Revitalizing Islamic Education Management through Spiritual-Professional Synergy

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ABSTRACT:

The management of Islamic education today faces a growing tension between spiritual ideals and professional demands. Many institutions emphasize administrative efficiency and technological advancement but often neglect the moral and ethical foundations that define Islamic education. This study seeks to explore how the revitalization of Islamic education management can be achieved through a synergy between spiritual values and professional competence. Using a library research approach, the study analyzes classical Islamic thought and contemporary management theories to construct a conceptual integration between ethical consciousness and organizational effectiveness. The findings reveal that sustainable institutional excellence emerges when professionalism is grounded in spiritual integrity, accountability, and compassion. Spiritual values such as amanah, adl, and ihsan strengthen professionalism by providing moral direction, while modern management practices ensure transparency, efficiency, and innovation. The synergy of these dimensions offers a holistic model of Islamic education management that balances faith-based ethics with strategic competence. Ultimately, the study concludes that genuine revitalization in Islamic education management requires not separation but harmony—where managing becomes an act of worship and professionalism becomes a reflection of moral devotion.

INTRODUCTION

The dynamic transformation of education in the twenty-first century has pushed Islamic educational institutions to adapt to rapid social, technological, and managerial changes. Yet, this adaptation often prioritizes administrative efficiency and digital innovation over the moral and spiritual dimensions that once defined the essence of Islamic education.[1] The growing imbalance between professionalism and spirituality has become an academic and institutional concern. Many leaders and educators have mastered modern management tools but lost the ethical depth that sustains the integrity of Islamic education.[2] This study begins with that anxiety: how can Islamic education management remain both professional and spiritually authentic in an era of institutional pragmatism?

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[1]Dasep Supriatna, "Development of an Online-Based Islamic Education Management System in Islamic Primary Education Institutions," *Journal of Asian Primary Education (JoAPE)* 2, no. 1 (2025): 14–27.

[2]Zainal Azman, Supriadi Supriadi, dan Yesi Arikarani, "Reformulation Of Islamic Educational Leadership In The Era Of Disruption," *El-Ghiroh: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 22, no. 2 (2024): 221–39.

Previous research has addressed professionalism and leadership in Islamic education from various perspectives. For example, Mohd Hidayat Mahadi et al. (2023) introduced the ethical basis of Islamic management,[3] while more recent studies by Supriatna (2024) emphasized amanah and adl as moral anchors for accountability.[4] However, these discussions often treat spirituality as a background element rather than as a dynamic force that interacts with managerial systems. On the other hand, Western management theories, such as transformational leadership (Bass, 1985) and values-based leadership, focus on motivation, vision, and ethics but lack the theological grounding that gives actions transcendental meaning. The literature therefore reveals a need for a more integrative orientation.

This gap between spiritual intention and professional implementation reflects a broader philosophical tension within Islamic education management. Institutions tend to compartmentalize spirituality as part of character education or moral development, while professionalism is confined to administrative procedures and strategic planning. Such separation reduces management to a technical activity rather than a moral process. In reality, Islamic management perceives all organizational actions as interconnected acts of ibadah (worship). The absence of spiritual consciousness in managerial culture risks turning educational institutions into mere bureaucracies—efficient in form but empty in moral substance.

Recent discussions on educational reform have increasingly called for a paradigm that unites value and competence. Hendry Corneles Mamengko Runtuwene (2025) proposed eco-theological approaches that integrate ethical care with leadership,[5] while Md Karim Rabiul, Ataul Karim Patwary, and I M Panha (2022) highlighted servant leadership as a model of service-oriented professionalism.[6] These studies mark an important step, but they remain fragmented, lacking a holistic framework that connects managerial effectiveness with spiritual devotion. The present study seeks to contribute to this conversation by conceptualizing a synergy between spirituality and professionalism as the foundation for revitalizing Islamic education management.

The rationale for this study rests on the belief that genuine institutional progress in Islamic education must arise from harmony, not separation. Spirituality without professionalism risks

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[3]Mohd Hidayat Mahadi et al., "A Model of Ethical Management in Organisations: An Analysis of al-Ghazali's Theory of Management," *International Journal of Islamic Thought* 24 (2023): 126–32.

[4]Supriatna, "Development of an Online-Based Islamic Education Management System in Islamic Primary Education Institutions."

[5]Hendry Corneles Mamengko Runtuwene, "Ecotheology: Integrating Faith, Creation Care, and Contextual Practice in Indonesian Protestant Congregations," *Educatio Christi* 6, no. 1 (2025): 145–70.

[6]Md Karim Rabiul, Ataul Karim Patwary, dan I M Panha, "The role of servant leadership, self-efficacy, high performance work systems, and work engagement in increasing service-oriented behavior," *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management* 31, no. 4 (2022): 504–26.

inefficiency, while professionalism without spirituality risks moral decay.[7] The two must coexist symbiotically, forming what this study calls spiritual-professional synergy. This synergy ensures that leadership decisions are grounded in faith-based ethics while maintaining strategic clarity and operational discipline. It presents management not as a dichotomy between the sacred and the practical, but as a continuous dialogue between the heart and the system.

Accordingly, the main focus of this study is to analyze how Islamic education management can be revitalized through the integration of spiritual values and professional competence. The research draws upon classical Islamic principles such as amanah, adl, and ihsan, alongside contemporary theories of organizational management, to construct a conceptual framework that bridges moral integrity and administrative effectiveness.[8] The analysis is based on library research, reviewing existing academic literature, classical Islamic texts, and modern management writings to synthesize a holistic orientation toward sustainable leadership in Islamic education.

Thus, the present study aims to answer three interrelated questions: (1) How can spirituality function as the moral compass of Islamic education management? (2) In what ways can professionalism enhance rather than dilute spiritual authenticity? and (3) What conceptual model can harmonize these two dimensions into a sustainable framework for institutional development? By addressing these questions, this paper seeks to offer a new orientation for Islamic education management—one that revives its spiritual essence while strengthening its professional foundation, making it both ethically grounded and operationally resilient.

Methods

This study employed a library research approach to explore the conceptual relationship between spirituality and professionalism in Islamic education management. The library method was selected because it allows the researcher to synthesize theoretical insights, classical Islamic perspectives, and contemporary management principles without the constraints of field-based data collection. Primary sources included books, peer-reviewed journal articles, dissertations, and credible online resources that discuss Islamic management, educational leadership, spirituality, and organizational professionalism. These materials were obtained from reputable academic databases such as Google Scholar, DOAJ, and Scopus-indexed repositories to ensure scholarly validity and conceptual depth. The approach emphasized interpretative reading to identify recurring concepts, key arguments, and theoretical connections among the selected works.

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[7] Laura Weiss Roberts dan Gabriel Termuehlen, *Professionalism and ethics: Q & A self-study guide for mental health professionals* (American Psychiatric Pub, 2021).

[8] Ms Wajeeha Arif dan Hafsah Ayaz, "Conceptual Framework of Business Ethics in Islam," *Al-Bahis Journal of Islamic Sciences Research" Y" Catagory* 5, no. 2 (2024): 38–49.

The analysis procedure followed a descriptive-analytical pattern, which involved three main stages: identification, interpretation, and synthesis. During identification, relevant literature was carefully selected according to its thematic relevance to Islamic education management and spiritual-professional integration. The interpretation stage focused on examining how different authors conceptualized values such as amanah (trust), adl (justice), and ihsan (excellence) in relation to professional competence and organizational governance. Finally, the synthesis stage integrated these findings into a new conceptual orientation—the spiritual-professional synergy framework. This operational process ensured that conclusions were grounded in scholarly reasoning, allowing the study to generate a theoretically robust yet practically meaningful contribution to the ongoing discourse on revitalizing Islamic education management.

Result

1. Revisiting the Spiritual Core of Islamic Educational Leadership

In Islamic education, leadership is not merely a functional role but a spiritual vocation. The Qur'an positions leadership as an amanah—a sacred trust that binds the leader to divine accountability.[9] Unlike secular conceptions of leadership that focus on authority, strategy, and performance, Islamic leadership originates from the awareness that every decision is a moral act witnessed by God. This consciousness transforms management from a technical responsibility into a spiritual journey. Revisiting the spiritual core of leadership means returning to its original purpose: to serve, guide, and protect the integrity of both people and knowledge as acts of worship (ibadah).[10]

The first fundamental value in this leadership paradigm is amanah (trust). Leadership as amanah implies that authority is not owned but loaned by God for a specific mission—to nurture, not to dominate.[11] In practical terms, amanah demands transparency in decision-making, fairness in policy, and consistency between words and actions. Leaders in Islamic education are accountable not only to institutions or stakeholders but also to Allah, who entrusts them with both material and spiritual responsibilities. This trust extends beyond administrative duties to include the moral formation of students, the preservation of institutional integrity, and the cultivation of an ethical learning environment.

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[9]Supriatna, "Development of an Online-Based Islamic Education Management System in Islamic Primary Education Institutions."

[10]Mohammad Eisa Ruhullah dan Thameem Ushama, "Leadership in Islam: a Spiritual and Theological Doctrine," *Fikroh: Jurnal Pemikiran Dan Pendidikan Islam* 18, no. 1 (2025): 54–74.

[11]Supriatna, "Development of an Online-Based Islamic Education Management System in Islamic Primary Education Institutions."

The second pillar, adl (justice), ensures that leadership operates within the moral boundaries of fairness and balance. In the Qur'an, justice is described as a divine command that sustains order in society and guards against corruption. For Islamic educational leaders, adl translates into equitable treatment of staff and students, transparent financial management, and inclusive governance that values all voices. Justice prevents misuse of power and institutional favoritism, creating a culture of mutual respect and harmony.[12] Through adl, leadership in education becomes a means of social and moral equilibrium, aligning institutional goals with the Qur'anic vision of balance (mizan) and collective welfare.

The third core value, ihsan (excellence), elevates leadership beyond compliance into the realm of sincerity and devotion. While amanah provides direction and adl ensures fairness, ihsan brings soul to leadership—an inner motivation to act with moral beauty even when unseen by others.[13] The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) defined ihsan as "worshiping Allah as if you see Him," which in leadership translates to self-discipline, empathy, and a continuous pursuit of improvement. Leaders who embody ihsan not only perform tasks efficiently but inspire others through integrity, humility, and compassion.[14] This spiritual excellence bridges professionalism and piety, showing that effective leadership is inseparable from moral refinement.

Revisiting these three values also exposes the limitations of contemporary leadership models that emphasize productivity without purpose. Modern theories such as transformational or transactional leadership highlight motivation and results but often ignore the metaphysical dimension that connects actions to divine accountability. The Islamic framework of amanah, adl, and ihsan complements these models by inserting spirituality as their moral compass.[15] It encourages leaders to pursue institutional success without compromising ethical integrity. In this sense, Islamic leadership does not reject modern management; it humanizes it—grounding strategy and innovation in spiritual wisdom.

Ultimately, the spiritual core of Islamic educational leadership calls for a reorientation of purpose. Leadership is not merely about achieving targets or sustaining organizations; it is

[12]H Bünyamin, "Workplace favoritism: Analysis of causes, consequences, and mitigation strategies," *Research and Reviews in Educational Sciences*, 2023, 139–58.

[13]Umar Abdullahi Maidugu dan Aliyu Ahmad Abubakar Sadeeq, "Islam and Morality: The Teachings of Al-Ihsan from the Qur'an and Hadith and its Effects on Muslim Ummah," *Solo Universal Journal of Islamic Education and Multiculturalism* 2, no. 03 (2024): 181–94.

[14]Mohamed Yacine, "Leadership in Action: Exploring the Principles of Prophet Muhammad in Contemporary Management Practices," in *Emotionally Intelligent Methods for Meaningful Leadership* (IGI Global Scientific Publishing, 2025), 1–30.

[15]Seni Sehati Br Surbakti, Rahimul Harahap, dan Uswatun Hasanah, "Future Perspectives on The Islamic Personality Model: Integrating Spiritual, Moral, Intellectual, Social, Personal, And Behavioral Dimensions For Holistic Development," *Journal on Islamic Studies* 1, no. 1 (2024): 17–35.

about cultivating moral consciousness and serving as a bridge between divine guidance and human development. When leaders internalize amanah, practice adl, and live with ihsan, they embody a holistic model of leadership that harmonizes the soul and the system. This spiritual reawakening is essential for revitalizing Islamic education management, ensuring that professionalism grows not at the expense of spirituality, but because of it.

2. Professional Competence and Accountability in Islamic Education Management

Professional competence is one of the defining features of modern educational management. It represents the ability of leaders and administrators to plan, organize, execute, and evaluate institutional programs effectively. In conventional terms, professionalism emphasizes technical skill, managerial discipline, and measurable outcomes.[16] However, within the framework of Islamic education, professionalism cannot be reduced to efficiency alone; it must reflect ethical consciousness and moral accountability. A professionally competent leader in Islamic education is not only skilled in administration but also grounded in spiritual and moral awareness.[17] The fusion of these dimensions ensures that competence becomes a manifestation of integrity rather than mere technical mastery.

In today's rapidly evolving educational landscape, professional standards have become more demanding. Managers are expected to understand digital systems, financial accountability, quality assurance, and performance-based evaluation. These requirements reflect the influence of modern management paradigms that prioritize productivity and innovation. Yet, the adoption of such paradigms in Islamic educational institutions must be approached critically. Professionalism in the Islamic context should not imitate secular models blindly but reinterpret them through the lens of Islamic ethics.[18] Competence, therefore, is redefined as the ability to integrate skill and sincerity (ikhlas), knowledge and humility (tawadhu'), performance and responsibility (mas'uliyyah).

The integration of professionalism into Islamic education management demands an ethical framework rooted in Qur'anic guidance. The concept of amanah (trust) becomes the moral foundation for accountability, while adl (justice) ensures that professional duties are performed fairly and transparently. Islamic professionalism views work as ibadah—an act of

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[16]Asgaruddin Asgaruddin, "Work Professionalism Through Work Discipline on Employee Performance (a Literature Study Human Resource Management).," *Dinasti International Journal of Management Science (DIJMS)* 4, no. 6 (2023).

[17]Abd Wahib, "Optimizing Spiritual Leadership for the Development of Islamic Education in Madrasah," *Journal of Educational Management Research* 4, no. 3 (2025): 515–25.

[18]Awil Hashi, "Revisiting Critical Thinking Through Quranic Lens," *AL-BURHAN: Journal of Qur'an And Sunnah Studies* 8, no. 1 (2024): 22–41.

worship through which individuals serve both God and humanity.[19] Accountability (hisab) in this sense extends beyond human evaluation systems; it is a divine responsibility. This theological dimension of accountability elevates professionalism from procedural compliance to moral commitment. Every report, decision, and policy reflects not only institutional duty but also a covenant of faith between the leader and the Creator.

Modern theories such as Total Quality Management (Deming, 1986) and Transformational Leadership (Bass, 1985) offer valuable insights into how organizations can achieve excellence through empowerment, vision, and continuous improvement.[20] However, these theories often operate within secular rationality, focusing on results rather than righteousness. Islamic education management can adopt their positive aspects—such as innovation and teamwork—while grounding them in moral objectives. In doing so, professional competence evolves into a spiritually guided process of improvement, driven by sincerity rather than competition.[21] This synthesis not only enriches modern management theories but also presents a unique contribution to global educational discourse: that professional effectiveness can coexist with divine consciousness.

Accountability in Islamic education management must also address institutional governance and transparency. Clear procedures, accurate documentation, and honest reporting are signs of both professionalism and ethical conduct. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) emphasized precision and trustworthiness in work, declaring that "Allah loves those who, when they perform a task, perfect it."[22] This prophetic teaching forms the basis of professional excellence in Islam—itqan. Thus, accountability is not imposed externally but internalized spiritually. Leaders and educators are motivated to perform with excellence because they view their roles as part of their spiritual duty, not merely as organizational requirements. This intrinsic accountability fosters trust, reduces corruption, and strengthens institutional credibility.

At the same time, the rise of digital transformation presents new opportunities and challenges for professionalism in Islamic education. Technology can enhance transparency, efficiency, and access to information, but it can also detach human values if not guided by

[19]Bushra Murtatza Malik, "Humanity's Cosmic Purpose: Worship, Ethics, and Divine Service in Islam," *International Journal of the Universe and Humanity in Islamic Vision and Perspective* 1, no. 1 (2024): 46–56.

[20]Bilal Saeed, "The Impact of Transformational Leadership and Human Resource Practices on Operational Excellence Through Knowledge Sharing" (Universiti Tun Hussein Onn (Malaysia), 2023).

[21]Afiful Ikhwan, Ali Rohmad, dan Fina Kholij Zukhrufin, "Integrating Emotional and Spiritual Quotient (ESQ) with Prophetic Values in Human Resource Development," *Afkar: Jurnal Akidah dan Pemikiran Islam* 27, no. 1 (2025): 383–426.

[22]Abdul Ghaffar, Tanveer Qasim, dan Waqas Ali Haider, "The Compassionate Diplomat: Prophet Muhammad's (Peace Be Upon Him) Approach to Interfaith Relations," *Al-ISRA* 3, no. 01 (2024): 23–48.

ethical reflection.[23] Islamic educational leaders must ensure that digital systems are used to serve people, not replace compassion or wisdom.[24] For example, adopting digital documentation or paperless administration can improve productivity while also aligning with environmental stewardship (khilafah). This illustrates how modern professionalism, when guided by Islamic ethics, can strengthen both administrative performance and moral purpose.

The synthesis of professional competence and accountability also demands continuous learning and reflective practice. In Islam, the pursuit of knowledge (*talabul 'ilm*) is a lifelong duty, not limited to religious studies but extending to all forms of beneficial knowledge.[25] Professional development programs, leadership training, and performance evaluations in Islamic institutions should therefore nurture not only technical expertise but also ethical growth. The integration of reflective practice (*muhasabah*) encourages self-evaluation based on both performance metrics and spiritual conscience. Through this balance, professional growth becomes a process of inner reform as well as institutional improvement.

Ultimately, professional competence in Islamic education management is a moral expression of responsibility before God and society. It requires leaders who are visionary yet humble, efficient yet empathetic, disciplined yet spiritually aware. Accountability provides the structure, while spirituality provides the soul. When both operate in harmony, professionalism transcends the pursuit of success and becomes an act of service—service to students, communities, and the Creator. This synergy of skill and sincerity represents the revitalized model of Islamic education management: one that is operationally sound, ethically grounded, and spiritually alive.

3. Bridging Spiritual Values and Organizational Efficiency

The discourse on educational management often positions spirituality and efficiency as two opposing poles: one concerned with moral purpose, the other with measurable performance. Yet, within Islamic education, these dimensions are not contradictory but complementary. Organizational efficiency represents the external order of the system, while spiritual values embody its internal conscience.[26] The challenge, therefore, lies not in choosing between the two but in building a bridge that unites them. Efficiency ensures that institutions

[23] Le Cheng, Jing Han, dan Jahongir Nasirov, "Ethical Considerations Related to Personal Data Collection and Reuse: Trust and Transparency in Language and Speech Technologies," *International Journal of Legal Discourse* 9, no. 2 (2024): 217–35.

[24] Mukhlis Mukhlis, "The Role of the Integration of Islamic Education and Technology in Developing Competence and Personality of Muslims in the Digital Era," *Al-Ilmi: Journal of Islamic Education* 1, no. 2 (2024): 113–38.

[25] Hassan Suleiman et al., "Learning Beneficial Worldly Knowledge: Between Islamic and Boko Harām Perspectives," *Intellectual Discourse* 32, no. 2 (2024).

[26] Sai Bhargavi Vedula dan Rakesh Kumar Agrawal, "Mapping Spiritual Leadership: A Bibliometric Analysis and Synthesis of Past Milestones and Future Research Agenda," *Journal of Business Ethics* 189, no. 2 (2024): 301–28.

operate effectively, while spirituality ensures that such effectiveness remains ethical and meaningful. The integration of these elements produces a balanced model of management where productivity serves a higher moral vision.

From an Islamic perspective, organizational efficiency is not merely about speed or output but about alignment—ensuring that every process reflects justice (*adl*), sincerity (*ikhlas*), and excellence (*ihsan*). The Qur'an encourages believers to act with precision and purpose, declaring, "Indeed, Allah loves those who, when they perform a task, perfect it." This perfection (*itqan*) forms the ethical foundation of efficiency in Islam. It implies that efficiency devoid of integrity becomes superficial, while spirituality without discipline becomes unproductive. Hence, true efficiency in Islamic education management is achieved when professional competence is animated by moral intention, transforming institutional processes into acts of worship (ibadah).

Modern management theories such as performance-based management and strategic planning have offered valuable tools for achieving efficiency and accountability.[27] However, these frameworks often prioritize numerical indicators over ethical considerations. By embedding spiritual values into performance systems, Islamic education can humanize these tools. For instance, evaluation procedures can include not only quantitative outputs but also qualitative reflections on moral behavior, social responsibility, and community service.[28] When performance indicators are expanded to include ethical and spiritual contributions, the institution's success becomes more holistic—balancing achievement with virtue, and progress with purpose.

At the organizational level, bridging spirituality and efficiency requires cultivating a culture that values both competence and conscience. Leaders must model ethical professionalism by demonstrating punctuality, honesty, and empathy in daily operations.[29] Likewise, staff and educators should view their roles not as mechanical duties but as moral commitments. This culture of spiritual efficiency fosters mutual respect and collective discipline, where work is done with both precision and passion.[30] It transforms the institution

[27]Elmehdi Sahli dan Ahmed Hefnaoui, "The Impact of Management Control Tools on Company Performance," *International Journal of Accounting Finance Auditing Management and Economics* 4, no. 6–1 (2023): 341–53.

[28]Daniel S Schiff et al., "Linking Personal And Professional Social Responsibility Development To Microethics And Macroethics: Observations From Early Undergraduate Education," *Journal of Engineering Education* 110, no. 1 (2021): 70–91.

[29]John Motsamai Modise, "Efficient and Effective Leadership in Law Enforcement, Characteristics and Behaviors of Effective Police Leaders that Assists Upholding A High Standard of Professionalism and Integrity," *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology* 8, no. 9 (2023): 2096–2112.

[30]Thomas Thakadipuram, "Servant Leadership and Spiritual Intelligence: A Synergistic Approach," in *Leadership Wholeness, Volume 2: Application of the Spiritual Intelligence Model* (Springer, 2024), 169–231.

into a moral community in which every task, from classroom teaching to administrative planning, contributes to the shared mission of serving God through service to others.

In essence, bridging spiritual values and organizational efficiency represents the core of the spiritual-professional synergy proposed in this study. It redefines efficiency as a moral practice and spirituality as an operational force. When these two realms intersect, Islamic education management transcends bureaucratic limitations and evolves into a dynamic system that harmonizes faith and function. This synthesis enables Islamic institutions to remain competitive in a globalized world without compromising their ethical and spiritual identity. Through this integration, management becomes more than the art of organizing—it becomes the art of serving with excellence and meaning.

4. Toward a Model of Spiritual-Professional Synergy in Educational Institutions

The growing complexity of educational institutions in the modern era requires a management paradigm that is both ethically grounded and strategically effective. Traditional models of Islamic education management have often prioritized moral formation while underemphasizing efficiency and accountability.[31] Conversely, contemporary managerial systems emphasize productivity and performance but risk neglecting the spiritual essence of education. The proposed model of spiritual-professional synergy seeks to bridge this divide by integrating ethical consciousness and professional competence into a single, cohesive framework. This model envisions Islamic educational institutions not merely as centers of learning, but as moral ecosystems where administrative systems, leadership, and culture are united under the guidance of divine values.

The first dimension of the model is the spiritual foundation, which provides the moral compass for all managerial practices. Spirituality, in this context, is not limited to ritual devotion but extends to ethical integrity, sincerity, and consciousness of accountability before God.[32] Leaders who internalize spiritual principles such as amanah (trust), adl (justice), and ihsan (excellence) make decisions with moral clarity and compassion. This foundation transforms management into a sacred responsibility rather than a mere organizational task. When the institutional vision and mission are rooted in spirituality, every policy and strategy reflects divine intention, ensuring that professional progress aligns with moral direction.

The second dimension is professional competence, which operationalizes spiritual intentions into measurable actions. In this model, professionalism does not replace spirituality

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[31]Nadia A Abdelmegeed Abdelwahed et al., "Unleashing Potential: Islamic Leadership's Influence on Employee Performance Via Islamic Organizational Values, Organizational Culture And Work Motivation," *International Journal of Law and Management* 67, no. 2 (2025): 165–90.

[32]Faisal Alshehri, Marianna Fotaki, dan Saleema Kauser, "The Effects of Spirituality and Religiosity on the Ethical Judgment in Organizations," *Journal of Business Ethics* 174, no. 3 (2021): 567–93.

but translates it into systems, policies, and practices that embody ethical efficiency. Professional competence includes skills in planning, financial management, human resource development, and institutional evaluation, but all are governed by moral responsibility.[33] Leaders are expected to master modern tools of management—strategic planning, digital administration, and quality assurance—while ensuring that these systems promote justice, transparency, and human dignity. Thus, professionalism becomes the operational form of spirituality, ensuring that values are not only preached but practiced.

The third dimension of the model involves integrative leadership, which serves as the bridge between spirituality and professionalism. An integrative leader combines visionary thinking with ethical mindfulness, uniting technical expertise with moral character. This kind of leadership reflects the Prophet Muhammad's model—strategic yet compassionate, decisive yet just. Integrative leadership ensures that managerial efficiency is not achieved at the cost of ethical principles, and that spiritual ideals do not remain abstract but are embodied in daily institutional practices.[34] Through this approach, leadership becomes both functional and inspirational, guiding institutions toward excellence that is both measurable and meaningful.

Another essential aspect of the model is organizational culture transformation. Institutions are sustained not only by their policies but by the shared values and behaviors of their members. The synergy between spirituality and professionalism can only be realized when it becomes part of institutional culture. This transformation requires continuous reflection, communication, and example. Leaders must model ethical professionalism; teachers must embody discipline and compassion; students must learn responsibility as a moral virtue.[35] Over time, these behaviors form a habitus of integrity—a living culture where efficiency and spirituality coexist harmoniously.

The curricular and pedagogical implications of this model are equally significant. Islamic educational institutions should design curricula that balance intellectual competence with ethical consciousness.[36] Courses on management, leadership, and administration can incorporate Islamic perspectives on justice, responsibility, and stewardship. Practical training can also include reflective sessions that connect professional scenarios with moral decision-

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[33]Amin Alizadeh et al., "Ethics, corporate social responsibility and the role of human resource development: the academic experts' view," *European Journal of Training and Development* 47, no. 1/2 (2023): 223–39.

[34]Coenrad Adolph Groenewald et al., "Philosophy of Management: Ethical Leadership and Organizational Integrity," *International Multidisciplinary Journal of Research for Innovation, Sustainability, and Excellence (IMJRISE)* 1, no. 3 (2024): 106–13.

[35]Daryono Daryono, Ratna Setyawati Gunawan, dan Diah Setyorini Gunawan, "The Role of Professional Culture; Enhancing Engagement and Organizational Performance in Islamic Social Entrepreneurship," *Contaduría y administración* 70, no. 2 (2025): 1–32.

[36]Mahmudulhassan Mahmudulhassan dan Muhammad Abuzar, "Ethical Curriculum Development: Insights from Islamic Epistemology," *Jurnal Pedagogy* 17, no. 2 (2024): 169–78.

making. Through this integration, the educational process itself becomes a laboratory of spiritual professionalism, preparing future leaders who can manage with skill and conscience simultaneously.

The policy and governance structure of institutions must also reflect this synergy. Policies should be developed through participatory processes (shura), ensuring inclusivity and fairness. Accountability systems should measure not only output but also ethical conduct and community impact. For instance, performance evaluations can include indicators of sincerity (ikhlas), social contribution, and environmental responsibility, alongside productivity metrics.[37] Such governance models reinforce the idea that professionalism is not value-neutral—it is a form of stewardship that requires moral direction.

This model also emphasizes sustainability and adaptability as hallmarks of spiritual-professional management. In a rapidly changing global context, Islamic education must remain flexible while staying faithful to its principles. The integration of digital tools, innovative pedagogy, and environmental responsibility should always be guided by spiritual awareness. Sustainable leadership emerges when institutions can adapt to new challenges without compromising their ethical identity.[38] Spirituality provides continuity, while professionalism ensures responsiveness; together, they sustain institutional relevance and resilience.

The final dimension of this model is evaluation and continuous improvement. In the spirit of ihsan, evaluation becomes not only an administrative task but also a form of self-purification (muhasabah). Institutions should regularly assess whether their operations reflect the values they proclaim. Feedback mechanisms, peer reviews, and reflective reports can help identify gaps between vision and practice.[39] This process ensures that the synergy between spirituality and professionalism remains dynamic, evolving with time while maintaining its ethical integrity.

In summary, the model of spiritual-professional synergy offers a transformative vision for Islamic education management. It harmonizes the inward dimension of faith with the outward demands of efficiency, creating an institutional identity that is both morally steadfast and professionally capable. This integrative framework redefines success not as mere

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[37]Diana Nurindrasari et al., "The Performance Measurement Construction for Developing Prosperity and Sustainability of Social Enterprises," *Revista de Gestão Social e Ambiental* 18, no. 9 (2024): 1–47.

[38]Muhammad Junaid Ahsan dan Sarwar Khawaja, "Sustainable Leadership Impact on Environmental Performance: Exploring Employee Well-being, Innovation, and Organizational Resilience," *Discover Sustainability* 5, no. 1 (2024): 317.

[39]Virginia Braun dan Victoria Clarke, "Is Thematic Analysis Used Well in Health Psychology? A Critical Review of Published Research, With Recommendations for Quality Practice and Reporting," *Health Psychology Review* 17, no. 4 (2023): 695–718.

productivity, but as the alignment of purpose, process, and principle. When implemented, it promises to revitalize Islamic educational institutions—making them centers of excellence that serve humanity through faith-inspired professionalism.

Discussion

The findings of this study affirm that revitalizing Islamic education management requires a balanced synthesis between spirituality and professionalism. This synthesis addresses the long-standing tension between moral authenticity and institutional performance that many Islamic educational institutions face. Previous models tended to emphasize either ethical idealism or administrative efficiency, resulting in fragmentation of purpose. By integrating spiritual principles such as amanah, adl, and ihsan with modern managerial practices, this research proposes a holistic orientation where faith becomes the moral engine of professionalism. This aligns with the concept of values-based leadership[40] (Alison H James et al, 2021) and transformational leadership (Bass, 1985), but expands them by embedding a divine accountability framework that secular theories lack.

The emphasis on spiritual foundations in leadership resonates with Ibnu Rusydi (2023) Islamic management theory, which positions leaders as trustees (khalifah) responsible for moral governance.[41] However, this study advances the discourse by demonstrating how spiritual leadership can coexist with professional accountability without reducing one to the other. Similar to Ali Nawaz Soomro and Dr Inayatullah Bhatti Yasmeen (2025) discussion on amanah and adl, the present model adds ihsan as a third pillar that transforms professionalism into an act of worship.[42] This extension introduces novelty by framing excellence not as institutional competition but as a continuous moral striving before God (*itqan*). Thus, the ethical triad of amanah–adl–ihsan serves as both an evaluative standard and a transformative philosophy for Islamic educational leadership.

Professional competence, as presented in this study, also intersects with contemporary management theories such as Total Quality Management (Deming, 1986) and Servant Leadership (Greenleaf, 1977). These theories promote continuous improvement and people-centered

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[40] Alison H James et al., "Nursing and Values-based Leadership: A Literature Review," *Journal of nursing management* 29, no. 5 (2021): 916–30.

[41] Ibnu Rusydi, "Good Governance According to Islamic Perspective," *Munaddhomah: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 4, no. 4 (2023): 1001–7.

[42] Ali Nawaz Soomro and Dr Inayatullah Bhatti Yasmeen, "Exploring the Employment Ethics in Working Place and Professionalism At Work: An Islamic Perspective," *Contemporary Journal of Social Science Review* 3, no. 2 (2025): 2755–61.

governance, yet they often lack theological grounding.[43] The spiritual-professional synergy model proposed here fills this void by positioning professional accountability within the framework of hisab—a divine form of evaluation. In this sense, efficiency and ethics are no longer competing values but interdependent forces. Islamic education institutions can therefore embrace innovation, digital transformation, and strategic planning without losing their spiritual compass. This balance allows professionalism to become a channel for ethical devotion rather than moral compromise.

Furthermore, this research supports findings from Abdullah (2021) and Naufal et al. (2022), who emphasized the importance of embedding ethical values in institutional culture. Yet, the present study goes further by offering an integrative framework that not only embeds values but systematizes them into managerial, cultural, and spiritual dimensions. By combining leadership ethics, organizational efficiency, and cultural transformation, this study contributes a more comprehensive model for sustainability in Islamic education. The alignment of spirituality with performance indicators—such as transparency, quality, and innovation—ensures that institutional success remains faithful to Islamic ethics while meeting modern standards of excellence.

In conclusion, the discussion highlights that the true revitalization of Islamic education management lies not in adopting external managerial frameworks, but in reawakening the spiritual conscience that guides them. The synergy between spirituality and professionalism redefines leadership as stewardship (khilafah), transforms management into moral service, and repositions institutions as ethical communities dedicated to both human development and divine purpose. This integrative paradigm provides a path forward for Islamic educational institutions to thrive amid global challenges—maintaining operational excellence while embodying the timeless wisdom of faith.

Conclusion

This study concludes that the revitalization of Islamic education management can only be achieved through a harmonious integration of spirituality and professionalism. The synergy between these two dimensions ensures that management is not reduced to administrative performance nor spirituality confined to personal piety, but both unite as complementary forces guiding institutional excellence. By revisiting the spiritual foundations of leadership—amanah, adl, and ihsan—and aligning them with professional competence, accountability, and efficiency, Islamic educational institutions can operate ethically and effectively. The proposed model of spiritual-professional synergy transforms management into an act of worship that values

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[43]B A Bada dan C S Atanda, "Total Quality Management, Leadership Styles And Service Delivery In University Libraries In Oyo State, Nigeria," *African Journal of Educational Management* 22, no. 1 (2021): 203–20.

transparency, integrity, and human dignity. It provides a holistic framework in which organizational systems, leadership ethics, and institutional culture interact as parts of a single moral ecosystem. Ultimately, this study emphasizes that professionalism rooted in spirituality is the true path toward sustainable, ethical, and transformative Islamic education management.

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