

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Every organization requires leaders and leadership. The leader is the main determinant of organizational success because he is central to the processes of planning, implementation, motivation, and supervision (Nugraha, 2010). The leader also has an active role and intervenes in every problem relating to the needs of organizational members (Anoraga, 1992).

Leadership can be described as the skills or art of influencing people to do something or to work in a coordinated manner, so that they are moved to accomplish their tasks well based on a planned program to support overall organizational performance (Walid, 2010). According to Zainuddin and Mustaqim (2008), leadership is an activity or art to influence the behavior of people to work towards a goal that is set or desired together.

Leadership is very important to all types of organization, including *pesantren*. *Pesantren* is an Islamic education organization that focuses on developing Muslim cadres. They are expected to become individuals who are devoted to Allah SWT, have deep understanding of the religion (*tafaqquh fi al-dien*), and proselytize Islamic teachings to society (Masyhud, 2003).

Pesantren leadership is usually centered around a Kiyai. The Kiyai is the owner, manager, and teacher at the *pesantren* that he leads (Qodir, 2003). Therefore, to perform his role and function well, a Kiyai must possess wisdom and insight, be skilled in

religious sciences, able to inculcate proper attitudes and views, and become a role model and a good leader.

The Kiyai is often ascribed with supernatural power and considered an ulema (Muslim scholar) who has a close relationship with God (Arifin, 2003). The Kiyai's authority endures as long as the *pesantren* tradition is maintained. The charismatic power of a Kiyai radiates its charm and manifests in the leadership form of a collective Assembly Boarding (Muhajir, 1987). The Kiyai also plays a role in the transformation of modern life, particularly in the *pesantren* context (Dhofier, 1994).

1.1.1 *Pesantren*

The term *pesantren* is taken from the word *santri*, to which the prefix *pe-* and suffix *-an* are added. The term *santri* originated from Tamil, which means a religious teacher (Khozin, 2006). *Santri* may also be derived from the Hindi word *shastri* (Daulay, 1997), which means those who understand the holy book of Hinduism (Alamsyah, 2000). *Pesantren* in its most fundamental meaning refers to a place of learning for students (Dhofier, 1994). A more precise meaning is that it is a place where the *santri* (student) lives and studies Islamic sciences (Effendi, 2008). It is a traditional institution of Islamic boarding school owned and led by a Kiyai.

The historical development of *pesantren* as an Islamic institution in the Indonesian archipelago is still debatable among scholars. According to Federspiel (2016), *Pesantren* emerged in the sixteenth century, when learning centers for the Islamic faithful (*santri*) were established. Lukens-Bull (2008), on the other hand, asserted that *pesantren* emerged earlier around the thirteenth century. In fact, its emergence was nearly as old as Islam in Java itself.

1.1.2 Elements of *Pesantren*

There are five important elements associated with any form of *pesantren*: Kiyai, *pondok pesantren*, *santri*, mosque, and classic books or *dirasah Islamiyyah* (Dhofier, 1985; Law of Pesantren, 2019; Efendi, 2014). Each of these elements are elaborated further below.

1.1.2.1 Kiyai

A Kiyai is the central figure of any *pesantren*, and so it cannot be conceived that a *pesantren* is without a Kiyai (Dhofier, 1994; Masyhud & Khusnuridho, 2003). The Kiyai may even be an extension of the mujtahid (Wijaya, 2011) or "little king" (Bull, 2004). Kiyai gives specific, scheduled lectures on certain topics using classic textbooks (*kitab kuning*) in front of intermediate pupils (van Bruinessen, 1990). Kiyai may be perceived as someone associated with superstition or magic. Kiyai refers to the elderly who are respected by the community. Kiyai can also be described as a person with a wide range of Islamic knowledge. According to Muthohar (2007), the term Kiyai is derived from the Javanese word *kijaji*—a person qualified in religious teachings. The title of Kiyai is not easily gained and cannot be obtained from formal education. It is society's gift to someone who has satisfied several requirements, including knowledge, piety, genealogy (descendants of previous Kiyai), and having many *santri* (Steenbrin, 1986).

A Kiyai and his aides are the only power hierarchy that is explicitly acknowledged in the *pesantren*. This power is absolute, and as such many students throughout their lives feel attached to the Kiyai, at least as a source of inspiration and moral support (Wahid, 1995). This power derives from a combination of traditional Islamic education and the charisma gained and inherited from the previous Kiyai (Rohmaniyah &

Wordwar, 2012). The power that derives from the Kiyai's charisma is his strong persuasion in instilling ideology. This charismatic power is called ideological or normative power (Romas, 2003).

1.1.2.2 Pondok Pesantren

Pondok pesantren is a dormitory where the *santri* lives and studies under the guidance of the Kiyai. The *santri* takes care of his pondok and needs under the supervision of senior students (Dhofier, 2011). There are three reasons why a *pesantren* must provide *pondok* for the *santri*. First, almost all *pesantren* are located in a rural area, where there is no housing to accommodate the *santri*. Therefore, dormitories for *santri* are necessary. Second, there exists a reciprocal relationship between the Kiyai and *santri*. The students see the Kiyai as their own father, while the Kiyai treats his *santri* as a trust from God that must always be protected. This relationship creates a sense of familiarity that requires them to be close to each other (Suparto, 2000). Third, *pondok* enables a *pesantren* to integrate the academic and social activities of the *santri* (Saifullah, 1995).

1.1.2.3 Santri

The third component of a *pesantren* is students or *santri*. Students who live in the pondok are regarded as of similar social background with no privilege of one over the other. All *santri* are under one rule which they must obey. The word *santri* means people who study Islam (The Compilation Team of the Language Center Dictionary, 2008). In the tradition of *pesantren*, *santri* are classified into two groups, namely *santri mukim* and *santri khodim*. *Santri mukim* are students who come from afar and live in the *pesantren* environment. They cover the entire cost of learning in the *Pesantren* by

themselves, including *syahriyah* costs (monthly fees), meals, learning materials, and other fees imposed by the *pesantren*. They oversee the *pondok*'s daily affairs and teach younger students the elementary version of a classic textbook. Meanwhile, *santri khodim* are students whose tuition fees are borne by the *pesantren*. In general, they come from the neighboring area and do not live in the *pesantren*, only attending the *pesantren* according to their learning schedule (Dhofier, 1994).

1.1.2.4 Mosque

The mosque has multiple functions to support the learning activities in the *pesantren*. In addition to being a place to pray five times a day and Friday prayers, the mosque also functions as a place to study manuscripts and *santri* development activities (e.g., Friday sermon, Barzanji prayer, and *Muhadoroh*) (Maksum, 1999). The mosque is thus the main resource and space in which the Kiyai carries out his obligation to educate and train his *santri* on the performance of worship, teach Islamic textbooks, and conduct social activities (Zarkasyi, 2009). In addition, the mosque reflects the togetherness of the community (Suparto, 2000), as can be clearly seen in the performance of the five daily prayers in congregation. The teachers and students, and at times locals, perform those prayers together, uniting the community in a ritual of submission to Allah the Almighty. The mosque is therefore not only beneficial for the *pesantren* but also for Muslims in general.

1.1.2.5 Classic Books or *Dirasah Islamiyyah*

In Islamic intellectual tradition, there are two categories of scientific works. The first category is called classic manuscripts (*al-kutub al-qadimah*), while the second is called modern manuscripts (*al-kutub al-'ashriyah*) (Wahid, 1999). In the *pesantren*

context, these books are known as *kitab kuning* (yellow manuscript) or *kitab gundul* (bare (lit. bald) manuscript). These are the textbooks, references, and curriculum in the *pesantren* education system (Aly, 2011). As van Bruinessen (1995) and Dhofier (2011) explained, these classic manuscripts are the main sources of knowledge construction and development of the *santri* in the *pesantren*.

According to Mukhtar (2001), classic books are commonly thought to be Arabic religious scriptures or scripts and as the thoughts of classical clerics written in a pre-modern format. However, as Mas'udi (1988) explained, this is untrue. He explained that there are two common characteristics of the classic books. First, they were written by Arabs but are hereditary references made by Indonesian scholars. Second, some of the books were also written by Indonesian scholars as an independent work or as a commentary or translation of the work of an Eastern cleric who used Arabic (Malay Arabic). According to Nata (1999), a classic book is that which discusses Islamic sciences and written or printed in the Arabic script in Arabic, Malay, Javanese, Sundanese, or other languages.

1.1.3 Types of *Pesantren*

In general, there are three types of *pesantren* in Indonesia: *salafi*, *khalaf*, and comprehensive (Malik, 2008). They are described below.

1.1.3.1 *Salafi*

The *salafi pesantren* still applies the traditional madrasah system as its education system (Haedari, 2004, Noor, 2006). This *pesantren* only offers religious and character development education. Therefore, the *salafi pesantren* has been regarded as the best—or at least the most traditional—religious education. The *pesantren* is based on the

Shafi'i school of jurisprudence (*madhab*), the traditional jurisprudential school in Indonesia. The *salafi pesantren* is a boarding school that only teaches books written by clerics in the 15th century using Arabic. Instruction is given in a *halaqah* pattern, which means carrying out discussion to understand the contents of the book, not to question whether it contains the right or wrong teachings but to understand what it is trying to teach. The students believe that the Kiyai will never teach them wrong things, and they are sure that the contents of the book that they learn are true (Bakhtiar, 1990).

1.1.3.2 *Khalaf*

Khalaf pesantren promotes *ijtihad* (independent interpretation) as opposed to the *taqlid* of *salaf pesantren*. Most *pesantren* today are considered “integrated” because they engage with traditional religious education and modern educational needs. Learning classic books is no longer a core activity. In fact, in some schools, they have been subordinated to complementary classes, thus religion will regress with the variety and complexity of Indonesia's current social development (Dhopier, 1994). *Khalaf pesantren* is more flexible and receptive to novel ideas and innovations (Malik, 2008). This type of *pesantren* seeks to modernize traditional Islamic education to keep up with the modernization brought by European colonizers (Madjid, 2010).

1.1.3.3 **Comprehensive**

A comprehensive *pesantren* combines the *salafi* and *khalaf pesantren* models (Bahri, 2011). It coordinates religious education and develops the skills of its students in agriculture, marine, technology, or other areas (Ghozali, 2003).

1.2 Problem Statement

Committed employees are the key success factors of any organization. But most organizations, including *pesantren*, found it difficult to maintain the high commitment of their employees. Wulandari and Priantini (2019) found that *pesantren* employees have a moderate level of organizational commitment. In Pesantren Darunnajah, Ibrohim et al. (2023) found that the organizational commitment of its 556 employees is moderate. Therefore, there is a need to conduct a study to examine the determinants of organizational commitment of *pesantren* employees in Indonesia, particularly in Pesantren Darunnajah.

Leadership is a critical element of *pesantren* in Indonesia. Traditionally, the leadership in *pesantren* is held by a Kiyai, who is also its founder. The development and sustainability of a *pesantren* depends a lot on the Kiyai's expertise, skills, and depth of knowledge (Hasbullah, 1999). The Kiyai is also an absolute source of power and authority in the *pesantren* environment (Dhofier, 1994). Therefore, leadership in *pesantren* is centered on the Kiyai, and the leadership of the Kiyai is attached to his personal qualities (Nugraha, 2010).

However, there is an inconsistent perception about the leadership style of *pesantren* leaders in the literature. For instance, Nugraha (2010) and Rachmawati (2009) argued that the *pesantren* leader applies the charismatic dominant leadership style. On the other hand, Prabowo (2016) noted that the leadership at *pesantren* tends to be an individual, limiting the roles and initiatives of subordinates. Abdullah et al. (2008) and Anchok and Suroso (2005) indicated that leadership in *pesantren* generally follows the religious leadership style. These inconsistent arguments justify further examination into the leadership style of the Kiyai.

There are also other issues related to *pesantren* leadership. First, decision-making is centered on the Kiyai, who produces authoritative decisions based on his level of reasoning and understanding. Second, some *pesantren* are unable to try new development patterns or innovations because they are not approved by the Kiyai. Third, there is no clear and systematized leadership succession plan. Fourth, the Kiyai as the sole leader of the *pesantren* often cannot keep up his leadership quality as the scope of influence of the *pesantren* grows (Wahid, 2010).

The problems abovementioned are closely related to leadership style in *pesantren*, and they may influence the organizational commitment and job satisfaction of its employees. There is some empirical evidence on the link between leadership style, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction. For instance, Wardianto dan Hendrati (2014) found a positive and significant relationship between leadership style and organizational commitment. Azim (2019) and Siddiq and Sudin (2013) showed that leadership style is positively related to employee job satisfaction. This study will extend the current body of knowledge by empirically examining the effect of three leadership styles (i.e., charismatic, transformational, autocratic) on job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Simultaneously examining three leadership styles can generate significant knowledge about which leadership style influences organizational commitment and job satisfaction.

This study further argues that job satisfaction could mediate the relationships between charismatic, transformational, and autocratic leadership style with organizational commitment. Evidence for these relationships is still lacking in the literature. There are three reasons to support the potential role of job satisfaction as a mediator in these relationships. First, leadership style is positively related to job satisfaction (Azim, 2019; Siddiq & Sudin, 2013). Second, job satisfaction has a positive

effect on organizational commitment (Mwesigwa, Tusiime & Ssekiziyivu, 2020). Third, job satisfaction can mediate between relationships, as has been shown in previous studies. For instance, Chan and Ao (2019) indicated that job satisfaction mediates the effect of pay satisfaction and work family conflict on turnover intention. Similarly, Riyadi and Soeling (2019) showed that job satisfaction mediates between leadership and employee performance.

This study was conducted to address the previous gaps. To be precise, this study examines the effects of charismatic, transformational, and autocratic leadership styles on organizational commitment and job satisfaction in the *pesantren* context. This study also examines the role of job satisfaction as a mediator in the relationships between charismatic leadership, transformational leadership, autocratic leadership, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. In addition, this study examines the level of charismatic, transformational, and autocratic leadership styles among the Kiyai.

Previous research directions extend the discussion about the factors that may influence organizational commitment in the context of this study, which is the *pesantren* in Indonesia. The findings from this study contribute meaningful implications to the *pesantren* on how to increase their employees' organizational commitment from moderate (Wulandari & Priantini, 2019; Ibrohim et al., 2023) to high.

1.3 Research Questions

- 1) What is the level of charismatic, transformational, and autocratic leadership styles among the *pesantren* Kiyai?
- 2) Do charismatic, transformational, and autocratic leadership styles influence the job satisfaction of *pesantren* employees?

- 3) Do charismatic, transformational, and autocratic leadership styles influence the organizational commitment of *pesantren* employees?
- 4) Does the job satisfaction of *pesantren* employees influence their organizational commitment?
- 5) Does job satisfaction mediate the relationships between charismatic, transformational, and autocratic leadership styles with organizational commitment?

1.4 Research Objectives

- 1) To determine level of charismatic, transformational, and autocratic leadership styles among the *pesantren* Kiyai.
- 2) To examine the effects of charismatic, transformational, and autocratic leadership styles on the job satisfaction of *pesantren* employees.
- 3) To examine the effect of charismatic, transformational, and autocratic leadership styles on the organizational commitment of *pesantren* employees.
- 4) To examine the effect of job satisfaction of *pesantren* employees influence their organizational commitment.
- 5) To assess the role of job satisfaction as a mediator in the relationship between charismatic, transformational, and autocratic leadership styles with organizational commitment.

1.5 Significance of the Study

First, the empirical findings of this study could enrich the extant literature on the determinants of organizational commitment. In specific, this study contributes new findings about the relationships between charismatic, transformational, and autocratic leadership styles with organizational commitment in the context of *pesantren* in

Indonesia. There is a paucity of research that examines the simultaneous effects of these leadership styles on organizational commitment. Current studies mostly assess the effects of those leadership styles on organizational commitment separately and in different contexts (Malik, Javed & Hassan, 2017; Adadevoh, 2003).

Second, this study incorporates a mediating factor, specifically job satisfaction. It then contributes empirical evidence to the literature about the mediating role of job satisfaction between charismatic, transformational, and transactional leadership styles with organizational commitment. Several studies have highlighted the role of job satisfaction as a mediator to explain different relationships (Chan & Ao, 2019; Riyadi & Soeling, 2019).

Third, the findings could also shed light on the leadership style of the Kiyai. This issue should be examined further because current findings have been unclear (Nugraha, 2010; Rachmawati, 2009; Prabowo, 2016; Abdullah et al, 2008; Anchok & Suroso, 2005).

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study was conducted to examine three issues. First, the leadership style of Kiyai at the *pesantren* in Indonesia. Second, the effects of charismatic, transformational, and autocratic leadership styles on job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Third, the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between charismatic, transformational, and autocratic leadership styles with organizational commitment. The research data were collected from employees of Pesantren Darunnajah in Indonesia.

1.7 Operational Definitions

Charismatic leadership refers to a leader who espouses the five characteristics specified by Conger, Kanungo, Menon and Mathur (1997). First, the leader formulates a strategic vision that is constantly presented in an inspiring way (strategic vision and articulation). Second, the leader assesses the environment to uncover growth opportunities for the organization (sensitivity to the environment). Third, the leader carefully evaluates his/her followers' needs (sensitivity to members' needs). Fourth, the leader provides a role model by demonstrating personal risk. Fifth, the leader provides a role model by demonstrating unconventional behavior to his/her followers.

Transformational leadership refers to a leader who espouses four characteristics (Bass & Avolio, 2010): (i) idealized influence, (ii) inspirational motivation, (iii) intellectual stimulation, and (iv) individualized consideration. Idealized influence means that the leader demonstrates reliability and a strong model, resulting in reverence from the followers, as he directs them towards the organization's vision and mission (Teymournejad & Elghaei, 2017). Inspirational motivation means that a leader serves as a model for followers to achieve organizational goals, and the leader clearly and confidently communicate his vision optimistically and enthusiastically (Jyoti & Dev, 2015). Intellectual stimulation means that the leader encourages followers to question the values, way of thinking, and beliefs of themselves and their leader (Jyoti & Dev, 2015). Individualized consideration means that the leader recognizes the differences among followers and provide individualized attention to motivate followers to exercise authority in decision-making (Ghadi et al., 2013; Teymournejad & Elghaei, 2017).

Autocratic leadership refers to a leader that has two characteristics (Cheng et al., 2000): to determine all decision and to emphasize the best performance.

Job satisfaction refers to employee's happiness towards the nine aspects of work, which are pay, promotion, supervisor, fringe benefit, contingent reward, operating condition, co-workers, nature of work, and communication (Weiss, Dawis, England & Lofquist, 1967).

Organizational commitment is defined by three aspects (Meyer & Allen, 1990, 1991): affective commitment, normative commitment, and continuance commitment. Affective commitment describes the employee's perception on the desire to stay with the organization (emotional attachment). Normative commitment describes the employee's feeling of obligation to stay with the organization (moral attachment). Continuance commitment describes the employee's need to stay with the organization (consequences of leaving are too high).

1.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter has discussed the research background and presented the problem statement. It has also explained the research questions and objectives, as well as its significance and scope. Finally, it provides the operational definitions for each research variable. Chapter 2 will review relevant theoretical and empirical literature.