

Date Received : July 2026
Date Revised : July 2026
Date Accepted : July 2026
Date Published : July 2026

MANAGING PESANTREN EDUCATION FOR ALUMNI SELF-ACTUALIZATION: INTEGRATING MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS AND ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVES AMONG GONTOR ALUMNI (1985)

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Kata Kunci:

manajemen pendidikan pesantren; aktualisasi diri alumni; hierarki kebutuhan Maslow; Islamic self-actualization; alumni Gontor.

ABSTRACT

Pendidikan pesantren modern berperan strategis dalam membentuk orientasi hidup, kepemimpinan, dan pengabdian sosial alumninya dalam jangka panjang. Namun, kajian empiris yang mengintegrasikan perspektif manajemen pendidikan pesantren dengan kerangka psikologi motivasi, khususnya pada fase usia dewasa akhir alumni, masih terbatas. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis aktualisasi diri Alumni KMI Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor angkatan 1985 (Alumni Marhalah 2 Zaman) sebagai refleksi efektivitas jangka panjang manajemen pendidikan pesantren. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan mixed-methods dengan desain convergent parallel, melibatkan 134 alumni (79,8% dari populasi hidup) melalui survei kuantitatif dan pertanyaan terbuka, yang dianalisis menggunakan statistik deskriptif dan thematic analysis dalam kerangka integrasi hierarki kebutuhan Maslow dan konsep Islamic Self-Actualization. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan dominasi kiprah alumni pada sektor pendidikan dan dakwah, disertai fenomena multi-profesi dengan rasio rata-rata 2,10 peran profesional per alumni, pencapaian akademik tingkat lanjut (doktor dan profesor), serta kontribusi institusional berupa pendirian dan pengelolaan 41 lembaga pendidikan yang tersebar secara nasional dan internasional. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa aktualisasi diri alumni pesantren tidak berhenti pada pencapaian personal, tetapi berkembang menuju dimensi transendensi yang bersifat kolektif dan institusional. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa manajemen pendidikan pesantren modern efektif membentuk alumni yang mencapai self-actualization dan transcendence secara berkelanjutan, serta memberikan kontribusi nyata bagi penguatan pendidikan Islam dan pembangunan masyarakat lintas generasi..

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Keywords:

pesantren education management; alumni self-actualization; Maslow's hierarchy of needs; Islamic self-actualization; Gontor alumni.

ABSTRACTS

Modern pesantren education plays a significant role in shaping alumni's life orientation, leadership capacity, and long-term social commitment. Nevertheless, empirical studies that systematically integrate pesantren education management with motivational psychology perspectives, particularly in examining alumni at later stages of adulthood, remain limited. This study aims to examine the self-actualization of alumni of KMI Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor class of 1985 (Alumni Marhalah 2 Zaman) as an indicator of the long-term effectiveness of pesantren education management. Employing a mixed-methods approach with a convergent parallel design, the study involved 134 alumni, representing 79.8% of the living population. Data were collected through structured questionnaires and open-ended responses, then analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques and thematic analysis within an integrated framework of Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Islamic self-actualization. The findings demonstrate that alumni predominantly pursue careers in education and da'wah, supported by a strong pattern of multi-professional engagement with an average of 2.10 professional roles per alumnus. Alumni also exhibit high levels of academic attainment, including doctoral and professorial positions, as well as substantial institutional contributions through the establishment and management of 41 educational institutions across national and international contexts. These results suggest that alumni self-actualization is not confined to individual achievement but evolves into a collective and institutional form of transcendence. The study concludes that modern pesantren education management is effective in fostering sustainable self-actualization and transcendence among alumni, while contributing meaningfully to the advancement of Islamic education and broader social development.

A. INTRODUCTION

Pesantren education is one of the oldest and most influential forms of Islamic education in Indonesia and Southeast Asia. As Dhofier explains, pesantren has historically preserved Islamic scholarship and shaped the moral and spiritual character of Muslim communities (2019). Pohl adds that pesantren has also functioned as a social institution that produces religious leaders, community figures, and agents of social change in contemporary Indonesia (2020). In this context, pesantren remains highly relevant in addressing moral education, social cohesion, and human resource development in Muslim society, especially in the post-reform era (Hefner 2024).

In its traditional form, pesantren emphasized mastery of classical Islamic texts, close teacher-student relationships, and a strong culture of discipline and devotion (Dhofier 2019). However, social transformation and globalization have gradually encouraged pesantren to adapt their educational models. Pohl (2020) notes that modern pesantren now integrate religious instruction with general sciences, foreign language proficiency, and leadership training as a response to these changes. Hidayat (2023) further shows that this integration allows pesantren to maintain core religious values while fulfilling modern educational demands.

Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor is widely recognized as one of the pioneers of this modern pesantren model. Zarkasyi (2020) describes Gontor's system as an integrated education that combines formal schooling, character education, extracurricular activities, and communal living. Education at Gontor is designed as a continuous learning process embedded in everyday life, rather than being confined to the classroom. Central to this process is the internalization of the Panca Jiwa Pondok,

such as sincerity, simplicity, self-reliance, Islamic brotherhood, and responsible freedom, which serve as the moral foundation for students' behavior and life orientation (Zarkasyi 2020).

Numerous studies have documented the important contributions of pesantren alumni to Indonesian society. Asy'ari and Munir (2020) report that many pesantren graduates are actively involved in education, da'wah, social services, and community leadership at various levels. Lukens-Bull (2023) further notes that this engagement extends into higher education and civic life, reflecting the broader social influence of Islamic schooling. Despite these contributions, Nugroho (2022) argues that existing research still tends to focus on descriptive outcomes, such as job distribution or social involvement patterns, without exploring deeper motivational and psychological dimensions.

In the field of psychology, Maslow's hierarchy of needs has long been used to explain human motivation and personal development. In Maslow's original formulation, individuals progress from basic physiological and safety needs toward belonging, esteem, and finally self-actualization (Maslow 1954). This framework has inspired many studies on student motivation, career development, and professional fulfillment in educational and organizational settings. However, subsequent scholarship has increasingly questioned how far this model can be generalized across cultures (Koltko-Rivera 2006).

Koltko-Rivera (2006) highlights that Maslow's theory is rooted in an individualistic worldview that may not fully match collectivist societies or religious communities. Early versions of the hierarchy also paid limited attention to spirituality and transcendence. To address these gaps, Maslow later introduced the notion of self-transcendence, which focuses on serving higher purposes beyond the self, such as contributing to society, humanity, or spiritual ideals.

From an Islamic perspective, self-actualization is understood in a more holistic and value-based manner. Haque (2020) emphasizes that Islamic self-actualization involves balanced development of personal potential, social responsibility, and spiritual devotion. In this view, human development is incomplete without service to the community (*khidmah li al-ummah*) and nearness to God (*qurbah ila Allah*). Lestari and Hamdani (2022) argue that success is therefore measured not only by individual achievement, but also by one's contribution to society and alignment with ethical and spiritual values. This understanding resonates strongly with the educational philosophy of pesantren, which prioritizes moral character, social service, and lifelong commitment to Islamic values (Hidayat 2023).

Although the concept of Islamic self-actualization has been discussed in Islamic psychology and education literature (Lestari dan Hamdani 2022), empirical studies that apply this framework to pesantren alumni remain limited. Nugroho's (2022) work shows that only a few studies trace how pesantren experiences shape alumni motivation, career orientation, and life purpose over the long term. Most research still focuses on early career outcomes, while the long-term effects of pesantren education on personal fulfillment, leadership, and institutional contribution are rarely explored.

Erikson's theory of psychosocial development offers a useful lens for examining these long-term trajectories. In later adulthood, individuals enter the stage of generativity, where they prioritize contributing to society, guiding the next generation, and leaving a meaningful legacy (Erikson 1993). Nugroho's (2022) study of Gontor

alumni in late adulthood illustrates how this stage can manifest in sustained social impact and institutional engagement. Investigating pesantren alumni at this life stage therefore provides a strategic opportunity to assess the long-term effectiveness of pesantren education.

The alumni of KMI Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor class of 1985, known as Alumni Marhalah 2 Zaman, represent a highly relevant group for this research. Around four decades after graduation, these alumni are approximately 60 years old and have accumulated extensive professional and social experience (Nugroho 2022). They occupy diverse roles as teachers, preachers, academics, school principals, institutional leaders, professionals, entrepreneurs, and public officials. Many also hold multiple professional roles simultaneously, reflecting a pattern of multi-professional engagement that is distinctive among pesantren alumni (Zuhdi 2025).

In Western career literature, holding multiple professional roles is often described as a portfolio career, which is usually associated with flexibility, economic adaptation, and individual career strategy (Handy 1995). In the pesantren context, however, multi-professional roles often reflect a different motivation. Rather than being driven primarily by economic considerations, these roles are commonly oriented toward service, education, and community development (Asy'ari & Munir, 2020; Zuhdi, 2025). This suggests that alumni career patterns may represent a form of contextual self-actualization shaped by pesantren values.

Several scholars argue that modern pesantren education successfully produces graduates with both religious commitment and professional competence (Hefner 2024). However, there are differing interpretations regarding the deeper meaning of alumni engagement in social and educational sectors. Some view this engagement as a continuation of traditional religious norms, while others interpret it as a creative and adaptive response to modern challenges (Prabowo 2024). These differing perspectives highlight the need for an integrative analytical framework that can capture both motivational psychology and Islamic values.

Based on this background, the present study positions pesantren education management as a strategic arena for long-term self-actualization and self-transcendence. Unlike previous studies that focus mainly on occupational outcomes, this research examines how professional careers, academic achievements, and institutional contributions reflect higher-level motivational fulfillment. The integration of Maslow's hierarchy of needs with the concept of Islamic self-actualization is used as the main analytical framework to provide a holistic understanding of alumni life trajectories (Maslow 1954).

Specifically, this study aims to analyze the professional profiles, patterns of multi-professional engagement, academic achievements, and institutional contributions of Alumni Marhalah 2 Zaman KMI 1985 of Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor from the perspective of pesantren education management. In addition, the study seeks to explain how pesantren values internalized during the student period are transformed into life orientation, leadership behavior, and social service during the generativity stage (Erikson 1993; Zarkasyi 2020). Using a mixed-methods approach, this research is expected to produce empirical findings that are accessible not only to pesantren scholars, but also to researchers in education, psychology, and social sciences (Hefner 2024).

The main contribution of this study lies in enriching the field of Islamic education management by introducing the concept of collective and institutional self-actualization. This study argues that the success of modern pesantren education should not be measured solely by short-term academic or career outcomes, but by the ability of alumni to establish, manage, and sustain educational institutions that benefit society across generations.

B. METHOD

This study employed a mixed-methods approach using a convergent parallel design. In this design, quantitative and qualitative data were collected at the same time, analyzed separately, and then integrated at the interpretation stage to provide a comprehensive understanding of alumni self-actualization within the context of pesantren education management (Creswell dan Creswell 2022). The use of a mixed-methods approach was considered appropriate because the research aimed not only to describe alumni outcomes in numerical terms, but also to explore the deeper meanings behind alumni career paths, academic achievements, and institutional contributions from a value-based motivational perspective (Waldo 2024). By combining numerical patterns with personal narratives, this approach allows for a richer and more balanced interpretation of long-term educational outcomes.

Data Sources and Research Participants

The population of this study consisted of all alumni of Kuliyatul Mu'allimin al-Islamiyah (KMI) Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor class of 1985, also known as Alumni Marhalah 2 Zaman. Based on official administrative records, the total population initially identified was 185 individuals. At the time of data collection, 168 alumni were confirmed to be living. From this group, 134 alumni participated actively in the study, resulting in a response rate of 79.8%. This relatively high response rate strengthens the representativeness of the sample and increases the reliability of the findings, particularly for a mixed-methods study that seeks both breadth and depth of data. Similar response levels have been reported in previous mixed-methods studies on pesantren and hybrid Islamic education contexts (Mustofa 2024).

Purposive sampling was applied to select participants who met several inclusion criteria. These criteria included the ability to be contacted, willingness to provide complete data, and current or past involvement in professional, educational, or social roles. This sampling strategy was chosen to ensure that respondents were able to provide relevant information related to professional development and self-actualization. The alumni were geographically distributed across various regions in Indonesia as well as several overseas locations, reflecting the wide social and institutional reach of pesantren alumni networks (Kevin 2025).

Data Collection Techniques

Quantitative data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs and the concept of Islamic self-actualization. The questionnaire consisted of several sections, including demographic information, professional background, types and number of professional roles, academic achievements, and forms of institutional involvement, particularly in educational and

da'wah institutions. Most items were designed using categorical and frequency-based response options to capture variations in alumni activities and levels of engagement.

Qualitative data were collected through open-ended questions embedded within the same questionnaire. These questions allowed respondents to explain, in their own words, the personal meaning of their career choices, motivations for holding multiple professional roles, and perceptions of how pesantren values influenced their life orientation and commitment to social service. This qualitative component was essential to understanding alumni self-actualization not only as an individual psychological process, but also as a socially and spiritually grounded experience.

Data collection was conducted primarily through an online platform using Google Forms. This method was chosen to accommodate the wide geographical distribution of alumni and to increase participation efficiency. The data collection process was supported by regional alumni coordinators who helped disseminate the questionnaire, reminded potential respondents, and facilitated communication between researchers and participants (Ismail 2024).

Data Analysis Methods

Quantitative data analysis was carried out using descriptive statistical techniques. These included frequency distributions, percentages, and ratios to describe alumni professional fields, patterns of multi-professional engagement, and levels of academic attainment. One important indicator used in this study was the professional role ratio, calculated by dividing the total number of professional roles reported by the total number of respondents. This ratio was used to illustrate the extent to which alumni were involved in more than one professional role, which is considered an important indicator of active self-actualization.

To interpret alumni professional activities within a motivational framework, the study adopted and adapted the need satisfaction classification proposed by Taormina and Gao (2013). Professional roles and activities were categorized into levels of need fulfillment, including esteem needs, self-actualization, and self-transcendence. These categories were then adjusted to reflect pesantren values and Islamic perspectives, particularly the emphasis on service, leadership, and contribution to the community.

Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis following the procedures outlined by Braun and Clarke (2021). The analysis process involved several stages: data familiarization through repeated reading of responses, initial coding to identify meaningful units, development of broader themes, and refinement of themes to ensure coherence and relevance. The main thematic categories identified in this study included self-actualization, social service, leadership, institutional contribution, and spiritual motivation. This process enabled the researchers to capture recurring patterns and shared meanings across alumni narratives (cfr. *Perspektif Pendidikan*, 2024).

Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Data

After separate analyses, quantitative and qualitative findings were integrated at the interpretation stage. This integration focused on identifying convergence, complementarity, or divergence between numerical trends and narrative explanations. For example, the quantitative dominance of alumni working in education and da'wah sectors was interpreted alongside qualitative narratives emphasizing spiritual responsibility, lifelong service, and commitment to community development. This

integrative process strengthened the validity of the conclusions by ensuring that statistical patterns were supported by contextual explanations (Kevin 2025).

Validity, Reliability, and Ethical Considerations

The validity of the research instruments was ensured through strong theoretical grounding in Maslow's hierarchy of needs and the concept of Islamic self-actualization, as well as through expert review by scholars in Islamic education and psychology. Reliability was supported by consistent response patterns across participants and by the high participation rate. Ethical considerations were addressed by ensuring informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality of personal data, and the use of all collected data solely for academic and research purposes (Ismail 2024).

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Findings

This section presents the research findings systematically to address the research questions and to highlight the novelty of the study on pesantren education management and alumni self-actualization. The presentation of results follows a structured sequence, beginning with an overview of alumni professional profiles, followed by geographical distribution, academic achievements, institutional contributions through the establishment of educational institutions, and finally an analysis of alumni self-actualization levels based on the integration of Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Islamic Self-Actualization. The order of tables and figures is maintained to ensure analytical consistency and to help readers clearly trace the relationship between empirical data and the theoretical arguments developed in this study.

Professional Profile Structure and Patterns of Modern Pesantren Alumni

Table 1 presents the main empirical evidence related to the distribution of professional profiles of Alumni Marhalah 2 Zaman KMI 1985 of Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor.

Table 1. Distribution of Professional Profiles of Alumni Marhalah 2 Zaman KMI 1985

No	Profession	Number	Percentage	Rank
1	Teacher	75	26.79%	#1
2	Preacher (Da'i)	46	16.43%	#2
3	Kyai / Pesantren Leader	34	12.14%	#3
4	Lecturer	27	9.64%	#4
5	Civil Servant (Teacher/Lecturer)	26	9.29%	#5
6	PhD Holder	21	7.50%	#6
7	Entrepreneur	19	6.79%	#7
8	School/Foundation Head	15	5.36%	#8
9	Government Official	13	4.64%	#9
10	Professional (Non-education)	9	3.21%	#10
11	Professor	8	2.86%	#11
12	Gontor Cadre	7	2.50%	#12
13	Judge	4	1.43%	#13
14	Not Active	4	1.43%	#14

15	Legislative Member	3	1.07%	#15
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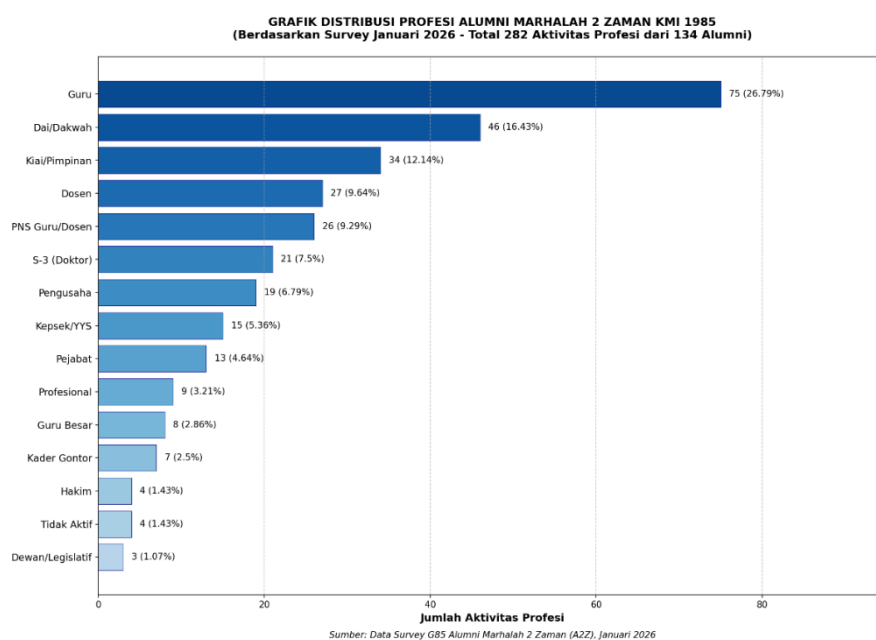
Source: G85 Alumni Marhalah 2 Zaman Survey Data (A2Z), January 2026

Table 1 shows that the education and da'wah sectors dominate alumni professional engagement. The teaching profession ranks first with 75 activities (26.79%), followed by preaching activities (16.43%) and roles as kyai or pesantren leaders (12.14%). Combined, these three categories account for more than 55% of total professional activities. This dominance indicates that the service-oriented values instilled through modern pesantren education not only persist but become stronger even four decades after graduation.

Further analysis shows that the professional activity ratio reaches 2.10, meaning that, on average, each alumnus holds more than two professional roles simultaneously. This phenomenon reflects the character of modern pesantren alumni as social actors with diverse role portfolios, ranging from educators and preachers to institutional managers, professionals, and public officials. From an education management perspective, this finding demonstrates the success of pesantren in developing cross-role competencies rather than preparing graduates for a single career path.

Visualization of Professional Distribution and Career Consistency

Figure 1 (maintained from the original manuscript) visualizes the distribution of alumni professions based on the proportion of professional activities.



The figure reinforces the dominance of education- and da'wah-based professions shown in Table 1 and illustrates a gradual decline toward non-education professions such as entrepreneurship, professional services, and government positions. This visual representation highlights the consistency of alumni career orientation over time.

Institutional Contributions through the Establishment of Educational Institutions

A significant finding of this study is the strong institutional contribution of alumni through the establishment and management of educational institutions. Table 4 documents 41 educational institutions founded and/or managed by Alumni Marhalah 2 Zaman KMI 1985, including pesantren and Islamic schools across various regions of Indonesia.

Table 4. Educational Institutions Established and/or Managed by Alumni Marhalah 2 Zaman KMI 1985

No	Institution Name	Location	Leader
1	Al Amin, Yayasan	Denpasar, Bali	K.H. Misbahul Munir
2	Al-Barokah, PP Modern	Kertosono, Nganjuk, Jawa Timur	Drs. K.H. Rasyidin Ali Said (Alm.)
3	Al-Fawwaz	Cikarang Pusat, Bekasi, Jawa Barat	Drs. K.H. Budi Utomo
4	Al Gontory Tulungagung	Tulungagung, Jawa Timur	K.H. Zainal Aly
5	Al-Ikhlas, PP Modern	Kuningan, Jawa Barat	Dr. K.H. M. Tata Taufiq, M.A.
6	Al Islam, YP	Ngawi, Jawa Timur	K.H. Mukhtar Wahyudi
7	Al-Islam, Yayasan	Bangka Belitung	Dr. Muhammad Misdar
8	Al-Kifah, SDIT	Karawang, Jawa Barat	Drs. K.H. Anding Mujahidin
9	Al Maliyah, SMP	Bekasi, Jawa Barat	K.H. Ibrahim Lam'a
10	Al-Muwahhidin Lelede, PP	Lombok Barat, NTB	TGH. Musleh Khalil, MH (Alm.)
11	Al-Rosyid, PP	Bojonegoro, Jawa Timur	K.H. Alamul Huda Masyhur
12	Annur, Yayasan	Sukabumi, Jawa Barat	K.H. Apit Sudrajat, Lc.
13	Antassalam, PP	Sukabumi, Jawa Barat	Dr. K.H. Acep Sukardi, M.Pd.
14	Ar-Raudhatul Hasanah, PP & STAI	Medan, Sumatera Utara	Dr. K.H. Rosyidin Bina, M.A.
15	Assalam, PP	Subang, Jawa Barat	Drs. K.H. Makmun Arba, M.Pd.
16	Asshiddiqiyah 2, PP	Tangerang, Banten	K.H. Abdul Kholiq, M.Ag.
17	Baitul Hikam, YPP	Tangerang, Banten	Drs. K.H. Ma'mun Adung
18	Daar El-Kutub, PP Modern	Baya, Lebak Banten	Drs. K.H. Kaelani S
19	Darosa, YPD	Bogor, Jawa Barat	Drs. Ikhwan Hamdani, M.Ag.
20	Darul Muttaqin, PP	Tegal, Jawa Tengah	K.H. Ibnu Nashori
21	Darul Muttaqin, PP	Kep. Selayar, Sulawesi Selatan	Dr. K.H. Mahlani Sabae, S.Th.I., M.A.

22	Darunnajah, PP, 23 Cabang & Univ.	Jakarta Selatan	Assoc. Prof. Dr. K.H. Sofwan Manaf & K.H. Busthomi Ibrahim, Ph.D
23	Darussalam, PP	Indramayu, Jawa Barat	Drs. K.H. Ahmad Faizin
24	Darussalam, PP	Depok, Jawa Barat	K.H. M. Thohir Manaf, M.Pd.
25	Darussalam, PP DDI	Pulau Masalembu, Madura	K.H. Wasiq Abdul Rozzaq
26	Darussalam, YP-PP	Cepu, Blora, Jawa Tengah	K.H. Ahmad Burhan
27	Hidayatullah Aceh, PP	Aceh Besar, Aceh	K.H. Muhammad Chofad
28	Insan Aulia, Yayasan	Palembang, Sumatera Selatan	Dr. Muhammad Misdar
29	Insan Cendekia BIAS Assalam	Tegal, Jawa Tengah	K.H. Untung Supriyadi
30	Mambaul Qur'an, PP	Magelang, Jawa Tengah	K.H. Muzakkki Saifurrohman
31	Mambaus Sholihin, PP	Gresik, Jawa Timur	K.H. Ahmad Thohari, S.Pd.
32	Manaabi'ul Karomah (Makah), PP	Bangka Belitung	K.H. Sopian Abdurrahman
33	Mawaridussalam, PP	Deli Serdang, Sumatera Utara	K.H. Basron Sudarmanto, MM
34	Nurul Bayan, PP	Lombok Utara, NTB	K.H. Abdul Karim Abdul Ghofur
35	Nurul Huda, PP	Depok, Jawa Barat	Drs. K.H. Ahmad Mujahid
36	Nurussalam, PP Modern, dan STAI	OKU Timur, Sumatera Selatan	Drs. K.H. Makinuddin
37	Nurussalam, MI	Nganjuk, Jawa Timur	K.H. Imam Ashari
38	Pabelan, PP	Magelang, Jawa Tengah	K.H. Ahmad Najib Hamam
39	Quba, YSPI	Denpasar, Bali	K.H. Salim Syamlan, M.Pd.I.
40	Raudhatussalam, PP	Rokan Hulu, Riau	K.H. Maghfur Abd. Halim, M.Pd
41	Ta'mirul Islam, PP	Surakarta, Jawa Tengah	K.H. Mohammad Halim

Source: M2Z Documentation, 2025.

The analysis of Table 4 shows that alumni-established institutions are not concentrated in a single region but spread from Aceh to Sulawesi, including remote and non-Java areas. This distribution indicates that alumni not only replicate pesantren education models but also adapt management practices to local needs. From an education management perspective, the establishment of these institutions reflects alumni capabilities in strategic planning, resource management, and institutional sustainability.

This institutional contribution also represents the level of transcendence in Maslow's hierarchy of needs, as alumni move beyond personal interests to build educational systems with long-term social impact. Therefore, the establishment of 41 educational institutions serves as strong empirical evidence that modern pesantren alumni self-actualization is collective and sustainability-oriented.

Geographic Distribution of Educational Institutions and Value Expansion

Tables 5 and 6 present the geographic distribution of alumni educational institutions within Indonesia and abroad.

Table 5. Domestic Geographic

No.	Region	Educational Institutions
1	Aceh	Hidayatullah Islamic Boarding School, Aceh (Aceh Besar)
2	North Sumatra	Ar-Raudhatul Hasanah Islamic Boarding School & Islamic Higher Education Institute (STAI), Medan; Mawaridussalam Islamic Boarding School, Deli Serdang
3	South Sumatra	Nurussalam Islamic Boarding School & Islamic Higher Education Institute (STAI), East OKU; Insan Aulia Foundation, Palembang
4	Riau	Raudhatussalam Islamic Boarding School, Rokan Hulu
5	Bangka Belitung	Al-Islam Foundation, Bangka; Manaabi'ul Karomah Islamic Boarding School, Bangka
6	DKI Jakarta	Darunnajah Central Islamic Boarding School with 23 branch campuses; Darunnajah University
7	Banten	Modern Daar El-Kutub Islamic Boarding School, Lebak; Asshiddiqiyah 2 Islamic Boarding School, Tangerang; Baitul Hikam Education Foundation, Tangerang
8	West Java	Al-Fawwaz Islamic Boarding School, Bekasi; Al-Ikhlas Modern Islamic Boarding School, Kuningan; Al-Kifah Integrated Islamic Elementary School, Karawang; Al Maliyah Junior High School, Bekasi; Assalam Islamic Boarding School, Subang; Darussalam Islamic Boarding School, Indramayu and Depok; Annur Foundation & Antassalam Islamic Boarding School, Sukabumi; Darosa Education Foundation, Bogor; Nurul Huda Islamic Boarding School, Depok
9	Central Java	Pabelan Islamic Boarding School, Magelang; Ta'mirul Islam Islamic Boarding School, Surakarta; Darul Muttaqin Islamic Boarding School, Tegal; Darussalam Education Foundation–Islamic Boarding School, Blora; Mambaul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School, Magelang; Insan Cendekia BIAS Assalam, Tegal
10	East Java	Modern Al-Barokah Islamic Boarding School, Nganjuk; Al-Islam Education Foundation, Ngawi; Al

		Gontory Islamic Boarding School, Tulungagung; Al-Rosyid Islamic Boarding School, Bojonegoro; Mambaus Sholihin Islamic Boarding School, Gresik; Nurussalam Islamic Elementary School (MI), Nganjuk
11	Bali	Al Amin Foundation, Denpasar; YSPI Quba, Denpasar
12	West Nusa Tenggara (NTB)	Nurul Bayan Islamic Boarding School, North Lombok; Al-Muwahhidin Lelede Islamic Boarding School, West Lombok
13	South Sulawesi	Darul Muttaqin Islamic Boarding School, Selayar
14	Madura	Darussalam DDI Islamic Boarding School, Masalembu Island

Table 6. Overseas Geographic

No	Country/City	Number	Percentage
1	Sarawak, Malaysia	2	1.5%
2	Suriname, South America	1	0.7%
3	Cairo, Egypt	1	0.7%
Total Overseas		4	2.9%

Source: G85 Alumni Marhalah 2 Zaman Survey Data (A2Z), January 2026

Tables 5 and 6 confirm that alumni-managed educational institutions are distributed across 14 regions in Indonesia and several countries abroad. This finding highlights the global dimension of modern pesantren alumni contributions. Alumni act as agents for the diffusion of pesantren educational values and practices at both national and international levels. Within the framework of Islamic Self-Actualization, this expansion reflects a service orientation that transcends geographical and cultural boundaries.

Academic Achievement and Intellectual Transcendence

Another important result is the high level of academic achievement among alumni. The presence of eight professors and twenty-one PhD holders from a single pesantren cohort demonstrates that modern pesantren education supports long-term intellectual development. Academic achievement in this context is not merely an individual success but also a form of knowledge service and dissemination. Alumni professors serve as knowledge mediators who bridge Islamic scholarly traditions with contemporary academic demands, reinforcing the argument that modern pesantren education enables both intellectual and transcendental self-actualization

Discussion

Repositioning the Findings within the Landscape of Pesantren Studies and Self-Development

The findings of this study demonstrate that the majority of Alumni Marhalah 2 Zaman KMI 1985 have pursued career paths that are strongly oriented toward education, da'wah, leadership, and long-term institutional service. Recent studies on alumni management and networking in Islamic boarding schools similarly show that pesantren

graduates often maintain sustained engagement in educational and social sectors over time (Basit 2021). This pattern reinforces earlier scholarship which emphasizes that pesantren education plays a central role in producing graduates with strong commitments to religious, educational, and social responsibilities (Prasetyo 2022). However, the present study advances this line of research by showing that such orientations are not temporary or situational, but rather persist across decades of alumni life trajectories.

Most existing studies on pesantren graduates focus on immediate post-graduation outcomes, such as early employment or initial career choices (Anam 2025). In contrast, this research positions pesantren education as a long-term developmental ecosystem that shapes identity, motivation, and patterns of self-actualization well into mature adulthood. This perspective aligns with life-span development theory, which views personal growth as a continuous and cumulative process shaped by early formative experiences (Santrock 2019). By applying this lens, the study adds a temporal dimension to pesantren research that has often been overlooked, especially in studies of Islamic education in Southeast Asia (Anam, 2025).

Modern Pesantren Education as a System of Long-Term Value Internalization

The dominance of education- and da'wah-related professions among alumni reflects a deep internalization of pesantren values. Empirical work on effective pesantren leadership shows that participative and transformational leadership styles play a crucial role in embedding ethical and religious values through curriculum, role modeling, discipline, and communal life (Prasetyo 2022; Yugo 2025b). The present study extends this value internalization framework by demonstrating that these values continue to shape alumni decision-making long after formal schooling has ended.

Contrary to critical views that portray pesantren education as rigid or insufficiently adaptive to modern socio-economic demands, recent research indicates that modern pesantren are increasingly able to translate foundational values into diverse professional and social contexts. Studies on transformational leadership and curriculum integration in contemporary pesantren highlight how religious values are linked with competencies in management, public service, and entrepreneurship (Yugo 2025a). Alumni involvement in education management, public service, entrepreneurship, and academic careers in this study suggests that pesantren values function as adaptive moral resources rather than fixed prescriptions. This observation is consistent with broader analyses of Indonesian Islamic education institutions, which maintain continuity while simultaneously adapting to modern challenges.

Multi-Professional Engagement as a Form of Contextual Self-Actualization

One of the most significant findings of this study is the prevalence of multi-professional engagement among alumni. Many respondents simultaneously occupy multiple roles, such as teacher and preacher, kyai and education manager, or academic and public servant. From a conventional career development perspective, such role multiplicity may be interpreted as a lack of specialization or career focus. However, this study offers an alternative interpretation by framing multi-professional engagement as a contextual and value-driven expression of self-actualization.

Handy's concept of the portfolio career, where individuals sustain multiple roles for flexibility and adaptability, provides a useful comparison, but the pesantren context

suggests a different motivational basis (Handy 1995). Rather than being driven primarily by economic considerations, these roles are commonly oriented toward service, education, and community development, as also observed in recent analyses of multi-professional Muslim educators (Zuhdi 2025). This finding both extends and challenges Maslow's classical hierarchy of needs, which conceptualizes self-actualization primarily as an individual and linear achievement (Maslow 1954). In the pesantren context, self-actualization appears to be relational, collective, and service-oriented. Alumni pursue multiple roles not mainly for personal advancement, but to maximize their contribution to society and ensure institutional sustainability. This pattern supports Koltko-Rivera's (2006) argument that Maslow's later work implicitly recognized self-transcendence as a motivational stage beyond self-actualization and resonates with Islamic perspectives on service and communal benefit.

Academic Achievement, Knowledge Production, and Intellectual Transcendence

The presence of eight professors and twenty-one doctoral graduates within a single alumni cohort represents a notable level of academic achievement. Recent scholarship on Islamic education in Indonesia indicates that pesantren-based educational trajectories increasingly contribute to the formation of intellectually grounded and socially engaged scholars (Hefner, 2024). In the context of this study, academic achievement should not be understood merely as individual success or upward mobility, but rather as a form of intellectual service.

Alumni who reach advanced academic positions often act as mediators between Islamic scholarly traditions and modern academic disciplines. Their roles include teaching, research, curriculum development, and public intellectual engagement, echoing findings from studies on Islamic religious education strategies in shaping students' character and civic responsibility (Anam 2025). Such activities reflect a form of intellectual transcendence, in which knowledge is produced and disseminated for the benefit of broader society rather than for personal prestige alone. This pattern reinforces recent arguments that contemporary Muslim education emphasizes moral leadership and public responsibility alongside scholarly excellence.

Institutional Establishment and Collective Self-Actualization

Another key contribution of alumni self-actualization identified in this study is the establishment and management of educational institutions. The founding of pesantren, Islamic schools, and educational foundations by alumni demonstrates a shift from individual achievement toward collective and institutional forms of self-actualization. Case studies on pesantren governance show that institution building is increasingly recognized as a critical arena for sustaining Islamic educational values across generations (Prabowo 2024).

Institutional establishment requires strategic planning, leadership capacity, resource mobilization, and long-term commitment. Empirical research on Islamic leadership management in pesantren confirms that effective leaders combine ethical commitment with organizational capability, which in turn supports institutional resilience and growth (Salim dkk. 2024). The ability of alumni in this cohort to sustain educational institutions across different regions indicates that pesantren education equips graduates with managerial competencies alongside moral orientation. This

observation aligns with recent analyses of pesantren leadership models that emphasize both ethical grounding and organizational competence.

Integrating Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Islamic Self-Actualization

A central theoretical contribution of this study lies in its integration of Maslow's hierarchy of needs with the concept of Islamic self-actualization. While Maslow's model has been influential in psychology and education, it has been criticized for its individualistic assumptions and limited cultural scope (Koltko-Rivera 2006). Islamic perspectives on self-development, as articulated in recent Islamic psychology and pesantren-based studies, emphasize balance between personal growth, social responsibility, and spiritual accountability (Haque 2020).

The findings demonstrate that pesantren alumni self-actualization cannot be fully explained by classical psychological models alone. In line with empirical work on generativity and service among pesantren alumni, self-actualization in this context involves continuous service (*khidmah*), leadership (*qiyadah*), and contribution to communal well-being (*maslahah*). By integrating these dimensions, the study offers a culturally responsive framework that enriches both educational management theory and self-development research, particularly within Muslim-majority and collectivist settings.

Implications for Pesantren Education Management

The findings of this study indicate that pesantren education management should be oriented toward long-term value formation rather than short-term academic or technical outcomes. Studies on effective pesantren and ethical leadership in Islamic education underscore that success should be assessed by the continuity and quality of alumni contributions to society, not merely by in-school performance (Novia 2024). The strong tendency of alumni to engage in education, da'wah, leadership, and institutional service in this cohort supports this broader criterion of success.

Furthermore, the prevalence of multi-professional engagement among alumni suggests that pesantren management should recognize flexibility and role diversity as core graduate competencies. Recent work on alumni networks and pesantren-based leadership points to the importance of cultivating transferable skills such as leadership, communication, organizational management, and ethical decision-making (Yugo 2025). In addition, the significant number of alumni who establish and manage educational institutions highlights the importance of institutional entrepreneurship. Providing students with early exposure to leadership roles, organizational experience, and basic education management principles can prepare them to become future institution builders who are capable of sustaining pesantren values in diverse social contexts (Salim dkk. 2024).

Finally, the findings emphasize the importance of aligning pesantren management practices with Islamic ethical and spiritual principles. Research on ethical leadership in Islamic education emphasizes values such as *khidmah* (service), *amanah* (trustworthiness), and *maslahah* (public benefit) as foundational to legitimate and effective leadership (Novia 2024). At the same time, alumni networks should be managed as strategic institutional assets that support collaboration, knowledge exchange, and long-term sustainability (Basit 2021). Through this integrated approach,

pesantren education management can remain relevant, resilient, and impactful in responding to contemporary educational and societal challenges.

D. CONCLUSION

The contents of the conclusion are written in Constantia 12. The conclusion is an overview based on the research that has been done. The conclusion is not a summary of the results of the discussion that refers to a particular theory but the results of the analysis/correlation test of the data discussed.

The contents of the conclusion are written in Constantia 12. The conclusion should answer the objectives of the research and research discoveries. The concluding remark should not contain only the repetition of the results and discussions or abstract. You should also suggest future research and point out those that are underway.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to the leadership of Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor and the KMI administration for their permission and support in conducting this research, especially in facilitating access to alumni records and institutional data. The authors also extend their appreciation to the Alumni Association of Marhalah 2 Zaman KMI 1985 and the regional alumni coordinators who actively assisted in disseminating the online questionnaire and encouraging participation. Special thanks are due to colleagues from the Islamic education and psychology departments at Universitas Darunnajah for their constructive feedback on the research design, instruments, and interpretation of findings, as well as to the administrative staff who provided technical support during data collection and processing.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest. There are no personal, academic, or financial relationships that could be perceived as inappropriately influencing the representation or interpretation of the research results presented in this article.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceptualization of the research focus on pesantren education management and alumni self-actualization, as well as the formulation of the theoretical framework integrating Maslow's hierarchy of needs with Islamic self-actualization, were carried out by Sofwan Manaf. Research design, development of the structured questionnaire, and coordination of data collection among Alumni Marhalah 2 Zaman were led by Sofwan Manaf and Busthomi Ibrohim. Quantitative data processing and descriptive statistical analysis were conducted by Busthomi Ibrohim, while qualitative coding and thematic analysis were performed by M. Yusuf Abu Bakar and Hadi Mujiono. The initial draft of the manuscript, including the introduction and method sections, was prepared by Sofwan Manaf, with Busthomi Ibrohim and M. Yusuf Abu Bakar contributing to the analysis and discussion section. All authors (Sofwan Manaf, Busthomi Ibrohim, M. Yusuf Abu Bakar, and Hadi Mujiono) contributed to critical revision of the manuscript, approved the final version, and agree to be accountable for all aspects of the work.

FUNDING

This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

DATA AVAILABILITY

The quantitative and qualitative data that support the findings of this study were collected from Alumni Marhalah 2 Zaman KMI 1985 of Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor through a structured online questionnaire (Google Forms). Due to ethical and confidentiality considerations, individual-level data are not publicly available. Anonymized aggregate data, summary tables, and selected excerpts from qualitative responses can be obtained from the corresponding author upon reasonable request for academic and non-commercial purposes.

DISCLAIMER

The views and opinions expressed in this article are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, Universitas Darunnajah, the KMI Alumni Association, or any other affiliated institution or potential funder.

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