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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Section: *Literature, Linguistics & Criticism***Management, organizational leadership, and religious values in education for student development: A systematic literature review**Rizki Ramadhan^{1*}, Muhammad Ilman Nafi², Efan Chairul Abdi³, Misbahul Munir⁴, Eni Kartikasari⁵, Lois Anggun Mamesah⁶, Agustinus Ridwan⁷, Muhammad Natsir Tarani⁸, Arjung⁹, Khoerul Umam Kholis⁹ & Naftali Risyat Sineri⁹¹Universitas Islam Indonesia, Yogyakarta, Indonesia²Universitas Airlangga, Surabaya, Indonesia³Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Malang, Indonesia⁴Universitas Kiai Abdullah Faqih Gresik, Gresik, Indonesia⁵Universitas Negeri Malang, Malang, Indonesia⁶Binus University, Tangerang, Indonesia⁷Universitas Tanjungpura, Pontianak, Indonesia⁸Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, Surakarta, Indonesia⁹Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia*Correspondence: rramadhan439@gmail.com**ABSTRACT**

Educational management and leadership play pivotal roles in integrating religious values into educational practices to foster students' holistic development. However, existing evidence remains fragmented across educational contexts, making it difficult to explain the organizational mechanisms through which religious values are translated into educational outcomes. This study aims to synthesize empirical evidence on how effective educational management and leadership facilitate the integration of religious values to promote holistic student development. A systematic literature review (SLR) was conducted following the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA 2020) guidelines. Literature was retrieved from the Scopus database, and 27 empirical studies published between 2010 and 2026 met the inclusion criteria. Data were analyzed using descriptive bibliometric analysis and thematic synthesis. The findings reveal growing research interest in this topic and identify three interconnected higher-order dimensions: Strategic Leadership, Organizational Enactment, and Educational Outcomes. Strategic Leadership establishes a value-based vision and supports institutional transformation; Organizational Enactment operationalizes religious values through curriculum design, teacher development, and organizational support systems; and Educational Outcomes are reflected in students' cognitive, moral, social-emotional, and spiritual development. This review proposes an integrated conceptual framework demonstrating that successful religious values integration depends on the interaction between leadership, organizational practices, and educational processes rather than on curriculum implementation alone. Nevertheless, existing studies remain concentrated within specific cultural contexts, predominantly employ qualitative approaches, and provide limited longitudinal and cross-cultural evidence. This review contributes to the literature on educational management by offering a comprehensive conceptual synthesis and practical directions for educational leaders and policymakers seeking to strengthen holistic student development through value-based educational leadership.

KEYWORDS: education, management, organizational leadership, religious values, student development, school, systematic literature review

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1. INTRODUCTION

Education plays a fundamental role in developing human potential and preparing competent, qualified, and competitive individuals for the future (Tohirin et al., 2025). Beyond academic achievement, schools are expected to foster students' character, as quality education cannot be separated from the values of character education (Junaidi et al., 2018). In this context, educational management, organizational leadership, and religious values are essential for creating a supportive learning environment that promotes holistic student development. Teachers contribute to this environment by encouraging open discussion, reflective thinking, collaboration, and teamwork, all of which support students' cognitive, social, and moral growth (Yanti et al., 2025). Furthermore, Islamic values play a crucial role in strengthening students' character, ethical behavior, and social responsibility, thereby reinforcing the broader goals of holistic education (Fatimah et al., 2025).

Recent scholarship indicates that school effectiveness is increasingly understood not as a consequence of administrative structure alone, but as an outcome of relationships and distributed capacity across the school community. Karakose et al. (2024), in a bibliometric and thematic analysis of 7,282 articles, trace a century-long shift from principal-centered administrative models toward instructional, distributed, and social justice-oriented leadership. Similarly, Sun et al.'s (2024) meta-synthesis of successful principalship across nine countries shows that effective leadership is context-responsive rather than tied to a single universal style, while consistently involving the construction of a shared vision and the development of staff capacity. Leithwood (2021) further identifies productive relationships with families and communities, together with high expectations for underserved students, as recurrent practices of equitable leadership. Evidence from Hong Kong and Macao also indicates that parental academic involvement contributes to student achievement, although principals' and teachers' perceptions of leadership operate differently within the tested model (Zhang & Wu, 2025). Collectively, this literature positions educational management as relational, distributed, and context-sensitive.

Leadership effects on student learning are also predominantly indirect. Leithwood and Sun's (2012) meta-analysis found that transformational leadership has stronger effects on school conditions and teachers' internal states than on achievement directly. The Four Paths Model formalizes this mediated influence through rational, emotional, organizational, and family-related pathways (Leithwood et al., 2020). Evidence on school-based management likewise suggests that decentralization can improve institutional responsiveness only when local autonomy is supported by adequate resources and implementation capacity (Cheng & Chan, 2000; Carr-Hill et al., 2018). A systematic review of interventions in low- and middle-income countries also found that strengthening school leaders' managerial practices produces modest improvements in student learning, with outcomes contingent on implementation conditions (Anand et al., 2023). These findings reinforce the need to examine the mechanisms through which leadership and management shape educational practice rather than assuming a direct administrative effect on student outcomes.

Within value-based education, religious values function not merely as an additional curricular component but as an ethical framework for cognitive, moral, spiritual, and social development. Logic-model evaluation and curriculum studies show that effective integration requires alignment among institutional inputs, instructional processes, and intended character outcomes (Ferdinan et al., 2025; Tsani et al., 2024). At the classroom level, thematic integration of science and religion can make learning more meaningful while cultivating faith, responsibility, and prosocial dispositions (Ningsih et al., 2022). Such values are transmitted through both explicit instruction and implicit practices, particularly teacher role modeling, classroom interaction, habituation, and school culture (Khalid, 2017; Maksun et al., 2025). In inclusive settings, compassion, justice, empathy, tolerance, and solidarity also provide an ethical basis for participation and belonging (Pradana et al., 2023). Consequently, the integration of religious values is simultaneously a pedagogical, cultural, and managerial undertaking.

Digital transformation adds a further layer to this managerial and pedagogical challenge. The use of technology in Islamic education should not be reduced to the cognitive transmission of religious knowledge; digital platforms and interactive media must also be designed to cultivate character, moral integrity, and spiritual discernment. Rois et al. (2026) similarly argue that technology integration can enhance access, engagement, and learning outcomes while preserving religious values when institutions curate content and align digital practices with Islamic ethical principles. From a holistic perspective, technology should therefore function as a value-governed pedagogical resource rather than a neutral technical instrument, helping schools connect knowledge acquisition with the formation of responsible and ethically grounded learners (Sulisno, 2025).

However, conceptually, most prior studies have tended to examine these aspects in isolation, focusing separately on educational leadership (Ahmed, 2023), educational management (Karim et al., 2023), value-based curriculum implementation (Juharyanto et al., 2024), or religious education and spiritual leadership (Shofiyyah et al., 2023). Consequently, the interconnectedness of these components as an integrated organizational mechanism for supporting students' holistic development remains underexplored. Studies on leadership in faith-based educational institutions further emphasize that spiritual authority is rarely conceptualized as a constitutive institutional logic; therefore, the organizational mechanisms that connect leadership vision to educational outcomes remain insufficiently developed (Efendi et al., 2026). As a result, mechanism-level explanations of how religious values are transformed from institutional visions into everyday educational practices, such as curriculum design, teacher professional development, and institutional systems, remain limited.

From methodological and empirical perspectives, this field remains predominantly characterized by single-context qualitative research designs and non-holistic outcome measures. Systematic reviews of educational leadership consistently report that case studies and qualitative approaches constitute the most frequently used designs (Chaaban et al., 2025). A similar pattern is evident in higher education leadership research, where methodological preferences and authorship distribution remain concentrated within specific regions and institutional types, thereby limiting the generalizability of findings (Bhowmik et al., 2026). This pattern is also accompanied by a persistent scarcity of comparative and longitudinal evidence (Karim et al., 2025).

Furthermore, very few studies integrate diverse educational leadership perspectives, such as transformational leadership, instructional leadership, distributed leadership, moral leadership, and value-based leadership, into a unified conceptual framework capable of explaining how strategic leadership is translated into organizational mechanisms and subsequently fosters students' holistic development (Ahmad et al., 2025; Alazmi & Bush, 2024). These limitations indicate that the relationships among leadership, organizational implementation, and educational outcomes remain only partially understood. Moreover, existing research rarely models how religious and spiritual leadership contribute simultaneously to holistic student development outcomes encompassing cognitive, moral, socio-emotional, and spiritual dimensions. Accordingly, a systematic synthesis is required to integrate these multifaceted leadership perspectives into a conceptual framework that explicitly delineates the linkages among strategic leadership, organizational implementation, and students' holistic development.

The novelty of this study lies in its integration of diverse perspectives that explain how educational leadership and management facilitate the integration of religious values to support students' holistic development. Using a systematic literature review and thematic synthesis approach, this study identifies three interconnected dimensions: Strategic Leadership, Organizational Enactment, and Educational Outcomes. These dimensions are then formulated into an integrated conceptual framework detailing the organizational mechanisms involved in implementing religious values within educational institutions. Thus, this study not only maps the evolution of the literature but also extends scholarship on value-based educational leadership and management through a conceptual model that links strategic leadership, organizational processes, and students' holistic development as a cohesive system. This framework is expected to serve as a foundation for future empirical research and to provide a reference point for policy development and value-based educational leadership practices across diverse educational contexts.

This SLR was designed to address four main research questions: (1) What is the research trajectory of educational leadership and management in the integration of religious values? (2) What organizational mechanisms are used by educational leadership and management to integrate religious values? (3) How does the integration of religious values contribute to students' holistic development? and (4) What are the current research gaps and future research directions in this field?

2. METHODS

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a systematic literature review (SLR) to synthesize empirical evidence regarding the role of effective educational leadership and management in facilitating the integration of religious values to support students' holistic development. The review process followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 guidelines developed by Page et al. (2021). Adopting the PRISMA

guidelines ensured that the identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and article selection processes were conducted in a transparent, systematic, and replicable manner.

2.2. Literature Search Strategy

The literature search was conducted using the Scopus database, as it is one of the largest multidisciplinary bibliographic and citation databases indexing internationally reputable scholarly publications, including journal articles, conference proceedings, book chapters, and review articles across various fields, particularly education, management, and the social sciences (Chadegani et al., 2013; Burnham, 2006; Wamba et al., 2019; Mahala et al., 2020). Scopus provides advanced search features, filtering options, and structured metadata that support a systematic process of literature identification, selection, and extraction. It also facilitates citation analysis, bibliometric analysis, and the identification of research trends, collaboration patterns, and research gaps (Burnham, 2006; Hemmat Esfe et al., 2025; Uvidia-Fassler et al., 2025).

Compared with other databases, such as Web of Science (WoS) and Google Scholar, Scopus offers broad publication coverage, high-quality metadata, and compatibility with PRISMA guidelines and analytical software such as VOSviewer and RStudio. These advantages make it one of the most widely used data sources in systematic literature reviews (Aghaei Chadegani et al., 2013; Baheti & Joshi, 2025; Burnham, 2006). The search strategy was formulated by combining three primary keyword clusters: educational management and leadership, religious values, and student development. The specific search syntax used was as follows:

TITLE-ABS-KEY (“educational leadership” OR “school leadership” OR “instructional leadership” OR “transformational leadership” OR management OR “educational management” OR “school management” OR administration) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY (“religious education” OR “religious values” OR “faith” OR “faith-based”) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY (student* development OR learner* development OR adolescent* OR “character development” OR “student development” OR “holistic development” OR wellbeing)

The initial search yielded 125 articles, which were subsequently screened following the PRISMA 2020 framework.

2.3. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Article selection was conducted based on predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria established before the review process. These criteria are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Study Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Criteria	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Publication Period	Articles published between 2010 and 2026.	Articles published outside the 2010–2026 period.
Language	Articles written in English.	Articles written in languages other than English.
Publication Type	Journal articles and conference proceedings.	Review articles, editorials, book chapters, notes, or non-empirical publications.
Database	Articles indexed in Scopus.	Articles not indexed in Scopus.
Research Topic	Studies addressing educational leadership and/or educational management in the context of religious values integration.	Studies that do not address educational leadership or management, or studies that discuss religious education without a leadership or management perspective.
Research Context	Studies conducted in educational settings, including primary, secondary, and higher education contexts.	Studies focusing on non-educational contexts, such as business organizations, healthcare services, military institutions, or religious organizations not operating in the education sector.
Outcome Focus	Studies explaining the implications of religious values integration for student development, including character, moral, spiritual, or holistic development.	Studies that do not examine impacts on student development.

Criteria	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Research Method	Studies employing empirical research methods, including qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-methods approaches.	Studies that do not employ empirical research methods.

2.4 Article Selection Process Based on PRISMA 2020

The article selection process followed four main stages in accordance with the PRISMA 2020 guidelines: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. During the identification stage, the literature search in the Scopus database yielded 125 articles matching the predefined search strategy. Subsequently, during the screening stage, initial filtering was performed using the criteria available in the Scopus database. Restricting the publication period to 2010–2026 reduced the number of articles to 115. Filtering by subject area, namely Social Sciences; Business, Management and Accounting; Arts and Humanities; and Psychology, resulted in 96 articles. Further restriction by document type, namely articles and conference papers, reduced the number to 61. Screening by publication language, namely English, yielded 54 articles, and this number remained unchanged after filtering by source type, namely journals and conference proceedings.

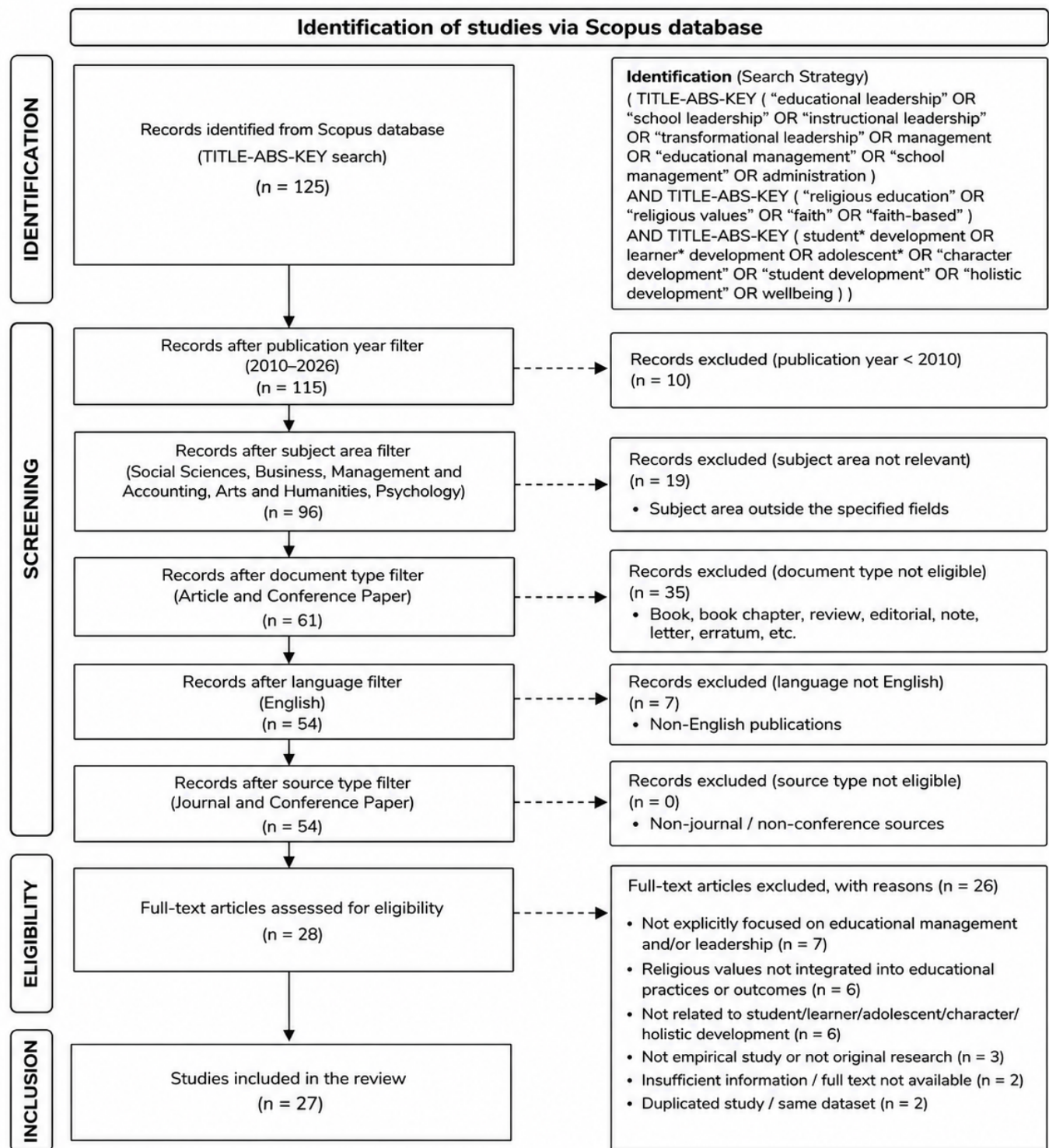
During the eligibility stage, all 54 articles underwent further evaluation through title and abstract screening based on the established inclusion and exclusion criteria. This screening revealed that 28 articles met the requirements for in-depth evaluation. Conversely, 26 articles were excluded because they fell outside the scope of this study. Specifically, these articles did not explicitly address educational leadership or management, examined religious values without detailing their implementation in educational administration, omitted discussions of student development or character/holistic development, focused on contexts outside educational institutions, or were conceptual articles lacking empirical research methods.

The final stage, inclusion, involved a full-text assessment of the articles that passed the eligibility phase. The evaluation confirmed that 27 articles fulfilled all inclusion criteria and were subsequently used as the primary data source for qualitative synthesis. The complete selection process is illustrated in Figure 1.

2.5. Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using the thematic synthesis approach developed by Thomas and Harden (2008). The analysis was conducted in three stages: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. In the open coding stage, each article was systematically analyzed to identify core concepts related to educational leadership, educational management, religious values integration, and student development. During the axial coding stage, interrelated concepts were grouped into broader themes based on shared meanings and conceptual relationships. Finally, selective coding involved integrating these themes into a unified conceptual framework explaining how educational leadership and management facilitate the integration of religious values within educational institutions and its subsequent implications for student development.

The thematic synthesis yielded three higher-order dimensions: Strategic Leadership, Organizational Enactment, and Educational Outcomes. The Strategic Leadership dimension comprised two subthemes: Establishing Vision and Value-Based School Culture and Leading Institutional Innovation and Transformation. The Organizational Enactment dimension comprised three subthemes: Designing Curriculum and Learning, Developing Teachers as Agents of Religious Values, and Institutionalizing Religious Values through Organizational Systems. Meanwhile, the Educational Outcomes dimension consisted of one subtheme: Promoting Holistic Student Development. These three dimensions were subsequently used as the foundation for structuring the thematic synthesis and developing a conceptual model that delineates the role of educational leadership and management in integrating religious values to foster students' holistic development.



Note. PRISMA 2020 flow diagram adapted for systematic literature review (Page et al., 2021).
 Figure designed in accordance with ELSEVIER style guidelines.

Figure 1. PRISMA Flow Chart

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Research Trends in Educational Leadership and Management for the Integration of Religious Values

The bibliometric characteristics of the 27 publications presented in Table 2 show that the literature was drawn from 26 sources published between 2010 and 2026, with an annual growth rate of 12.93%. This indicates increasing scholarly interest in the role of educational leadership and management in religious values integration. The average document age was 3.19 years, suggesting that most of the analyzed literature was relatively recent, with an average of 4.22 citations per article. A total of 98 authors contributed to the 27 documents, with an average of 3.63 authors per article, indicating that research in this field is predominantly collaborative. However, the international co-authorship rate remained relatively low at 11.11%, suggesting that research collaboration continues to occur primarily within national boundaries. Regarding publication types, most documents were

journal articles (25 articles), while two documents were conference papers, confirming that empirical evidence in this domain is predominantly disseminated through scholarly journals.

Figure 2 illustrates that publication volume remained relatively limited during the 2010–2023 period, with several years yielding no publications. A significant increase became evident in 2024, reaching its peak in 2025–2026, with seven articles published in each year. Conversely, the mean total citations per year (MeanTCperYear) fluctuated considerably, peaking in 2014 and 2024. This indicates that despite limited publication output in those specific years, the published articles generated relatively high citation impact. Meanwhile, the lower MeanTCperYear value observed in 2026 is likely attributable to the recency of the publications, which have not yet had sufficient time to accumulate citations.

Table 2. Bibliometric Characteristics of the Analyzed Publications (2010–2026)

Description	Results
MAIN INFORMATION ABOUT DATA	
Timespan	2010–2026
Sources	26
Documents	27
Annual growth rate (%)	12.93
Document average age	3.19
Average citations per document	4.222
References	2,659
DOCUMENT CONTENTS	
Keywords Plus (ID)	23
Author’s Keywords (DE)	131
AUTHORS	
Authors	98
Authors of single-authored documents	6
AUTHOR COLLABORATION	
Single-authored documents	6
Co-authors per document	3.63
International co-authorships (%)	11.11
DOCUMENT TYPES	
Article	25
Conference paper	2

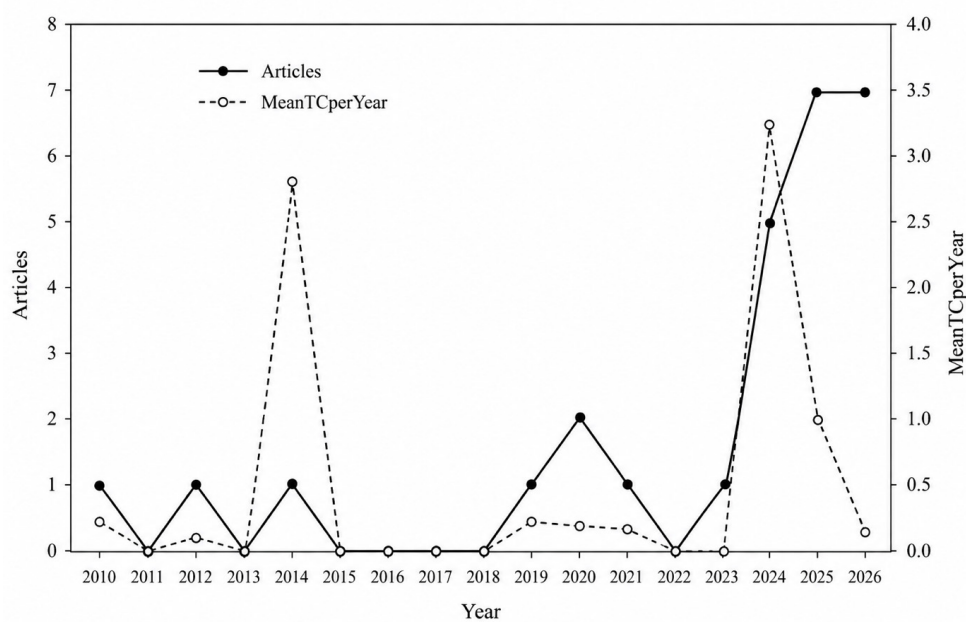


Figure 2. Trends in the Number of Publications and Average Citations per Year During the 2010–2026 Period

Table 3. Geographical Distribution, Methodological Approaches, and Educational Settings of the Included Studies

Characteristics	N
Educational Setting	
Primary School	5
Secondary School	2
Higher Education	4
Islamic Boarding School	8
Other Educational Settings	8
Methods	
Qualitative	17
Quantitative	6
Other: Research and Development	3
Conceptual	1
Mixed-methods	0
Country	
Indonesia	18
Thailand	2
England	2
Malaysia	1
Iran	1
Israel	1
Greece	1
South Korea	1
Sweden	1
Costa Rica	1

The distribution of educational settings across the 27 analyzed articles, as presented in Table 3, demonstrates comprehensive and multidimensional coverage spanning primary education, secondary education, higher education, and specialized educational systems. Islamic boarding schools and the “other educational settings” category represented the largest proportions, each accounting for eight articles (29.6%). This finding indicates that the current body of literature places considerable emphasis on residential educational models characterized by strong spiritual values, as well as on diverse educational contexts requiring adaptive management approaches. Within the Islamic boarding schools context, the reviewed studies primarily examined the pivotal role of *kiai* (Islamic religious scholars) leadership, the transformation of the *Mu’adalah* curriculum, and the integration of digital technologies to enhance student satisfaction and academic integrity (Istiyani et al., 2026; Kurniawan et al., 2025; Manaf et al., 2026; Setiawan et al., 2026; Tobroni et al., 2024; Wulandari & Rihardjo, 2025). Meanwhile, the “other educational settings” category illustrates the flexibility of educational management in addressing diverse and complex contexts, including leadership in kindergartens, integrated K–12 educational systems, schools operating in wartime environments, and national education policy frameworks aimed at mitigating sociocultural risks (Gu & Kim, 2026; Gutman et al., 2026; Mitropoulou, 2012; Ningrum et al., 2025; Zhen & Vodéll, 2026).

At the primary education level, five articles (18.5%) were classified under primary schools, focusing on post-disaster trauma recovery strategies in madrasahs, the internalization of religious moderation values among early childhood learners, and the development of systems thinking to promote educational sustainability. At the higher education level, four articles (14.8%) investigated the quality of Islamic Religious Education assessment, the implementation of religious moderation curricula in universities, and innovative internship programs designed to strengthen the soft skills of prospective professional educators (Baroroh et al., 2024; Marzuki & Syahrial, 2020; Mukhibat et al., 2024; Nugraha et al., 2025). Finally, secondary school settings were represented by two articles (7.4%), which examined the influence of school managers’ value systems on students’ moral development and community-based social entrepreneurship initiatives (Alavi & Rahimipoor,

2010; Aulia, 2025). Overall, this distribution suggests that efforts to strengthen educational management and integrate religious values are not confined to a single educational sector. Rather, they constitute a holistic endeavor encompassing all stages of learners’ educational development, with the aim of fostering resilient, ethical, and adaptable individuals capable of addressing contemporary societal challenges.

The geographical distribution of the reviewed studies reveals a significant predominance of the Indonesian context, which accounted for 18 articles (66.7%) of the total literature. This finding underscores Indonesia’s central role in scholarly discussions concerning Islamic educational management, *kiai* leadership, and the integration of religious values within the national education system. Beyond Indonesia, Thailand and England each contributed two articles, with the latter including one single-country study and one international comparative study. The remaining countries were each represented by a single publication, reflecting a diverse international perspective encompassing the Middle East, represented by Iran and Israel; Southeast Asia, represented by Malaysia in collaboration with Indonesia; East Asia, represented by South Korea; Europe, represented by Greece and Sweden; and Central America, represented by Costa Rica. This geographical diversity demonstrates that the challenges associated with educational management and the integration of religious values in shaping students’ character are not unique to a particular national context but represent a global concern shared across diverse educational systems.

3.2 Organizational Mechanisms in the Integration of Religious Values through Educational Leadership and Management

3.2.1 Strategic Leadership

Strategic leadership in educational institutions serves as the primary mechanism for providing organizational direction by integrating religious values into the school vision amid a rapidly changing educational environment (Lateh et al., 2024; Manaf et al., 2026). In this context, leaders rely not only on technical administrative skills but also on the capacity to align structural reforms with the institution’s spiritual mission to ensure organizational sustainability (Alavi & Rahimipoor, 2010). Effective strategic leadership adopts a holistic approach encompassing spiritual, intellectual, and social dimensions to ensure that institutions remain relevant to local community needs while responding to global challenges (Ilyasin, 2019; Lateh et al., 2024; Setiawan et al., 2026). Through the integration of local wisdom and religious principles, such as *ikhlas*, *amanah*, and *adalah*, leaders establish a philosophical framework that guides school identity within a complex educational landscape (Lateh et al., 2024; Ningrum et al., 2025). Essentially, strategic leadership functions as a bridge connecting traditional values with the demands of educational modernity to achieve the satisfaction of all stakeholders (Gu & Kim, 2026; Manaf et al., 2026; Slater et al., 2014; Zakiyyah, 2024). Table 4 presents strategic leadership in the integration of religious values within educational institutions.

Table 4. Strategic Leadership in the Integration of Religious Values within Educational Institutions

Main Theme	Conceptual Meaning	Subtheme	Role of Effective Educational Management and Leadership	Representative Articles
Strategic Leadership	Leadership provides strategic direction by embedding religious values into the school’s vision while adapting institutions to changing educational environments.	Establishing Vision and Value-Based School Culture	Educational management and leadership establish a shared vision, institutional mission, and organizational culture that embed religious values into the school’s identity.	(Alavi & Rahimipoor, 2010; Ilyasin, 2019; Lateh et al., 2024; Ningrum et al., 2025; Setiawan et al., 2026; Slater et al., 2014)
		Leading Institutional Innovation and Transformation	Leadership enables educational institutions to respond to technological, societal, and educational changes while maintaining their religious identity and core values.	(Chorna, 2024; Erdoğan, 2020; Gu & Kim, 2026; Manaf et al., 2026; Marzuki & Syahril, 2020; Zakiyyah, 2024)

In developing a value-based school vision and culture, the internal value systems held by school leaders, including social and religious values, are significantly correlated with students’ moral and character development (Alavi

& Rahimipoor, 2010; Setiawan et al., 2026). Leaders cultivate this culture by formulating a shared vision that explicitly embeds religious values into institutional identity and responds to community expectations (Ilyasin, 2019; Lateh et al., 2024). The implementation of traditional leadership values, such as Ki Hajar Dewantara's philosophy through exemplary leadership (*Ing Ngarso Sung Tulodo*) and the *kiai*-based religious leadership model, has been shown to be effective in creating ethical, humanistic, and participatory school environments (Ningrum et al., 2025; Setiawan et al., 2026). This strong value-oriented school culture serves as an important instrument in developing students' moral agency, which subsequently contributes to preventing academic dishonesty (Setiawan et al., 2026). By embedding these values into school missions and regulations, leaders establish a "moral atmosphere" that strengthens institutional credibility in the eyes of society (Lateh et al., 2024; Slater et al., 2014).

Institutional transformation and innovation under strategic leadership enable schools to respond to technological and social changes without compromising their core religious identity (Manaf et al., 2026; Zakiyyah, 2024). In this regard, innovations such as the use of digital technology and the development of blended learning curricula should be managed as complementary tools that continue to prioritize educator role modeling and the values of *adab* (ethical conduct) (Marzuki & Syahrial, 2020; Zakiyyah, 2024). Educational leaders must also demonstrate responsiveness to sociocultural transformation, including the transition toward multicultural societies and the challenges of sustainable development, by positioning religious education as a literacy instrument for reducing the risks of social conflict (Chorna, 2024; Gu & Kim, 2026). Successful change management, including school amalgamation processes, requires a balance between transformational leadership, which provides vision, and transactional leadership, which ensures operational stability during periods of transition (Lateh et al., 2024). By prioritizing teacher competency development and ethical institutional support, leaders ensure that innovation remains aligned with the institution's fundamental value commitments (Erdoğan, 2020; Manaf et al., 2026; Zakiyyah, 2024).

The interpretation of strategic leadership as a relational and adaptive process is corroborated by studies from diverse educational systems. In Indonesian Christian higher education, servant leadership influenced lecturers' job satisfaction through trust and leader-member exchange, demonstrating that leaders' intentions are translated into outcomes through relationship quality (Dami et al., 2022). In India, transformational leadership strengthened educators' commitment by building shared vision, collaboration, and ownership of institutional goals (Kareem et al., 2023). In Kosovo, both transformational and transactional attributes of principals predicted distinct dimensions of teacher motivation, suggesting that inspirational direction and structured contingent support are complementary rather than mutually exclusive (Hyseni Duraku & Hoxha, 2021). Evidence from China further shows that moral leadership can support teachers' innovation by increasing psychological safety, with identification with the leader strengthening this relationship (Chen et al., 2022). Leadership capacity is also developable: virtual professional leadership learning communities enabled school leaders to collaborate, reflect, exchange resources, and strengthen instructional leadership practices (Pashmforoosh et al., 2023). These findings suggest that effective strategic leadership depends on a context-responsive, ethically grounded repertoire and sustained professional learning, not on a fixed leadership style.

3.2.2 Organizational Enactment

Organizational enactment in educational management refers to the systematic operationalization of religious values through curriculum implementation, teacher professional development, institutional governance, and educational policies (Mukhibat et al., 2024). Effective educational management ensures that religious values extend beyond institutional vision statements and are consistently embedded in every aspect of school operations (Ilyasin, 2019; Zakiyyah, 2024). Educational leadership plays a pivotal role in aligning the institution's religious identity with societal needs and the demands of academic excellence in an increasingly globalized environment (Ilyasin, 2019; Ningrum et al., 2025). This process entails transforming educational systems to preserve their spiritual foundations while remaining responsive and adaptable to contemporary social and educational changes (Mukhibat et al., 2024; Zakiyyah, 2024). Through strategic educational management, institutions cultivate an organizational ecosystem in which ethical and spiritual values serve as guiding principles for institutional decision-making and everyday educational practices (Gutman et al., 2026; Mitropoulou, 2012). Table 5 presents the organizational roles involved in integrating religious values within educational institutions.

Table 5. Implementation of Organizational Roles in the Integration of Religious Values within Educational Institutions

Main Theme	Conceptual Meaning	Subtheme	Role of Effective Educational Management and Leadership	Representative Articles
Organization- al Enactment	Educational management operationalizes religious values through curriculum, teacher development, governance, policies, and organizational support systems.	Designing Curriculum and Learning for Religious Values Integration	Educational management translates religious values into curriculum design, instructional planning, learning management, and assessment practices.	(Aulia, 2025; Ilyasin, 2019; Marzuki & Syahrial, 2020; Mitropoulou, 2012; Mukhibat et al., 2024; Nugraha et al., 2025; Zakiyyah, 2024)
		Developing Teachers as Agents of Religious Values	Leadership strengthens teachers' professional capacity to implement and model religious values in educational practice.	(Baroroh et al., 2024; Gutman et al., 2026; Mustafa et al., 2025; Zhen & Vodéll, 2026)
		Building Supportive Organizational Systems	Educational management creates organizational structures, policies, resources, and quality assurance systems that sustain the implementation of religious values.	(Gutman et al., 2026; Mukhibat et al., 2024; Mustafa et al., 2025; Ningrum et al., 2025; Zakiyyah, 2024)

Designing curriculum and learning for the integration of religious values emphasizes the translation of religious values into curriculum design and instructional practices (Mukhibat et al., 2024). Educational management is responsible for developing integrated curricula that combine scientific knowledge and religious principles to foster students' holistic competencies (Ilyasin, 2019). The use of digital technologies, including blended learning modules and interactive digital textbooks, has emerged as an important instrument for facilitating the delivery of religious values in more engaging and effective ways (Marzuki & Syahrial, 2020; Mitropoulou, 2012). Furthermore, effective classroom management, together with transparent and equitable assessment systems, has been identified as a key determinant of students' academic achievement in Islamic educational settings (Nugraha et al., 2025). Curriculum innovation also includes the development of integrated internship programs that provide prospective teachers with authentic experiences in managing value-based educational activities (Baroroh et al., 2024). Through active learning and problem-based instructional approaches, educational management promotes the meaningful internalization of religious values and the development of moderate character among students (Mukhibat et al., 2024; Zakiyyah, 2024).

Broader scholarship clarifies that value integration is most effective when it is designed across both formal curriculum and the lived curriculum of the school. Explicit instruction can connect subject content with Qur'anic and ethical principles, while implicit practices reinforce those values through teacher modeling, interaction, routines, and the moral climate of the classroom (Khalid, 2017). In sociology education, for example, Hidayat et al. (2020) propose a monotheistic paradigm across all phases of learning, while Wulan et al. (2021) show that integrating science, technology, and Islamic values can create more meaningful and contextual learning experiences. Together with evidence from thematic-integrative science and religion instruction (Ningsih et al., 2022), these studies support the present review's conclusion that curriculum design must align content, pedagogy, role modeling, and assessment rather than simply add religious references to existing lessons.

Complementary Indonesian evidence reinforces this organizational perspective. Integrating Islamic boarding schools and formal schooling can develop religious character by connecting students' awareness of their relationship with God, other people, and the natural environment, while Islamic boarding schools provide an institutional setting in which religious formation is embedded in everyday formal education (Capriatin et al., 2025; Sari et al., 2022). At the operational level, this integration is enacted through habitual practices such as praying before lessons, reciting *Asmaul Husna* and short Qur'anic passages, and performing Dhuha and congregational Dhuhr prayers (Kurniawan et al., 2021). In early childhood education, the same process depends heavily on adults' concrete modeling of honesty, empathy, and gratitude in daily interactions (Nurlina et al., 2024). These findings show that organizational enactment links institutional design, structured routines, and role modeling to the formation of religious character.

Digital technologies extend the organizational means available for this integration but do not guarantee value internalization by themselves. Evidence indicates that interactive videos, e-learning systems, educational social media, and other digital resources can increase access, engagement, and conceptual understanding when they remain grounded in Islamic pedagogical principles (Rois et al., 2026; Santosa, 2025; Shobirin et al., 2025; Suaidi et al., 2025). Santosa (2025), for example, shows that multimedia depictions of Qur'anic narratives and the life of the Prophet Muhammad can make abstract moral concepts more concrete and contextually meaningful, provided that teachers reinforce them through modeling, routines, and value-based activities. Consistent with the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework, effective integration requires alignment among technological affordances, pedagogy, religious content, infrastructure, staff readiness, digital literacy, and ethical governance so that efficiency does not displace the institution's moral and spiritual purposes (Sulisno, 2025; Wardoyo, 2025). Digital innovation should therefore be treated as a value-governed organizational capability: its success is measured not only by knowledge transfer or engagement, but also by its contribution to moral integrity, character formation, and spiritual development.

Developing teachers as agents of religious values highlights the role of leadership in strengthening teachers' professional capacity to model religious values (Mustafa et al., 2025). Teachers are regarded as moral agents and central figures whose personal spiritual beliefs significantly influence their pedagogical decisions and relationships with students. Effective instructional leadership has been shown to enhance teacher self-efficacy through clear communication of institutional goals and sustained professional support (Zhen & Vodéll, 2026). By adopting local leadership values, such as the philosophy of Ki Hajar Dewantara, school principals serve as role models (*Ing Ngarso Sung Tulodo*) who inspire teachers to demonstrate ethical conduct (Ningrum et al., 2025). In crisis or trauma-related contexts, school leadership provides emotional support and guidance, enabling teachers to remain innovative and serve as empathetic mentors for their students (Gutman et al., 2026). Therefore, teacher capacity development is essential to empower educators as key actors in implementing religious values within classroom practices (Mustafa et al., 2025; Ningrum et al., 2025).

Building supportive organizational systems emphasizes the establishment of organizational structures, policies, and quality assurance systems that sustain the integration of religious values (Mukhibat et al., 2024). Educational institutions develop Total Quality Management systems that prioritize stakeholder satisfaction, particularly among students and parents, through the provision of high-quality educational services (Zakiyyah, 2024). School management also fosters strong collaboration with parents through school committees to ensure alignment between character education at home and at school (Mustafa et al., 2025). The provision of technological infrastructure and adequate resources represents a systemic support mechanism that facilitates continuous development among all members of the school community (Mitropoulou, 2012; Zakiyyah, 2024). Participatory and inclusive leadership creates opportunities for dialogue, thereby strengthening organizational commitment to the established religious vision (Gutman et al., 2026; Ningrum et al., 2025). Finally, periodic program evaluations are conducted as a continuous improvement mechanism to ensure that educational quality standards are consistently maintained (Mukhibat et al., 2024; Zakiyyah, 2024).

Parental academic commitment is associated with student achievement, which underscores the importance of treating families as active partners rather than peripheral stakeholders (Zhang & Wu, 2025). Research on school-based management similarly indicates that devolved decision-making is not effective through autonomy alone; outcomes depend on local leadership capacity, resources, accountability, and support for implementation (Carr-Hill et al., 2018; Cheng & Chan, 2000). The modest learning gains identified in management interventions across low- and middle-income countries further show that managerial skill-building must be connected to feasible implementation structures (Anand et al., 2023). Thus, supportive organizational systems combine participation with capacity, resources, and continuous accountability.

3.2.3 Educational Outcomes

Effective educational leadership and management play a crucial role in facilitating students' holistic development through the integration of religious values into cognitive, moral, social, emotional, and spiritual learning outcomes. This relationship is summarized in Table 6.

Table 6. Holistic Student Development as an Outcome of Religious Values Integration

Main Theme	Conceptual Meaning	Subtheme	Role of Effective Educational Management and Leadership	Representative Articles
Educational Outcomes	Religious values integration supports students' holistic development.	Promoting Holistic Student Development	Educational leadership facilitates students' holistic development by integrating religious values into cognitive, moral, social, emotional, and spiritual learning outcomes.	(Alavi & Rahimipoor, 2010; Aulia, 2025; Ilyasin, 2019; Mariyono, 2025; Mukhibat et al., 2024; Mustafa et al., 2025; Ningrum et al., 2025; Pangastuti et al., 2025; Wulandari & Rihardjo, 2025; Zakiyyah, 2024; Zhen & Vodéll, 2026)

In the cognitive dimension, educational leaders manage curricula by integrating general knowledge with religious values to foster comprehensive understanding. Excellence-based curriculum management ensures that academic achievement is not detached from spiritual foundations, thereby equipping students with the cognitive readiness required to navigate global challenges (Ilyasin, 2019). Furthermore, the integration of digital technologies into Islamic Religious Education learning under Total Quality Management frameworks is directed toward enhancing students' productive thinking abilities while maintaining fundamental character values (Zakiyyah, 2024). At the higher education level, curriculum reforms have been implemented to internalize religious moderation values and produce graduates with knowledge and skills aligned with national needs (Mukhibat et al., 2024).

Students' moral development is significantly influenced by the value systems embraced by educational managers or school principals, whose knowledge and attitudes serve as behavioral models for students (Alavi & Rahimipoor, 2010). School leadership that adopts philosophical values such as Ki Hajar Dewantara's emphasizes the importance of exemplary conduct (*Ing Ngarso Sung Tulodo*) in shaping an ethical and humane school culture (Ningrum et al., 2025). Teachers, as moral agents under the guidance of school leaders, play a central role in cultivating honesty, discipline, and responsibility through routine habituation strategies and exemplary practices in daily life (Mustafa et al., 2025).

Educational leaders promote students' social and emotional growth by designing social entrepreneurship and multicultural entrepreneurship initiatives (Aulia, 2025; Mariyono, 2025). Through collaboratively managed Islamic boarding school business units, students develop empathy, teamwork, and ethical responsibility in their interactions with diverse communities. Management strategies at the madrasah level also systematically internalize values of moderation, tolerance, and non-violence to develop students' character, enabling them to appreciate differences and live harmoniously within diverse societies (Pangastuti et al., 2025).

The spiritual dimension is positioned as a fundamental element of instructional leadership, in which spiritual guidance is considered a non-negotiable component that strengthens teacher efficacy and student learning outcomes (Zhen & Vodéll, 2026). Educational management that emphasizes the reinforcement of religious beliefs and behavioral patterns also functions as a protective mechanism for students against anti-nationalist ideologies while simultaneously fostering religiously grounded nationalism (Wulandari & Rihardjo, 2025). Overall, the success of holistic education is reflected in students' ability to express nationalistic and spiritual values through their daily behaviors. Figure 3 illustrates a conceptual model demonstrating how educational leadership and management function as institutional mechanisms that enable the integration of religious values and contribute to students' holistic development.

Integrated Conceptual Framework

How Leadership and Management Facilitate the Integration of Religious Values to Promote Holistic Student Development

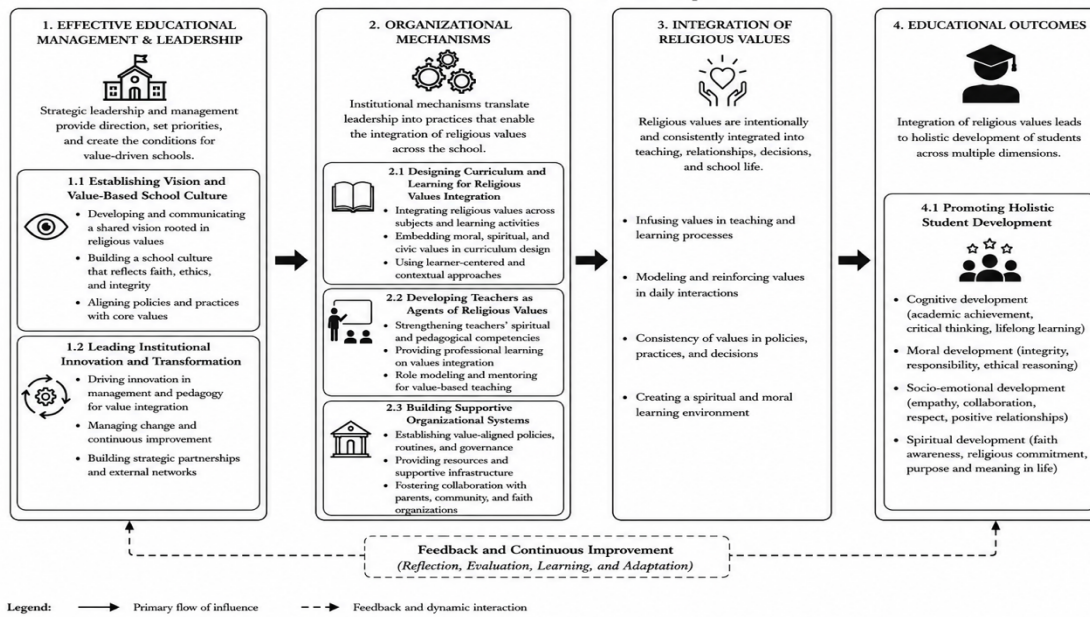


Figure 3. Integrated Conceptual Framework

3.3. Contributions of Religious Values Integration to Students' Holistic Development

3.3.1. Cognitive and Intellectual Development

The integration of religious values into curricula has demonstrated a significant impact on students' academic achievement and critical thinking abilities. The application of problem-based learning approaches in religious moderation education enables students to enhance their analytical skills and problem-solving abilities in addressing complex social issues (Baroroh et al., 2024; Mukhibat et al., 2024). Furthermore, curricula that integrate science and religion in a balanced manner allow students to develop comprehensive intellectual capacities, whereby they not only master general knowledge but also understand the ethical foundations underlying such knowledge (Ilyasin, 2019; Istiyani et al., 2026; Lateh et al., 2024). The implementation of digital technologies, including interactive digital books and blended learning, further enriches students' cognitive learning experiences by facilitating deeper understanding of religious concepts (Marzuki & Syahrial, 2020; Mitropoulou, 2012; Zakiyyah, 2024). Research on modern Islamic boarding schools demonstrates that legally and curricularly integrated educational systems can significantly improve national examination performance, including in analytical subjects such as mathematics and science.

3.3.2. Moral and Ethical Development

Religious education serves as a fundamental foundation for the formation of students' ethics and morality. The value systems upheld by educational leaders are directly associated with students' moral development in secondary schools (Alavi & Rahimipoor, 2010). Religious moderation values internalized through processes of value transformation and value transaction have proven effective in fostering honesty, discipline, and responsibility in students' daily behaviors (Mustafa et al., 2025; Pangastuti et al., 2025). Moreover, a religiously oriented school culture plays an important role in preventing deviant behaviors, such as academic dishonesty, by cultivating integrity as an essential component of students' spiritual identity (Setiawan et al., 2026). Teachers, as moral agents, use exemplary practices to teach principles of justice and truth, enabling students to make appropriate moral judgments in various situations (Mustafa et al., 2025; Zhen & Vod  l, 2026).

The wider literature also supports this multidimensional account of character formation. Teachers identify honesty, discipline, compassion, responsibility, empathy, tolerance, and cooperation as values that must be introduced early and reinforced through consistent modeling and guidance (Maksum et al., 2025). Evaluations of Islamic values integration in general subjects likewise report improvements in honesty and responsibility when lesson planning, teacher-student interaction, and institutional expectations are aligned (Ferdinan et al., 2025). In inclusive education, the same ethical repertoire, especially compassion, justice, empathy, tolerance, and brotherhood, supports participation and belonging among diverse learners (Pradana et al., 2023). These findings

indicate that moral outcomes arise from repeated and coherent experiences across instruction, relationships, routines, and school culture rather than from cognitive knowledge of values alone.

3.3.3. Social and Emotional Growth

The integration of religious values contributes significantly to the enhancement of students' emotional intelligence and social skills. Programs such as multicultural entrepreneurship and community-based social entrepreneurship initiatives train students to develop empathy, collaborate effectively in teams, and demonstrate concern for surrounding social issues (Aulia, 2025; Mariyono, 2025). Transformational leadership in faith-based educational institutions also creates environments that support students' emotional resilience, particularly in crisis or conflict situations (Gutman et al., 2026; Manaf et al., 2026). Through inclusive religious education, students are encouraged to appreciate sociocultural diversity and develop cross-cultural literacy, both of which are essential for fostering social cohesion within multicultural societies (Gu & Kim, 2026; Slater et al., 2014). The balance between Spiritual Quotient and Emotional Quotient has become a central focus in integrated school models to ensure that students develop into emotionally stable individuals (Ilyasin, 2019).

Complementary evidence suggests that internalized *akhlak* values also operate as psychological resources in digital environments. Muaini (2026) identifies *sabr* (patience), *tawakkul* (trust in God), *sidq* (truthfulness), *amanah* (trustworthiness), *tabayyun* (verification), *haya'* (modesty), *rahmah* (compassion), *shukr* (gratitude), *tawadu'* (humility), and *'adl* (justice) as values that strengthen students' resilience. These values contribute through five interrelated pathways: meaning-making, emotional regulation, ethical self-control, social connectedness, and responsible adaptation to social media. This extends the present review's framework by showing that moral and spiritual internalization is not only a normative educational outcome but also a mechanism that helps students navigate digital pressures with psychological stability and ethical responsibility.

3.3.4. Spiritual and Character Development

Spiritual development represents the core dimension of religious values integration and shapes students' long-term character formation. The attitudes of *istiqomah* (consistency) and commitment to religious practices cultivate students' perseverance, principled behavior, and mental resilience in pursuing their life goals (Nugraha et al., 2025). Prophetic character values, including *shiddiq* (truthfulness), *amanah* (trustworthiness), *tabligh* (responsibility in conveying truth), and *fathonah* (wisdom), are internalized through continuous guidance to develop strong spiritual identities (Lateh et al., 2024; Mariyono, 2025). In addition, the application of local philosophical values aligned with religious principles, such as the educational philosophy of Ki Hajar Dewantara, strengthens inclusive and humanistic character development among early childhood learners (Ningrum et al., 2025). Contemporary religious education has also begun incorporating sustainable thinking, encouraging students to develop environmental responsibility as an expression of spiritual devotion to God (Chorna, 2024). This integration ensures that graduates possess strong religious identities while maintaining the capacity to adapt to the demands of the modern era (Istiyani et al., 2026; Wulandari & Rihardjo, 2025).

3.4. Research Gaps and Future Research Direction

Current research gaps encompass several crucial aspects. *First*, contextual and institutional limitations remain evident, as many studies focus on specific geographical regions or institutional types, such as public schools in remote areas or faith-based schools within a single country. This makes their findings difficult to generalize to global contexts or different school settings (Alavi & Rahimpour, 2010; Istiyani et al., 2026; Mustafa et al., 2025; Pangastuti et al., 2025; Zhen & Vodell, 2026). *Second*, there is a significant methodological gap, as several studies rely on small sample sizes or employ single-case qualitative approaches that restrict the generalizability of results and interpretive objectivity. This limitation is accompanied by the notable absence of integrative models capable of simultaneously testing multiple causal pathways in faith-based education (Baroroh et al., 2024; Chorna, 2024; Istiyani et al., 2026; Manaf et al., 2026; Mariyono, 2025; Pangastuti et al., 2025). *Third*, from a theoretical and conceptual standpoint, educational leadership and management models specifically tailored to local cultural and religious values remain scarce. These include the absence of frameworks for measuring sociocultural risks or religious literacy in public education systems, as well as the disconnect between Western student engagement models and the realities of institutions such as Islamic boarding schools (Gu & Kim, 2026; Manaf et al., 2026; Ningrum et al., 2025; Nugraha et al., 2025; Setiawan et al., 2026). *Finally*, in the digital era,

a research void also exists regarding the impact of digital entrepreneurship in religious school environments and the challenges of balancing normative discipline with the ethical use of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) (Erdoğan, 2020; Mariyono, 2025; Setiawan et al., 2026).

In response to these gaps, future research should be directed toward expanding research scope and conducting cross-cultural, cross-age, cross-educational-level, and cross-national comparative studies to generate broader comparative insights. Such work may include comparative studies across diverse institutional typologies, such as traditional (*salafi*) and modern Islamic boarding schools (Alavi & Rahimipoor, 2010; Istiyani et al., 2026; Mariyono, 2025; Mitropoulou, 2012; Mukhibat et al., 2024; Slater et al., 2014). Future researchers are also encouraged to develop contextualized models and instruments, such as measurement tools for religious tolerance, an Islamic Boarding Schools Engagement Scale, sociocultural risk indicators, and inclusive leadership models that respect local values. Longitudinal studies are strongly recommended to monitor behavioral changes, character development, and the long-term impacts of curricular innovations on graduates. The optimization of technology and AI should continue to be explored by embedding ethical awareness into school policies and maximizing educators' roles in designing engaging yet value-grounded digital modules. Finally, stakeholder synergy should be strengthened through further empirical inquiry into the effectiveness of partnerships among schools, parents, and communities in fostering character education and sustainability, with the broader aim of establishing an educational system that is adaptive to global standardization.

4. CONCLUSION

Research on educational leadership and management that facilitates the integration of religious values and its implications for students' holistic development indicates that this topic has gained increasing attention in recent years, although it remains dominated by contextual studies in Indonesia and qualitative research approaches. Through thematic synthesis, this study identified three interconnected main dimensions: Strategic Leadership, Organizational Enactment, and Educational Outcomes. These three dimensions demonstrate that the integration of religious values relies not only on leadership driven by a value-based vision but also on systematic organizational implementation through curriculum, teacher development, governance, and institutional support systems. Together, these mechanisms foster students' holistic development across cognitive, moral, socio-emotional, and spiritual dimensions.

This study offers a theoretical contribution by proposing a conceptual framework that integrates strategic leadership, organizational implementation, and educational outcomes to explain the mechanisms of religious values integration within educational institutions. Unlike previous studies that tend to examine leadership, curriculum, or religious education in isolation, the synthesized findings demonstrate that successful value integration is the outcome of dynamic interaction among leadership, managerial practices, and organizational systems. Consequently, this study extends scholarship on value-based educational leadership through a more comprehensive perspective. Practically, these findings imply that educational leaders must position religious values as a strategic foundation in formulating vision, organizational culture, curriculum development, teacher capacity building, and institutional governance. The integration of religious values cannot be realized solely through classroom instruction; rather, it must permeate the entire school organizational system to sustainably support student character formation and holistic development. These insights also provide a valuable benchmark for policymakers in designing educational policies that balance academic achievement, character education, and the enhancement of spiritual values amid the dynamics of social change and technological advancement. In this sense, value-oriented digital integration represents a paradigm shift from knowledge transmission toward character formation: schools should develop learners who are not only proficient and critical users of technology, but also morally responsible persons capable of directing technology toward social well-being and the common good (*maslahah*).

Nevertheless, this study highlights several persistent research gaps. Most existing studies remain focused on the Indonesian context, employ qualitative research designs, and rarely examine causal relationships between variables. Therefore, future research should expand to diverse cultural contexts, educational systems, and religious traditions through comparative, longitudinal, mixed-methods, or quantitative modeling approaches. Furthermore, there is a critical need to develop more contextualized models of value-based educational leadership, validated measurement instruments, and further explorations of religious values integration in addressing the challenges of digital transformation, artificial intelligence, and the evolving global educational landscape.

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