise theory by introducing religious legitimacy as a core element of hybrid value creation. It contributes to tourism studies by showing that sustainable religious tourism depends on institutional ecosystem design.

The model also offers a corrective to fragmented studies of pesantren economy. A fragmented approach may conclude that one unit succeeds or fails without understanding its role in the broader institution. The PHIEE model encourages researchers to analyze interdependence. It asks how one unit supports another, how surplus circulates, how religious values shape economic choices, how santri learn from participation, and how community actors become part of the system. This approach better captures the complexity of contemporary pesantren.

The model remains context-sensitive. It does not claim that every pesantren can or should develop the same business units. Local history, leadership capacity, community needs, capital access, tourism potential, and governance quality will affect each case. The contribution lies in the analytical architecture, not in a fixed business formula. Other pesantren can adapt the model by

identifying their values, governance structure, economic units, integration mechanisms, and intended outcomes. Comparative research can refine the model by testing it across different regions and pesantren types.

Comparative Reading of Results and Previous Studies

The results answer the initial research objective by explaining not only what economic units exist, but why their connection matters. Earlier studies on santripreneurship and pesantren business education show that Islamic boarding schools can train students to become entrepreneurs and can link religious learning with productive skills (Alifa et al., 2021) (Anggadwita et al., 2021). This study agrees with that argument. It also moves beyond the training perspective by showing that entrepreneurship becomes stronger when it forms part of institutional governance. Santri learning, community services, and business units become mutually supportive when they operate under one coordinated ecosystem.

The findings also extend recent work on social capital in pesantren. (Tahira et al., 2025) show that trust, networks, and community relations support economic independence in a pesantren context. The An-Nur II case confirms this point and shows how social capital becomes operational through resource sharing, cross-subsidization, and visitor-based economic circulation. Social capital does not remain abstract. It appears in alumni support, community trust, internal discipline, and the legitimacy attached to kyai leadership. These elements make economic cooperation possible even when formal market incentives are not the only driver.

The religious tourism findings support and refine recent sustainability studies. (Khoiriyah et al., 2024) review the need to balance positive economic effects with environmental and social concerns in religious tourism. (Budarma et al., 2024) highlight the role of religiosity in sustainable tourism behavior. (Noer et al., 2024) show that Indonesian religious tourism research increasingly discusses economic, social, cultural, and environmental dimensions. This study confirms those themes but adds a pesantren governance perspective. It argues that sustainable religious tourism requires an internal ecosystem that can coordinate values, services, local participation, and economic benefits.

The findings also relate to Islamic educational management. (Rochmania, 2022) emphasizes the importance of planning educational facilities, while (Rahmatullah & Subekti, 2023) show that Islamic education can draw from historical religious traditions to respond to social change. In this study, planning and tradition meet in economic governance. The pesantren does not abandon its educational identity when it develops business units. It uses economic activities to protect and extend that identity. This relationship between continuity and adaptation is one reason the PHIEE model can contribute to Leadership's focus on Islamic education management.

Methodological Reflection and Analytical Boundaries

The study also offers a methodological reflection for future pesantren research. A qualitative case study is useful because it can reveal relationships

among actors, values, routines, and resources that may be invisible in survey data. The PHIEE model emerged from repeated comparison among interviews, observations, and documents. This process made it possible to see how economic sustainability was constructed through daily coordination rather than through formal business ownership alone. The method therefore fits the phenomenon because the ecosystem is relational, contextual, and value laden.

At the same time, the case study design requires careful boundaries. The findings should not be read as proof that all pesantren with business units have become hybrid ecosystems. Some pesantren may operate separate businesses without strong coordination. Others may have values and leadership but lack financial capacity or tourism potential. The model therefore works as an analytical lens. It helps researchers examine whether values, governance, business integration, resource circulation, and outcomes are connected. It does not impose a single formula on all pesantren.

This boundary is important for practical use. Authors, reviewers, and policymakers should avoid turning the model into a checklist of business units. The core issue is not whether a pesantren has a cooperative, transport service, fuel station, or tourism facility. The core issue is whether the institution can integrate its resources in a way that protects education, supports welfare, and maintains accountability. This distinction keeps the model faithful to Islamic educational management because it places mission and governance above business expansion.

Practical Implications for Al-Hikam, Pesantren Leaders, and Policymakers

The findings offer practical implications for journal readers, pesantren leaders, policymakers, and community development practitioners. For pesantren leaders, the study shows that business diversification should not proceed without governance integration. Adding business units may increase revenue, but it may also create fragmentation when the units lack shared direction. The priority should be value alignment, transparent coordination, managerial competence, and clear mechanisms for resource circulation. Leadership must define which economic activities support the pesantren's mission and which activities may create excessive risk.

For policymakers, the study suggests that pesantren can become strategic partners in local economic development and sustainable tourism. Government support should not be limited to infrastructure or occasional entrepreneurship training. It should strengthen governance capacity, financial literacy, human resource development, digital management, halal and tourism standards, and community partnership models. Public policy can also support pesantren by connecting them to responsible tourism networks and Islamic social finance instruments.

For tourism practitioners, the study shows that religious tourism must be managed as a social and institutional ecosystem. Destination planning should include community participation, ethical visitor management, local business

support, cultural preservation, and educational interpretation. Tourism should not reduce pesantren identity to a commodity. It should strengthen the institution's mission and create shared benefit. For academic journals such as Leadership, the case also offers a relevant contribution because it links Islamic educational management with economic governance, community empowerment, and sustainable tourism.

Table 5. Theoretical Contribution Matrix

Field of literature	Existing tendency	Contribution of this study
Islamic economics	Discusses values, maqasid, and welfare as normative foundations	Shows how Islamic values operate as organizational resources in economic integration
Social enterprise	Explains balance between social and commercial missions	Adds religious legitimacy as a third mission dimension in hybrid value creation
Institutional theory	Explains embeddedness, legitimacy, and organizational stability	Shows how religious, educational, social, and commercial logics become coordinated in one ecosystem
Religious tourism	Examines visitors, destination management, and community impact	Explains how internal pesantren governance supports sustainable tourism outcomes
Islamic educational management	Focuses on leadership, learning, and institutional quality	Connects leadership and governance to economic resilience and community welfare

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Pondok Pesantren An-Nur II Al-Murtadlo functions as a hybrid Islamic economic ecosystem in which Islamic leadership, institutional governance, multi-sector business integration, resource circulation, and community-based tourism reinforce one another. The findings answer the research objective by showing that sustainability does not emerge from one business unit alone. It emerges from the pesantren's ability to align economic activity with religious values, educational mission, and community welfare. The kyai's leadership provides moral legitimacy and strategic direction, while governance mechanisms translate that direction into operational coordination.

The study identifies five core elements of the ecosystem. First, Islamic values guide economic behavior and protect the institution from mission drift. Second, leadership and governance provide coordination, accountability, and

legitimacy. Third, diversified business units create multiple revenue streams and practical learning spaces. Fourth, resource sharing and cross-subsidization allow stronger units to support educational and social functions. Fifth, religious tourism expands public engagement and local economic participation when managed through sustainable principles. These elements form the Pesantren Hybrid Islamic Economic Ecosystem model.

Theoretically, the study contributes to Islamic economics by showing that values can operate as productive resources in economic organization. It contributes to social enterprise literature by adding religious legitimacy as a core dimension of hybrid value creation. It contributes to institutional theory by explaining how economic practices become embedded in religious and social structures. It also contributes to religious tourism studies by showing that sustainable tourism depends on internal institutional governance, not only destination attractiveness or visitor demand.

Practically, the study suggests that pesantren can become strategic actors in local economic development when they strengthen governance, diversify responsibly, involve communities, and maintain educational priorities. Policymakers should recognize pesantren not only as educational institutions but also as partners in community welfare and sustainable tourism. Pesantren leaders should build transparent coordination and avoid treating business units as isolated projects.

This research has limitations. It uses a single qualitative case study, so the findings cannot be generalized statistically to all pesantren. The study also depends on available institutional evidence and field interpretation. Future research should compare several pesantren with different economic models, use mixed-method designs to measure social and financial outcomes, and examine the role of digital platforms, Islamic social finance, productive waqf, and halal tourism standards in strengthening pesantren-based ecosystems. Further studies may also test the PHIEE model in other Muslim communities beyond Indonesia.

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