

Strategic Planning of Teacher Human Resource Development to Improve Teaching Quality in Pesantren

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ABSTRACT

The quality of education in pesantren is determined by teacher quality, yet pesantren in Indonesia face persistent challenges in managing teacher human resources, particularly regarding welfare, professional development, and recognition. This study analyzes the strategic planning of teacher human resource (HR) development to improve teaching quality at Pesantren Nurhasanat, Jatisari, Karawang, using Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs as the analytical framework. A qualitative narrative approach was employed, utilizing in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentary analysis with ten informants representing teachers, administrative staff, and institutional leaders. Data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model, with credibility ensured through triangulation and member checking. Physiological and safety needs remain partially unmet due to financial constraints, delayed salary payments, and the absence of pension and occupational insurance schemes. Social needs are moderately fulfilled through collegial relationships and kinship culture, though formal professional learning communities are absent and leadership support is inconsistent. Esteem and self-actualization needs are developing but remain sporadic and individualistic rather than systemic. Effective HR planning in pesantren must integrate Maslow's hierarchical framework with Islamic values, prioritizing foundational welfare before advancing to professional actualization. The study contributes an Islamic-Modified Maslow Hierarchy model for educational HR development.

Keywords: human resource planning; teacher development; teaching quality; pesantren; Maslow's hierarchy

ABSTRAK

Kualitas pendidikan di pesantren ditentukan oleh kualitas gurunya, namun pesantren di Indonesia menghadapi tantangan berkelanjutan dalam mengelola SDM guru, terutama terkait kesejahteraan, pengembangan profesional, dan pengakuan. Penelitian ini menganalisis perencanaan strategis pengembangan sumber daya manusia (SDM) guru untuk meningkatkan kualitas pengajaran di Pesantren Nurhasanat, Jatisari, Karawang, dengan menggunakan Hierarki Kebutuhan Maslow sebagai kerangka analisis. Pendekatan kualitatif naratif diterapkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi partisipatif, dan analisis dokumenter terhadap sepuluh informan yang mewakili guru, tenaga kependidikan, dan pimpinan lembaga. Data dianalisis menggunakan model interaktif Miles dan Huberman, dengan kredibilitas yang dijamin melalui triangulasi dan member checking. Kebutuhan fisiologis dan keamanan masih belum terpenuhi secara optimal akibat keterbatasan keuangan, keterlambatan pembayaran gaji, serta ketiadaan skema pensiun dan asuransi kecelakaan kerja. Kebutuhan sosial terpenuhi secara moderat melalui hubungan kolegal dan budaya kekeluargaan, meskipun komunitas belajar profesional formal belum tersedia dan dukungan pimpinan belum konsisten. Kebutuhan penghargaan dan aktualisasi diri mulai berkembang namun masih bersifat sporadis dan individualistik, bukan sistemik. Perencanaan SDM yang efektif di pesantren harus mengintegrasikan kerangka hierarki Maslow dengan nilai-nilai Islam, memprioritaskan kesejahteraan dasar sebelum melanjutkan ke aktualisasi profesional. Studi ini menyumbangkan model Islamic-Modified Maslow Hierarchy untuk pengembangan SDM pendidikan.

Kata Kunci: perencanaan sumber daya manusia; pengembangan guru; kualitas pengajaran; pesantren; hierarki Maslow

INTRODUCTION

The quality of education in Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) is fundamentally determined by the quality of its teachers. As the primary agents of knowledge transmission and character formation, teachers in pesantren serve not merely as instructors (mu'allim) but as spiritual guides (murabbi) and moral exemplars (uswah hasanah) for their students. This dual role demands not only professional competence but also spiritual resilience and emotional stability—qualities significantly influenced by the extent to which teachers' basic human needs are met within their work environment. Purdawan (2025) demonstrates that systematic HR planning significantly influences productivity and quality outcomes, while Maulana and Jarkawi (2025) found that learning management in pesantren requires integrated curriculum approaches and facility optimization. Mardani et al. (2026) confirm that HR policies play a strategic role in ensuring quality and equity of national education, and Eminarni et al. (2025) emphasize that data-driven planning is effective for sustainably improving educational quality.

Despite the recognized importance of teacher quality, pesantren in Indonesia continue to face persistent challenges in managing their human resources effectively. Putri et al. (2025) demonstrated that HR planning and development strategies based on market needs and continuous competency development improve organizational competitiveness—a finding particularly relevant for pesantren, which must balance spiritual values with professional demands. Wardani (2025) further emphasizes that HR planning has become a key element in organizational management strategy amid increasingly competitive business competition. Aditya (2025) adds that digital-based HR competency development is essential for competitiveness in the Industry 4.0 era, while Isnaeni et al. (2026) found that competency development through training and digital utilization increases business capacity and competitiveness.

Existing literature on teacher development in Islamic education has predominantly focused on either financial aspects of teacher welfare or professional dimensions of pedagogical competence. Studies have documented the relationship between teacher welfare and teaching performance (Sutarto & Wibowo, 2020), examined the effectiveness of professional development programs (Adiyanti, 2025), and analyzed the role of leadership in improving teacher quality (Syahril et al., 2025). Khairunnisa et al. (2025) demonstrated that coaching strategies by principals significantly improve teacher performance, while Gumono and Salamun (2025) found that professional learning communities enhance teacher professionalism. Bapa (2025) found that teacher professional competence in utilizing technology influences teaching quality, and Istiqomah et al. (2025) demonstrated that developing teacher professional competence through learning communities enhances learning quality. However, several gaps remain. First, while

previous research has examined teacher welfare and competence as separate variables, few studies have explored how these dimensions interact within a hierarchical needs framework in pesantren settings. The interconnected nature of human needs—where foundational deficiencies constrain higher-order development—has not been systematically analyzed in Islamic educational institutions.

Second, existing studies have not systematically mapped the specific conditions of physiological, safety, social, esteem, and self-actualization needs among pesantren teachers in rapidly industrializing regions such as Karawang, where socio-economic transformations create distinctive challenges for institutional resource management. Aifu and Mokodompit (2025) revealed that limited training, lack of technology access, and inadequate infrastructure significantly impact service quality, yet similar assessments in pesantren contexts remain scarce. Astuti et al. (2026) identified that HR development in resource-constrained contexts faces challenges including limited funds and lack of access to information. Astria et al. (2026) similarly found that HR development faces constraints including limited funds and low awareness of training, while Sunaryo et al. (2026) identified that low digital literacy and limited managerial capacity remain significant barriers. Third, there is limited research that translates Maslow's hierarchy into an operational framework for strategic HR planning tailored to pesantren, which simultaneously function as educational institutions, religious communities, and social organizations with unique governance structures centered on the kiai and the yayasan.

The novelty of this research lies in its attempt to integrate Maslow's hierarchical needs theory with Islamic values to construct a comprehensive, operationally relevant model for teacher HR development in pesantren. Rather than treating spiritual motivation and material welfare as competing factors, this study positions them within an integrated framework where spiritual values provide meaning and resilience while material satisfaction provides the foundation for sustained professional engagement. This integration responds to the need for management theories that are culturally and religiously contextualized, as highlighted by Dwi Prasetyo (2026), who found that HRM success in pesantren-based schools is largely determined by the ability to integrate modern management principles with pesantren values. Gusfirullah and Kurniawaty (2025) demonstrated that effective HR management in pesantren improves teacher productivity and student learning outcomes. Permatasari (2025) found that integrated HR management builds a quality assurance cycle and positively impacts teacher competency and welfare. Furthermore, the study contributes a contextually grounded understanding of how resource-constrained pesantren can prioritize their HR development efforts sequentially.

The research objective is to analyze the strategic planning of teacher HR development in improving teaching quality at Pesantren Nurhasanat, Jatisari, Karawang, using Maslow's needs hierarchy as the analytical framework. Specifically, the study addresses: (1) How are the physiological and safety needs of teachers and administrative staff fulfilled within the pesantren work environment? (2) What is the condition of social needs among educators and administrative staff? (3) To what extent are esteem and self-actualization needs being met through recognition systems, professional autonomy, and development opportunities? (4) How can an integrated HR development model be constructed that synthesizes Maslow's hierarchy with Islamic educational values?

This study matters for several interrelated reasons. Theoretically, it contributes to the development of culturally contextualized management theory by demonstrating how Western motivational frameworks can be critically adapted to Islamic educational settings. As Zulkifli and Haron (2021) argued, Islamic reinterpretation of Maslow's hierarchy in teacher development offers a more holistic understanding of human motivation in religious educational contexts. Practically, the findings provide evidence-based recommendations for pesantren administrators, yayasan managers, and policymakers seeking to enhance the quality of Islamic education through strategic HR development. The study offers a sequential framework for prioritizing interventions under resource constraints. Efriani et al. (2026) highlighted the importance of digital leadership in adapting HR planning to technological changes. Rirmawati and Ali (2026) demonstrated that transformational leadership enables pesantren heads to realize strong visions and create harmonious environments. Syukri et al. (2026) found that HR development strategies significantly enhance organizational competitiveness in the digital era. Utari et al. (2025) demonstrated that optimizing HR planning and development strategies improves employee performance, while Afvandi et al. (2025) found that positive HR planning significantly contributes to organizational effectiveness. Finally, the study contributes to the broader discourse on teacher welfare and professional development in developing countries, where resource limitations necessitate careful prioritization and creative integration of available resources. By attending to the full spectrum of teacher needs—from material welfare to spiritual fulfillment—pesantren can cultivate educators who are not only professionally competent but also spiritually grounded, capable of transmitting knowledge with wisdom and shaping character with integrity.

METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative narrative approach with an interpretive paradigm oriented toward understanding the meanings and subjective experiences of teachers within the social context of pesantren institutions. The narrative

approach was selected because it enables in-depth exploration of how teachers and administrators construct meaning from their work experiences, particularly regarding the fulfillment of their needs and the institutional conditions that shape those experiences. This approach aligns with the research objective, which is not to measure quantifiable variables but to understand the dynamics of needs, motivation, and self-development within the framework of Maslow's theory. As Creswell (2018) noted, qualitative inquiry emphasizes exploration of phenomena in natural settings, with the researcher serving as the primary instrument of data collection and analysis

Research Setting

The research was conducted at Pesantren Nurhasanat in Jatisari Village, Karawang Regency, West Java Province, Indonesia. This location was selected purposively because it represents modern Islamic educational institutions that integrate formal education with boarding-based religious education. Its socio-economic context reflects pesantren in semi-urban areas facing teacher welfare challenges due to limited funding and fluctuating student enrollment (Dwi Prasetyo, 2026; Gusfirullah & Kurniawaty, 2025). Karawang Regency is one of Indonesia's largest industrial zones, where rising living costs have widened the gap between institutional compensation and actual expenses, intensifying welfare challenges and making strategic HR management increasingly critical (Aifu & Mokodompit, 2025; Astuti et al., 2026).

Participants and Sampling

Informants were selected through purposive sampling based on three criteria: (1) minimum two years of service at the pesantren; (2) direct involvement in teaching, administrative functions, or institutional management; and (3) willingness to participate with informed consent. Ten informants were recruited, comprising permanent foundation teachers, contract teachers, security staff, administrative personnel, the public relations officer, the school principal, and a member of the foundation board. This sampling approach aligns with the methodological recommendations of Miles et al. (2014) regarding purposive selection of information-rich cases.

Data Collection Techniques

In-depth Interviews. Semi-structured interviews were conducted using open-ended questions developed based on three dimensions of Maslow's needs theory. Questions addressed economic welfare, job security, social relationships in the workplace, forms of recognition and appreciation, and opportunities for self-actualization. Examples of interview questions included: "How do you assess the adequacy of your current salary and incentives for meeting basic needs?"; "Do you feel secure in your career at this pesantren?"; "How strong is the social support among teachers in facing teaching challenges?"; "Does the recognition provided by the institution match your contributions?"; and "How does the pesantren support

your professional development, such as training or further study?" Interviews were audio-recorded with participant consent, transcribed verbatim, and coded according to relevant themes.

Participatory Observation. The researcher conducted direct observation in the pesantren environment to observe teacher activities and social interactions among staff. Observation focused on teaching activities, teacher meetings, dormitory activities, and religious forums to understand how social and self-actualization needs manifest in daily practice. Observation was conducted over three weeks, with field notes recording the work atmosphere, interpersonal interactions, and forms of institutional support for teachers.

Documentary Study. Documents analyzed included the pesantren organizational structure, personnel data, HR policies, teacher meeting archives, and documented interview results. These documents were used to complement and verify data from interviews and observations, particularly regarding formal policies related to welfare and HR development.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted interactively and simultaneously using the Miles and Huberman (2014) model, which includes three main stages:

Data Reduction. Data obtained from interviews, observations, and documents were selected, focused, and categorized into three dimensions of Maslow's theory: (1) physiological and safety needs; (2) social needs; and (3) esteem and self-actualization needs.

Data Display. Reduced data were organized into matrices, tables, and thematic narratives to facilitate identification of patterns and relationships between variables—for example, the relationship between salary delays and teaching motivation, or between non-formal recognition and teacher self-confidence.

Conclusion Drawing and Verification. The researcher interpreted data based on Maslow's theoretical framework, then verified findings through triangulation across data sources and informants to ensure research validity.

Trustworthiness

To ensure the validity and reliability of research results, four trustworthiness criteria according to Lincoln and Guba (1985) were applied:

Credibility. Achieved through member checking with key informants and triangulation across sources (teachers, administrative staff, and pesantren leadership).

Transferability. Research results are presented in detail to enable application in other pesantren with similar characteristics.

Dependability. The research process was recorded and traceable through field notes, interview transcripts, and supporting documents.

Confirmability. Findings are based on empirical evidence rather than subjective interpretation alone.

Researcher Presence and Ethical Considerations

The researcher acted as a participant observer in teacher meetings, religious discussions, and pesantren social activities to gain contextual understanding without disrupting routine activities. The researcher's presence also served as a reflective instrument for understanding how Maslow's theory applies contextually in Islamic education, where sincerity (ikhlas) and service (khidmah) are integral to educators' work motivation (Zulkifli & Haron, 2021; Dwi Prasetyo, 2026). Ethical principles were adhered to, including official permission, confidentiality of informants, academic data use, and voluntary informed consent.

RESULTS

Physiological and Safety Needs of Teachers and Administrative Staff

The first dimension of analysis concerns the fulfillment of physiological and safety needs, which represent the most fundamental requirements for human motivation. In the context of Pesantren Nurhasanat, interview data revealed that the majority of teachers reported that their basic salary and incentives were insufficient to meet basic living needs. The rising cost of living in the Karawang region, which has become a major industrial area, has created a widening gap between income and family economic requirements.

A permanent foundation teacher explained: "The salary is honestly not enough for daily needs, especially with children's school expenses. We often have to find additional income outside, but that reduces our focus on teaching." This statement illustrates the financial pressure experienced by teachers who must divide their attention between educational responsibilities and economic survival.

Salary payment delays emerged as a recurring theme across interviews. Data revealed that payment delays have occurred frequently since the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting from declines in student enrollment and institutional revenue. One administrative staff member noted: "Since the pandemic, salary delays have become common. Sometimes it's two weeks late, sometimes a month. We understand the institution's condition, but we also have obligations at home."

The institutional perspective, as articulated by a foundation board member, acknowledged these constraints: "We try to pay on time, but when student payments are late, our cash flow is disrupted. We prioritize operational needs first, then salaries." This statement reveals the structural financial vulnerability of pesantren that depend primarily on student fees for revenue.

Regarding safety needs, the research found that job security varies significantly based on employment status. Permanent foundation teachers (Guru Tetap Yayasan) reported a sense of security, as expressed by one informant: "If you're already permanent, it gives you a sense of security for your career at this

pesantren." However, contract teachers expressed concerns about potential termination: "As a contract teacher, there's always worry. Every year we wait to see if our contract will be renewed."

The foundation representative explained the contract renewal process: "Contracts are usually extended annually for up to three years, after which teachers can be proposed for permanent status with recommendation from the department head." This tiered employment structure creates differentiated experiences of job security among teaching staff.

Health and social protection facilities represent another dimension of safety needs. The pesantren has provided BPJS Kesehatan (national health insurance) for most teachers and staff. However, BPJS Ketenagakerjaan (employment insurance) and occupational accident insurance have not been implemented due to foundation budget constraints. Teachers are permitted to register for BPJS independently if they wish additional protection. One informant explained: "BPJS for health is alhamdulillah adequate, but for pension and work accidents, the foundation hasn't budgeted for that."

Social Needs of Educators and Administrative Staff

The second dimension of analysis concerns social needs (belongingness and love needs), which occupy the third level in Maslow's hierarchy after physiological and safety needs. In the context of pesantren education, teachers' social needs encompass not only professional relationships among colleagues but also Islamic brotherhood (ukhuwah Islamiyah), collective spiritual values, and the spirit of service (khidmah) that underlies educational commitment.

Field data indicated that teachers and administrative staff at Pesantren Nurhasanat generally maintain positive interpersonal relationships. They support each other in teaching and social activities, although no formal Professional Learning Community (PLC) exists. A teacher stated: "Communication among colleagues here is good; no one ignores each other. We help each other, although support from leadership sometimes differs between units." This observation suggests strong horizontal social cohesion among teachers, but weaker vertical connections between teachers and institutional leadership.

Communication patterns among teachers were described as familial and effective. Teachers reported being able to share problems and seek solutions together. However, emotional support from leadership was not always consistent. Some teachers felt their innovative ideas were not responded to supportively by unit leaders. One teacher observed: "The junior high school is more open to new ideas, but the senior high school is somewhat rigid. If there's criticism, it's heard, but not necessarily accepted immediately."

Social activities such as halal bihalal (post-Ramadan gatherings), iftar jama'i (communal breaking of fast), national holiday celebrations, and community service work have served as mechanisms for building togetherness and solidarity.

However, these activities have not been routinely conducted since the COVID-19 pandemic. One informant noted: "Before COVID, we had regular gatherings. Now they're rare because priorities have changed." These periodic social activities function as stress relief mechanisms and opportunities for building collective spirit.

A significant finding concerns the absence of an internal Professional Learning Community (PLC) at Pesantren Nurhasanat. Teachers predominantly join external teaching communities outside the pesantren to develop their competencies. One teacher explained: "We don't have a formal forum like a PLC. So, we often join teacher communities at other schools to discuss teaching methods." While this expands professional networks, it simultaneously reduces internal institutional cohesion.

Support from pesantren leadership emerged as a partially fulfilled dimension of social needs. Some informants stated that pesantren leadership provides discussion space but has not been fully proactive in accompanying teacher idea development. Teachers felt accepted but sometimes insufficiently supported concretely when facing difficulties. One teacher noted: "If criticism is conveyed, it's usually heard. But concrete help or support isn't necessarily immediately available."

Esteem and Self-Actualization Needs

The third dimension of analysis concerns esteem needs and self-actualization needs, which represent the two highest levels in Maslow's hierarchy. In the Islamic educational context, these needs are transformed into righteous deeds (*amal shalih*) and intention for the sake of God (*lillahi ta'ala*), where recognition is not merely material but also spiritual. Teachers in pesantren seek not only professional acknowledgment but also the sense that their contributions have worship value and benefit for the community.

Interview data revealed that the formal recognition system at Pesantren Nurhasanat has not operated optimally. Teachers have not received performance-based recognition, learning innovation awards, or specific professional contribution recognition. One teacher stated: "The pesantren hasn't been able to provide appropriate recognition. The focus is still on operations. So, we just carry on with sincerity."

This condition reveals a disparity between intrinsic motivation and external recognition systems. Teachers possess high dedication spirit, but without a clear recognition system, their potential cannot develop maximally. As compensation, the pesantren provides non-formal appreciation, such as "Inspirational Teacher" certificates on National Teacher Day. One informant noted: "Usually on National Teacher Day, we receive an inspirational teacher certificate. It makes us proud, especially if selected by the students themselves."

Despite limited formal recognition, teachers at Pesantren Nurhasanat enjoy significant autonomy in the learning process. Teachers are given freedom to design methods, select media, and innovate in the classroom. One teacher explained: "Teachers have great freedom in designing lessons and choosing methods. Even if we make mistakes, the leadership response is constructive." This freedom creates a healthy work atmosphere and provides psychological recognition through trust and professional acknowledgment.

Regarding self-actualization, teachers' needs have begun to be fulfilled through support for training and further study, albeit in limited capacity. Teachers receive permission and time flexibility to pursue master's degrees, and some have successfully implemented their study results into teaching practice. One informant stated: "The pesantren supports teachers who pursue further study. We're given time permission, teaching hours are reduced, so we can focus on studies."

However, research also found that the pesantren has not provided research facilities or financial support for further education. All financing is done independently by teachers. This indicates that self-actualization needs have begun to grow but remain individualistic rather than systemic.

Structural and cultural barriers still impede teachers in actualizing their best potential. Some teachers felt their innovative ideas were not always received openly by leadership, especially if considered too experimental. One teacher recounted: "I once proposed an idea about an Arabic language teaching kit, but it was rejected because it was considered unsuitable for the children's comprehension level." Such rejections, even when explained with rational reasons, can potentially reduce innovation spirit if not accompanied by constructive feedback mechanisms.

Table 1. Fulfillment of Maslow's Needs Hierarchy at Pesantren Nurhasanat

Need Dimension	Actual Condition	Fulfillment Level
Physiological	Salary insufficient for basic needs; payment delays common	Low
Safety	Health insurance available; pension and accident insurance absent	Partially fulfilled
Social	Strong collegial relations; PLC absent; leadership support inconsistent	Moderately fulfilled
Esteem	Non-formal recognition effective; formal performance-based system absent	Partially fulfilled
Self-Actualization	Study support available; research funding absent; innovation barriers exist	Sporadic

Source: Research data, 2025.

Table 2. Islamic Values Corresponding to Maslow's Hierarchy Levels

Maslow Level	Islamic Value Equivalent	Implementation in Pesantren
Physiological	Kifayah (sufficiency)	Adequate salary and incentives
Safety	Amanah & Istiqamah	Clear employment status, social security
Social	Ukhuwah Islamiyah	Collegial relations, social activities, PLC
Esteem	Al-'Adl (justice)	Formal reward system, professional autonomy
Self-Actualization	Ihsan & Khidmah	Research, innovation, spiritual service

Source: Theoretical synthesis, 2025.

DISCUSSION

The finding that physiological and safety needs remain partially unmet at Pesantren Nurhasanat aligns with broader patterns in Islamic educational institutions across Indonesia. Sutarto and Wibowo (2020) documented that teachers with low welfare levels tend to experience work fatigue and decreased teaching effectiveness, creating a cyclical relationship where financial stress undermines professional performance. The salary delays reported by informants represent a particularly acute form of welfare insecurity that distinguishes pesantren from public educational institutions where salary payments are guaranteed by government budgets. Mardani et al. (2026) similarly found that disparities in teacher certification rates and access to professional development remain significant between urban areas and disadvantaged regions, indicating that welfare challenges are systemic across the Indonesian education sector.

The institutional perspective articulated by foundation board members reveals the structural vulnerability of pesantren financing models. Unlike public schools that receive regular government funding, pesantren depend primarily on student fees, donations, and limited government subsidies. Aifu and Mokodompit (2025) similarly found that financial uncertainty in resource-constrained educational institutions significantly reduced teaching engagement and job satisfaction. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated this vulnerability by reducing student enrollment and family capacity to pay fees. Astuti et al. (2026) confirmed that HR development in resource-constrained contexts faces challenges including limited funds, low awareness of training importance, and lack of support and access to information, though development potential remains large.

The tiered employment structure observed—distinguishing between permanent foundation teachers and contract teachers—creates differentiated experiences of job security. Gusfirullah and Kurniawaty (2025) demonstrated that

the absence of social security in non-government educational institutions negatively affects teacher loyalty and organizational citizenship behavior. The finding that contract teachers experience ongoing anxiety about contract renewal suggests that this tiered system may undermine the psychological security necessary for sustained professional engagement. Khairunnisa et al. (2025) similarly found that planned, participatory, and continuous coaching strategies are essential for improving teacher performance and motivation.

The theoretical implication of these findings for Maslow's hierarchy is significant. The persistence of unmet physiological and safety needs suggests that attempts to promote professional development, innovation, or self-actualization may face fundamental limitations. However, the observed commitment of teachers despite material deprivation points to the operation of what Zulkifli and Haron (2021) termed "spiritual transcendence as a compensatory mechanism for unmet material needs." The Islamic values of *ikhlas* and *khidmah* appear to function as psychological buffers. This compensatory mechanism, however, has limits. Dwi Prasetyo (2026) identified this tension between spiritual motivation and material needs as a distinctive challenge of Islamic educational institutions.

The finding that social needs are moderately fulfilled through strong collegial relationships but limited by the absence of formal professional learning communities illuminates the distinctive social dynamics of *pesantren* work environments. Gumono and Salamun (2025) found that positive social relationships in Islamic educational work environments can enhance job satisfaction and reduce teacher emotional stress. However, the absence of a formal Professional Learning Community (PLC) represents a missed opportunity for systematic professional development. Khairunnisa et al. (2025) demonstrated that establishing internal PLCs in educational institutions improved collaboration quality and learning efficiency. Istiqomah et al. (2025) further found that developing teacher professional competence through learning communities significantly enhances the quality of learning.

The inconsistency in leadership support observed across different units suggests that organizational culture within *pesantren* may vary significantly by subunit. Khairunnisa et al. (2025) identified open communication between teachers and leadership as a prerequisite for healthy collective learning culture. The finding that some teachers feel heard but not necessarily supported in concrete terms suggests that the *pesantren* has achieved a degree of communicative openness but has not yet developed responsive mechanisms that would translate teacher input into tangible institutional action. Syahrial et al. (2025) emphasized that transformational and participatory school leadership that strengthens collaborative culture is a key component of effective HRD strategies.

The theoretical contribution of these findings lies in demonstrating how social needs in *pesantren* contexts are simultaneously professional and spiritual.

Unlike secular workplaces where belongingness primarily concerns collegial relationships, pesantren social needs encompass participation in a community of faith (jama'ah) united by shared spiritual purpose. This dual nature suggests that interventions to strengthen social fulfillment should address both professional collaboration mechanisms and spiritual community-building activities.

The finding that esteem needs are partially fulfilled through non-formal recognition and professional autonomy but remain limited by the absence of formal performance-based recognition systems reveals the complex interplay between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The effectiveness of symbolic rewards, such as the "Inspirational Teacher" certificate, aligns with Adiyanti's (2025) finding that recognition can increase teacher work motivation even without direct financial compensation. The 70:20:10 development model identified in that study provides a useful framework for understanding how recognition can be embedded in daily practice.

The significant autonomy granted to teachers in designing lessons represents a form of structural recognition. Syahrial et al. (2025) found that granting autonomy in teaching enhances teacher self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation. In Islamic terms, this autonomy can be understood as an expression of amanah (trust) and ikhtiyar (discretion). However, the absence of formal recognition systems creates a gap in esteem needs fulfillment. The observed pattern where teachers continue to demonstrate high dedication despite limited formal recognition suggests that intrinsic and spiritual motivation currently sustains their commitment. Khairunnisa et al. (2025) demonstrated that consistent coaching supports the formation of quality assurance mechanisms through monitoring, reflective evaluation, and follow-up coaching.

The finding that self-actualization needs are growing but remain individualistic rather than systemic represents both an opportunity and a challenge. The support provided for teachers pursuing further study demonstrates institutional goodwill. However, the absence of financial support or research facilities means that self-actualization remains dependent on individual initiative. This creates inequity between teachers who can afford further study and those who cannot. Mardani et al. (2026) found that rigid bureaucratic culture in religious educational institutions often hinders creative teaching practices. Wicaksana (2025) similarly found that digital training strategies require continuous support and institutional commitment to produce meaningful improvements. Wardiyatul et al. (2025) demonstrated that innovative teacher strategies such as CLIL significantly increase teacher motivation when learning feels more meaningful and contextual.

The findings support the construction of an integrated model for strategic HR development in pesantren that synthesizes Maslow's hierarchy with Islamic values. This model comprises five interconnected levels: (1) Physiological Needs

and Kifayah; (2) Safety Needs and Amanah; (3) Social Needs and Ukhuwah; (4) Esteem Needs and Al-'Adl; and (5) Self-Actualization and Ihsan. This model provides a comprehensive framework for strategic HR planning in pesantren that is both theoretically grounded and practically actionable. Permatasari (2025) similarly demonstrated that integrated HR management—from recruitment to compensation—builds a quality assurance cycle and positively impacts teacher competency, motivation, and welfare.

At the institutional level, the foundation board and pesantren leadership should prioritize the development of a comprehensive Human Resource Development Plan (HRDP) that addresses all five levels of the integrated model. At the regional and national levels, the findings suggest the need for policies that support pesantren financial sustainability, including equitable access to government subsidies, technical assistance for financial management, and mechanisms for sharing resources across networks of pesantren. Efriani et al. (2026) highlighted the importance of digital leadership in adapting HR planning to technological changes.

For Islamic educational networks, the findings suggest opportunities to develop shared professional learning communities that connect teachers across multiple pesantren. Rirmawati and Ali (2026) demonstrated that transformational leadership enables pesantren heads to realize strong visions and create harmonious environments, suggesting that leadership development should be a priority. Mardani et al. (2026) recommended data-driven planning, expansion of digital-based teacher training, enhanced cross-stakeholder collaboration, and performance-based incentive systems to improve the quality and sustainability of education HR policies. Wardani (2025) emphasized that organizations implementing strategic HR planning can more easily adapt to market changes and leverage new opportunities.

CONCLUSION

This study analyzed the strategic planning of teacher human resource development to improve teaching quality at Pesantren Nurhasanat, Jatisari, Karawang, using Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs as the analytical framework. The main answer to the research objective is that the fulfillment of teacher needs at Pesantren Nurhasanat is uneven across the five levels of Maslow's hierarchy. Physiological and safety needs remain partially unmet due to financial constraints, delayed salary payments, and the absence of pension and occupational insurance schemes. Social needs are moderately fulfilled through collegial relationships and kinship culture, though formal professional learning communities are absent and leadership support is inconsistent. Esteem and self-actualization needs are developing but remain sporadic and individualistic rather than systemic, sustained

primarily by intrinsic and spiritual motivation rather than institutional recognition systems.

The most important theoretical contribution of this study is the Islamic-Modified Maslow Hierarchy for Educational Human Resource Development, which demonstrates how Maslow's framework can be culturally adapted to Islamic educational contexts. This model positions spiritual values not as substitutes for material satisfaction but as complementary dimensions that provide meaning and resilience at every level of need fulfillment. The model advances theoretical understanding by demonstrating that in Islamic educational contexts, self-actualization is understood not merely as individual achievement but as the integration of professional excellence with spiritual purpose—the pursuit of *ihsan* through *khidmah*.

The practical implications support several recommendations for pesantren management. First, the foundational priority must be the improvement of teacher welfare through adequate and timely compensation, expanded social protection, and clearer employment security. Second, the development of internal Professional Learning Communities that integrate professional reflection with spiritual development should be prioritized to strengthen both social needs fulfillment and professional competence. Third, formal recognition systems that reward teaching excellence and innovation should be established to complement existing non-formal recognition. Fourth, research grants and university partnerships should be developed to support teacher self-actualization through systematic professional development rather than individual initiative.

The policy implications extend beyond individual institutions. The findings suggest that government and Islamic educational networks should support pesantren financial sustainability through equitable subsidies, technical assistance, and resource-sharing mechanisms. The development of shared professional learning communities across pesantren networks could provide access to professional development that individual institutions cannot sustain independently. Policymakers should also consider the specific challenges faced by pesantren in semi-urban and industrial areas, where rising living costs create particular pressures on teacher welfare.

The limitations of this study should be acknowledged. As a single case study, the findings are specific to the context of Pesantren Nurhasanat and may not be directly generalizable to pesantren with different characteristics, resources, or locations. The qualitative approach, while providing depth and contextual understanding, does not permit statistical generalization. The study focused on teacher and staff perceptions at a single point in time, and longitudinal research

would be valuable for understanding how HR development strategies affect teacher motivation and teaching quality over extended periods.

Future research should extend this investigation in several directions. Comparative studies across multiple pesantren with varying financial conditions, locations, and management approaches would enhance understanding of how contextual factors shape HR development challenges and opportunities. Quantitative research that measures the relationships between different need dimensions and teacher performance outcomes would complement the qualitative findings of this study. Action research that implements and evaluates specific HR development interventions based on the integrated model would provide practical guidance for pesantren management. Finally, research that explores the perspectives of students and parents on teaching quality would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how teacher development translates into educational outcomes.

This study concludes with the conviction that strategic HR development in pesantren requires both theoretical grounding and spiritual sensitivity. The integration of Maslow's hierarchy with Islamic values offers a framework that respects the distinctive character of Islamic education while addressing the universal human needs that underlie professional motivation and excellence. By attending to the full spectrum of teacher needs—from material welfare to spiritual fulfillment—pesantren can cultivate educators who are not only professionally competent but also spiritually grounded, capable of transmitting knowledge with wisdom and shaping character with integrity.

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