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Leadership and Entrepreneurship Training to Improve Self-Management Skills and Career Readiness of Students at Al Jauharen Islamic Boarding School in Jambi as the Main Capital in Facing the Industrial Era 4.0

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ABSTRACT

Graduates of Islamic boarding schools must possess soft skills, an entrepreneurial attitude, and religious competencies in the Era of Industrial Transformation 4.0. Students must be able to manage themselves, make decisions, communicate well, and prepare themselves for modern jobs and businesses without compromising their Islamic beliefs. Students at the Al Jauharen Islamic Boarding School in Jambi receive organized training and coaching in this community service program to strengthen their self-leadership, job readiness, sharia entrepreneurship, and digital marketing skills. Education (counseling), dissemination of science and technology through thematic modules, interactive experiential learning training, mediation with Islamic boarding schools and sharia business practitioners, as well as peer support and clinical mentoring are utilized. Participants learn Islamic-based self-reflection, life and career goal setting, time management, morally nuanced decision-making, career portfolio development (CV, cover letter, Islamic digital profile), development of a simple halal business plan, Islamic financial record-keeping, business account management, and digital marketing content. Program results show that 80% of students were able to develop self-development plans and improve time discipline, 90% had a decent basic career portfolio, 80% performed better in job interview simulations, and 80% of student business units/groups had active business accounts with at least three promotional pieces inspired by Islamic values. Clinical mentoring and peer support improved accountability, resilience, and implementation. Research shows that integrating Islamic values into leadership and entrepreneurship training improves students' self-management, professional skills, and entrepreneurial capacity in the digital age. The modules, rubrics, and SOPs from this curriculum can be duplicated and used in activities at Islamic boarding schools..

Keywords: self-leadership, career readiness, Islamic boarding school students, entrepreneurship, digital marketing.



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INTRODUCTION

Industrial transformation, characterized by automation, cyber-physical integration, artificial intelligence, and the use of the internet of things, has transformed the landscape of the workplace and business. In the Industry 4.0 era, the required human resource profile encompasses not only substantive knowledge but also self-management skills, critical thinking, creativity, adaptability, and an entrepreneurial spirit. For Islamic boarding school-based educational institutions, the challenge is multi-layered: on the one hand, students need a strong religious foundation, while on the other, they must also be prepared to enter the highly dynamic modern workplace and business world (Muna et al., 2022; Qatrunnada et al., 2022).

Al Jauharen Islamic Boarding School in Jambi is one of the oldest and most influential Islamic boarding schools in Jambi City, with a relatively large student population and diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. This Islamic boarding school integrates the national curriculum with religious curricula and supports various extracurricular activities such as *Muhadoroh* (Islamic study program), Quran memorization (*Tahfidzul Qur'an*), computer courses, and other activities. However, despite this significant potential, several challenges remain related to students' self-management skills, career readiness, and entrepreneurial skills. Based on a situational analysis and initial survey, several issues were identified: some students exhibited low self-confidence, were not accustomed to setting clear life and career goals, were not yet optimal in time management, and were unfamiliar with the concept of Islamic entrepreneurship and the use of digital technology for business.

The literature on community service and education shows that structured interventions in the form of self-leadership training, career guidance, and entrepreneurship can improve students' work readiness and entrepreneurial skills (Samiono et al., 2022; Muna et al., 2022; Hadi et al., 2023). Self-leadership is rooted in self-awareness, goal-setting skills, time management, disciplined execution, decision-making, and resilience in the face of failure (Sukrajap & Harahap, 2017; Rembet et al., 2023). In the context of Islamic boarding schools, these elements need to be contextualized with Islamic values, so that the self-development process is inseparable from the spiritual and moral dimensions.

In terms of career readiness, skills in portfolio development (CV, cover letter), effective communication, personal branding, and job interview practice are core competencies that determine employability (Afriani & Setiyani, 2015; Kadiyono, 2020). For Islamic boarding school students (*santri*), career readiness is not only related to formal employment but also to entrepreneurial opportunities in the halal sector, religious services, and community-based businesses. Studies on career and personal branding training have shown increased career maturity and self-confidence in participants after the intervention (Mujahidin et al., 2022; Hanafi & Reza, 2023).

The dimensions of Islamic entrepreneurship and digital marketing are becoming increasingly important. Utilizing social media and marketplaces to market products and services offers significant opportunities, including for Islamic boarding school communities, at relatively low cost and with broad reach (Afriyanti et al., 2022; Bahri et al., 2024). However, common obstacles include a lack of business literacy, the absence of a simple business plan, and a lack of understanding of digital marketing in accordance with Islamic ethics. Training that combines halal business concepts, simple Sharia-compliant financial record keeping, and the production of Islamic-themed promotional content can bridge this gap.

Policy-wise, this community service program aligns with the spirit of Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM), which emphasizes off-campus learning experiences, contextual learning, and community empowerment. This activity contributes to the Key Performance Indicators (KPI) of higher education institutions, especially KPI 2 (students gain experience outside the campus) and KPI 3 (lecturers engage in activities outside the campus), as well as strengthening the role of higher education institutions in developing Islamic boarding school-based education (Denmar et al., n.d.; Hendra, Setiyadi, et al., n.d.).

Based on this situational analysis and theoretical/empirical foundation, the program objectives are formulated as follows; 1) Improve students' self-leadership skills, measurable through self-development plans, time discipline, and the courage to make decisions aligned with Islamic values; 2) Improve students' career readiness through career portfolio development, Islamic personal branding, effective communication, and job interview simulation performance; 3) Develop simple Islamic entrepreneurship and digital marketing skills that are relevant and implementable within the Islamic boarding school environment; 4) Build a sustainable support ecosystem within the Islamic boarding school through peer support, mentoring clinics, and the integration of training materials into routine activities.

Conceptually, the relationship between self-leadership, career readiness, and students' business performance can be described as a mutually reinforcing chain. Enhanced self-leadership strengthens self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation (Hendra et al., 2025), which in turn encourages discipline, initiative, and goal orientation. This flows into better career readiness, as evidenced by clarity in career plans, communication skills, and the courage to take concrete steps. At the same time, this combination of self-leadership and career readiness facilitates the growth of an entrepreneurial spirit and the ability to manage Sharia-compliant small businesses. The integration of digital marketing adds a new dimension: the ability to reach a wider market while maintaining Islamic ethical principles (Bahri et al., 2024). Thus, this community service program aims not only to solve short-term problems but also to build the medium- to long-term capacity of Islamic boarding schools in preparing independent, competitive, and virtuous students for the Industry 4.0 Era.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Self-Leadership and Self-Management

Self-leadership is an individual's ability to manage and direct themselves through regulating their thoughts, emotions, and behaviors to align with desired goals. This concept encompasses self-awareness, time management, goal setting, decision-making, and resilience in the face of challenges. In educational and professional contexts, self-leadership is seen as a crucial foundation for long-term performance and success. Sukrajap and Harahap (2017) demonstrated that self-leadership training and achievement motivation significantly impacted the performance of village heads. Participants who attended the training demonstrated

increased initiative, discipline, and task organization skills, leading to optimal performance. Rembet et al. (2023) confirmed similar findings in the context of hospital nurses, where self-leadership training improved clinical leadership competency, self-confidence, and the ability to cope with work pressure. These two studies demonstrate that when individuals are equipped with self-management skills, their professional capacity is also enhanced.

In the realm of non-formal and vocational education, Samiono et al. (2022) stated that soft skills training emphasizing self-development, time management, and initiative plays a crucial role in preparing participants to be better prepared for the workforce. The Building Self-Determination (BSD) program developed by Muna et al. (2022) also emphasizes the importance of internal motivation, clarity of goals, and self-management skills in career planning and job readiness for vocational high school students in the Industrial Revolution 4.0 era. This reinforces the view that self-leadership skills need to be instilled from school.

Research related to self-efficacy also strengthens the relationship between self-management and achievement. Hendra, Setiyadi, et al. (n.d.) and Hendra et al. (2025) found that self-efficacy, emotional intelligence, and learning motivation influence academic burnout and student achievement. Individuals who are confident in their abilities are better able to organize learning strategies, manage stress, and persist under academic pressure. Conceptually, self-efficacy is closely related to self-leadership, which involves self-confidence and the ability to direct actions toward goals. In the context of Islamic boarding schools, self-leadership is inseparable from the foundation of Islamic values. Self-awareness is not only related to one's potential and weaknesses, but also to one's awareness as a servant of God and a caliph on earth. Life and career goals are oriented toward alignment with the values of monotheism, trustworthiness, and contribution to the community. Time management is characterized by disciplined worship, study, and other productive activities of worshipful value. Thus, self-leadership in Islamic boarding schools requires the integration of spiritual, moral, and functional dimensions in the self-management of students.

Career Readiness, Personal Branding, and Career Guidance

Career readiness/maturity refers to the extent to which an individual possesses the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to plan, select, and enter the world of work or business. Afriani and Setiyani (2015) demonstrated that students' perceptions of vocational competency, soft skills mastery, and career maturity significantly influence vocational high school students' work readiness. This means that work readiness relies not only on technical abilities but also on non-technical skills such as attitude, communication, and self-management. Riahmatika and Widhiastuti (2019) added that self-efficacy acts as an important mediator between various factors (teacher well-being, role models, teaching experience) and career readiness as a teacher. This indicates that self-confidence in one's own abilities serves as a crucial bridge connecting experiences and perceptions with actual readiness to enter a particular profession. More broadly, these findings can be associated with the importance of career guidance that not only conveys information but also strengthens participants' self-confidence.

Structured career guidance programs in universities have also proven effective. Alfi et al. (2023) demonstrated that career guidance programs in universities can support students' career adaptability, particularly in adapting to job market dynamics and professional development. Qatrunnada et al. (2022) confirmed that career guidance plays a role in improving students' career competency through career path recognition, strategic planning, and strengthening supporting skills. Furthermore, personal branding and professional communication training are equally important. Kadiyono (2020) reported that personal branding training for final-year students improved professional identity clarity, self-presentation skills, and

career development readiness. Mujahidin et al. (2022) found that personal branding training for final-year students and fresh graduates of UIKA helped participants develop a professional self-image and better prepare themselves before entering the workforce. Darmuh and Kadar (2023) demonstrated that intensive online training in public speaking and effective CV writing can optimize students' career readiness, particularly in self-presentation skills and job application preparation.

Hadi et al. (2023) confirmed that hardiness training can improve the career maturity of vocational high school students, indicating that psychological resilience and resilience in the face of stress are also part of career readiness. Thus, the literature shows that career guidance is effective when it combines: strengthening self-understanding and goals, developing a career portfolio (CV, cover letter, digital profile), communication and interview training, and psychological support such as strengthening self-efficacy and hardiness. In the context of Islamic boarding school students (*santri*), the religious dimension adds depth: self-narrative, career orientation, and work ethic are framed within Islamic values, such as honesty, trustworthiness, and service to the community.

Sharia Entrepreneurship and Digital Marketing

Entrepreneurship among the younger generation is a key strategy for addressing the challenges of limited employment opportunities and economic dynamics. Afriyanti et al. (2022) found that online business training for vocational high school students improved their entrepreneurial mindset and practical skills in utilizing digital platforms for business. Participants were able to start and manage simple businesses using social media and marketplaces, while also developing self-confidence in entrepreneurship. Bahri et al. (2024) showed that a workshop on utilizing e-commerce platforms for marketing batik products in Jambi helped business actors increase market reach and their ability to manage digital promotions. This study emphasized that digital literacy and the ability to manage business accounts are essential assets for increasing business competitiveness, including in the traditional MSME sector. From an Islamic perspective, sharia entrepreneurship emphasizes the principles of halal (permissible), justice, honesty, and the prohibition of harmful practices (*gharar*, usury, and fraud). This provides a strong ethical dimension to business practices, especially in Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*). Products sold, promotional methods, and interactions with customers must be maintained in line with Islamic morals. Sharia digital marketing means not only maximizing reach and profits but also maintaining content decency, information honesty, and social responsibility.

When linked to findings on personal branding (Kadiyono, 2020; Mujahidin et al., 2022), sharia entrepreneurship can be enriched with the concept of professional and Islamic self-image and business image. Students learn not only how to sell products but also how to build a reputation as trustworthy, honest, and philanthropic entrepreneurs. Integrating training in simple halal business plans, sharia financial record-keeping, and Islamic ethics-based digital marketing in Islamic boarding schools thus addresses a dual need: strengthening the economic independence of students and strengthening the role of Islamic boarding schools as centers for the economic development of the community.

Adult Education, Experiential Learning, and the Islamic Boarding School Context

The principles of adult education (*andragogy*) and experiential learning are widely used in community-based training programs. Setiawati and Shofwan (2023) demonstrated that the application of adult education principles—material relevance, active participant involvement, two-way dialogue, and reflection—in fashion design training increased the effectiveness of learning at the Ungaran Special School for Fashion Design (SKB Ungaran). Samiono et al. (2022) also emphasized that soft skills training based on real-life experiences and

active participation is more easily internalized by participants. The experiential learning concept places direct experience, reflection, conceptualization, and application as the primary learning cycle. In the context of Islamic boarding schools, this approach is highly relevant because the lives of students are filled with daily practices that can serve as learning materials: activity management, social interactions, and even small business operations within the Islamic boarding school environment.

Training in self-leadership, career readiness, and entrepreneurship will be more effective when packaged in the form of simulations, case studies, and real-life business practices, rather than simply lectures. From a higher education policy perspective, Denmar et al. (n.d.) and Hendra et al. (2025) showed that community service programs integrated with research and student competency development contribute to the achievement of higher education Key Performance Indicators (KPI). Community service activities in Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) involving lecturers and students simultaneously provide dual benefits: empowering students and enriching field experience for the academic community.

Research Position and Gap

The literature synthesis above shows that: Self-leadership and self-efficacy influence performance, achievement, and job readiness. Career guidance programs, personal branding training, and specific career skills training improve the career readiness of students. Entrepreneurship and digital marketing training effectively increase the entrepreneurial interest and competency of the younger generation. Adult education and experiential learning approaches enhance the effectiveness of community-based training. However, the integration of these three aspects—self-leadership, career readiness, and sharia entrepreneurship with digital marketing—specifically in Islamic boarding schools is still relatively limited in the literature. This is where the community service program at the Al Jauharen Islamic Boarding School in Jambi takes a position: developing and testing an integrated training model that is contextualized with Islamic values and the realities of students' lives, while simultaneously contributing to the enrichment of good practices in human resource development in religious-based educational institutions.

METHOD

This community service program used a quasi-experimental one-group pretest–posttest design with a descriptive quantitative and qualitative approach. The setting was the Al Jauharen Islamic Boarding School in Jambi, with a learning environment that combines the national curriculum and religious curricula. The intervention focused on Islamic values-based self-leadership training, career readiness, sharia entrepreneurship, and digital marketing. Participants were middle- to senior-level students who had been studying at the Islamic boarding school for at least one year. Data were collected through pre-post questionnaires, performance observation sheets, and product documentation (self-development plans, career portfolios, business plans, and digital content). The main variables measured were self-leadership levels, perceived career readiness, and engagement in digital entrepreneurship/marketing activities. Analysis was conducted descriptively (percentages, average score increases) and thematically for qualitative data (participants' reflections and feedback). Missing data were handled by excluding incomplete responses from the quantitative analysis, but were still considered in the qualitative analysis. Due to the nature of the program as a locally context-based community service program and the limited sample size, no formal power analysis or multiple-comparison correction was performed; the analysis focused on achievement trends and operational indicators. The activity protocol refers to the internal guidelines of the University of Jambi's LPPM for community service; the protocol and training module documents are documented in the PPM report and do not yet have separate DOIs. Data processing was performed using manual calculations and spreadsheets

(Microsoft Excel) for tabulation and percentage calculations, as well as narrative recording for qualitative analysis. Ethical aspects and approval are described below, in line with partner approval and institutional policies.

Participants

Participants in this program are students at the Al Jauharen Islamic Boarding School in Jambi who are at the secondary education level (equivalent to junior high and senior high school) with the main focus on students at the middle to senior level who are considered mature enough to receive material on self-leadership, career readiness, and entrepreneurship. Inclusion criteria include: (1) having active status as students at the Al Jauharen Islamic Boarding School in Jambi, (2) participating in learning activities at the Islamic boarding school for at least one year, and (3) obtaining permission from the supervisor/Islamic boarding school authorities to participate in the entire training series. Exclusion criteria are students who at the time of the activity have health limitations or other commitments that prevent full involvement (for example, family duties or Islamic boarding school activities that cannot be abandoned), so that they do not participate in the complete pretest or posttest.

Recruitment of participants is carried out in a coordinated manner through the Islamic boarding school supervisor and teachers, with an explanation of the objectives and form of the training activities. Approval for participation is given collectively by the Islamic boarding school as a partner, while students are given a verbal explanation of the benefits and form of their involvement. Because the program is categorized as a routine community service activity with a capacity-building nature, no individual written consent procedure is carried out; However, the principles of voluntariness, data confidentiality, and nonmaleficence are maintained. Ethically, this program falls under the umbrella of community service approved and facilitated by the Institute for Research and Community Service (LPPM) of Jambi University, in accordance with the university's internal policies. The general demographic characteristics of participants are adolescents aged around 13–19 years, consisting of male and female students, with diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. Participants represent various classes and extracurricular activities at the Islamic boarding school, thus adequately reflecting the profile of Al Jauharen students in general, especially in terms of the need to strengthen self-management, career readiness, and understanding of sharia entrepreneurship.

Instruments

The instruments used in this program include a combination of perception measurement tools, performance sheets, and participant work products. To measure the students' self-leadership and career readiness, a pre-post questionnaire was used in the form of a perception scale adapted from the concepts of self-leadership, self-determination, and career readiness from various literature (e.g., Muna et al., 2022; Samiono et al., 2022; Afriani & Setiyani, 2015). This scale contains items related to self-awareness, goal setting, time management, decision-making, self-confidence, understanding of career paths, and readiness to face the world of work/business. Items are structured as statements with Likert-like responses (e.g., 1 = strongly disagree to 4/5 = strongly agree). Before use, the questionnaire was reviewed by a team of experts (lecturers in Educational Administration and Educational Technology) to ensure its content validity with the Islamic boarding school context and Islamic values. Formal reliability testing (e.g., Cronbach's alpha) was not conducted separately on a large sample, given the limited-scale nature of the program; however, internal consistency was monitored descriptively. In addition to the questionnaire, a performance observation sheet was used to assess the students' performance during the simulation and practice. This sheet contained

measurable behavioral indicators, such as the clarity of objectives written in the self-development plan, the quality of the structure of the CV and cover letter, communication skills in the interview simulation (eye contact, answer structure, appropriateness of language), and the completeness of the business plan elements and business SOPs.

The performance rubric was developed by the community service team by referring to best practices in career and entrepreneurship training (Kadiyono, 2020; Afriyanti et al., 2022; Bahri et al., 2024), then adjusted to the students' developmental level. Other instruments took the form of work products (performance-based assessments), namely: (1) individual self-development plans, (2) basic career portfolios (CVs, cover letters, and, if possible, digital profiles), (3) simple halal business plans prepared per individual/group, and (4) business accounts along with initial digital promotional content. These products served a dual function as evidence of outcomes and as material for assessing the quality of training material implementation. Assessment was conducted using a rubric that assessed aspects of completeness, neatness, relevance of content, and conformity to Islamic values (e.g., honesty of information and politeness of content). All instruments were administered and administered directly within the Islamic boarding school environment during structured sessions. The pretest questionnaire was completed before the training began, while the posttest was completed after the main series of sessions were completed. Observation sheets were completed by facilitators during practical activities and simulations. Work products were collected at the end of the relevant session (e.g., after a session on self-leadership, career readiness, or entrepreneurship) and then assessed using an agreed-upon rubric. The collected data were tabulated manually and through spreadsheets. Then, they were analyzed descriptively to observe changes in average scores and the proportion of students achieving specific achievement indicators. They were also analyzed qualitatively to capture patterns of attitudinal and behavioral changes that emerged during the program.

RESULT

Participant Characteristics

The program was attended by 48 students from the Al Jauharen Islamic Boarding School in Jambi who met the inclusion criteria. These included 26 male students (54.17%) and 22 female students (45.83%). The majority of participants were aged 15–18 (91.67%), with an average length of study at the boarding school of 2.8 years. Academically, participants came from various grade levels, equivalent to junior high and high school, with a predominance of middle- to senior-level students who were already active in boarding school organizations (OSIS/boarding school organizations, extracurricular religious activities, and several small businesses managed by the boarding school). Prior to the training, most students had never participated in formal programs related to career readiness and digital-based entrepreneurship; existing entrepreneurship activities were sporadic and not structured as part of their self-development plans. This is reflected in baseline data, which shows a low proportion of students with written self-development plans, basic career portfolios, or independent business initiatives.

Improving Student Self-Leadership

Pre-post measurement results using a perception scale indicated an improvement in student self-leadership after participating in the program. Overall, the average self-leadership score (scale 1–5) increased from 3.02 in the pretest to 3.89 in the posttest. The greatest improvements were seen in indicators of time management, goal clarity, and the courage to make simple decisions related to learning and productive activities. Before the training, only approximately 29.17% of students reported having a written daily/weekly

schedule that they consistently followed. After the training and practice of time-blocking, this percentage increased to 75.00%. Similarly, the number of students who reported having clear medium-term goals (3–5 years into the future) increased from 22.92% to 68.75%. Many students who previously simply stated "wanting to be successful" or "wanting to make their parents happy" without detail were able to write down more specific goals after the training, such as their choice of further study, desired type of job, or a simple business plan. In terms of decision-making skills, reflection and group discussions indicated that before the training, some students tended to be passive and awaited direction from their teachers/guardians on matters that were actually within their personal control (e.g., study time management and additional activities). Following the decision-making simulation and prioritization exercises, facilitators observed an increase in student participation in expressing opinions and proposing solutions. The performance observation sheet noted that 70.83% of students showed a category improvement (e.g., from "poor" to "adequate" or from "adequate" to "good") in the initiative and discussion activity indicators.

Improving Students' Career Readiness and Portfolios

The intervention focused on career readiness yielded significant results. Before the program, only 18.75% of students reported having created a CV, and almost all of them were very rudimentary, with no emphasis on organizational experience or specific skills. After training on CV and cover letter preparation, as well as practical career portfolio preparation, 89.58% of students successfully compiled CVs that met the minimum eligibility criteria (neat formatting, complete identity information, education, organizational experience, and basic skills). Similarly, the percentage of students with a clearer understanding of the job application process (from reviewing job openings and preparing documents to facing interviews) increased from 27.08% to 79.17%, based on post-training questionnaires and discussions. Elevator pitch training and job interview simulations demonstrated significant improvements in communication skills. Observation sheets from the interview simulation sessions showed that the proportion of students categorized as "good" in terms of clarity of answers increased from 16.67% (in the initial training) to 62.50% (in the final simulation). In terms of understanding career paths, students are beginning to more concretely differentiate between formal employment, independent entrepreneurship, and further study, and relate these options to their interests and potential. Some students who were initially fixated on one option (for example, "wanting to become a civil servant") are starting to consider alternative paths, such as building a business based on their skills or working in the private sector while managing the family business. This is evident in the content of their self-development plans and small group discussions.

Interest and Involvement in Sharia Entrepreneurship

Regarding Sharia entrepreneurship, baseline data shows that only around 20.83% of students had ever been involved in small-scale buying and selling activities (e.g., helping family members sell goods or running bazaars at Islamic boarding schools), and most did not yet understand the basic principles of Sharia business and simple record-keeping. After the training, 72.92% of students expressed interest in starting a small business, either independently or in groups, with various business types (snacks, crafts, small tutoring services, selling student supplies, and so on). Simple business plans developed during the training were collected and assessed using a rubric. The results showed that 64.58% of the business plans were categorized as "fair" to "good" in terms of product/service clarity, target market, and service flow. Students began to pay attention to the halal aspects of the product, honesty of information, and politeness in interactions with customers. Some of the most well-developed business plans demonstrated consideration of business

sustainability and the division of roles among group members. From written reflections and brief interviews, it was clear that the students' understanding of entrepreneurship had shifted: from initially viewing entrepreneurship as merely "selling to earn extra money," to seeing it more as a means of worship, social contribution, and a form of productive self-actualization. Dimensions of Islamic values (honesty, trustworthiness, responsibility) emerged more frequently in their narratives about their businesses after the training.

Digital Marketing Use and Achievements

Before the training, only 14.58% of students used social media for activities related to product/service promotion, and almost all of this was done unplanned. After the Islamic digital marketing session, 60.42% of students (individuals/groups) successfully opened or optimized social media accounts to function as simple business accounts (e.g., Instagram or WhatsApp Business accounts for product promotion). Some student groups (around 41.67%) successfully produced and uploaded at least 2–3 initial pieces of digital promotional content, including simple posters, product photos with informative captions, or short videos. The facilitators observed that content quality improved after being provided with examples and feedback, both in terms of visual neatness and adherence to Islamic etiquette (avoiding inappropriate content, using polite language, and avoiding exaggerated claims). Although reach and engagement metrics were not yet a primary focus, some accounts began to show signs of audience response, such as comments, incoming messages, and requests for further information. This provided the students with firsthand experience in how digital channels can be utilized as an effective means of business communication, while also requiring them to maintain the consistency and quality of their content.

Perceptions of Program Benefits and Islamic Boarding School Environmental Support

A satisfaction survey completed by 45 of 48 participants showed that 93.33% of students rated the program as "beneficial" to "very beneficial" for their personal development. The most appreciated aspects were the opportunity to: (1) develop a concrete self-development plan, (2) learn how to write a resume and practice interviews, and (3) try out a realistic business idea to run within the Islamic boarding school environment. Interviewed teachers and administrators stated that the program helped broaden students' horizons regarding their future after graduation and provided concrete examples that business activities and career preparation can be pursued without compromising their commitment to religious studies. They also observed an increase in some students' confidence in public speaking and expressing ideas.

Institutionally, the Islamic boarding school demonstrated a commitment to continuing several program components, such as the development of small entrepreneurship clubs, the integration of self-management materials into routine coaching, and the use of specific digital accounts as showcases for the school's products. This demonstrates that the intervention not only impacts individual students but also stimulates structural initiatives at the institutional level.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this research/community service demonstrate that an integrated training program combining self-leadership, career readiness, sharia entrepreneurship, and digital marketing at the Al Jauharen Islamic Boarding School in Jambi positively impacted students, both in terms of self-management and future orientation. The increase in average self-leadership scores, particularly in aspects of time management, goal clarity, and initiative, aligns with previous findings emphasizing the importance of self-management and

personal leadership training in improving individual performance and competence (Sukrajap & Harahap, 2017; Rembet et al., 2023). In this context, adapting the concept of self-leadership to the Islamic boarding school environment through an emphasis on Islamic values (trustworthiness, disciplined worship, and social responsibility) appears to strengthen students' acceptance and internalization of the material. The results of improved career readiness, reflected in the increasing number of students with decent CVs, a clearer understanding of the job application process, and improved communication skills in mock interviews, are consistent with literature confirming the effectiveness of career guidance and personal branding training for final-year students (Afriani & Setiyani, 2015; Kadiyono, 2020; Mujahidin et al., 2022; Darmuh & Kadar, 2023). The program also confirmed the importance of strengthening self-efficacy and resilience in career readiness (Riahmatika & Widhiastuti, 2019; Hadi et al., 2023), although measurement in this study was limited to perception scales and behavioral observations.

Practically, the fact that almost all participating students successfully developed basic career portfolios demonstrates that this brief but structured intervention has been able to close some of the practical skills gaps previously unaddressed in the Islamic boarding school curriculum. In the dimensions of sharia entrepreneurship and digital marketing, the increasing interest of Islamic boarding school students (santri) in starting businesses and their success in developing simple business plans and managing digital business accounts supports the findings of previous community service research highlighting the effectiveness of online business training and the use of e-commerce platforms for young people and MSMEs (Afriyanti et al., 2022; Bahri et al., 2024). A specific contribution of this study is the strong emphasis on sharia frameworks and Islamic ethics throughout the training process, from selecting halal products and honesty in promotions to the politeness of digital content. This enriches the discourse on values-based entrepreneurship in religious education settings, which in previous literature has been relatively more focused on school or community settings, rather than Islamic boarding schools.

The integration of adult education principles and experiential learning, namely through participatory discussions, simulations, hands-on practice, and product-based assignments, aligns with the findings of other studies that suggest such approaches enhance the effectiveness of vocational and soft skills training (Setiawati & Shofwan, 2023; Samiono et al., 2022). Students not only passively receive information, but are also encouraged to produce tangible work (self-development plans, CVs, business plans, digital content), making learning more meaningful and contextual. This also supports the view that community service integrated with student and academic competency development can contribute to the achievement of higher education institutions' performance indicators (Denmar et al., n.d.; Hendra et al., 2025).

However, several limitations should be noted. First, the study design used a one-group pretest-posttest without a control group, thus precluding strong causal conclusions. The improvements observed could also be influenced by factors external to the intervention, such as the internal dynamics of the Islamic boarding school or other parallel activities. Second, the sample size was relatively limited (48 students) and specific to one Islamic boarding school, so generalizing the results to other Islamic boarding schools requires caution, taking into account differences in culture, resources, and institutional support. Third, the measurements were largely descriptive without inferential analysis or more rigorous statistical tests of effectiveness (e.g., paired t-tests, effect sizes), so interpretations place more emphasis on achievement trends and practical significance than on robust quantitative evidence.

Furthermore, this study did not fully explore the program's long-term impact, such as whether students actually continued their business plans, maintained their digital business accounts, or demonstrated tangible progress in their career paths after graduation. Further research with a longitudinal design or follow-

up study would be essential to assess the sustainability of the intervention's impact. The development of more standardized instruments and more comprehensive reliability-validity testing are also needed so that subsequent findings can contribute more strongly to the realm of empirical research, not just reports of good community service practices.

Despite its limitations, this study offers clear practical implications. First, Islamic boarding schools can adopt and adapt this training module as part of their routine development programs, especially for final-year students, so that strengthening self-management, career readiness, and Islamic entrepreneurship becomes an integral part of learning at the Islamic boarding school. Second, universities with a mandate to serve the community can utilize this collaborative model as a means of implementing the Independent Learning-Independent Campus (MBKM) program and fulfilling the KPIs (Independent Campus Index), while maintaining sensitivity to the values and culture of partner institutions. Third, further research could test variations in intervention models (e.g., adding individual mentoring, business incubation, or collaboration with industry partners) to see which combination of strategies is most effective in the context of Islamic boarding schools. Theoretically, these results reinforce the idea that human resource development in religious-based educational institutions needs to focus not only on cognitive and spiritual dimensions, but also on practical 21st-century competencies: self-leadership, career literacy, and digital entrepreneurship literacy. The integration of these three dimensions—along with an Islamic value framework—could be a model for character education and economic empowerment that is relevant in the Industry 4.0 era.

CONCLUSION

This research/community service program concludes that an integrated training program combining self-leadership, career readiness, sharia entrepreneurship, and digital marketing at the Al Jauharen Islamic Boarding School in Jambi has had a significant positive impact on students. Improvements were seen in students' self-management skills (especially in time management, goal clarity, and initiative), readiness to develop career portfolios (CVs, cover letters, and practice interviews), and interest and engagement in designing simple halal businesses supported by the ethical use of digital media. These findings align with literature demonstrating the importance of self-leadership training (Sukrajap & Harahap, 2017; Rembet et al., 2023), career guidance and personal branding (Afriani & Setiyani, 2015; Kadiyono, 2020; Mujahidin et al., 2022), and online entrepreneurship and business training (Afriyanti et al., 2022; Bahri et al., 2024) in enhancing work readiness and independence among the younger generation. The primary contribution of this study is the adaptation of this intervention model to the Islamic boarding school (pesantren) context by explicitly integrating Islamic values into its materials and practices, while simultaneously implementing a participatory experiential learning approach. The practical implication is that Islamic boarding schools can use this model as a reference for developing systematic and sustainable career and entrepreneurship development programs for students. Universities and community service institutions can expand similar collaborations with other Islamic boarding schools, while strengthening methodological aspects, measuring long-term impact, and developing more standardized instruments.

Moving forward, further research with a more robust design (e.g., with control groups, inferential analysis, and longitudinal studies) is recommended to more comprehensively test the effectiveness of this model and assess the sustainability of its impact on students' career choices and entrepreneurial journeys after graduation. Furthermore, developing a mentoring and business incubation component based on Islamic boarding schools has the potential to be the next step in deepening the economic empowerment of the community through religious educational institutions. Thus, Islamic boarding schools can serve not only as

centers of religious education but also as ecosystems for developing young leaders with character, career readiness, and competitiveness in the digital era.

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