# Exploring Visionary and Transformational Leadership among Islamic Leaders and Its Impact on Job Satisfaction in Indonesian Pesantren

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**Abstract:** The background of this study includes the need for a deeper understanding of the factors that influence job satisfaction of operators in Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools in Banten Province, especially in the context of visionary and transformational leadership. This study explores the impact of visionary and transformational leadership on job satisfaction among operators at Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools in Banten Province. The research employs a quantitative method with a survey technique. One hundred sixty-six operators from Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools in Banten Province participated in the study. Data on visionary leadership, transformational leadership, and job satisfaction were collected using a Likert scale questionnaire with five response options. The questionnaire was validated before use. Data analysis was conducted using multiple regression analysis. The findings indicate that transformational leadership significantly affects job satisfaction, while visionary leadership does not. These findings highlight the importance of developing transformational leadership to enhance job satisfaction among operators of Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools, thereby improving their welfare and impacting the quality of Islamic boarding schools and other Islamic educational institutions. The implications of these findings underscore the importance of transformational leadership development as a strategy to improve the welfare and quality of management in the Islamic education environment, which can strengthen the position of pesantren as effective and competitive educational institutions.

**Keywords**: Transformational leadership, visionary leadership, job satisfaction.

## Introduction

Islamic boarding schools (*Pondok Pesantren*) play an irreplaceable role in shaping individual character and spirituality while maintaining religious values in society (Alwasilah, 2013; Maliki et al., 2022; Armila, 2023). Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools serve as crucial educational institutions, teaching distinctive Islamic teachings (Nor, 2021; Arifin, 2022; Minarti & Isroani, 2022) and training the younger generation to become resilient leaders in both religion and daily life (Munir & Ahmad, 2020; Ihsan et al., 2021; Suharto & Fatmawati, 2022; Nasri & Mulyohadi, 2023). However, a significant issue in their daily operations is the low job satisfaction experienced by the operators.

Although extensive research has been conducted on leadership and job satisfaction across various fields (Mihalcea, 2014; Cakmak et al., 2015; Boamah et al., 2018; Toyib et al., 2020; Juhji et al., 2022; Syahid et al., 2022), studies explicitly addressing the impact of visionary and transformational leadership on the job satisfaction of operators in Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools are limited. Therefore, this study investigates the direct influence of visionary and transformational leadership on the job satisfaction of operators in Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools in Banten Province. This research aims to contribute significantly to leadership dynamics and job satisfaction in Islamic education.

The role of Islamic boarding schools as vital institutions in developing quality religious leaders is increasingly recognized (Kutsiyah, 2020; Priatna, 2020). Despite this, it is essential to acknowledge that while much attention has been given to educational and religious development, there needs to be more focus on the job satisfaction of key behind-the-scenes players, the operators. Low job satisfaction among these operators can significantly impact management effectiveness in Islamic boarding schools. Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools, as significant entities in Islamic education, need help managing the job satisfaction of their operators. Low job satisfaction can negatively affect their performance (Kumar, 2021; Liu et al., 2022; Gumasing & Ilo, 2023), ultimately influencing the quality of education the boarding schools provide. Thus, this study aims to explore the influence of visionary and transformational leadership on the job satisfaction of operators in Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools in Banten Province.

## Research Method

This study employs a quantitative research design to systematically and objectively collect and analyze data. The target population comprises 553 educational operators at Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools in Banten Province. The research sample comprises 166 educational operators from Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools across four districts/cities in Banten

Province. The research procedure began by approaching the management of Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools in these four districts/cities to obtain permission and cooperation. After securing approval, questionnaires were distributed to the educational operators at the Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools. The questionnaires included measures of job satisfaction, visionary leadership, and transformational leadership.

Data was collected through respondents' completion of these questionnaires. The job satisfaction questionnaire assessed the operators' job satisfaction levels, while the visionary and transformational leadership questionnaires gauged their perceptions of the kyai's leadership. The collected data was analyzed using statistical methods, specifically regression analysis, to explore the influence of the studied variables. Regression tests were employed to determine how visionary and transformational leadership impact job satisfaction among the educational operators at Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools.

## Result and Discussion

The data for the variables of visionary leadership and transformational leadership, as they relate to job satisfaction among operators at Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools in Banten Province, were entered and analyzed using SPSS software. The analysis results for these variables are presented in Table 1 below.

**Table 1 Model Summary Visionary Leadership (X1), Transformational Leadership (X2) Operators Job Satisfaction (Y)**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .649$^a$ | .421 | .414 | 13.708 |
| a. Predictors: (Constant), transformational leadership ($X_2$), visionary leadership ($X_1$) | | | | |
| b. Dependent Variable: operators job satisfaction (Y) | | | | |

Based on the analysis in Table 1, the R Square value of 0.421 indicates that visionary leadership (X1) and transformational leadership (X2) together account for 42.1% of the variance in job satisfaction among operators at Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools (Y). These leadership variables can explain approximately 42.1% of the variation in job satisfaction, while the remaining 57.9% is attributed to other factors not examined in this study.

Subsequently, an ANOVA analysis was conducted using SPSS software. The results of the ANOVA for the impact of visionary leadership (X1) and transformational leadership (X2) on job satisfaction (Y) are presented in Table 2 below.

**Table 2 ANOVA Variables Visionary Leadership (X1), Transformational Leadership (X2) Operators Job Satisfaction (Y)**

| | Model | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 22316.529 | 2 | 11158.265 | 59.377 | .000[b] |
| | Residual | 30631.115 | 163 | 187.921 | | |
| | Total | 52947.645 | 165 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: Operators Job Satisfaction (Y)
b. Predictors: (Constant), Transformational Leadership $(X_2)$, Visionary Leadership $(X_1)$

Based on Table 2, the F value is 59.377 with a significance level of 0.000, less than 0.05. Since the F value (59.377) is greater than the F table value (1.463) and the significance value (0.000) is less than 0.05, it can be concluded that visionary leadership (X1) and transformational leadership (X2) have a significant simultaneous effect on job satisfaction (Y) of operators at Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools. Therefore, the regression model is valid, and both visionary and transformational leadership significantly impact job satisfaction among these operators.

These findings demonstrate that visionary and transformational leadership significantly affect job satisfaction at Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools. Previous research by Karakitapoğlu-Aygün et al. (2024) highlighted transformational leadership as a crucial predictor of job satisfaction. Similarly, Siswanto and Yuliana (2022) identified a relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction. However, other factors also influence job satisfaction (Tutuncu & Kozak, 2007; Sypniewska, 2014; Davies et al., 2016; Munir & Rahman, 2016; Arian et al., 2018; Staempfli & Lamarche, 2020). Thus, further research should consider additional factors affecting job satisfaction in Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools.

This research supports Cakmak et al. (2015) 's assertion that leadership impacts job satisfaction. The leadership style of the kyai at Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools is crucial for institutional development according to its vision, mission, and goals, which are achievable through effective cooperation with operators. Achieving these goals requires considering job satisfaction, as Singh and Jain (2013) noted that job satisfaction affects employee performance.

Empirical results from this research indicate that job satisfaction among operators at Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools can be enhanced by applying visionary and transformational leadership styles. It aligns with Cakmak et al. (2015), who found that improved leadership styles increase job satisfaction. Therefore, the study recommends that educational institutions adopt visionary and transformational leadership to ensure high-quality education through improved performance influenced by job satisfaction.

According to Hidayah (2014), visionary leadership involves a leader's ability to create, formulate, communicate, socialize, transform, and implement ideal thoughts as future organizational goals are achieved through the commitment of all members. Visionary leadership affects job satisfaction. Chung and Li (2021) describe transformational leadership as motivating subordinates to achieve higher goals and increasing their intrinsic motivation, which also impacts job satisfaction.

Thus, visionary leadership, including the leader's ability to set the organization's direction, act as a spokesperson, coach, and anticipate future changes, along with transformational leadership aspects such as intellectual stimulation, individual consideration, idealized influence, and inspirational motivation, jointly impact job satisfaction dimensions like salary, the work itself, coworkers, supervisors, promotions, and the work environment. However, other factors not examined in this study also influence job satisfaction among operators at Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools.

## Conclusions

Transformational and visionary leadership influence job satisfaction among operators at Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools in Banten Province. This study suggests that future research should explore additional factors affecting job satisfaction. Based on these findings, it is recommended that the management of Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools enhance job satisfaction by strengthening transformational and visionary leadership training, improving communication, and creating a supportive work environment.

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