

**BEYOND THE CHARISMA OF ISLAMIC BOARDING  
SCHOOL LEADERS: COUNTERING POTENTIAL ABUSE  
THROUGH ENHANCING CRITICAL THINKING  
AND CRITICAL DIALOGICAL ABILITIES  
OF THE 'LED'**

Thesis

Submitted to meet the Graduation Requirements of  
Master's Degree MA in Education



Author

Supriyono

Student ID: 04242110005

UNIVERSITAS ISLAM INTERNASIONAL INDONESIA

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Supriyono

Corresponding emails: [supriyono.hemay@uiii.ac.id](mailto:supriyono.hemay@uiii.ac.id) or [hemayono91@gmail.com](mailto:hemayono91@gmail.com)

## ABSTRACT

In response to the pressing call for enhancing the critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities of the students at *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools) in Indonesia, this study delves into the 'dark side' of charismatic leadership commonly adopted by these 'indigenous' Islamic educational institutions. The inquiries stem from rising reports of sexual abuse at *pesantren* institutions and scrutinize the romanticized axiom of charisma in leadership that is often overshadowed by extreme admiration, blind idolization, and unquestioning obedience, which leads to sparing limited or even no room for the followers to question and criticize, making them vulnerable to power abuse. Hence, this study draws upon the insights of 24 participants from two *pesantren* institutions in East Java, probing their perceptions, practices, and reflections on charisma and obedience. A multiple case study design is employed within a qualitative research framework, utilizing document analysis, focused group discussions, interviews, and observations for the data collection. Triangulation techniques in both data collection and data sources are used for validation to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the data, which is analyzed using software-based thematic analysis through Quirkos. This study also addresses ethical considerations and the researcher's positionality to maintain academic integrity and methodological rigor. The findings suggest that the student's critical thinking and dialogical capabilities are not a mere function of the leadership style in *pesantren*. Rather, these aspects span a broader spectrum, hinging on the Islamic educational models that they adopt, here contested by *adab* (moral disciplining) and *tarbiyah* (critical dialogue). Exclusive reliance on *adab* leads to unbalanced charismatic leadership, fostering a patriarchal culture conducive to power abuse, including sexual abuse. Conversely, combining both *adab* and *tarbiyah* promotes a balanced charismatic leadership where *adab* (moral) forms the basis while critical thinking and dialogue serve as control mechanisms. In practice, critical thinking acts as an alarm, enabling students to discern whether their leaders' commands align with Islamic principles, while critical dialogical abilities serve as a countermeasure, empowering students to assertively challenge potential misconduct. This research highlights the importance of the control element in charismatic leadership, complementing the three components suggested by previous studies: basis, emotional connection, and signaling communication. Consequently, these findings lay the groundwork for further research to delve deeper into the dark side of charismatic leadership in the Islamic school setting, given that charisma meets religiosity could yield benefits on one hand, but potentially negative consequences on the other.

**Keywords:** *Islamic school leadership, charismatic leadership, dark side of charisma, power abuse, sexual abuse, critical thinking, critical dialogue, Islamic education, pesantren, indigenous Islamic school.*

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

BRIN	Indonesia's National Research and Innovation Agency
OCB	Organizational Citizenship Behavior
FGD	Focused Group Discussion

## LIST OF GLOSSARIES

<i>Adab</i>	Islamic educational model which promotes moral disciplining
<i>'Amal</i>	Action
<i>'Aql</i>	Mind
<i>'Ilm</i>	Knowledge
<i>Akhlakul Karimah</i>	Good moral
<i>Al-haywan al-natiq</i>	Rational animal
<i>Bahsul Masail</i>	Discussion held by <i>pesantren</i> to find the right theorem ( <i>dalil</i> ) of certain problems that happened in societies
<i>Barakah</i>	One of the charismatic attributes of <i>pesantren</i> leaders, characterized by the increase in goodness.
<i>Cangkolang</i>	Madurese term for <i>lancang</i> in Indonesian, or presumptuous in English.
<i>Gus</i>	Son of <i>pesantren</i> leaders or future leaders of <i>pesantren</i>
<i>Haqq</i>	Real or true
<i>Ilmu Mantik</i>	Logic-related subjects in <i>pesantren</i>
<i>Karamah</i>	A charismatic attribute of <i>pesantren</i> leaders, characterized by extraordinary abilities such as closeness to God, efficacious prayers ( <i>mustajab</i> ), mastery of Islamic knowledge, the power of being disappeared, and the ability to predict the future.
<i>Khalafiyah</i>	Modern type of <i>pesantren</i>
<i>Khidmad</i>	Serving or subserving
<i>Kitab Kuning</i>	Literally yellow books, where the papers in the book look yellowish and contain Islamic subjects.
<i>Kualat</i>	The feeling of being accursed.
<i>Kyai</i>	Leader of <i>pesantren</i> in Indonesia.
<i>Laduni</i> knowledge	An ability and talent to be able to master various branches of Islamic knowledge in a way that is greatly facilitated by God
<i>Madrasah</i>	A type of formal modern-day school in Indonesia which offers a blend of religious and general education.

<i>Mudarat</i>	Destruction
<i>Musyawah</i>	Discussion
<i>Nyai</i>	Wife or daughter of <i>pesantren</i> leaders
<i>Patuh</i>	Obey
<i>Pengajian Quran</i>	A type of informal education for learning Quran usually conducted in worship places called <i>Surau</i> or small Mushalla
<i>Pesantren</i>	Islamic boarding school that is acknowledged as the indigenous Islamic educational institution in Indonesia and has been present since pre-colonial time.
<i>Pondok</i>	Dorm of <i>pesantren</i> students
<i>Qalb</i>	Soul
<i>Salafiyah or Salaf</i>	Traditional type of <i>pesantren</i>
<i>Santri</i>	Students of Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia.
<i>Su'ul adab</i>	Bad characteristic
<i>Ta'lim al-Mutallallim</i>	One of the yellow books written by Islamic scholar Al-Zarnuji about the "Guidance for Students".
<i>Taat</i>	Devout
<i>Tarbiyah</i>	Islamic educational model which promotes critical dialogue
<i>Wali Songo</i>	Nine Saints of Java, are believed to be among the first-generation spreaders of Islam in Indonesia.
<i>Warasatul ambiya</i>	Inheritors of the prophets
<i>Ziyadatul Khair</i>	Increase in goodness or added value of something good

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

*“Both the academic and management literature are replete with compelling examples of the abuse of power by leaders, especially charismatic leaders, in business, education, and politics” (Howell & Shamir, 2005, p. 108)*

### 1.1. Background of Study

Charisma has long been a subject of discussion both in everyday talk and academic discussions. Yet, what it really means remains ambiguous. When someone says ‘that person is so charismatic’, the question is: what does that person actually have, so that he or she was perceived as charismatic? Indeed, Rosenberg and Hirschberg (2009) explained that defining charisma is “more difficult” than identifying it. Although it seems we could easily identify which individual is charismatic and which is not, it remains unclear exactly what is unique about the person that affects our judgment. Despite the ambiguity, Potts (2009) in his book *A History of Charisma* explained that the term charisma has been present since the first century of the "early Christian church". By the end of the third century, it had lost its religious significance and went underground making sporadic appearances. Later in the early twentieth century, Max Weber's sociology revived the term. Currently, it is broadly for use in the "contemporary Western culture", media, scientific studies, and “popular discourse” (Potts, 2009), positioning itself as an urban legend.

Traditionally defined as a “gift of grace” (Weber, 1948 as cited in Schneiderman, 2015), charisma has been an elevated topic in leadership scholarly discussion. While the axiom of leadership itself is romanticized (Alvehus, 2021), attaching charisma to it has doubled its romanticism. Within the global context, the definition of charisma is debated (see Banks et al., 2017; Antonakis et al., 2016). In this case, the traditional definition is

deemed non-scientific for it romanticizes charisma as “miraculously-given power” (Davies, 1954 as cited in Karim et al., 2020, p. 132). Meanwhile, another type of definition confuses charisma as a construct for this is defined based on its effects or “antecedents” (Banks et al., 2017). Following the debate, scholars argue that to define charisma, it must be scientifically “measurable” whilst also detached from its “antecedents”. Thus, the definition formulated by Antonakis et al. (2016) is considered to meet these criteria, in which charismatic leadership is mentioned as “values-based, symbolic, and emotion-laden leader signaling” (Antonakis et al., 2016, p. 304). Here, the latter definition is taken as a panacea for it puts charisma as a construct, and is also measurable.

Despite the controversy on its definition, a wide corpus of literature has been conducted on charismatic leadership, though it ranges from the different contexts of organizations. While certain studies demonstrate that charismatic leadership generates positive implications, others contrarily reveal the opposite. On the positive side, charismatic leadership produces favorable results toward OCB or organizational citizenship behavior (Babcock-Roberson & Strickland, 2010; Cho & Dansereau, 2010). Here, OCB refers to the “extra-role behavior” of an individual (Ocampo et al., 2018), which is “not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system” (Organ, 1988 and Bies & Organ, 1989 as cited in Ocampo et al., 2018). In addition to OCB, studies have also shown that charismatic leadership is found to be able to improve the follower’s task performance (Chen et al., 2013; Sosik et al., 2011; Banks et al., 2017), as well as team performance (Nohe et al., 2013). However, it has to be noted that all of the positive implications above are generated from studies within the general organizational context globally, mostly outside the educational setting.

Not only for the positive implications, but charismatic leadership could also posit the “dark side” areas, which potentially result in adverse outcomes. The literature indicates that charismatic leadership is shadowed by extreme “admiration” and “blind idolization” which could lead to sparing limited or even no room for the followers of charismatic leaders to question and criticize, and thus culminate in “unquestioning obedience” (Howell & Shamir, 2005). More critically, studies have shown that the followers of charismatic leaders are more inclined to think their leaders are always right or assume that their leaders know best (Howell & Shamir, 2005; Samnani and Singh, 2013). With the "emotional and symbolic" foundation that charismatic leaders often have, their followers also frequently succumb “under the leader's spell" (Howell, 1988 in Samnani and Singh, 2013), making charismatic leaders tend to be “autocratic” (Ma, 2018). Indeed, charisma has been dubbed as the human's politically controversial quality in societies, as it can lead to “truth-bending manipulation” (Aaltio-Marjosola & Takala, 2000), making the followers prone to power abuse (Howell & Shamir, 2005).

While the topic of charisma along with its two faces has been an upraised discussion in the organizational discourse, charisma appears to have also colored the theme of scholarly discussion in Islamic educational leadership. In this case, Islamic educational leadership is a relatively new focus area of research. A review by Arar et al. (2022) of the research on Islamic education leadership from 1990 until 2021, indicates that research on Islamic educational leadership was hardly found in the pre-2000 databases. While contrarily the research interest in this topic has particularly surged only within five years, proven by the large composition (more than 50%) of the reviewed studies on this topic published between 2016 to 2021 (Arar et al., 2022). Derived by the recency of this research interest, there appears an identified gap in the scholarly discussion that focuses on “non-western approaches” (Shah, 2015; Brooks & Mutohar,

2018). This is supported by the findings in Southeast Asia (Sumintono et al., 2023) and the Arab context (Oplatka & Arar, 2017), highlighting the importance of research on Islamic educational leadership to employ “positionality, paradigms, and epistemologies” grounded from its root that is Islamic religious frameworks.

Albeit the current body of knowledge on Islamic educational leadership is lacking in the conceptualization of “spiritual and faith-based leadership” (Arar et al., 2022), numerous studies have gone further in examining the leadership styles that Islamic schools adopt. In this case, there are three communal themes on how scholars describe the leadership styles at Islamic schools globally. They are: first, the faith-based leadership style which includes “charismatic leadership” (Humaisi et al., 2019; Jatmikowati et al., 2019), and “spiritual leadership” (Sholikhah et al., 2019; Karim et al., 2022); second, the community-engaged leadership style consists of “cultural and democratic leadership” (Brooks and Ezzani, 2017; Ezzani and Brooks, 2019; Hammad & Shah, 2019); and third, “strategic leadership” (Rissanen, 2019; Malla et al., 2020). These variations depend so much on which type of Islamic schools are studied, indicating that different types of Islamic schools have different natures of leadership. This particular circumstance demonstrates that Islamic educational leadership has indeed more varieties, resonating with the findings in Southeast Asia that different contexts necessitate different kinds of Islamic educational leadership (Sumintono et al., 2023).

To focus on the faith-based leadership style at Islamic schools, it appears that the studies that fall within the theme of charismatic leadership are associated with the traditional form of Islamic education, namely Islamic boarding school—or colloquially known as *Pesantren* (see Humaisi et al., 2019; Jatmikowati et al., 2019). *Pesantren* here is considered the center of Islamic learning predominantly in Java and the Malay Archipelago (Dhofier, 1990). The Ministry of Religious Affairs—the state institution

which supervises and administers the religious schools in Indonesia—acknowledges that *pesantren* is the “oldest indigenous” Islamic school in the country (Ministry of Religious Affairs, n.d.). Its indigenous feature appears from the conception that this is considered Indonesia’s original version of Islamic schools which have become a witness to how Muslims were taught in Indonesia ever since the pre-colonial period (Dhofier, 1982). Looking at the historical perspective, *pesantren* has been recognized to have crucial contributions not only to educational development but also to Indonesia’s independence, with *santri* (*pesantren* students) among the force fighting for the country’s independence (Azzahra, 2020). At least seven state-acclaimed national heroes come from *pesantren* backgrounds including *Kyai* Hasyim Asyari and *Kyai* Ahmad Dahlan (Zulfikar, 2022).

To be critical of the charismatic leadership style that *pesantren* institutions adopt, there is an identified gap in the existing literature on *pesantren* charismatic leadership. While it is clear that the global discussion on leadership has cautioned about the dark side of charisma—even the darker side such as psychopathy (Ma, 2018), it is apparent that the existing literature on charismatic leadership at *pesantren* only focuses on the positive side of it, and ignores its side-effect. For instance, the topics of the existing literature thus far only range from understanding the outcomes of charismatic leadership on *pesantren* education improvement and leadership (Humaisi et al., 2019; Jatmikowati et al., 2019; Ta’rifin & Halid, 2021), or exploring the advantages of charismatic leadership on *pesantren*’s organization and in societies (Arifin et al., 2018; Hariyadi et al., 2018), or measuring the influence of charismatic leadership on "psychological safety" and societies compliance (Fikri et al., 2021; Karim et al., 2020). Indeed, research on charismatic leadership, in general, is still less in the context of its adverse implications, and thus it is recommended to perform any research exploring this area (Ma, 2018; Eisenbeiß & Boerner, 2011; Howell & Shamir, 2005; Samnani & Singh, 2013).

Notwithstanding, in consideration of the loophole in the existing literature above, coupled with the potential negative implications of charismatic leadership at the *pesantren* institutions, this present study aims to contribute to narrowing down the gap in the current body of research by focusing on the potential adverse implications of charismatic leadership at the *pesantren* institutions. Considering that the dark side area of charismatic leadership is associated with “extreme admiration”, “blind idolization”, and “unquestioning obedience” (Howell & Shamir, 2005), all of which could spare limited or even no room for the followers to question and criticize, thus it appears crucial to explore the critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities of the *pesantren* students (*santri*) as a group who are led by *pesantren* charismatic leaders—colloquially known as the *Kyai*.

## 1.2. Research Rationale

Hosting the largest Muslim population in the world (Pew Research Center, n.d.), Indonesia adopts an educational dual system, with secular-like schools being administered under the Ministry of Education and Culture, and Islamic schools under the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Lee, 1995; Dhofier, 1994). While each ministry supervises both public and private schools in their respective category, *pesantren* is a private-run educational institution supervised by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. In the Indonesian context, *pesantren* is one of three intuitional channels of Islamic education, besides madrasah and *Pengajian Quran* (Hefner, 2009). Madrasah here connotes a formal Islamic modern school, while *Pengajian Quran* is the Quran learning activity that is informally held at the local worship places. As madrasah is formal education that is recognized by the state and *Pengajian Quran* is informal, *pesantren* stands in between offering both formal and informal education ranging from the primary level to higher education. According to the Religious Affairs Ministry’s data, over 4 million students are enrolled

in 32,200 *pesantren* nationwide as of 2021 (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2022), indicating that it remains a promising educational option in the Muslim-majority country.

Not only pose as a school alternative for Muslim students, but *pesantren* has also attained the government's attention through the recognition of October 22 as the *Hari Santri* (Day of *Pesantren* Students). The government has also passed Law No 18 in 2019 on *Pesantren* uplifting the status of *pesantren* in the national education system legally. Notwithstanding, the long list of development of the *pesantren*—ever since pre-colonial times until today—indicates that this type of educational institution has been a crucial part of Indonesia's education development. This recognition comes not only from the civil societies but also from the government side, putting *pesantren* as the nucleus of Islamic education in Indonesia, a country that is argued to be the world leader in Islamic education, thanks to its long-time historical-sociological education reform (Hefner, 2022).

However, despite the significant locus that the *pesantren* posits in the educational field, one aspect that is worth critical exposure from the *pesantren* is related to the critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities of their students (*santri*), derived mainly from the charismatic attributes of their leaders (*kyai*). With the potential “extreme admiration”, “blind idolization”, and “unquestioning obedience” (Howell & Shamir, 2005) as generated from the charisma of the *pesantren* leaders, it is most likely that the *pesantren* students would have limited or even no room to be critical or engage in a critical dialogue with their leaders. This particular condition then puts their critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities in question. Here, critical thinking refers to the cognitive ability that an individual has “to engage in an activity with reflective skepticism” (McPeck, 2016, p. 8), while critical dialogue is how their critical thinking could be communicated under “difficult conversation” (Morris, 2017, p. 376). Critical thinking and critical dialogues

have been the central part of educational activities, as they become the core discussion in the philosophies of education, either from the Western-secular or Islamic perspective (see Dewey, 1903; Freire, 2006; Sahin, 2013).

To rationalize the cruciality of exploring the critical thinking and critical-dialogical abilities of those who are 'led' by the *pesantren* charismatic leaders, this has been evidenced by social phenomena of the increasing sexual abuse cases at *pesantren*. In 2022, international media were loaded with reports over an act of a *pesantren* leader in West Java, as he (as an individual, not as a generalization) was found guilty by the court for raping 13 female students for a period of five years, and fathering nine children with them (see New York Times, 2022; Reuters, 2022; South China Morning Post, 2022). Whilst the news shone the international spotlight, this is not the sole case as numerous sexual abuse cases have also been reported in other *pesantren*. The students both male and female are the victims, while the perpetrators are ranging from the teachers (Rachman, 2022), sons of *pesantren* leaders (Tempo.co, 2022), or the *pesantren* leaders (Huda, 2022; Suryarandika, 2022). Like in any other cases of sexual assault, such incidents are allegedly related to asymmetrical positions and unbalanced relations between the 'power' and the 'powerless' (Gravelin, et al., 2019), resulting in the hesitancy of the powerless to refuse such acts.

To view this issue from the wider perspective of sexual violence in religious institutional settings, what has happened in the *pesantren* is not unique in the Muslim context, as similar cases have also been reported in other religions. This includes the Abrahamic religions such as at the Catholic churches (Dressing et al., 2021), Christian-religious schools (Anton & Latimer, 2013), and orthodox Jewish communities (Lusky-Weisrose et al., 2021), as well as non-Abrahamic religions such as those perpetrated by Buddhist monks (Ekachai, 2019; Jiang & Xiong, 2018) or priest at Hindu temple

(Blackwell, 2019). In this case, there would not be a single factor contributing to this circumstance, depending so much on the particular case. Yet, specific to the religious context, “grooming” for sexual abuse could be influenced by “religion and legitimation”, “religious power, authority, and patriarchy”, as well as “compliance to the authoritarian religions” (Raine & Kent, 2019, pp. 9-15). This is no wonder then that the factors contributing to the occurrence of sexual violence in the religious setting include the “theodicies of legitimation” whose elements include “power, patriarchy, obedience, protection, and reverence toward authority figures” (p. 2).

While the authoritative patriarchal culture seems to be a dominant factor in this context, another significant factor could be sourced from the victims’ perspective which here correlates with their level of critical thinking. Literature has indicated that the low level of critical thinking of the victim could be one of the risk factors that facilitate sexual violence to happen, as in selecting the victim, the perpetrator would most likely choose the ones who have the “lack of knowledge about sex and sexuality” and “low levels of assertiveness” (Kaufman et al., 2016, p. 42). Moreover, in the religious institutional setting, the perpetrators would even utilize the “victims’ fears about spiritual punishments” and “scriptural uses to justify adult-child sex” (Raine & Kent, 2019, p. 2). Hence, albeit not the sole factor, it thus appears essential to apply theories and methods that show people how to use their critical thinking skills to help eradicate sexual assault (Christensen, 2014). In the United States, for instance, the students are trained to apply critical thinking skills to examine their “relationships, sexual norms” and school culture (p. 449) as part of preventing sexual violence. This activity is part of the “Yes Means Yes” training program which is said as a “new approach to sexual assault prevention and positive sexuality promotion” (Lafrance et al., 2012, p. 445).

### **1.3. Critical Thinking and Sexual Abuse**

Critical thinking plays a vital role in preventing sexual abuse, as it could help facilitate a culture of questioning and “take an evidence-informed approach” within an organization or community (UNICEF, 2020). In this regard, the significance of critical thinking in preventing sexual abuse could be identified into three main points, namely (1) it could help recognize the manipulative tactics of the potential perpetrators; (2) it could be used to challenge societal norms and beliefs; and (3) it promotes personal boundaries and assertiveness. As suggested by UNESCO's “International technical guidance on sexuality education” (UNESCO, 2018), it is crucial to use participatory and learner-centered approaches in sexual education that allow children to develop their critical thinking skills (Council of Europe, 2020).

In recognizing manipulative tactics, critical thinking could help individuals identify the tactics used by potential perpetrators for manipulation or “grooming” which is often involved in child sexual exploitation and usually include “a power imbalance between the perpetrator and victim” (UNICEF, 2020, p. 4). It enables the potential victims to question and evaluate the intentions, behaviors, and statements of others, helping to uncover ulterior motives or signs of coercion. Meanwhile, in challenging societal norms and beliefs, critical thinking could be part of universal prevention efforts on sexual abuse which here involve “mobilizing changes in norms” either in “social norms” or “gender norms” (UNICEF, 2020, p. 25). It allows individuals to critically analyze these norms, beliefs, and stereotypes that contribute to the perpetuation of sexual abuse. By questioning and challenging these norms, people can work towards creating a culture that promotes consent, respect, and healthy relationships.

In the meantime, promoting personal boundaries and assertiveness means that critical thinking could help individuals develop a strong sense of self and personal boundaries, as is reflected in the 'yes means yes' program in the US (Lafrance et al., 2012). It enables potential victims to recognize and assert their rights, say 'no' when necessary, and establish healthy boundaries in relationships, reducing the risk of becoming victims of sexual abuse. Overall, critical thinking is vital in raising awareness, cultivating a culture of consent and respect, and empowering individuals with the instruments required to prevent sexual assault. That is no wonder then that consequently adopting ideas and approaches that teach people how to use their critical thinking skills appears vital to help abolish sexual assault (Christensen, 2014).

Specific to the *pesantren* context, the call to improve the critical thinking of *pesantren* students has been highlighted by Indonesia's National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN) following the increasing cases of sexual abuse toward the *santri* (*pesantren* students). A monograph essay by BRIN's researcher Solekhah (2022) stated that the sexual abuse cases at *pesantren* have indeed relevance to the level of critical thinking of the *pesantren* students. This is derived from media reports that say there is a case in Pamekasan, Madura, East Java, where the voluntary action of *santri* to obey the *Kyai* (*pesantren* leader) in pursuing *barakah* (blessing) has been used as a modus operandi by the *pesantren* leader to perform such misconduct. Moreover, the victims were hesitant to report the case to the police as they were haunted by the feeling of *kualat* (accursed) if they eventually file a police report (Solekhah, 2022).

In the *pesantren* context, *barakah* becomes the main objective for *santri* to pursue education, in addition to knowledge and skills (Dhofier, 1980). In this regard, *barakah* is considered a part of the charismatic attributes of *pesantren* leaders, besides *karamah*. *Karamah* is a set of extraordinary qualities that *pesantren* leaders have including "grace,

thaumaturgic, charismatic gifts", while *barakah* refers to the increase in goodness characterized by "blessing, holiness, virtue as inherent spiritual power". Given the *karamah* that the *Kyai* have, they become the source of *barakah* for their followers (Dhofier, 1980). Thus, considering that the sexual abuse case has been indicated to have somewhat relevance with the *barakah* and *karamah* of the *pesantren* leader, the social phenomena prove that there is indeed a problem with the critical thinking of the *santri* in dealing with these charismatic attributes of their leaders.

The social phenomena above confirm that charismatic leadership is indeed prone to be abused and manipulated (Aaltio-Marjosola & Takala, 2000). As the sexual abuse cases in the *pesantren* context are relevant to the charismatic attribute of their leaders (Solekhah, 2022), this adds to the cruciality of further studying the critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities of the *pesantren* students. However, it should be disclaimed that the issue of institutional sexual violence in a religious setting is broad and complex, thus there would not be a single solution to this problem. Yet, to view it from the perspective of the potential victims, this could at least be approached by improving the critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities of the vulnerable groups (Christensen, 2014; Lafrance et al., 2012). Thus, given these considerations, this present study would explore, through scientific methodology, the critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities of the *pesantren* students as a way to find an alternative in countering potential abuse of power—especially sexual abuse—by *pesantren* charismatic leaders.

#### **1.4. Research Aims and Inquiries**

Given the research background and rationale above, it is apparent that the charismatic attributes of *pesantren* leaders could derive the potential “unquestioning obedience” (Howell & Shamir, 2005), which then put the *pesantren* students in a

vulnerable position for power abuse. Thus, in general, this study aims to explore the critical thinking and critical-dialogical abilities of *pesantren* students amid the potential “unquestioning obedience” as implicated by the charismatic attributes of their leaders. In detail, this study aims to:

1. To reveal the perception of *pesantren* communities (leaders, teachers, students) on the charisma and obedience; the charisma of the *pesantren* leaders and the obedience of those whom they lead.
2. To uncover the practice of *pesantren* students in applying critical thinking and critical-dialogical abilities amidst the charisma of their leaders.
3. To explore the reflection of the *pesantren* communities (leaders, teachers, students) on the significance of critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities in countering the potential abuse from *pesantren* charismatic leaders.

The formulation of the research inquiries follows the research objectives above. In this case, the research questions of this present study are divided into three categories: perception, practice, and reflection.

1. How do *pesantren* communities (leaders, teachers, students) perceive the charisma and obedience; the charisma of the *pesantren* leaders and the obedience of those whom they lead?
2. How do *pesantren* students practice critical thinking and critical-dialogical abilities towards their leaders amidst the charisma that the leaders have?
3. How do the *pesantren* communities (leaders, teachers, students) reflect on the significance of critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities in countering the potential abuse from *pesantren* charismatic leaders?

### 1.5. Significance of Study

The answers to the above questions will lead to the discussion on the cruciality of understanding the critical thinking and critical-dialogical abilities of the students at Islamic schools, especially in the traditional ones such as *pesantren*. Academically, it will enrich the scholarly discussion on Islamic school leadership which highly attract scholarly discussion in the last five years (Arar et al., 2022). Without a doubt, there are still many loopholes found within the Islamic educational leadership discussion as the scholars are still developing the conceptualization of what is so-called “Islamic educational leadership”. Thus, this study is expected to explain the complexities within the Islamic school leadership where charisma meets religiosity could be positive on one hand, yet also negative on the other hand, which makes this even more worthy of discussion. In the academic context, the study aims to contribute to adding a perspective in viewing charismatic leadership in the Islamic educational milieu, in which most literature thus far only focuses on its positive implications and still lacking in the aspect of adverse implications.

Practically, the study is expected to provide findings that can be potentially helpful for those taking strategic action as to how to improve the critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities of the *pesantren* students. With the potential “unquestioning obedience” generated from the charismatic attributes that the *pesantren* leaders have, this alone has given enough reason to question the critical thinking and critical-dialogical abilities of the *santri*. Coupled with the recent cases of sexual abuse perpetrated by *pesantren* leaders, this gives more rationale to put the critical thinking and critical-dialogical abilities of the *pesantren* students in utmost concern. Hence, for the practical aspect, this present study would take part in finding the empirical evidence on how to improve the critical thinking and critical-dialogical abilities of the *pesantren* students to

further be taken as insights for the concerned parties to follow up with strategic actions. This is particularly intended for educational practitioners, governments, or policymakers, as well as the national and international non-governmental organizations concerning educational improvement in the Muslim societies' context.

### **1.6. Study Limitations**

While the discussion regarding the power relation between the leaders and the 'led' in this study might overlap with other types of leadership styles such as authoritative leadership or spiritual leadership, yet still, the main discussion is focused on charismatic leadership. This is because theoretically, this type of leadership correlates more with the topic of the study, namely critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities of the *pesantren* students. Despite this limitation, it is humbly disclaimed though that the scope of this study somehow spread to the authoritative and spiritual leadership given the nature of charisma which could generate "autocracy" (Ma, 2018), or the *pesantren* context itself that is the religious-based educational institution (Rachman, 2014). Hence, this is to declare that the theoretical foundation, findings, and discussion somehow conceive certain aspects of autocracy and spirituality though the focus remains on charismatic leadership. In addition, the research methodology employs a qualitative approach meaning that the findings of this present study are indicative and cannot be applied to the general population, as the research participants are selected on purpose.

## CHAPTER II

### THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

From the introduction of the study, it is clear that this study would explore the critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities of the *pesantren* students from the lens of educational leadership, specifically charismatic leadership, following the potential abuse generated from it. Notwithstanding, this chapter begins with a review of charisma with its controversies, as well as an explanation of its positive and negative implications. The review is then narrowed down to the literature on charismatic leadership within the Islamic school context, putting the *pesantren* at the cornerstone. The discussion then carries on with the identification of loopholes in the current body of knowledge to find novelties and the originality of the study. The chapter ends with the theoretical perspective used to address the problem, which is concluded with the research assumption to be explored with a scientific methodological approach.

#### 2.1. Literature Review

##### 2.1.1. Debunking Fallacy in Defining Charisma

The term charisma has long been a subject of debate among scholars. In its traditional definition, Weber defines charisma as “the authority of the extraordinary and personal gift of grace” (Weber, 1948, p. 79, as cited in Schneiderman, 2015). Here, charisma is taken from *kharisma*, a Greek word meaning "favor or grace." In its variations, Weber’s concepts of charisma are divided into two contexts: political and religious contexts. In this case, the political context is related to political sociology, while the religious context is referred to as the sociology of religion. The traditional definition of charisma is somewhat romanticized, as it views charismatic leaders to have “miraculously-given power” (Davies, 1954, as cited in Karim et al., 2020, p. 132). Even,

they are considered “larger-than-life characters” for they are believed to have “mysterious gifts” (Shamir, 1992, as cited in Banks et al., 2017).

Despite the romanticized perception, other definitions offer a more rational context focusing on the outcomes of charismatic leaders. House (1977), for instance, mentioned charisma as "a characteristic of individuals who by force of their personal abilities are capable of having profound and extraordinary effects on followers" (as cited in Antonakis et al., 2016, p. 10). In line with this, a similar definition focuses on the perception of the followers such as Yukl (1999) who viewed that “the most useful definition seems to be in terms of attributions of charisma to a leader by followers who identify strongly with the leader” (p. 294). From the way the definitions are formulated, it is apparent that they unhand the aspect of romanticism. That being said, it is noted that the formulation of the definitions is taken either from the effect of charisma on others or the perception of other people on charismatic leaders.

Critics have been gauged on the ways of defining charisma. Banks et al. (2017) observed that the two themes of the most cited definition of charismatic leadership are either, one, the term charisma has always been used to describe “consequences” or “antecedents” of the charismatic leader, or two, charisma is considered as a mysterious personality trait or a "miraculous" capacity. Banks et al. (2017) criticized these two themes, saying that both of them are “problematic”. The first theme confuses the effects or “antecedents” of charisma with "the construct" meaning of charisma itself. Whilst, the second theme is merely a meaningless way of characterizing a construct from a "scientific" position as it could not be operationalized or explored in a "systematic manner". Thus, Banks et al. (2017) came up with the idea to negate the two themes, saying that to define charismatic leadership, this has to be, one, “free from antecedents and consequences” and two, “specifically measurable” (p. 2).

Hence, the definition given by Antonakis et al. (2016) was considered as meeting the two criteria, as it stands on its own, in a way that it is independent of the leader's environment, the effects on the followers or the institutions, and the leader's antecedent characteristics (Banks et al., 2017). Antonakis et al. (2016) define charismatic leadership as “values-based, symbolic, and emotion-laden leader signaling” (Antonakis et al., 2016, p. 304). This definition emphasizes that charisma is best viewed from signaling theory, with the components including (1) naturally based on “vision, ideology, values, morals, beliefs, mission, symbols of leader”; (2) “emotion-based” in which the leaders and followers must have an emotional connection; and (3) “expressive communication” in transmitting the information or signaling. Here, this latter definition addresses the common "denominator for all" while preserving the integrity of the construct by getting beyond "tautological" problems (Banks et al., 2017). Through this definition, a person could be charismatic without having any kind of influence whatsoever, not from the characteristics of the leaders, consequences of the leadership style, let alone ambiguous unmeasured “gift of grace” from the divine.

That being said, despite the effort to make charisma more scientific in its definition, it seems difficult to connect the contemporary term of charisma with the *pesantren* context. Rachman (2014) argued that the *pesantren* charismatic leadership does not correspond to the term “scientific charismatic”. Instead, it connotes more to the “religious charismatic”. This argument is based on the significant “personality and charismatic role” of the *pesantren* leaders which are more to religious basis and clerical. In this case, the clerical attitude is connotated with the term *ulema* (knowledgeable men) or Islamic scholars or *Kyai*. This argument is supported by the findings of a systematic literature review by Arar et al. (2022) which categorized charismatic leadership at Islamic schools as faith-based or spiritual.

Notwithstanding, albeit the effort to debunk the logical fallacy of the traditional definition of charisma, the contemporary definition given by Antonakis et al. (2016)—though it is more scientific and logical—is still considered unfit for the *pesantren* context, and thus it is deemed difficult to be taken as the working definition of charisma in this present study. Instead, the *pesantren* context of charisma is more correlated with the traditional definition given by Max Weber as a “gift of grace” as part of the sociology of religion. Though it might not be scientifically measured as contemporary scholars have scrutinized, this definition of charisma is in line with the charismatic attributes that the *pesantren* leaders have: *barakah* (the increase in goodness characterized by "blessing, holiness, virtue"), and *karamah* ("grace, thaumaturgic, charismatic gifts") (Dhofier, 1980). Thus, because the *pesantren* context of charisma is more connoted to the traditional definition as a “gift of grace”, this present study will adopt this as its working definition of charismatic leadership.

### **2.1.2. Two-sides of Charismatic Leadership: Good and Bad**

Delving further into the theories of charisma, studies have shown that charismatic leadership generates positive and negative outcomes. On the positive side, it has favorable results on organizational citizenship behavior or OCB (Babcock-Roberson & Strickland, 2010; Cho & Dansereau, 2010), follower task performance (Chen et al., 2013; Sosik et al., 2011; Banks et al., 2017), and team performance (Nohe et al., 2013). Yet despite the positive outcomes, charismatic leadership has dark side areas where it could generate extreme admiration, blind idolization and unquestioning obedience of the followers toward the leaders (Howell & Shamir, 2005). Hence, while charisma could have positive impacts on the organization, it is noted that the shadow of its dark side might result in negative outcomes that need to be concerned on.

As for the positive outcome of charisma, empirical studies by Babcock-Roberson and Strickland (2010), as well as Cho and Dansereau (2010), indicated that charismatic leadership encourages more organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) from their followers. This is in line with the earlier study on behavioral charismatic leadership which indicated that the increasing amounts of OCBs are likely to develop as a result of the atypical conduct that charismatic leaders demonstrate for their followers (Conger & Kanungo, 1994). The OCB here connotes the “extra-role behavior” of an individual (Ocampo et al., 2018), which is “not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system” (Organ, 1988 and Bies & Organ, 1989 as cited in Ocampo et al., 2018). In simpler words, OCB is related to the willingness or voluntary commitment of individuals to do for and to be part of the organization.

The study by Babcock-Roberson and Strickland (2010) found that there is a strong positive correlation "between charismatic leadership and work engagement", "work engagement and OCB", and "charismatic leadership and OCB". The findings also indicated that the relationship was mediated by the employee's involvement at work "between charismatic leadership and OCB". In this case, work engagement shed light on the connection between OCB and charismatic leadership. This result generates the idea that when a charismatic leader is present, employees are more engaged in their work, and fosters “organizational citizenship”. These findings are supported by another study by Cho and Dansereau (2010) which showed that within a group level of an organization, the charismatic leader's actions are tied to the members' OCB for the group. These charismatic behaviors include “articulating a compelling vision, inspiring collective identity and spirit, and serving as an excellent role model” (Cho & Dansereau, 2010, p. 416).

In addition to OCB, the other studies found that charismatic leadership also has positive outcomes on follower task performance and team performance. From a follower-centric standpoint, Chen et al., (2013) looked at how organizational members' emotions and worries about their well-being affected their perceptions of a change in a leader's charisma. The study found that concerns about well-being had an impact on both the strength and "the divergence of charisma attribution". Moreover, these impacts "partially contribute" to the feelings connected to the organizational shift. In addition, charismatic leaders are also effective at encouraging employees to put forth more effort and display the appropriate attitudes to perform at high levels. This practice is helped by leaders' "signaling high standards", a shared identity, and a desire for success to motivate followers to hold themselves to these higher standards (Sosik et al., 2011; Banks et al., 2017). Besides, another study showed that team leaders are viewed as more charismatic if they exhibit actions that encourage change. The perceived charisma and willingness to adjust of individual followers facilitate "team performance" (Nohe et al., 2013).

Despite the positive outcomes above, other studies contrarily reveal the adverse implications, or what they call the "dark side" of charismatic leadership. In this case, the side effects of charismatic leadership have not been adequately addressed in the leadership studies (Eisenbeiß & Boerner, 2011). In this regard, it is noted that theories and concepts of charismatic leadership have primarily emphasized the "heroic" features of it with less focus on its possible side-effects; or that they only concentrate on the leaders' role and less empathize with the followers' role (Howell & Shamir, 2005; Samnani & Singh, 2013). The theme of adverse implications could be generated into extreme "admiration" and "blind idolization" which then spare limited or even no room for the followers to question and criticize, and thus culminated in the potential "unquestioning obedience" (Howell & Shamir, 2005).

Indeed, studies have shown that emotional allure, attractiveness, and compelling communication are all tools that charismatic leaders employ to win over their followers (Judge et al., 2009; Samnani and Singh, 2013). Moreover, with the "emotional and symbolic" foundation that charismatic leaders often have, the followers frequently succumb "under the leader's spell" (Howell, 1988, as cited in Samnani and Singh, 2013), making charismatic leaders tend to be autocratic (Ma, 2018). In other studies, followers of charismatic leaders are found to be more inclined to think that their leaders are always right or assume that their leaders know best (Howell & Shamir, 2005; Samnani and Singh, 2013), exposing their followers to be vulnerable on the "truth-bending manipulation" (Aaltio-Marjosola & Takala, 2000). Even on the darker side, charisma could generate "dark-triad" personalities which include "narcissism, Machiavellianism, and even psychopathy" (Ma, 2018).

All of these adverse implications indicate that despite the positive aspects that charismatic leaders have towards the follower's citizenship behaviors, task performance, and team performance, it is crucial to not leave unbend its side-effect, which further put the obedience of their followers in question. Indeed, "unquestioning obedience" is one implication that should be critically concerned on when it comes to the personalized charismatic relationship between a charismatic leader and the led (Howell & Shamir, 2005, p. 107). In this case, the leader could internalize the inflated reflections of the followers' evaluations and finally come to believe they have "omnipotence". This could then result in the letting go of moral and other constraints on the "use of power". To be more critical, "blind adoration" and "unquestioning obedience" to charismatic leaders eliminate any potential roadblocks from the leader's path and may also give the leader a power drive to pursue their mistaken and potentially lethal ambitions (Howell & Shamir, 2005).

Table 2.1.

*Positive and negative implications of charismatic leadership as generated from the abovementioned combined literature sources.*

<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>
Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB)	Extreme admiration
Follower task performance	Blind idolization
Team performance	Unquestioning obedience

Table 2.1. wraps up the positive and negative implications of charismatic leadership. That being said, the findings above are generated based on the studies on organizations within the general context, mostly outside the educational organization. Thus, these findings will be contextualized toward the dynamics in the education context. Notwithstanding, the next sub-section will expound on the review of the literature on charismatic leadership in the school setting, with a straight focus on *pesantren* institutions, as the context of this present study.

### **2.1.3. Charismatic Leaders at *Pesantren*: Who and How?**

*Pesantren* or *Pondok* is the Indonesian term that is widely translated into English as Islamic boarding schools. Terminologically, this definition is not wrong. However, it seems to have not done any justice to explaining what *pesantren* really is. Thus, in describing *pesantren*, Dhofier (1982) took the context of how Islam first entered Indonesia, and how it outspreads within societies and assimilated with the local culture by *Wali Songo* (Nine Saints of Java). *Wali Songo* is believed to be the first-generation spreaders of Islam in Java and Indonesia. The Islamization process in Java, which continued to the other Islands such as Sumatra, was said to be around the 12<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> centuries, during which *pesantren* was considered the “spearhead of civilization in the

Malay Archipelago”. In its process, Indonesia is now a country with the largest Muslim population in the world (Pew Research Center, n.d.). In this case, dubbed Indonesia’s original version of the Islamic school, *pesantren* has become witness to how Islam is being taught and learned in the country from time to time, whilst maintaining its original and special tradition despite its robust development from traditional to modern as its adaptation to the national education system in 20<sup>th</sup> century (Dhofier, 1994). Despite its vast transformation, the Ministry of Religious Affairs (n.d.) acknowledges that *pesantren* is the “oldest indigenous” Islamic school in the country.

From the outsider’s perspective, Hefner (2009) explains as to where is the position of *pesantren* in Islamic education in Indonesia. To give a clearer view, Indonesia’s Islamic education has three types of “institutional channels”, and they are: (1) *Pengajian Quran* which is a type of informal education of learning or reciting the Quran usually conducted in local worship places called *Surau* or small Mushalla; (2) *Pesantren* or *Pondok* which is an Islamic boarding school designed for the Muslim students seeking the "intermediate or advanced" proficiency in Islamic intellectual; and (3) *Madrasah* which is a type of modern-day school which offers a blend of "religious and general education" through "graded classes", "textbooks", and paid teachers (Hefner, 2009).

Each type of Indonesian Islamic school has different dynamics. In this case, while the nature of the Madrasah is more formalized and *Pengajian Quran* is informal, *pesantren* poses a unique position as it is either formal or informal. Yet, albeit the nature of *pesantren* is traditional and informal, they have experienced a great educational transformation which makes them survive the prediction of collapse during the post-colonial crisis. This is conducted by their initiation in adapting to modernization and development, such as by building formal madrasahs within the *pesantren* or adopting general education into their curriculum (Hefner, 2008). Indonesia is now argued to be the

world leader in Islamic education thanks to its great historical-sociological educational transformation (Hefner, 2022).

Despite the transformation of *pesantren*, its tradition was never unhanded. Dhofier (1980) explained that there are five elements for an educational institution to be called *pesantren*. They are: (1) the *pesantren* leader called *Kyai*, (2) the students called *santri*, (3) the presence of the mosque, (4) the teaching and learning of Islamic classical books, and (5) the student's dorm. Yet, to make it contextual to the research problem, the present study would classify these elements into two categories: human elements and non-human elements. As for the human element, it consists of *Kyai* as the leader and *santri* as the student. In this context, *Kyai* is the most essential part of the *pesantren*. The term *Kyai* itself is a notable title for the ulema (scholars) from the Islamic tradition group which is usually given to those who own or lead *pesantren*. In the meantime, *santri* as the *pesantren* students is an element whose presence not only determines the size but also the popularity of the *pesantren*. What it means is that the higher the number of the *santri* in one *pesantren*, the larger and more popular the *pesantren* would be.

Other than the *Kyai* and *santri*, the other elements are non-human. The mosque is the third element that is used not only for praying but also for teaching and learning activities including for the Islamic classical texts. These Islamic classical books are also called *Kitab Kuning* (literally yellow book, where the papers in the book look yellowish), and here considered as the fourth element. Meanwhile, the student's dorm is the last element, which is established within the *pesantren* complex, close to *Kyai*'s home. In general, *pesantren* complexes are exclusive from the outside world. They usually are surrounded by fences, and even have a special venue for the meeting point if the student's parents want to meet their children. The dorm here is needed because generally the

students' home is far from, and thus they could not commute to, the *Kyai's* home (Dhofier, 1982).

From the five elements of *pesantren* above, the human elements—the *Kyai* and *santri*—are interesting to look at, especially in the way they connect and interact with one another. Regarding the nature of *Kyai-santri* interaction, two themes could be generated: 'respect' and 'obedience'. Respect should be given by the *santri* towards the *Kyai*, and this is "absolute" and "everlasting" throughout their life span—even after the *Kyai* passed away. Meanwhile, "absolute obedience" should be performed upon the belief that the *Kyai* is the *santri's* "channel of God's grace" both in the "world" and the "Hereafter". The consequence of not respecting and disobeying the *Kyai* is believed to be the "loss of the *barakah* (blessing)" which may result in the ineffectiveness of the knowledge that they have gained (Dhofier, 1980).

Here, the 'everlasting respect' and 'absolute obedience' are a form of voluntary submission of the *santri* toward the *Kyai* mainly derived from the charismatic attributes that the *Kyai* have. Conforming to the romanticized definition of charisma as a "gift of grace", the *Kyai* here are mentioned as exceptional individuals with *karamah* ("grace, thaumaturgic, charismatic gifts") and thus become sources of *barakah* ("blessing, holiness, virtue as inherent spiritual power") for their followers, including the *santri* (Dhofier, 1980). In a more romanticized way, *Kyai* is also mentioned as an individual with "miraculously-given power" and the "larger than life characters" as people think of them as having efficacious prayers (*mustajab*), the invisibility power (disappeared), and even "the ability to predict/forecast the future" (Karim et al., 2020). Hence, both 'respect' and 'absolute obedience' of *santri* towards the *Kyai* are mainly sourced from the above-mentioned grace and thaumaturgic power that the *Kyai* have.

As the first theme of *santri*'s ethic toward the *Kyai*, 'respect' here is translated into specific behaviors of how *santri* should interact with the *Kyai*. In this regard, Dhofier (1980) quoted medieval Islamic scholar Al-Zarnuji through his famous classical book "*Ta'lim al-Mutallallim*" or the "Guidance for Students". The quote reads:

"A student must always try to please his teacher; he must not walk in front of his teacher, nor take a seat on his chair, nor open the conversation before the teacher asks him to do so; nor talk much to the teacher, nor ask questions if his teacher is not in the mood to answer questions" (Zarnuji, 1963, p. 64-65 as cited in Dhofier, 1980).

In his footnote, Dhofier (1980) explained that this classical book is taught in every *pesantren* as a way to teach *santri* "ethics" and "morals" as they are in pursuit of knowledge at the *pesantren*. Confirming this quote, scenes of a non-fiction national award-winning movie *Sang Kiai* (2013) depict how *santri* behaves toward the *Kyai*. A simple act such as when the *santri* is walking, and then the *Kyai* is also walking at the same venue, the *santri* must stop and stand still until the *Kyai* asked him to move, or the *Kyai* left the venue. *Sang Kiai* (2013) is a movie portraying the life story of *Kyai* Hasyim Asyari, a state-acclaimed national hero who is also the founder of the world's largest Muslim organization in Indonesia: the Nahdlatul Ulama.

In addition to respect, absolute obedience becomes the second theme of the *santri-Kyai* interaction. Given the charisma of the *Kyai*, it is a 'must' for the *santri* to show absolute obedience toward the *Kyai* for them to gain *barakah*. In its practice, this absolute obedience has caused a centralized authority within *pesantren* putting the *santri* in a powerless position. What Dhofier (1980) described could be proof of this:

"The *Kyai* in Java claim that a *pesantren* is like a *kerajaan kecil* (small kingdom) in which the *Kyai* is the absolute source of power and authority. No *santri* can challenge the authority of the *Kyai* except another greater ulama. *Santri* always expect their *Kyai* to be self-confident in all Islamic matters" (Dhofier, 1980, p. 68).

This quote implies that the religious charismatic attributes of the *Kyai* (*karamah* and *barakah*) direct the potential authoritative nature within *pesantren* which results in “absolute obedience” of the *santri* toward the *Kyai*. This confirms the potential adverse implication of charisma itself which could generate “autocracy” (Ma, 2018), and further direct the “unquestioning obedience” (Howell & Shamir, 2005) of the *santri* towards the *Kyai*.

Not only for the *Kyai*, the same level of respect and obedience must also be given to the closest members of the *Kyai's* family. In this case, Dhofier (1982) stated that the *Kyai's* family has high prestige, and often enjoys the privileges granted by society. This includes the wife, the children, grandchildren and so do their in-laws. In Java, the *Kyai's* wife and daughters acquire the title "*nyai*", while the sons, grandsons, and sons-in-law are given the nickname "*gus*", short for *sibagus* (the good one). A *Kyai* always expects his sons to become potential candidates as *pesantren* leaders in the future. If a *Kyai* does not have sons, one of his sons-in-law will be directed to be the main candidate. In this case, there is a belief that the *Kyai's* son can inherit some spiritual attributes from his father. Even, most '*gus*' are considered to have *laduni* knowledge, which is an ability and talent to be able to master various branches of Islamic knowledge in a way that is greatly facilitated by God (Dhofier, 1982). In addition, to maintain authority, the *pesantren* families usually develop an “endogamous marriage alliance” (p.101) in which the children of *Kyai* have to get married to also the children of *Kyai*.

While it is apparent that the charismatic attributes of the *Kyai* (*barakah* and *karamah*) generate “everlasting respect” and “absolute obedience” from the *santri*, this has to be disclaimed that the nature of the respect and obedience could be different between one *pesantren* to another, depending on the *pesantren* type. In its typology, *pesantren* is categorized into three: traditional (*salafiyah*), modern (*khalafiyah*), and

semi-traditional-modern (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2007). In this case, the more modern the *pesantren*, the more faded the traditional aspect will be—though it is not a guarantee that its tradition would be completely unhanded even if they turn fully modern. Yet, considering that the theme of charismatic leadership remains an elevated topic in studies on *pesantren*, this is enough proof that the charismatic attributes of *pesantren* leaders should be critically concerned on. This is primarily because the existing literature on this particular topic only focuses on the positive side and ignores its negative sides, as it is indicated from the review of the previous studies on *pesantren* charismatic leadership which will be detailly elaborated further in the following section.

#### **2.1.4. Previous Studies on *Pesantren* Charismatic Leadership: Finding Novelty**

Given the charismatic features of the *Kyai*, many scholars have come further to research deeper about the charisma of *pesantren* leaders. In this case, the general themes of studies on *pesantren*'s charismatic leadership as generated from the existing literature could be categorized into three categories. First, the studies that qualitatively explore the outcomes of charismatic leadership for *pesantren* education (Humaisi et al., 2019; Jatmikowati et al., 2019; Ta'rifin & Halid, 2021); second, the studies that attempted to answer the advantages of charismatic leadership on the organization (Arifin et al., 2018; Hariyadi et al., 2018). And third, the studies that examined the aspect of charismatic leadership using quantitative measures (Fikri et al., 2021; Karim et al., 2020). The grouping of the studies is based on the topics and methodology.

As for the first theme on the outcomes of charismatic leadership on *pesantren* education, this is though conducted within the qualitative approach. A case study by Humaisi et al. (2019) showed that the *Kyai*'s charismatic leadership could improve the quality of *pesantren* education in certain aspects. The *Kyai*'s charisma is proven to drive

the teachers and staff to improve the effectiveness of student supervision, including the development of the dorm, the program supervision, and the "quality time". Furthermore, it raises the standard of *pesantren* outcomes by expanding the connections between domestic and foreign alumni, as well as inter-boarding schools and universities. The findings above are supported by another research which showed that the charismatic aspect of the *Kyai* becomes a factor that contributes to the success of *pesantren* education (Jatmikowati et al., 2019). This study revealed that all the dimensions of the leadership of the *Kyai* (which here include charisma) are expected to be followed by the *santri* once they later serve in the community.

In addition to the two studies above, another research that focuses on the outcome of charismatic leadership at *pesantren* is a historical and phenomenological study by Ta'rifin & Halid (2021) which revealed that *Kyai's* charisma becomes a factor that determines the resilience and sustainability of the *pesantren*. This study found that the *pesantren* which are "discontinued" are those which do not follow up the charisma of the *Kyai* with a "structured regeneration" system after the *Kyai* passed away. In other words, if the leaders who continue the leadership do not have the charisma, it could put the continuity and sustainability of the *pesantren's* existence in jeopardy (Ta'rifin & Halid, 2021).

The second category of studies on *pesantren* charismatic leadership is a group of studies that tried to explain the benefits of charismatic leadership on organizational improvements (Arifin et al., 2018; Hariyadi et al., 2018). A phenomenological study by Arifin et al. (2018) found that partnership with charismatic leaders from specific *pesantren* is thought to be an "accurate strategy" to counteract the leadership weaknesses of the school principals so that the school culture improves and the school system becomes more powerful. This strategy was named the "Islamic crash course" or "*nyantri*

program". In the meantime, a case study by Hariyadi et al. (2018) explores how charismatic leadership builds the organizational culture within *pesantren*. The organizational culture includes regular routines such as group prayer, Quran recitation, *sholawat* (religious chant praising Prophet Muhammad), as well as weekly activities such as *tahlil* (a form of dhikr that involves the praising of God), deliberation on *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), as well as annual activities such as the celebrations of "Muharram, Ramadan, Eid al-Fitr, and Eid al-Adha".

In the meantime, the third category of research on *pesantren* charismatic leadership lingers on those which used quantitative measurement of charismatic leadership on either "psychological safety climate and tacit knowledge sharing" (Fikri et al., 2021), or on community compliance (Karim et al., 2020). A survey by Fikri et al. (2021) investigates the correlation between charismatic leadership on the "climate of psychological safety" and "tacit knowledge exchange". The essential function of "psychological safety climate" as a mediating factor "between charismatic leadership and tacit knowledge sharing" is also examined in this study. The findings show that charismatic leadership has a significant correlation with the "climate of psychological safety" and "tacit knowledge exchange". This study also discovers proof that charismatic leadership, via the "mediation" of a psychologically safe climate, has a significant correlation with the "tacit sharing" of knowledge.

Also grouped in the category of quantitative studies on charismatic leadership, Karim et al. (2020) through a mixed-method study examined the influence of charismatic leadership on community compliance. The results show that society views the leaders' charisma frequently in a negative light; and that the charisma of the *pesantren* leader has only 19.9% influence on society, which is considered as a "poor influence". Yet, to be critical of these findings, it is not surprising that it has only minimum influence. This is

because this study singles out the compliance of society at large which does not have a direct relation to the *Kyai*. The result might be different if the respondents are from the close circle of the *Kyai*, be it the students, the student's parents, or the *pesantren* teachers and staff. As it goes back to the concept of charisma, it is the followers' obedience that must be in question, not the public in general who does not have a relation whatsoever with the *Kyai*.

To sum up the review of the existing studies on charismatic leadership at *pesantren* above, the inductive conclusion could be generated into two categories: methodology and research problem. Methodologically, *pesantren* charismatic leadership has been researched using both qualitative and quantitative. The quantitative part is mostly conducted with case studies and phenomenology designs. Meanwhile, for the quantitative parts, they are conducted non-experimentally via a survey (though one used a mixed method). Meanwhile, in terms of the research problem, it ranges from understanding the outcomes of charismatic leadership on education improvement and leadership, exploring the advantages of charismatic leadership on *pesantren*'s organizations and in societies, and measuring the effect of charismatic leadership on psychological safety and social compliance.

Notwithstanding, from the conclusion of the literature review above, it is apparent that the existing studies on *pesantren* charismatic leadership only focus on the positive side of it, and set aside its potential side-effect or the "dark side" area. This could be seen from the list of categories of topics that focus on the positive outcomes of charismatic leadership either on *pesantren* educational improvement, organizational impacts, and societal compliance. Thus, this literature gap opens up space for this present study to explore the area of its adverse implication, to further be taken as the novelty of this present study. In addition, in terms of the topic of study, none of the reviewed literature above

chooses critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities of the *santri* as a topic, which here makes another novelty of this present study. Thus, to wrap up the literature review part, the originality of this present study lies in two aspects: First, it focuses on the dark-side area of charismatic leadership, and second, it discusses a topic that could potentially become the adverse implications of *pesantren* charismatic leadership, which are: the critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities of the *pesantren* students.

## **2.2. Theoretical Frameworks**

In addressing the critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities of the *santri*, this study hypothesizes that it is not solely related to the specific issue of leadership in education. Beyond that, it expands to the broader area of discipline which covers all the aspects of education where the educational leadership itself is a part of it: philosophy of education. Indeed, the discipline of educational philosophy does not directly depend on empirical evidence, however, this is the place where critical questions are raised to interrogate why things in education are the way they are. This is a connecting area between education and philosophy where it does not touch the area of practice, but its presence becomes the foundation of the practice (Dufour & Curtis, 2011). This assumption is primarily supported by the fact that when it comes to critical thinking and critical dialogue, the discussion always comes back to the educational philosophy.

### **2.2.1. Critical Thinking and Critical Dialogue as Educational Core**

Critical thinking and critical dialogue have become two crucial elements discussed in the philosophies of education either from Western-secular and Islamic perspectives (see Dewey, 1903; Freire, 2006; Sahin, 2013). Terminologically, the two concepts are distinctive though intercorrelated to one another. In its definition, critical thinking refers to “the propensity and skill to engage in an activity with reflective

skepticism” (McPeck, 2016, p. 8). Whilst, critical dialogue is “an active group process and opportunity for students and faculty members to learn how to engage in civil, respectful, difficult conversations” (Morris, 2017, p. 376). Simply put, critical thinking is more about the individual cognitive ability to think critically, while critical dialogue is the social interaction on how the individuals could communicate their critical thinking. From the way they are defined, it seems impossible for someone to have a critical dialogue without first having critical thinking. Whilst contrarily, someone who has critical thinking might not necessarily be able to communicate their critical thoughts well. Ideally, these two skills must be present all together within the educational practices.

In an article titled “Moving beyond critical thinking to critical dialogue”, Morris (2017) highlighted that education today should shift its orientation, not only focusing on critical thinking but also on critical dialogue. While critical thinking is crucial for critical dialogue to happen, it seems that critical dialogue gained less attention. Here, Morris (2017) emphasized that critical dialogue is not merely about communication, yet it is more about how the students and teachers could actively exchange their critical thoughts in a well-mannered conversation to address issues facing both of them. In more detail, Morris (2017) explained that the nature of critical thinking is more individualistic and is closely related to the “cognitive development” of an individual. Yet, critical dialogue derives more into the conversations which not only relate to the “cognitive domain” but also “attitudinal and behavioral predilections” (p. 376).

In the educational context, critical thinking and critical dialogue have become a core discussion in the educational philosophy either from Western-secular and Islamic perspectives. In the Western secular context, Dewey (1903) argued that there is a crucial need for educational institutions to be based on “the principle of freedom of intelligence” which as the name suggests, relates to the pedagogical interaction where both students

and teachers are free in developing and communicating their intelligence. Meanwhile, Freire (2006) through his concept of Critical Pedagogy scrutinized the “traditional model of education” which he mentioned as the “banking model of education”. This model, he said, needs to be changed as it puts the students as an empty “container” that can be filled by the teachers. Freire described this model as passive and irrelevant to real life, for there is no “dialogue” and “critical consciousness” whatsoever. In the meantime, Islamic education has the concept of *tarbiyah* which is mentioned as the critical-dialogical process of becoming (Sahin, 2013). In this case, *tarbiyah* offers a student-led educational approach with critical dialogue as part of its pedagogical method. Notwithstanding, both Western and Islamic educational philosophies highlight critical thinking and critical dialogue as the core of educational activities.

To explain deeper about the “freedom of intelligence”, Dewey (1903) associated this with the “democracy of mind” where the teachers are not supposed to conduct the “undemocratic suppression” towards the students’ intelligence of mind, suggesting a more flexible and dynamic interaction between the teachers and students in their educational activities. In his book “*Experience and Education*”, Dewey (1986) explained that the “freedom of intelligence” is where the students have freedom of observation and freedom of judgment. In this context, the focus of learning here is on the student’s interest, and on how they should be active in the process. This indicates that the students are expected to be free to develop their own intelligence and contribute to communicating it along with the teachers.

As for Critical Pedagogy, Freire (2006) in his book “*Pedagogy of the Oppressed*” contended that the main issue with humans is that they frequently experience dehumanization while they strive to become fully human. Certain conditions like “injustice, exploitation, oppression, and the violence” of the so-called “oppressors” are to

blame for this. From these conditions, the oppressed turn into “less human” and thus will thereby "regain their lost humanity". Freire cautioned, however, that to regain their “humanity”, the oppressed should not imitate to be the "oppressors" but rather act as “restorers” of the humanity among themselves. Consequently, the responsibilities of the oppressed are here to make free both "themselves and the oppressors from the dehumanization". To gain this freedom, they have to perform the critical thinking process by identifying the oppressors and assessing the type of oppression. It is continued by engaging in critical discussion to solve the identified problems. In this case, the point of critical pedagogy is that teachers should not act as the oppressors toward the students, and allow them to be critical and engage in critical dialogue with them.

Meanwhile from the Islamic education perspective, Sahin (2013) argued that the concept of *tarbiyah* offers critical-dialogical learning, as it is based on the concept of the Quranic educational worldview. In this case, it is crucial to change the perspective from “thinking Islamically about education” to “thinking educationally about Islam” (Sahin, 2018, p.7). Viewing education Islamically means understanding education from the Islamic perspective, while thinking educationally about Islam provides a wider perspective on seeing Islam as a wholly educational spiritual concept from which it contains educational values and principles sourced from the “Divine Word and its embodied transformative presence in the life of Muhammad” (p.8). Here, the Quranic educational worldview positions God as the Divine educator who teaches humans with the book called Quran. In this case, the Quranic educational worldview offered an educational concept that facilitates learners with critical-dialogical learning. This is evidenced by the way God as a Divine educator encourages humans to critically reflect on the stories He narrates in the Quran, or by engaging with humans through critical-

dialogical questions such as “Don’t you reflect?” (Al-An'am 6:50) so that humans could critically reflect and answer the question with Him, making a critical-dialogue.

That being said, to focus on the dynamic of the Islamic educational perspective, it is apparent that within Islamic education, *tarbiyah* is not the sole educational concept. Despite the critical-dialogical approach that *tarbiyah* offers, the problem in Islamic education lies in the contestation between *tarbiyah* and *adab* as the competing educational concepts in Islam. Whilst *tarbiyah* is considered the “critical-dialogical process of becoming” (Sahin, 2013), *adab*, on the other hand, connotes more as moral disciplining (Al-Attas, 1980). In this case, the two models of Islamic education indeed consult the Islamic values and principles in developing the concepts, yet they are distinctive in their educational approach, pedagogical method, and aim of education. The contestation between *adab* and *tarbiyah* models of education is elaborated further in the following part, followed by an explanation of how this could be taken as the theoretical lens to address the problem under study.

### **2.2.2. *Adab* vs *Tarbiyah*: What Could Go Wrong with *Adab*?**

Education in *adab* concept is viewed as “a process of instilling something into human beings” (Al-Attas, 1980, p. 1), through which it consists of three elements: method, content, and recipients. The method here is “instilling”; whilst the content is knowledge (*‘ilm*); and the recipients are the “human beings”. In *adab* context, humans as the knowledge recipients are mentioned as the “rational animal” or “*al-haywan al-natiq*” which constitute the mind (*‘aql*) and soul (*qalb*) that encompass rational and spiritual substances. In the meantime, the knowledge as the content is defined as “recognition of the proper places of things in the order of creation, such that it leads to the recognition of the proper place of God in the order of being and existence” (p. 7). What is meant by

“proper place” here is connotated with the term *haqq* which means “real” and “true”. Meanwhile, as for the method, *adab* used the term “instilling” which refers to the process of how the knowledge is imparted to the humans as the recipients. Here the term ‘instill’ is described as an activity “to put a feeling, idea, or principle gradually into someone's mind, so that it has a strong influence on the way that person thinks or behaves” (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.)

When it comes to the aim of education, the *adab* concept of education believes that the main objective of education is to produce a “good man” (Al-Attas, 1980, p. 12). In this context, the term "good" designates the "man of *adab*" in the sense that it embraces both "spiritual and material" existence. To produce a good man, *adab* incorporates ‘*ilm* (knowledge) with ‘*amal* (action). The importance of ‘*amal* is underlined to assure that ‘*ilm* is used effectively in society. In detail, Al-Attas (1980) explained that *adab* entails action to “discipline the mind and soul”. It encompasses the development of positive mental and spiritual qualities, acting in a righteous rather than wrongous manner. It also calls for executing the correct behavior as opposed to the incorrect ones. In this situation, the accomplishment of the goal of ‘*ilm* would be made possible by *adab* as the disciplined activity, the chosen acquisition, the right performance, and the quality preservation, along with the knowledge they imply.

In contrast with *Adab*, the *Tarbiyah* with its Quranic educational worldview offers a different perspective. To think educationally about Quran means to view the Quran as a book (*kitab*) that God as the Devine educator sent to humans so that humans could learn from it (Sahin, 2013). In other words, the Qur’an needs to be viewed from the educational perspective, meaning that it is the way the Devine educator teaches humans with His Quranic verses. The Quranic educational worldview saw that God teaches humans by telling stories so that they can critically reflect on themselves. The Quran also uses a

dialogical approach such as through critical-reflective questions like: “Which, then, of your Lord's blessings do you both deny?” (Rahman 55:13); or “Don’t you reflect?” (Al-An'am 6:50). Here, it would seem that the oral nature of the Qur'anic dialogues is primarily used as pedagogical techniques to aid in the efficient communication of the Divine message.

Thus, the critical-dialogical questions asked by God in the Quran above could be viewed as a way God wants humans to be critical, and thus create a dialogue with Him as the Divine educator. This indicates that the Quran uses a learner-centered approach to impart its message and takes seriously the realities of its initial audience (Sahin, 2013). Through this foundation, *tarbiyah* is indicated as an educational concept that is more into student-led learning which along the process requires critical thinking and critical dialogues between the students and teachers aimed at flourishing human life (a process of becoming).

Table 2.2.

*Comparison between adab and tarbiyah in method, approach, and outcome as generated from the abovementioned combined literature sources.*

<b>Educational facet</b>	<i>Adab</i>	<i>Tarbiyah</i>
Method	Instilling	Critical-dialogical
Approach	Teacher-led	Student-led
Outcome	Good man; man of <i>adab</i>	Human flourishing

To be viewed from the perspective of critical thinking and critical-dialogical perspectives, there is a tendency that *adab* with its instilling method and teacher-led approach, offers little—if not entirely no—room for the students to be critical as it adopts a top-down communication from the teachers to the students. The outcome itself (good man) is more focused on the creation of certain characteristics that a man should have—

fixed and non-negotiable. In *adab*, it seems that the students are considered empty spaces that could be filled by the teachers with the knowledge that the students could not even challenge and criticize. In this case, the term “instilling” could be interpreted as having close relevance with “indoctrination”. Sahin (2013) argued that *adab* indeed displays characteristics of an instruction-centered and “strict doctrinal teachings process” that tends to ignore the learner's individual capabilities. In other words, instilling *adab* in the students by incorporating ‘*amal*’ as the output could be mistakenly transformed into indoctrination, and thus put both the critical thinking and critical-dialogical abilities of the students in jeopardy.

In contrast with that, *tarbiyah* offers a critical-dialogical method of learning where the students are encouraged to be critical and create a dialogue with the teachers. In the *tarbiyah* concept, this is the students who are active during the learning process. By dialogical approach, *tarbiyah* is meant to have two-way communication between the teachers and the students. In this case, unlike *adab* with its fixed output to create a good man, *tarbiyah* offers a more dynamic outcome that focuses more on the development of the human or to flourish the human agencies. In explaining what it means to flourish human life as an educational aim, Brighouse (2006) stated that just because the teachers are more knowledgeable than the students, and have legitimate authority over them, it does not give them the right to impose their personal expectations for how the students should flourish and develop as humans. It must be the students who determine how they will flourish in their life, and this is facilitated by the teacher.

In this case, it is apparent that the contestation between *adab* and *tarbiyah* as Islamic educational models could be taken as a lens to make sense of the problem under study. Looking back to the review of the *pesantren* in the previous part, it is obvious that the *santri-Kyai* relation and interaction are themed with “everlasting respect” and

“absolute obedience” as generated from the charismatic attributes of the *Kyai* (Dhofier, 1980). To some extent, this particular circumstance connotes more to the *adab* model. “No *santri* can challenge the *Kyai*” (Dhofier, 1980, p. 68) means that the *pesantren* model of education is highly teacher-led and professedly employ the instilling method of teaching (no critical dialogue). In addition, the aim of education to produce a man with *barakah* (the increase in goodness with blessing) symbolizes the characteristic of *adab* with a fixed outcome, which is here in contrast with the dynamic outcome that *tarbiyah* offers with its critical-dialogical approach to flourishing human life. Thus, the literature review indicates that the way *pesantren* practice their education tends to resonate with the *adab* model instead of *tarbiyah*—though it should be disclaimed that this is not a ground for generalization, as *pesantren* itself is broad and diverse in its types.

### **2.2.3. Research Assumption**

The review of the theoretical foundation above culminates in a research assumption that this present study would like to explore through an empirical methodological approach. This study assumes that while the issue of critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities of the *pesantren* students seems to be centered on the leadership style that they adopt, this problem is not solely about the leadership. Yet, it goes back to the foundational underpinning of how the *pesantren* communities view education itself (*adab* or *tarbiyah* model), which then impacts how they run the *pesantren* education with the educational leadership style that they adopt: charismatic leadership. Shah (2015) clearly mentioned that Islamic educational leadership is highly impacted by how Islam and Muslims view education: philosophy of education. Thus, this study assumes that to address the issue of critical thinking and critical-dialogical abilities of the *santri*, the perspective should not only be limited to the issues of educational leadership, but beyond that, this has to be expanded to the theoretical underpinning of how *pesantren*

communities view the education itself which then impacts on how their educational leadership is practiced.

Recalling back to the rationale of the study, critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities of the *pesantren* students should be improved in order to counter the potential power abuse generated from the *pesantren*'s charismatic leadership. Hence, this study would seek deeper into the issue through the lens of charismatic leadership, in the hope to generate findings that could be helpful to be followed up with strategic actions by the concerned parties. With the assumption that this issue is not solely about leadership but expands to the educational philosophy, this study would use a scientific methodological approach in finding empirical evidence that could be beneficial not only for academic discussion but also for practical consideration on how to improve the critical thinking and critical-dialogical abilities of the *pesantren* students, as one alternative to prevent them from falling victim of any form of abuses including sexual abuse.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

This chapter explains the methodological procedures for this present study, starting with the research approach, research design, data collection techniques, research subjects and instruments, validity and reliability, and data analysis techniques. This chapter also addresses the researcher's positionality, ethical issues about the research, as well as the time and place of the study. Each point explains why the specific decision was made by consulting the research methodological reference, mainly aimed at providing reasonings to make sense of all the technical processes of the research.

#### **3.1. Qualitative Approach**

Considering the nature of inquiry as betoken from the already formulated research questions, this present study would be best conducted through a qualitative approach. There are three particular reasons why the qualitative approach is suitable for this research. First, all the research questions start with 'how' which indicates that the data would be in words, not in numbers as in quantitative (Creswell & Gutterman, 2019). Second, the question 'how' requires answers that lead to the explanation of a process, rather than generalization. In this case, qualitative researchers do not seek absolute truths but rather ascribe, understand, and explain the problem under study (Gay et al., 2012). Third, the main purpose of the present study is exploratory, which is to reveal something under the surface regarding the issue. Here, exploratory research can address a knowledge gap on an understudied subject to produce novel and cutting-edge insights (Leavy, 2017, p. 5). Thus, from the three considerations above, it is clear that this present study is explorative in essence, and thus qualitative in nature.

The exploratory purpose is relevant to the problem being studied here—the critical thinking and critical-dialogical abilities of the *santri*—which still need to be explained further and explored deeper to be made sense and to be better understood. By employing the qualitative approach, this study digs deeper under the surface of what exactly happens on the ground. Recalling the assumption of the study, it appears that on the surface the issue of critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities of the *pesantren* students is centered on the leadership style that *pesantren* adopts: religious charismatic. Yet, this study digs deeper beneath the surface of what exactly happened, assuming that this is not solely about leadership, but it relates to the wider scope of the discipline which impacts how education is eventually practiced, including how it is led (leadership). Notwithstanding, this exploratory purpose could be carried out through a qualitative approach with a post-positivist paradigm.

### **3.2. Multiple Case Study Design**

A multiple case study design is used for this study. In this case, the case study is chosen not primarily because this is one of the most widely used qualitative designs (Thomas, 2011), but more of the chance that the researcher could use to concentrate on an area of study known as a “bounded system” or specific functioning (Flyvbjerg, 2011). In this study, the bounded system is a *pesantren* as an educational institution with elements including *Kyai*, *santri*, the mosque, classical textbook teaching and learning, and students' dorm (Dhofier, 1980). Given that *pesantren* is an independent privately-run educational institution, thus there are variations on how *pesantren* runs its educational activities (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2007). With this condition, taking the studies with more than one case is deemed necessary to generate more complex data from different types of *pesantren* institutions. Thus, a multiple case study is considered befitting for this study.

More specifically, a multiple case study design is considered suitable for this study for three particular considerations. First, it gives the researcher a chance to explore deeper the case being studied with in-depth questions (Creswell et al, 2007). Second, the case study fits research that seeks answers to explanatory questions or in studying the process (Gay et al., 2012). Third, this design is flexible and allows the researcher to select cases that are most suitable to address the situated research problems and answer the formulated questions (Hyett et al., 2014). In this regard, the case study is not a choice of methods, yet a decision on what will be "studied" (Stake, 2008). Hence, in this regard, the case study is chosen to support the exploratory purpose of the study, while a multiple case study design is used to maximize the findings from the different types of *pesantren* institutions.

In selecting the cases, uniqueness could be taken as the basis (Crowe et al., 2011). Yet, it requires the researcher to justify why the particular cases are chosen (Creswell & Gutterman, 2019). Considering that the issue of critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities of the *santri* is relevant to the sexual abuse cases, this study selects two *pesantren* institutions that are located in the same territory as a *pesantren* that has reported sexual abuse cases in Madura, East Java. This selection of the case is considered the most appropriate given the versatile position it provides. Here, selecting *pesantren* with reported sexual abuse cases is constrained by access and sensitivity, yet selecting a *pesantren* that is located far from the *pesantren* with sexual abuse cases would be hindered by the possible different research context. Thus, selecting cases that are located in the same territory as the *pesantren* with the sexual abuse case could be a panacea given two considerations: familiarity and similarity.

By familiarity, it means that the two *pesantren* under study have been familiar with the news of sexual abuse cases at the nearby *pesantren*, and how the charismatic

attributes of the *Kyai* could be misused as a *modus operandi* for such misconduct. This familiarity with the sexual abuse case could inform them that the charismatic attributes of the *Kyai* should indeed need critical concern. Meanwhile, for the similarity, it means that the selected cases share similar cultures and characteristics with the one which has experienced sexual abuse case, as they share the same locality. With the similarity, it is expected that the two cases under study could represent a similar condition to that in *pesantren* with the reported sexual abuse, especially in the context of *Kyai-santri* relation and interaction which here correlates closely with the critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities of the *pesantren* students.

As a background of the research setting, Madura is an island under the regional administration of East Java, a province known as the home base of the World's largest Muslim organization Nahdlatul Ulama. As an island, Madura consists of four different regencies: Bangkalan, Sampang, Pamekasan, and Sumenep. Citing the data from the Ministry of Religious Affairs, East Java hosts the highest number of *santri* with 564,299 in total as of 2021; they study within 4,452 *pesantren* institutions spread all over cities and regencies within the province (as cited in [dataindonesia.id](http://dataindonesia.id), n.d.). Among all the choices available as the potential research setting, this study selected the cases of a semi-traditional-modern *pesantren* and a traditional *pesantren*. These two cases are chosen upon consideration that they still maintain—entirely or partially—the *pesantren* traditional nature, meaning that they generate a fair representation of the case being studied.

### **3.3. Data Collection Techniques**

Four different techniques of data collection are employed for this research, namely: document analysis, focused group discussion, interviews, and observation. Each

technique is chosen based on certain considerations. These include compatibility with the background of the research participants, efficiency in the technical process, and effectiveness in generating and absorbing the data and information from different respondents.

### **3.3.1. Document analysis**

As the first technique in collecting the data, this study starts with document analysis which refers to “the systematic assessment and evaluation of documents, including printed and computer-based and internet-transmitted electronic resources” (Bowen, 2009). The documents that could be analyzed include text and pictures that were not created by the researcher. A study of documentation can be thoroughly examined using a variety of document types, which here include the vision and mission of an educational institution. Thus, in its practice, this study analyzed the document of vision and mission of the *pesantren* under study to help answer the three formulated research inquiries. In its procedure, the researcher requested both *pesantren* institutions under study for their vision and mission. However, only Case 1 has a vision and mission document handed over to the researcher, while Case 2 (as a traditional *pesantren*) admitted that they did not have it. Thus, specific only for document analysis, this is only performed for Case 1, and not for Case 2. Here, the absence of a vision and mission document for Case 2 at least affirms its traditional feature that it is indeed a traditional institution that does not have a documented organizational vision and mission.

### **3.3.2. Focused Group Discussion (FGD)**

The second data collection technique is through focused group discussion (FGD), which is known as a widely employed strategy to comprehend in-depth social topics in a qualitative study (Nyumba et al., 2018). In this regard, instead of using a "statistically

representative sample" of a larger population as in the quantitative approach, the FGD seeks to collect data from a deliberately chosen group of people aimed at finding the group's understanding of an issue. In its procedure, FGD gathers around 8-12 participants to speak openly about a particular topic, guided by a facilitator which here could be the researcher themselves (Chaleunvong, 2009). Given the main purpose of FGD is to generate group consensus, thus it is important during the recruitment of the participants to consider "group composition" which includes "the mix of ages and sexes" as well as the background of the participants (Gill et al., 2008). This is particularly aimed at generating the "quality of discussion" which eventually impact the data.

In this study, the FGD is employed to collect data from the *pesantren* students as the research subjects, specifically to answer all three research inquiries. In its practice, as many as 10 *pesantren* students from each case are selected to participate in the FGD by considering the fair composition of the group: sex, age, and grade level. In recruiting the participants, the researcher consults the head of the *pesantren* and/or the teacher to help select which among all the *pesantren* students could represent at the discussion forum. The FGD was conducted at the *pesantren* premise in each case, and it ran for about one to two hours. The FGD for Case 1 was held on March 26, 2023, while FGD for Case 2 was on April 3, 2023. Before the discussion takes place, a list of questions is prepared to guide the running of the discussion, and this conforms to the three already formulated research inquiries. The discussion is guided by the researcher. The FGDs in each case were audio-taped for a transcription process.

### **3.3.3. Interview**

The interview is the third data-gathering technique that this study utilized. An interview is considered the most practical method for gathering information (Fontana &

Frey, 2005). This is an activity in which the interviewer asks questions to the interviewees in the hope to garner their perspectives, experiences, thoughts, and reasoning around certain issues (Gill et al., 2008). There are three ways in conducting an interview depending on the type of questions: unstructured, semi-structured, and structured. While the unstructured interview is performed with “little or no organization” of questions, the structured interview uses a set of prepared questions with little to no flexibility (at all) during the process. In the meantime, a semi-structured interview mediates both of them in which it used a list of "predetermined" questions, yet along the way the interviewer is free to follow up on the answers for clarification (Griffiee, 2005). The flexibility here makes it possible to uncover information that is crucial to the respondents but might not have been anticipated by the researcher (Gill et al., 2008).

In its practice, this study used a semi-structured interview with the *Kyai* and the teacher from each case. Here, interviewing the *Kyai* is considered crucial as the same with the students, the *Kyai* is also the main subject in this study. Meanwhile, interviewing the *pesantren* teacher is considered optional, aimed at garnering information from a third party other than the *Kyai* and students, in the hope to mediate and validate the data gotten from both students and the *Kyai*. A teacher is considered fit as a third informant because they have witnessed how the *Kyai* and *santri* relate and interact with each other in their daily life. As the interview is semi-structured, a list of questions was prepared prior to the interview. This conforms to the three research inquiries to allow the comparisons between the responses of the *Kyai* and *pesantren* teachers to that of the students. The interview was exclusively held for each participant (one on one), taking place for about 30 minutes to 60 minutes each. The interviews were conducted face-to-face during the period of March 26, 2023, until April 3, 2023, as per appointment with the participants. As same as in FGD, the interviews were also audio-taped to allow the transcription process.

### 3.3.4. Observation

In addition to the document analysis, FGD, and interview, this study's fourth type of data-gathering method is observation. In this case, observation is considered the basic cornerstone of social interaction, which in academic research, must be performed methodically, and with an emphasis on certain questions (Ciesielska et al., 2018). There are two techniques of performing observation: the participant and the non-participant. In participant observation, the observer actively participates in the scene they are observing, meaning the researcher engages in the situation while simultaneously monitoring and gathering information about the events taking place, the participants, and the environment itself. Contrarily, non-participant observation is when the observers are not actively involved in the circumstance under observation, meaning that they do not interact with or take part in the activities under investigation; rather, they observe or record the participants' behaviors (Gay et al., 2012).

This study used non-participant observation towards two main activities: (1) the daily interaction of the *Kyai* and *santri* and (2) the classical (yellow) textbook teaching and learning activities. The daily social interaction between *Kyai* and *santri* is taken to provide context on the nature of social interaction between *Kyai* and *santri*. Meanwhile, classical (yellow) textbook teaching and learning is chosen given that this is the main pedagogical activity that becomes the element of a *pesantren* (Dhofier, 1980). The observation period is one-day for each case. Observation for Case 1 was conducted on March 26, 2023, while observation for Case 2 was conducted on April 6, 2023. To minimize the observer's presence during the observation, the observer dressed similarly to the subjects being observed by wearing traditional Islamic attire. Before going to the field, the format of the observation sheet was created. In this case, the observation is used to validate the data gotten from the document analysis, FGDs, and interviews.

### 3.4. Research Subjects and Instruments

The term "research subject" refers to a "living individual" about whom a researcher collects data through intervention, interaction with the subject, or the use of personally identifiable information (Consultores, 2021). In total, the research subjects of this study consist of 24 individuals from two different *pesantren*: 20 students (10 in each case), two *Kyai* (one in each case), and two teachers (one in each case). Meanwhile, as for the research instrument, this follows the nature of qualitative study which put the researcher as the main instrument (Gay et al., 2012). The researcher collects the data through the means of document analysis, FGDs, interviews, and observations.

Table 3.1.

*Data collection techniques, research subjects, and instruments of the study*

<b>Data Collection Techniques</b>	<b>Research Subjects</b>	<b>Research Instruments</b>
Document analysis	-	Vision/Mission
FGDs	20 students	A list of questions
Interviews	2 <i>Kyai</i> and 2 teachers	A list of questions
Observations	<i>Kyai-Santri</i> interactions	Observation form

### 3.5. Validity and Reliability

To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, the triangulation technique is employed. The triangulation technique refers to "a validity procedure where researchers search for convergence among multiple and different sources of information to form themes or categories in a study" (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 126). In its practice, triangulation technique could be performed through "data collection techniques" or "data sources" (Gay et al., 2012). In terms of data collection, the validity and reliability of this

present study are generated through the means of four data collection techniques, namely document analysis, FGDs, interviews, and observations. Meanwhile, as for the triangulation of data sources, this study generated data from different elements of each case being studied: documents, students, *Kyai*, and teachers. This triangulation technique—either in data collection techniques or data sources—is aimed to make sure that the collected data are valid and reliable before eventually being taken to the next stage: the analysis.

Table 3.2.

*Triangulation techniques in data collection and data sources of the study.*

<b>Research Inquiries</b>	<b>Data Collection</b>	<b>Data Sources</b>
Perception	Document analysis, FGD Interviews	Document, Students, <i>Kyai</i> , teacher
Practice	Document analysis, FGD, Interviews, Observation	Document, Students, <i>Kyai</i> , teacher, observed <i>Kyai-santri</i> interaction (daily/teaching learning)
Reflection	Document analysis, FGD and Interviews	Document, Students, <i>Kyai</i> , teacher

### 3.6. Data analysis

Data analysis is the most challenging part of qualitative research (Simula, 2018). The analysis process here is performed after the completion of data collection and validation. Since all the datasets of this study are in the form of texts (words), thus the analysis was performed through the thematic analysis technique. Thematic analysis is defined as “a method for developing, analyzing, and interpreting patterns across a qualitative dataset, which involves systematic processes of data coding to develop themes” (Clarke & Braun, 2021). A code is a construct created by the researcher that

symbolizes or "translates" the qualitative data into meaning (Simula, 2018). The stages include: "(1) familiarization of the data; (2) coding the data; (3) generating the initial theme; (4) developing and reviewing the theme; (5) refining, defining and naming the theme; and (6) writing the theme" (Clarke and Braun, 2021). Notwithstanding, this present study follows these six stages in analyzing the data.

In its practice, the thematic analysis of this present study was conducted electronically by utilizing the paid version of Quirkos software. The help from this software was deemed necessary to reduce time and generate effectiveness during the analysis process. Yet, it must be noted that the use of the Quirkos here is only to help categorize, code, and retrieve the data, not to do the analysis by itself. This is in line with the statement of Basit (2003) that the text analysis software indeed cannot perform the analysis by itself and that the user still has to decide what to collect, aggregate, segment, code, and establish the categories to organize it. Thus, while the software is helpful in easing the analysis process, yet still, the coding and making themes are still in the control of the researcher, including writing the theme from a bunch of codes. After the coding and generating theme were completed, the researcher then reflected on the data to further transform them into analysis and reports.

### **3.7. Researcher's Positionality**

The researcher's positionality refers to the views in which the researcher positions themselves in the research, which here includes explaining how they develop as the researcher and how their background may impact the research process (Holmes, 2014, p.4). Similar to the thematic analysis which requires reflexivity (Clarke and Braun, 2021), positionality here needs the researcher's self-assessment of how their background may impact the process and findings of the research. The researcher in this study has

experienced first-hand a three-year study period at a *pesantren* institution in Madura, East Java. Thus, the familiarity of the *pesantren* culture in this territory has been the strength of this positionality. To maintain trustworthiness, the researcher holds on to the validity and reliability techniques of triangulation—as explained in Section 3.5.—whilst also consult to the two supervisors with expertise in educational management and leadership for the entire research process. With the triangulation technique and supervision, the procedure and findings of this study are expected to be valid and accountable.

### **3.8. Ethical Issue**

Due to the sensitivity of the issue being studied, consent and confidentiality are taken as the utmost concern. The selection of the research participants is participatory and their identity would be subject to confidentiality. The data collection process followed a procedure by which it would not harm the physical and psychological aspects of the participants, and their identities will not be disclosed in any reports. For the same reason, the aspects of consent, confidentiality, and anonymity procedures are also applied to the research setting of the study (the name of the institutions), which will not be disclosed in any reports of the study.

### **3.9. Time and Place of Study**

The study was initiated in September 2022 with its proposal defense and validation affirmed in January 2023. The data collection was conducted in April 2023. The research setting was in East Java, a province hosting the highest number of *pesantren* students in Indonesia. The thesis defense was conducted on July 10, 2023, followed by the revision and finalization of the report on July 28, 2023.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the study's results and discussion which are structured by first revealing the findings in each case study and then followed by a discussion explaining how these findings contribute to the existing body of knowledge. The findings are divided into Case 1 and Case 2, each of which consists of three sub-points explaining the findings in three research inquiries (perception, practice, reflection). Meanwhile, the discussion part elaborates on the contributions of the findings to both academic discussion and practical domains.

#### 4.1. Results

##### 4.1.1. Case 1

The *pesantren* of Case 1 could be categorized as a semi-modern *pesantren*, as it adopts the madrasah system while at the same time still maintaining the traditional teaching and learning of classical textbooks (yellow books). Regarding the Madrasah system, the *pesantren* of Case 1 offers a range of educational levels from kindergarten to a secondary high school. Meanwhile, the traditional teaching and learning of Islamic classical textbooks are conducted informally within the *pesantren*'s mosque. In terms of organization, the *pesantren* of Case 1 has a clear organizational structure including the foundation and schools that are formal, as well as the *pesantren* structure that is informal. In this *pesantren*, formality and informality merge either in pedagogical practice or organizational structure, making it an institution that is solid with a clear vision and mission.

The grand vision of the *pesantren* of case 1 is “to produce quality students with good moral (*akhlakul Karimah*)”. While good moral here is highlighted as the main

outcome, the term “quality students” is characterized by five success indicators which are incorporated into five missions. One mission could be coded into the theme of critical thinking and critical dialogue, while two missions are coded into good moral (*adab*). The mission that supports the enforcement of critical thinking and critical dialogue is put as the first point of the mission, which reads: “to organize learning activities to develop the student's ability in active thinking and be creative and active in solving problems.” In this regard, although it does not use the exact term as critical thinking, the first point of mission singles out one competency that the students should have, namely the ability of “active thinking” and “be creative” in solving the problems they face, which here could be coded into the theme of critical thinking, as in solving the problems, critical reflection is required during the process.

Meanwhile, the two missions that are coded into good moral (*adab*) are put at the fourth point of the missions which read: “To foster religious environment and behavior so that students can practice and live religion in a real way”, as well as the fifth point of the missions which reads: “to develop behavior so that students can become role models for their friends and society”. These two missions are coded into the theme of good moral (*adab*) as the *pesantren* requires its students to have certain behavioral characteristics that adhere to Islamic principles through which they can inspire and become role models for their peers and societies at large. Notwithstanding, the vision and mission of the *pesantren* reflect that the students could have both critical thinking and good moral (*adab*) as the main outcomes that the *pesantren* would like to achieve through its formal and informal educational activities.

Given the converged aims of education as reflected in its vision and mission, the theme that appeared from the collected data from Case 1 is versatility where it adopts a combined general and Islamic religious education aimed at producing students with both

*adab* and critical thinking. The blend between *Adab* and critical thinking is not only reflected by the *pesantren*'s vision and mission, but also supported by the observation findings, and affirmed by data generated from the focused group discussion and interviews. In this regard, specific to the *pesantren* of Case 1, the findings indicate that *pesantren* becomes a place for *santri* (*pesantren* students) to think critically and engage in critical dialogues with their charismatic leader (*Kyai*). Yet, despite the space given for *santri* to think critically and engage in critical dialogues, these activities must be demonstrated under the rule of moral (*adab*).

#### **4.1.1.1. Perception: Charisma, Obedience and Critical Thinking**

Delving further into the questions in perception inquiry, all 10 students who participated in the focused group discussion consider their *pesantren* leader as charismatic. As for the reasons, this confirms the literature review findings that this is related to the *karamah* attribute that the leader (*Kyai*) has. Given the *karamah* qualities of the *Kyai*, the students mentioned that the reason why they choose to study in *pesantren* is not solely to gain knowledge but also *barakah*. As for *barakah*, this is perceived in different ways by the participants though they still connote the same construct. The students, for instance, mentioned *barakah* as “the easiness of the way in achieving goals”. Meanwhile, the teacher viewed this as “an effect of the knowledge that the *santri* have as it becomes beneficial”. In the meantime, the most comprehensive perception was given by the *Kyai* who explained:

“Implicatively, *barakah* is  *ziyadatul khair minaallah*. Actually, Westerners know this [concept] too, but with another term. According to Westerners, *barakah* is a plus value. So, this is something good that develops into other good things. In our context, this is  *ziyadatul khair* which is the added value of something good. With *barakah* of knowledge, people can be safe in this world and hereafter. With *barakah* of knowledge, people can also benefit others. *Barakah* indeed comes from something good” (*Kyai* of Case 1, 26/03/2023)

In general, *barakah* here is viewed as “plus value” or “added value” which is additional goodness that builds on something already good. It means that for *barakah* to work, the basic should be from something good that develops into another goodness.

For the way *santri* gains *barakah*, the response from all respondents is one voice, that is by performing total obedience toward the *Kyai* and *pesantren*'s rule. This, though, is conveyed in different narratives by the respondents. The students said that “the key to *barakah* is to obey patiently and sincerely what the *Kyai* instruct”. Similarly, the teacher thought that the way for *santri* to gain *barakah* is by performing “obedience toward the *Kyai*, teachers and *pesantren*'s rule”. Again, the *Kyai* gave a more conceptual answer in this regard, saying that “*al-ilmu bita'alum, wal barokatu bil khidmad*” which means “to gain knowledge is by learning, but to gain *barakah* is by performing *khidmad*.” *Khidmad* here is mentioned as “*malayani*”, Indonesian term for “serving”. It means that to gain *barakah*, the students must serve their teachers. This includes the acts of “obeying”, “respecting”, “not making them upset” and “always making them happy”.

As for the level of obedience, all respondents agreed that there is no limitation on this, meaning that the *santri* should perform total submission in obeying the *Kyai*. This is because, in the context of *pesantren*, the *Kyai* is chosen as the leader for the *karamah* (extraordinary) qualities in them that Muslims should follow, namely “closeness to God”, “mastery of Islamic knowledge”, and “adherence to Islamic teaching and principles”. In this context, total obedience should be performed because the *Kyai* is part of the *ulema* as the “*warasatul ambiya*” or “inheritors of the prophets”. Thus, with this paradigm, what comes from the *Kyai* is assumed as something good, and thus must be followed without any limitation.

However, despite the fact that total obedience should be performed towards *Kyai* in order for *santri* to gain *barakah*, the participants are aware that there is the potential for the charismatic attributes of the *Kyai*—*karamah* and *barakah*—to be taken as the tools for power abuse. Thus, all the respondents believed that teaching the students critical thinking could be an option to counter the possible adverse implications. The teacher said: “This [critical thinking] is obligatory to be present at *pesantren*. By accommodating this, the dynamic will not go one way, so there will be critical awareness in their actions to consider good or bad consequences.” Meanwhile, the student said: “This [critical thinking] will become the provision that guides us to choose the right path.” The *Kyai* said: “It must be taught.” Thus, all the respondents agree that critical thinking should be taught to *pesantren* students to counter the possible adverse implications generated from their total submission in obeying the *Kyai*.

#### **4.1.1.2. Practice: Critical Dialogue and *Adab***

The inquiry of practice aims to uncover how *pesantren* facilitates the student’s critical thinking and critical dialogue. The data indicate that the *pesantren* of Case 1 has proven to be highly proactive in this regard. The facilitations that they provide to foster the students’ critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities are coded into four main themes: (1) intra-curricular (curriculum), (2) pedagogical method, (3) extracurricular, and (4) daily interaction. As for the intra-curricular (curriculum), this is related to the curriculum of formal education which here is facilitated by the presence of a logic-related subject called *Ilmu Mantik*. This is conveyed by both students and *Kyai*. A female student who appeared to be one of the most vocal among all FGD participants said:

“So, we are here given the science of logic, namely *ilmu mantik*. *Kyai* himself directly teaches us. Here, we are taught to be critical and have the right thoughts. This knowledge brings many benefits to us as students, that we can also have critical thinking even though we are in *pesantren*” (Student of Case 1, 26/03/2023).

Her statement was confirmed by other students who said that they are indeed given *Ilmu mantik* subject. Separately, the *Kyai* explained:

“*Ilmu mantik* teaches the methods of how to think critically. This is the knife of the analytical lens to find the truth in the scientific context. This is needed in order to give [students] methods on how to think critically” (*Kyai* of Case 1, 26/03/2023).

Besides the curriculum, the second facilitation is through the pedagogical method, which here used interactive discussion. This is conveyed by the students and teacher and is supported by the observation finding. The student testified:

“Teachers in class when they finished explaining the materials, they are like ‘Is there something you want to ask?’ Here, this is very common to convey an opinion like that. This is also applied to *Kyai*” (Student of Case 1, 26/03/2023).

This testimony from the student is proven by the observation on the teaching and learning of the yellow book titled “*Ta’limul muta’alim*” or students' ethics that took place in the *pesantren*'s mosque. During the observation, the teacher used interactive methods in which during the explanation, the teacher appeared to ask questions three times to check the students' understanding, which here responded to by the students. Besides, there was also a discussion session after the material delivery, where the students are given a chance to ask questions. In this case, a student appeared to ask a question that was well responded to by the teacher. During the activity, the teacher provided a room for discussion and the students used the opportunity either in answering the questions from the teacher, or asking questions to the teacher (See appendix for overall observation report of Case 1).

Also becoming a part of the pedagogical method, critical thinking is also reflected in the assignment given to the student. In this case, the teacher testified:

“To provoke the critical thinking of students is by giving them assignments related to learning material, while also giving them the freedom to ask questions. The students are allowed to give arguments according to their abilities. Incidentally, I teach sociology subject so it is closely related to society. So, I assign them to do research, usually in their family scope, then later on in the wider community, the surrounding community so that they are, well, accustomed to reading [observing]

their surroundings, then I asked them to present and discuss their findings in class” (Teacher of Case 1, 26/03/2023).

In this case, the assignment given to students is research-based, so that students could identify and address problems around them as part of their learning process. This assignment resonates with the first mission of the *pesantren* which is “to organize learning activities to develop the student's ability in active thinking and be creative and active in solving problems.”

The third facilitation of *pesantren* of Case 1 in accommodating space for their students’ critical thinking and critical dialogue is through extracurricular activities. This is conducted through discussion activities either in the form of a seminar or small group discussions—even using English and Arabic. In this case, the teacher said: “The discussions are usually conducted under the student associations body. We may also invite speakers from outside.” In addition, the *pesantren* of Case 1 also encourage their *santri* to participate in *Bahsul Masail* which refers to a discussion to find the right theorem [*dalil*] of certain problems that happened in societies. This is conveyed by the *Kyai*:

“Because there are contesting arguments during the *Bahsul masail*, there must be different views and opinions during the discussion, and this represents the critical dialogue in the *pesantren*” (*Kyai* of Case 1, 26/03/2023).

Meanwhile, the fourth facilitation towards the student’s critical thinking and critical dialogue is related to daily activities, which is here conducted through *Musyawah* (discussion). This was conveyed by both *Kyai* and the students. The *Kyai* said:

“In fact, many *Kyai* deliberately invited their students to ask for their opinion, including me. I ask the students ‘In my opinion, this should be like this, so what do you think about it?’ So, this is constructive discussion” (*Kyai* of Case 1, 26/03/2023).

This is confirmed by the student’s statement:

“*Kyai* [name censored] is rarely here. Yet, when he was here, he must have taken the time to meet with us and asked for our opinion about something, or how we see things like, our opinion” (Student of Case 1, 26/03/2023).

This indicates that the student’s voices at *pesantren* of Case 1 are taken into account either to find solutions to certain problems facing the *pesantren* or in the decision making.

From the four facilitations for the student’s critical thinking and critical dialogue above, this indicates that the *pesantren* of Case 1 has been serious in implementing its mission to produce students with critical thinking and critical dialogical skills. However, as the mission of the *pesantren* is not solely for critical thinking, another theme that appeared from the collected data is also *adab*—good moral. Here, the *pesantren* vision and mission reflect that *adab* means “behaving in ways that adhere to Islamic principles”. Yet, in its practicality, the *Kyai* explained that *Adab* refers to “a set of rules established by the *pesantren* for the common good or for the benefit of all in the world and hereafter”. In this regard, while critical thinking and critical dialogue are facilitated, this must be noted that being too critical could also lead to unexpected outcomes. In this case, the *Kyai* said: “Knowledge without *Adab* only creates *mudarat*, destruction”. Thus, it is mentioned that teaching the students to be critical cannot stand alone; this must be incorporated with *adab*, to make critical thinking and critical dialogue constructive and beneficial.

To explain what it means by critical dialogue should be incorporated with *adab*, the *Kyai* explained:

“Islam never limits critical thinking. [In fact] critical thinking is something that is recommended in the hadith. The only thing that is regulated in Islam, [or] in *pesantren*, is ‘how’ and ‘when’ we could use critical thinking” (*Kyai* of Case 1, 26/03/2023).

As for the aspect of ‘how’, *Kyai* elaborated that critical thinking and critical dialogue should be conducted using polite language, respecting each other’s opinion, and being conducted for the sake of finding solutions to the problem, not solely debating each other.

He said that: “debating is *su'ul adab*, a bad characteristic. The one allowed is to discuss or to consult.” Meanwhile, as for the aspect of ‘when’, the *Kyai* explained that critical dialogue could be conducted after the students are given permission to do so, or if it is allowed by the teachers or *Kyai*. The *Kyai* explained:

“After obtaining permission from the *Kyai*, feel free to ask questions if you wish. What is prohibited in the ethics of teaching and learning in Islam is that students speak or ask questions before being given the opportunity to ask questions. What we know from *Ta'limul muta'alim* [book of students’ ethics] is like that” (*Kyai* of Case 1, 26/03/2023).

Hence, this can be concluded that critical thinking and critical dialogue are allowed in *pesantren* of Case 1 and even encouraged for the students, yet this has to follow the rule of *adab*, which consists of ‘how’ and ‘when’ aspects: how does the critical dialogue being practiced and when this should be practiced. Thus, the findings for the inquiry of practice imply that critical thinking and critical dialogue are not against *pesantren* education. In fact, these are highly facilitated through four different means namely intra-curricular (curriculum), pedagogical method, extracurricular activities, and daily interaction. Yet, while the students are allowed and encouraged to think critically and engage in critical dialogue, this comes with a crucial note that these activities must be demonstrated under the rule of moral (*adab*), in order to make it beneficial and constructive.

#### **4.1.1.3. Reflection: Critical Thinking, *Adab* and Charisma**

In the reflection inquiry, the respondents were taken to reflect on whether critical thinking and critical dialogue could be taken as an alternative to counter the possible adverse implication of charismatic leadership. The results indicate that critical thinking and critical dialogue could indeed be taken as the alternative in this regard. Yet, similar to the findings in the practice inquiry, the data showed that this cannot stand alone, as this has to be incorporated with the element of *adab*. In this case, *adab* is mentioned by all

respondents as the core of the *pesantren* education. The narratives given by them are varied, though under the same theme. The *Kyai* said: “*Adab* is number one in *pesantren*”; “Knowledge without *Adab* only creates *mudarat*, destruction”. Meanwhile, the teacher said: “Anywhere, *adab* is always a priority”. The student said: “*Adab* first, critical thinking second”. This indicates that even though critical thinking and critical dialogue are facilitated, the main objective of the education in *pesantren* of Case 1 is *adab*. This is also clearly stated in its vision, which is “to produce quality students with good moral (*akhlakul Karimah*)”.

Not only does it become the main objective of the *pesantren* educational activities, *adab* is also reflected to play a significant role in how charismatic leadership works at *pesantren*. Thus, while critical thinking is deemed crucial to counter the possible adverse implication of charismatic leadership, this could only be working if this is understood under the framework of *adab*. This argument is generated from the reflection of *pesantren* communities that when it comes to charismatic leadership at *pesantren*, this is actually moral-based. This is conveyed by the *Kyai*:

“Charisma is moral-based leadership. So, no matter how charismatic, if you have become immoral, you won't be able to get that [charisma]. So, charisma can be manifested in moralist leadership, not politics. The higher the moral level of a person, the more charismatic they would appear. So, charisma is the fruit, the fruit of morality” (*Kyai* of Case 1, 26/03/2023).

From the statement, it is clear that the charisma of a leader in *pesantren* context is determined by the morality that the leaders have (moral-based). In this case, morality in the *pesantren* context is associated with adherence to Islamic principles. Thus, the higher the adherence of a person to Islamic principles, the higher the charisma would be; and the higher the charisma, the higher the level of obedience of the followers would also be.

In this regard, the adherence of a leader to Islamic principles is determined by the level of worship they have which here divided into four levels, depending on the closeness

or intimacy with God, namely *syariah* (the lowest), *tariqah*, *haqiqah* and *ma'rifah* (the highest). *Syariah* level consists of adherence to order and prohibition; while *tariqah* is the higher level of applying *syariah* with sincerity. Meanwhile, *haqiqah* and *ma'rifah* are non-physical when a human is closely intimate with God. In this context, the level of worship comes in stages, meaning a person cannot reach *ma'rifah* without first applying *haqiqah*, *tariqah*, and *syariah*. In this case, the level of worship that the leaders have would determine the charisma they have, which automatically also determines the level of obedience of their followers.

Given this reflection, this implies not only that charismatic leadership in *pesantren* is moral-based, but it also works depending on how the followers see the moral (*adab*) of the leaders. This generates two implications: first, charismatic leadership in the *pesantren* context only works if the leaders have moral (*adab*) which here associated with adherence to Islamic principles, and second, the ones who are in power to determine the charisma is actually not the leaders, but the followers. Thus, while it seems like charismatic leaders are so powerful, the truth is, the power is actually on the followers as they are the ones who determine if a leader has charisma or not, or if the leader should be obeyed or not. The *Kyai* said: "Obedience at some point is without rules. It happens *bila kaifa, wabila mada* (naturally). This is purely one's will to do that." It means that if the leaders adhere to Islamic principles, the followers will perceive them as charismatic, and given their charisma, the obedience of the followers thus comes naturally.

Notwithstanding, this pattern also works in the opposite direction. It means that if the leaders show attitudes that go against Islamic principles, it will automatically decrease or omit their charisma. If charisma is not there, disobedience will also come naturally. This is conveyed by the teacher:

“Students must be taught good things and bad things. So, when it turns out that they are given bad treatment, automatically the students will avoid that kind of person. If we hear from other *pesantren*, usually there are people whose behavior is not good, so people automatically know [what to do], especially the students. They will stay away automatically” (Teacher of Case 1, 26/03/2023).

This is also confirmed by the reflection of the student who thinks that religious order is higher than *Kyai*'s command. The student said: “For instance, if we are doing the command of the *Kyai*, and then there is an *azan* [call to prayer], we need to drop first the *Kyai*'s command [over prayer].” It means that when *Kyai*'s command is juxtaposed with Islamic principles, the students think that the Islamic principle wins over *Kyai*'s command.

Hence, the reflections from the *Kyai*, teacher and students above supported the two arguments that, first, *pesantren*'s charismatic leadership is indeed moral-based, and second, the followers have the power to make the charismatic leadership in *pesantren* context to work. Given that charismatic leadership in the *pesantren* context is centered on these two aspects, thus *adab* should not be the only element in this dynamic. In addition to *adab* as the basis, it needs another element that could function as a control for the possible adverse implications of charismatic leadership, which here could be accommodated by the critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities of the followers. In this case, critical thinking could function as an alarm to spot if the actions of the charismatic leaders adhere to *adab* rule (adherence to Islamic principles), while critical dialogical abilities function as a counter to prevent any possible misconduct targeted to them. The teacher said:

“This [critical thinking and dialogue] is obligatory to be present at *pesantren*. By accommodating this, the dynamic will not go one way, so there will be critical awareness in their actions to consider good or bad consequences” (Teacher of Case 1, 26/03/2023).

This statement was supported by the student who said:

“*Adab* is required, yet critical thinking is also required—even obligatory. This will become the provision that guides us to choose the right path” (Student of Case 1, 26/03/2023).

Meanwhile, *Kyai* said:

“It is wrong to think that *pesantren* does not practice critical thinking. In fact, from *pesantren* comes critical thinking” (*Kyai* of Case 1, 26/03/2023).

Thus, this can be concluded that from the reflection of the respondents of Case 1, this is not enough for charismatic leadership in *pesantren* context to only have moral (*adab*) as the basis. It also needs another element that could work as a control, that is accommodated by critical thinking as an alarm and critical dialogue as the counter to the possible adverse implication of charismatic leadership.

#### **4.1.2. Case 2**

While all three research inquiries have been answered through the data collected from the *pesantren* of Case 1, this study also collected data from another *pesantren*. In this regard, the same procedure of data collection was implemented for the *pesantren* of Case 2 aimed at finding different dynamics of charisma and obedience at the different type of *pesantren*. The data of Case 2 was collected from the same total number of participants as Case 1 which include 10 students with Focused Group Discussion, and exclusive interviews with the *Kyai* and a teacher. Thus, the analysis presented in this part is sourced from data collected from the *pesantren* of Case 2, being compared with the data of Case 1 aimed at providing different dynamics of charismatic leadership at different type of *pesantren* in Indonesia.

As for the *pesantren* of Case 2, the typology could be categorized as a traditional *pesantren*, given that they only hold traditional activities of teaching and learning such as Quran study and classical textbooks (yellow book). The students stay in dorms, yet they also pursue formal education from nearby schools—though the formal schools are still

associated with the *pesantren* communities. Given its traditional nature, the *pesantren* of Case 2 does not have a vision and mission—at least not in the form of a document. While the document for vision and mission is not available to analyze, the absence of this document has at least indicated something about this institution—that this is indeed a traditional *pesantren*. Thus, unlike the *pesantren* of Case 1 whose theme is dominated by versatility, the theme in the *pesantren* of Case 2 appears to be patriarchal. This is reflected not only in the observation findings, yet also data collected from focused group discussions with the 10 students, as well as the interviews with the *Kyai* and the teacher.

#### **4.1.2.1. Perception: *Kyai* is Like a King**

Similar to Case 1, the 10 students who participated in the focused group discussion in Case 2 also perceived their *Kyai* as a charismatic leader. As for the reasons, this is also related to the *karamah* attributes that the leader has. In this regard, *karamah* is mentioned by the *Kyai* of Case 2 as:

“... extraordinary abilities of humans that are usually given by Allah [God] for the outstanding qualities that they have such as *wali* [saints], *ulema* and *sholihin* [the pious Muslims]” (*Kyai* of Case 2, 03/04/2023).

In addition, *karamah* is closely related to the “seriousness of humans to go straight to God”. Here, as same as in the *pesantren* of Case 1, the *Kyai* is mentioned as having the *karamah* quality, and this is the main reason why then they pursue *barakah* through the *Kyai*. In terms of perception about *barakah*, the student said: “*Barakah* in *pesantren* is identical with knowledge, that is when it becomes beneficial”. The teacher said: “*barakah* is every good thing that adds to our closeness to God.” Meanwhile the *Kyai* said: “*barakah* is goodness, that humans cannot gain except Allah gave it [to them].” Thus, the perception of *barakah* in the *pesantren* of Case 2 could be concluded as the goodness that is up to God to give it or not to give it to humans.

Given the nature of *Barokah* is prerogative to God, thus the way to gain *barakah* is through the humans that are close to God—who in this case is the *Kyai*. In this regard, the respondents believed that the way to gain *barakah* is to obey *Kyai*—same as the *pesantren* of Case 1. Yet, there is a different nature between Case 1 and Case 2 on how obedience should be performed. This is reflected by the choice of words in describing it. In this case, Case 1 used the term “*patuh* [obey]” and “*melayani* [serve]”, while the *pesantren* of Case 2 used more intense terms such as “*taat* [devout]” and “*mengabdi* [subserve]”. The student said: “obedience and *taat* are obligatory towards teacher”. The teacher said: “there are three ways to get *barakah*. To be serious in seeking knowledge, to be serious in *taat* towards *Kyai*, and implementing their knowledge.” Meanwhile, the *Kyai* of Case 2 expressed the same narrative as the *Kyai* of Case 1: “To gain knowledge is by learning, but to gain *barakah* is by performing *khidmad*.” Yet, the difference is that in explaining the term *khidmad*, the *Kyai* of Case 1 mentioned it as “*melayani* [serve]” while Case 2 mentioned it as “*mengabdi* [subserve]”.

Hence, the different terms used by respondents of Case 1 and Case 2 above provide hints on the intensity level of obedience performed by the *santri* toward the *Kyai* in each case. The *pesantren* of Case 1 used regular terms such as “*patuh* [obey]” and “*melayani* [serve]”. According to the Indonesian Great Dictionary (KBBI), “*patuh*” refers to “to obey”, while “*melayani*” is defined as “to help prepare (take care of) anything that is needed by someone; to serve”. Meanwhile, Case 2 used the terms “*taat* [devout]” and “*mengabdi* [subserve]”. In this case, KBBI defines “*taat*” as “to always devout (to God, government, etc.)”. Meanwhile, “*mengabdi*” is defined as “*menghamba; menghambakan diri; berbakti*” which translates to “to subserve, to be subservient to; to be filial to.” Collins Dictionary mentioned the term ‘subserve’ as closely related to the term ‘obsolete’ that is “to serve as subordinate”. Thus, this can be concluded that the

difference between the two *pesantren* in referring to the obedience of *santri* toward *Kyai* is that Case 1 used more general dictions such as “*patuh* [obey]” and “*melayani* [serve]”, while Case 2 used more intense terms *taat* [devout]” and “*mengabdikan* [subserve]” which indicate superior vs subordination relations, and thus is patriarchal.

Here, the patriarchal nature in Case 2 is not only reflected by how the respondents choose dictions in explaining obedience. Further, it is also supported by the observation findings on how the *Kyai* and *pesantren* communities interacted in their everyday life. During the observation, there are three attitudes marked in the memo as “unusual”. First, when the observer arrived at the *pesantren*, there was a man who drove a motorcycle. As the man arrived at the gate of the *pesantren*, the man switched off the bike engine and chose to walk on foot while holding his motorbike, taking it to a parking area under a tree. The observer asked the man: “Why do you do that?”. The man replied in Madurese: “It is not polite toward *Kyai* if you drive while already near the *Kyai*’s home.” Yet, the gate to the *Kyai*’s home is quite far around 200 meters. The attitude of the man is considered “unusual” because this is not something that people outside the *pesantren* usually do in showing respect to another person.

The second attitude that is marked as “unusual” is when the *Kyai* was walking on the road, the students automatically made way for him and stood still at the edge of the road as the *Kyai* was passing by. They did not even dare to look at the *Kyai* and directed their sights to the ground, while their head was a bit lowered. They stood still and only dispersed after the *Kyai* left the venue. Furthermore, when the *Kyai* arrived at a place and he took off his sandals, the *santri* came and tidy up the *Kyai*’s sandals position in a way that it would be easy for the *Kyai* to use them again later. This scene is considered unusual because this is not a common practice that could be encountered in everyday interactions between regular people outside *pesantren*. From the general perspective, what the *santri*

did was considered unusual—if not too much—as it resembles the attitude that people showcase toward a king in a kingdom. In addition, the same exact attitude was performed by the students when a daughter of the *Kyai* was walking by. The students made way for her and only dispersed after she left the venue. It showed that the same respect and obedience were also given by the students to the *Kyai*'s family members.

Meanwhile, the third “unusual” scene came from *Kyai*'s attitude during the teaching and learning of the yellow book, in which the *Kyai* was seen delivering the material with the position of lying down, instead of sitting or standing. The activity was held at the *pesantren*'s mosque and the *Kyai* was laying down while delivering the material, making him in a much more comfortable position. The students appeared to be fine with the *Kyai*'s attitude as if they already get used to this. In this case, the attitude of the *Kyai* is considered “unusual” because usually, during teaching and learning, the teacher's position is either sitting down or standing up, not lying down. This unusual scene adds to the oddity found during the observation which supports the argument that *pesantren* of Case 2 has a tendency to the patriarchal pattern, in which *Kyai* has all the power to do whatever he wants (superior), and *santri* act in a way that shows too much respect and obedience toward the *Kyai* (subordinate)—please see appendix for full observation report of Case 2.

#### **4.1.2.2. Practice: Asking Questions is Presumptuous**

Not only become a theme in the perception inquiry but the patriarchal culture is also reflected in the answers to the inquiry of practice, either from the observation, FGD, and interviews. The observation on the teaching and learning of the yellow book of Case 2 indicates that it did not contain critical dialogical activities. The teaching and learning activity of the yellow book is a one-man show where the *Kyai* read, translated, and

explained materials to the students from the beginning until the end. Meanwhile, the students only listened and took notes. The students were not given room to ask questions and convey their opinions. To confirm the findings, the observer asked a question to one of the students during the observation, “Is there a question-and-answer session?”. The student answered, “There is no. It’s *cangkolang* to ask questions to *Kyai*.” In this case, *cangkolang* is a Madurese term for *lancang* (in Indonesian) which translates to English as “presumptuous”. This proves that room for *santri* to perform critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities in the *pesantren* of Case 2 is highly limited.

The findings of the observation above are confirmed by *Kyai* during the interview.

The *Kyai* said:

“In *pesantren*, usually it has become culture and habit that when, say, a teacher is giving lessons, indeed at that time they [students] are not given the opportunity to ask questions so as not to give lessons that are not good for the students” (*Kyai* of Case 2, 03/04/2023).

In this regard, the *Kyai* viewed that giving the students the opportunity to ask questions as a negative move because he thought it would teach the students a bad sample of attitude. The *Kyai*’s statement is confirmed by the teacher who admitted that critical thinking and critical dialogue are something that the *pesantren* of Case 2 is indeed missing. The teacher testified:

“Seen from our current curriculum, students are taught to be patient in listening to the advice or lessons conveyed by teachers or *Kyai*. In this phase, religious doctrines are needed to strengthen the religious basis of the students. *Santri* is required to be not critical for this basic material. At this *pesantren*, the focus is on material that is basic in nature, such as reciting the Quran and its interpretations, learning about *Fiqh*, *Fathul Qarib* and *Fathul Mu'in* [name of Fiqh books]. Everything is basic, and therefore students are required not to ask too many questions” (Teacher of Case 2, 03/04/2023).

Hence, the testimonies from the teacher and *Kyai* above indicate that unlike the *pesantren* of Case 1 with its diverse means of facilitations for the students on critical thinking and

dialogue, contrarily the *pesantren* of Case 2 does not encourage their students to even ask questions.

This condition is also confirmed by the student's response in which they themselves do not have any courage to ask questions to *Kyai*, given the *lancang* or "presumptuous" reason. That being said, albeit the students do not have the courage to ask questions to the *Kyai*, they, however, admitted that they still could ask questions to teachers, and if the teachers could not answer, then the teachers will bring the issue to the *Kyai*. The student said:

"We are allowed [to ask questions] to teachers, if teachers could not answer, then it will go to *Kyai*" (Student of Case 2, 03/04/2023).

This proves that there is indeed a patriarchal pattern in the *pesantren* of Case 2 that if the students have questions, this has to be channeled through the teachers, and from teachers to the *Kyai*. This pattern indicates that the students are positioned below teachers; teachers are above students yet below *Kyai*; and *Kyai* is above all of them. This condition confirms that the *pesantren* of Case 2 has indeed strong patriarchal culture with *Kyai* (*Kyai*'s family) at the top, teachers in the middle, and students at the bottom.

#### **4.1.2.3. Reflection: Compatibility in *Adab*, Critical Thinking and Charisma**

Despite the findings in the inquiry of perception and practice which showed a straight contrast with Case 1, surprisingly the findings in the inquiry of reflection indicate certain similarities. In reflecting on the social phenomenon of power abuse through charismatic attributes of the *Kyai*, the participants of Case 2 gauged the same narratives as Case 1, that: first, charismatic leadership in *pesantren* is moral-based (based on adherence to Islamic principle), and second that the followers have the power to determine the charisma of the leader. This is conveyed by the *Kyai*, teacher and students. The *Kyai* said:

“Actually, at the grassroots level in society, when things like that [power abuse] happen, the social sanctions in society are still strong. By itself, such *Kyai* will drastically collapse and will no longer be trusted by society. But sometimes people still feel inadequate, so they still report it to the authorities [police]. In fact, even without being reported, the *Kyai* has automatically stepped down from his position as a *Kyai* and become someone who is no longer respected in society” (*Kyai* of Case 2, 03/04/2023).

The *Kyai*'s statement was in line with the student who said that the basis for their obedience should be religious teaching. The student said:

“If the instruction of the *Kyai* is against religious principles, then we will not obey. It's because the *Kyai* instructs us to do something that is not good” (Student of Case 2, 03/04/2023).

In this case, same as in Case 1, the students of Case 2 reflected that the basis for charismatic leadership to work is the adherence of the *Kyai* to religious teaching (moral or *adab*), and that they are the ones who determine if they should obey the *Kyai* or not. Thus, this can be concluded that even though the room for the students to ask questions is limited, and must come through the rigid patriarchal process, the *pesantren* of Case 2 still reflect that when it comes to charismatic leadership in *pesantren* context, this is indeed moral-based, and must be accommodated also with the element of critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities, as the control to the possible adverse implications of the charismatic leadership.

Notwithstanding, the reflection of the respondents of Case 2 culminated in the idea that critical thinking should also be taught to the *santri*—resonating with the findings of Case 1. The *Kyai* said:

“Actually, that's not the case, giving space for critical thinking but with the condition that it remains under the auspices of norms and morals. But a *santri* cannot argue with his teacher, and then insult his teacher, it is not permissible by the rules” (*Kyai* of Case 2, 03/04/2023).

This statement was supported by the student: “Yes, it [critical thinking] is important, as important as *adab*.” Meanwhile, the response of the teacher—as a third party mediating the students and *Kyai*—is more reflective and realistic, saying:

“It must be admitted that this is the weakness of our *pesantren*, namely the absence of teachings regarding logical critical thinking. In the future, we will try to make teaching materials at the *pesantren* to be more complex, by adding more logical material to it” (Teacher of Case 2, 03/04/2023).

Hence, all of these statements from respondents of Case 2 are compatible with the findings of Case 1 that the element of charismatic leadership in *pesantren* is not enough to only have moral (*adab*) as the basis, but it has to be accompanied by the presence of critical thinking and critical dialogue as the control to the adverse implications of the charismatic leadership in the *pesantren* context.

#### **4.2. Discussion**

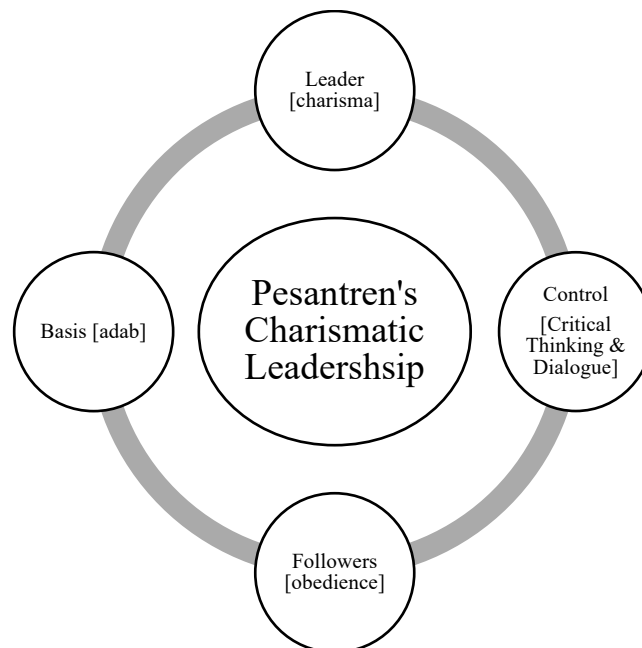
The findings of Case 1 and Case 2 above depict the different natures of charisma and obedience in the *pesantren* context. While a paradox appears in the findings of the inquiries of perception and practice, interestingly the findings on the reflection part from both cases are compatible and support each other. In Case 1, the inquiries of perception and practice are dominated by the versatility where both moral (*adab*) and critical thinking and dialogue are accommodated for their students through four different means: intra-curricular (curriculum), pedagogical method, extracurricular and daily activities. In contrast, the inquiries of perception and practice of Case 2 are dominated by the patriarchal culture which leads to the limitation and discouragement for the students to even have a question toward the teacher and *Kyai* (doctrinal). This contrast appears following the different types of *pesantren* it represents in which Case 1 is a semi-traditional-modern, while Case 2 is a traditional *pesantren*.

Despite the paradox in the inquiry of perception and practice, surprisingly the findings on the reflection inquiry from both cases generate a consensus that there are two elements that must be present between charisma and obedience in the *pesantren* context: (1) moral (*adab*) and (2) critical thinking and dialogue. In detail, Moral (*adab*) here works

as the basis in which in order for charisma to work, the leader should live a life that adheres to Islamic principles (adherence to Islamic principles). Meanwhile, critical thinking and dialogue function as control mechanisms. In this regard, critical thinking works as an alarm for it requires *santri* to assess if the command of the *Kyai* is adherent to or against Islamic principles. In the meantime, the critical dialogical ability operates as a counter for it allows *santri* to be assertive and challenge the possible misconducts that they would receive from the *Kyai*, intentionally or unintentionally. Thus, the findings of this present study conclude that in order for charismatic leadership in *pesantren* context to work, it is not enough to only take moral (*adab*) as the basis. It must also include another element as the control which here could be accommodated by critical thinking as the alarm and critical dialogue as the counter.

Figure 4.1.

*Elements that should be present in Pesantren's charismatic leadership based on findings of the present study.*



The findings above confirm the research assumption as mentioned in the theoretical foundation of Chapter II that indeed when it comes to critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities of the *pesantren* students, it is not solely related to the leadership style that the *pesantren* institution adopts, but more on a broader spectrum of education which here also impact the leadership, namely philosophy of education. The justification is palpable from the elements that should be present in the *pesantren* charismatic leadership in which it should include moral (*adab*) as the basis, and critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities as the control. These two elements resonate with the two educational concepts in Islamic educational philosophy namely *adab* with its moral disciplining (Al-Attas, 1980) and *tarbiyah* with its critical-dialogical approach (Sahin, 2013).

Table 4.1.

*Comparisons between Case 1 and 2 on educational method, approach and outcome.*

<b>Educational facet</b>	<b>Case 1</b>	<b>Case 2</b>
Method	A mix of <i>adab</i> and critical thinking and dialogue	Instilling, non-critical-dialogical
Approach	Teacher-led, Student-led	Teacher-led
Outcome	Man with both moral ( <i>adab</i> ) and critical thinking	Good man; man with <i>adab</i> .

The findings from Case 1 and Case 2 indicate that *pesantren* education is more favorable to *adab* model of education, although Case 1 with its versatility also mixes it up with critical thinking and critical dialogue which here conforms to *tarbiyah* model of education. Table 4.1. above clearly indicates that Case 1 with its versatile theme combines both *adab* and critical thinking and dialogue in its educational method, approach, and outcomes. For the *pesantren* of Case 1, these two elements should be present because critical thinking and dialogue without *adab* could only lead to *mudarat* (destruction),

whilst *adab* without critical thinking and dialogue is prone to power abuse. Thus, *pesantren* of Case 1 approaches education with both teacher-led and student-led schemes with an aim to produce students with both good moral (*adab*) and critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities. With this identification, the focus of *pesantren* of Case 1 is still *adab*, yet it also applies the critical-dialogical approach to teaching and learning with here indicates the *tarbiyah* model of education. It is confirmed by the *Kyai*:

“So, this is called *at-tarbiyah*. Teach the students to behave well first [*adab*]. After that, teach them critical thinking skills. That is *pesantren*” (*Kyai* of Case 1, 26/03/2023).

Meanwhile, Case 2 appeared to focus merely on *adab* as it used instilling method of teaching (one-man show) without any reverse communication from the students (non-critical-dialogical). The *pesantren* of Case 2 approaches education with the teacher-centric approach where the students are not encouraged to even ask questions to the teachers and *Kyai*. This indicates that Case 2 expects its students to have certain characteristics that adhere to Islamic principles with an aim to produce students with good moral (man with *adab*). Yet, unlike Case 1 which combines *adab* with critical thinking and critical dialogue, Case 2 appeared to be only enough with *adab* approach, although the reflection findings of Case 2 indicate that this is something that they admit to be lacking from them as an Islamic educational institution, as confirmed by the teacher:

“It must be admitted that this is the weakness of our *pesantren*, namely the absence of teachings regarding critical thinking. In the future, we will try to make teaching materials at the *pesantren* to be more complex by adding more logical material to it” (Teacher of Case 2, 03/04/2023).

As the research assumption was met, the paradox in the findings between Case 1 and Case 2 provides two significant contributions to the current body of knowledge as explained in the theoretical foundations in Chapter II. The first contribution is related to the adverse implication of charismatic leadership. The existing literature indicates that the critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities of *pesantren* students are in question

following the ‘dark side’ of charismatic leadership which here marked by extreme admiration, blind idolization, and unquestioning obedience (Howell & Shamir, 2005). However, the findings of the present study show that charismatic leadership does not necessarily jeopardize the critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities of the followers of charismatic leaders, proven by the compatibility of critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities to be one of the elements that should be present in *pesantren* charismatic leadership—as indicated in the findings of Case 1.

Thus, these findings generate that when it comes to charismatic leadership, the implication is not always unquestioning obedience. In this regard, it might be true that unquestioning obedience could become one implication of charismatic leadership—as indicated in the findings of Case 2. Yet, that is not always the case, as the findings of Case 1 surprisingly prove the opposite, that the followers of charismatic leaders could also have critical thinking and engage in critical dialogue with their charismatic leaders. This condition appears possible given the facilitation that the *pesantren* institution provides for their students which here channeled through the curriculum with a logical-related subject (*ilmu mantik*); the pedagogical method that is interactive critical-dialogical; extracurricular activities such as through discussion or *bahsul masail*; as well as through daily interaction. These findings imply that critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities are not against, yet compatible with, charismatic leadership.

The first contribution above leads to the second contribution which is related to the elements of charismatic leadership. In this regard, the findings of this study contribute to adding an additional element that should be present in charismatic leadership. The previous studies identify that there are three components for charismatic leadership to work in the way that it could be “scientifically measurable” and “free from antecedents and consequences” (Antonakis et al., 2016; Banks et al., 2017). The three components

are (1) the basis which includes “vision, ideology, values, morals, beliefs, mission, symbols of leader”; (2) “emotion-based” in which the leaders and followers must have an emotional connection; and (3) “expressive communication” in transmitting the information or signaling (Antonakis et al., 2016). However, the findings of the present study provide different identification than previous studies, with two elements, namely (1) basis which is sourced from moral (*adab*), and (2) control which is accommodated by critical thinking as the alarm and critical-dialogical abilities as the counter.

Figure 4.2.

*Elements of charismatic leadership from previous studies and the present study.*

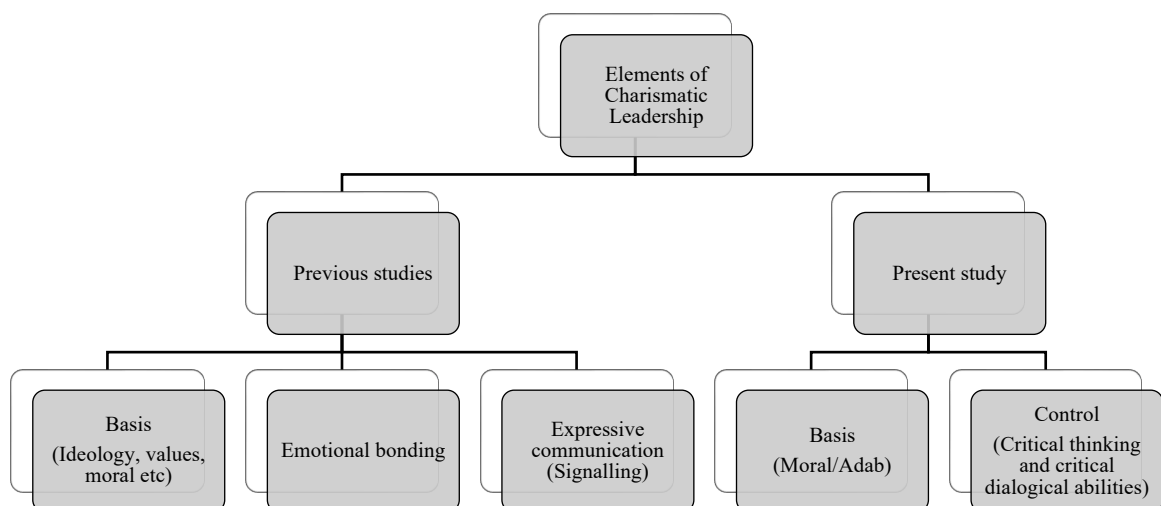


Diagram 4.2. illustrates the difference between elements of charismatic leadership proposed by previous studies (Antonakis et al., 2016; Banks et al., 2017) and the present study. The similarity lies in the aspect of basis which here include moral, or in the *pesantren* context is specified as *adab* (adherence to Islamic principles). Meanwhile, the difference lies in the remaining elements in which previous studies highlight “emotional bonding” and “expressing communication”, while the present study highlights the

element of control which here include critical thinking as the alarm and critical dialogue as the counter. The different elements as proposed by both previous studies and the present study above indicate that the elements of charismatic leadership could require different elements for different contexts. In this regard, the context of the previous studies is the general circumstance which here connotes more to “scientific charismatic leadership”. Whilst, the present study puts the context in “religious charismatic leadership” (Rachman, 2014) with emphasis on its potential adverse implication.

The differentiation of the findings of this present study in comparison to the previous studies above provides significant implications for both academic and practical domains. As for the academic contribution, the findings of this study provide a significant contribution to the scholarly discussion on the adverse implication of charismatic leadership, which here centered on “unquestioning obedience” (Howell & Shamir, 2005), as well as the elements that should be present for the charisma to work (Antonakis et al., 2016; Banks et al., 2017). Whilst in the practical domain, this further helps to find a possible alternative on how to counter the adverse implications of charismatic leadership through improving the critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities of the *pasantren* students.

#### **4.2.1. Academic Implication**

As the “dark side” of charisma is also applied to the general context of charismatic leadership, the indicative findings of the present study open up space for the academic discussion in the general context to also consider critical thinking and critical dialogue as another element that should be present in the dynamic of charismatic leadership. This is crucial as the identification given by the earlier studies only focuses on how charisma could work, and ignore the adverse implication that charisma could generate, or how

charisma could work well. In this case, the previous studies identified the elements of charisma from the scientific and construct considerations (Antonakis et al., 2016; Banks, et al. 2017). Yet, seen from the perspective of the adverse implications of charisma, the control element should be accommodated in order to balance the dynamic and further function as a counter to the potential adverse implications.

Thus, this study argues that another element that should be present in charismatic leadership is ‘control’ which here could be accommodated by critical thinking as the alarm and critical dialogical abilities as the counter. In this regard, empowering the followers of charismatic leaders to have critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities does not omit the charisma of the leaders, yet contrarily strengthens their charisma through increased logical reasoning on why the followers should or should not follow the leaders. In other words, having critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities could help the followers of charismatic leaders to rationalize their obedience to their leaders. With critical thinking and critical dialogical elements, this will counter not only unquestioning obedience (Howell & Shamir, 2005) but also the potential autocracy (Ma, 2018), and truth-bending manipulation (Aaltio-Marjosola & Takala, 2000). In this case, adopting *tarbiyah* with its critical-dialogical approach appears to be a solution to the problem as it could function as the counter to the act of power abuse in *pesantren* context, as it leads to the balanced, less autocratic, non-patriarchal, charismatic leadership practice.

#### **4.2.2. Practical Implication**

As for the practical implication, the findings of the present study also provide insights on the alternative to improve the critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities of the *pesantren* students. As implicated from the findings of Case 1 and Case 2, it is noted that the issues of critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities of the *pesantren*

students are rooted in the education models that they adopt, which then determines the way they practice their educational leadership. This argument is reflected in the paradox of the findings between Case 1 and Case 2 on how they perceive, practice, and reflect on charisma and obedience which further generate two significant elements that should be present in *pesantren*'s charismatic leadership (basis and control) which here resonate with the educational models that they adopt: *adab* or *tarbiyah*.

Figure 4.3.

*Implications of adoption of education model on charismatic leadership and facilitation of critical thinking and critical dialogue in pesantren.*



In this regard, Case 1 combines both *adab* and *tarbiyah* model of education which lead to the practice of charismatic leadership which not only focus on *adab* as the basis but also embraces critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities of *pesantren* students as the control. In this regard, the adoption of both *adab* and *tarbiyah* educational models in Case 1 leads to the practice of balanced charismatic leadership. Meanwhile, Case 2 only adopts the *adab* model of education and thus their practice of charismatic leadership only consists of the basis and without control. This condition leads to the unbalanced practice of charismatic leadership and thus is prone to power abuse. In this regard, the absence of the facilitation of critical thinking and critical dialogue in *pesantren* of Case 2

appears to be sourced from the sole adoption of *adab* model of education, which then impact the practice of charismatic leadership that is marked by strong patriarchal culture, putting the students in a position that is prone to be manipulated for any potential abuses.

These findings show that to improve the critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities of the *pesantren* students, it is not enough to only target the leadership aspect. Yet it has to be dragged into the foundational underpinning of how education is viewed by the *pesantren* communities. Thus, in the practical domain, it is crucial to educate *pesantren* communities to change their paradigm in adopting the educational model, not only focusing on *adab* as moral disciplining as in Case 2 but also incorporating it with *tarbiyah* as in Case 1. By changing the perspective and paradigm of *pesantren* communities in adopting the *tarbiyah* education model, it is expected that there would be control over the practice of charismatic leadership in *pesantren* which here could function as the counter for the potential power abuse—including sexual abuse—to happen at the *pesantren* institutions.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This chapter consists of the conclusion and suggestions for further studies following the methodological and substantial limitations of the present study. The conclusion rounds off the re-elaboration of the study's findings and discussion, while the suggestion outlines the limitations of the present study which are then followed by relevant recommendations to improve the methodological and substantial elements for further research.

#### 5.1. Conclusion

While the issue of critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities of the *pesantren* students seems to be centered on the leadership style that the *pesantren* adopt, this present study found that this problem is not merely about the leadership. Yet, it goes back to the foundational underpinning of how the *pesantren* communities view education itself, which then impacts how they run the *pesantren* education with the educational leadership style that they adopt. Thus, in order to improve the critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities of the *pesantren* students, this is not enough to only address the educational leadership domain, but it has to be expanded to the Islamic educational philosophy, focusing on the adoption of the Islamic educational models which here include *adab* as moral disciplining and *tarbiyah* as the critical-dialogical process of learning.

The inquiries of perception, practice and reflection explored in this study through the scientific methodological method culminates in the conclusion that the education model adopted by the *pesantren* institution could play a significant role in how they practice their educational leadership. Further, this leadership practice could determine the facilitation of critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities towards the *pesantren*

students. In this regard, the convergence of *adab* and *tarbiyah* models of education leads to the balanced practice of charismatic leadership as it embraces two elements, namely the basis (moral/*adab*) and the control (critical thinking as the alarm and critical dialogue as the counter). This type of charismatic leadership then leads to the facilitation of critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities to the *pesantren* students be it in the domain of intra-curricular (curriculum), pedagogical method, extracurricular, and daily activities.

Meanwhile, the adoption of only *adab* model of education derives the practice of unbalanced charismatic leadership where it only embraces the element of basis (moral/*adab*) and unhands the control element (critical thinking and dialogue). This leadership practice then leads to the limitation of facilitating the *pesantren* students on critical thinking and critical dialogue, affirming the high potential of it to fall into the practice of the strong patriarchal culture, and thus make it prone to the acts of power abuse—especially sexual abuse. Thus, this present study argues that in order to improve the critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities of the *pesantren* students as a way to counter the potential abuse at *pesantren* institutions, there is a need to change the perspective of *pesantren* communities in the adoption of the educational model from only *adab* that is more to moral disciplining to also include *tarbiyah* with its critical-dialogical approach.

Despite the practical implication above, this present study also contributes to the development of academic discussion especially in the elements of charismatic leadership. The previous studies proposed three elements of charismatic leadership as it is seen from the aspect of measurability and construct. They are (1) basis, (2) emotional connection, and (3) signaling communication. While it is argued that these three elements could indeed make charisma more scientifically measurable and stand on itself as a construct, however, it missed one crucial element that should be present: control. Thus, seen from

the perspective of the adverse implications of charismatic leadership, the present study proposed two crucial elements of charismatic leadership, namely (1) the basis, and (2) control. These two elements should be present in charismatic leadership in order to make it balanced. This way, there would be a control mechanism for the possible adverse implication of the dark side of charismatic leadership.

In the *pesantren* context, the basis is in the form of moral (*adab*) which is the adherence of the leaders to Islamic principles. Meanwhile, the control mechanism is in the form of critical thinking and critical dialogue. As for the moral (*adab*) as the basis, the higher adherence of the leaders to Islamic principles, the higher the charisma would be. The higher that charisma, the higher the obedience would also be. In the meantime, control is needed to balance the dynamic. In this regard, critical thinking works as an alarm for it requires *pesantren* students to assess if the command of their leaders is adherent to or against Islamic principles. In the meantime, the critical dialogical ability operates as a counter for it allows *pesantren* students to be assertive and challenge the possible misconducts that they would receive from their leaders, intentionally or unintentionally.

These two elements should be present altogether to make the dynamic of *pesantren* charismatic leadership balanced. If the *pesantren* only adopts *adab* as the basis and ignores critical thinking and dialogue as the control, it will generate a patriarchal culture that could facilitate power abuse—including sexual abuse—to happen. Meanwhile, if it is only about critical thinking and critical dialogue without *adab*, there might be the possibility that critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities be performed in ways that are unconstructive or even destructive. Notwithstanding, these two elements should be present altogether to make charismatic leadership balanced, in control, and especially safe for both leaders and followers.

## 5.2. Suggestion

There are three suggestions that the present study would like to propose for further research, following the three limitations that it has. The limitations and suggestions are outlined in the following points:

1. First, due to access and sensitivity reasons, the research subjects of this study come from *pesantren* institutions which did not directly experience sexual abuse cases. Thus, they are chosen based on similarities and familiarity with the *pesantren* that have experienced sexual abuse cases, not from the real *pesantren* that recorded sexual abuse cases. Given this limitation, further research is expected to brace the complexities in access and sensitivity to go to the real victims of sexual abuse for data collection or perhaps could interview the real perpetrators too, to generate more valid data and insights. Given the sensitivity of the issue, the ethical issue must be upheld when it comes to generating insights from the subjects who encounter real cases of sexual abuse.
2. Second, in terms of topic, the present study only limits itself to only one aspect of the adverse implications of charismatic leadership: unquestioning obedience. The gap is still wide—especially in the Islamic school context. Thus, further study could dig deeper into the other adverse implications of charisma such as Dark Triad personality traits which include narcissism, psychopathy, and Machiavellianism as part of the darker side of charismatic leadership.
3. Third, an interesting insight generated from this study is that “the more adhere the leaders to Islamic principles, the higher the charisma would be. The higher the charisma, the higher the level of the obedience of the followers would be.” The present study could not confirm the validity of this insight as it is only part of the perception and reflection of the respondents through interviews and FGDs under

the qualitative research approach. Thus, from this limitation, this study suggests further studies to examine this insight using a quantitative approach using appropriate sampling with relevant statistical analysis to confirm the validity.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: FGD Questions for Students

Let me introduce myself. My name is Supriyono, a 4th-semester student at UIII, majoring in MA in Education. I am currently conducting research on charismatic leadership in Islamic boarding schools in relation to the student's critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities. As a respondent, your identity will be kept confidential and will not be shown in any publications.

Are you willing to be a respondent in my research?

Please sign this form.

#### Opening Questions

1. In your opinion, is the *Kyai* [name] a charismatic figure?
  - If yes (participants can continue the discussion)
  - If not (participants are no longer relevant to being a member of the FGD)
2. In your opinion, what makes *kyai* [name] charismatic?
3. Do you agree that what makes a *kyai* charismatic is the nature of his *karamah*, so with that *karamah*, you want to get the *barakah*? Give reasons.

#### Perception Inquiry

The following questions are made to find out your perception of the obedience of the *santri* towards the *kyai* in relation to the *barakah* and *karamah* they have.

1. What are *barakah* and *karomah* meant to you, and how important are they for you as a *santri*?
2. In your opinion, what are the ways for *santri* to get *barakah* from the *kyai*?

3. In your opinion, is obeying the *kiai* a way for *santri* to get barakah? Give reasons.
4. In your opinion, are there any limitations in the obedience of the *santri* towards the *kyai*? If yes, what are they? If not, what is the reason?
5. What do you think about the incidents in which there are *kyai* who force their students to commit acts that violate the law and religious principles by manipulating them to receive *barakah*? \* news will be shown to the respondent

### Practice Inquiry

The following questions are made to find out how students practice critical thinking and critical dialogue with the *kyai*.

1. In the process of teaching and learning with *Kyai*, what material usually stimulates your mind to think critically?
2. Have you ever had the courage to convey different opinions against your *kyai* both in your daily life and in the teaching and learning process? Give reasons.
3. Have you ever conveyed critical thoughts to your *kyai* both in daily life and in the teaching and learning process? Give reasons.

### Reflection Inquiry

The following questions are made to find out your reflection regarding the students' critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities towards the *kyai* in the pesantren environment.

1. In your opinion, does *pesantren* education emphasizes *adab* or critical thinking in their teaching and learning? Give reasons.
2. In your opinion, should *santri* be given space to think critically and engage in critical dialogue with their *kyai*, both in teaching and learning activities or in daily life? Give reasons.

3. In your opinion, does having critical thinking towards the *kyai* still make the *santri* get *barakah*? Give reasons.

## **Appendix 2: Interview Questions for Kyai and Teachers**

Let me introduce myself. My name is Supriyono, a 4th-semester student at UIII, majoring in MA in Education. I am currently conducting research on charismatic leadership in Islamic boarding schools in relation to the student's critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities. As a respondent, your identity will be kept confidential and will not be shown in any publications.

Are you willing to be a respondent in my research?

Please sign this form.

### Perception Inquiry

The following questions are made to find out your perception of the obedience of the *santri* towards the *kyai* in relation to the *barakah* and *karamah* they have.

1. What are *barakah* and *karomah* meant to you, and how important are they in pesantren context?
2. In your opinion, what are the ways for *santri* to get the *barakah* from the *kyai*?
3. In your opinion, is obeying the *kiai* a way for *santri* to get *barakah*? Give reasons.
4. In your opinion, are there any limitations in the obedience of the *santri* towards the *kyai*? If yes, what are they? If not, what is the reason?
5. What do you think about the incidents in which there are *kyai* who force their students to commit acts that violate the law and religious principles by manipulating them to receive *barakah*? \* news will be shown to the respondent

### Practice Inquiry

The following questions are made to find out how students practice their critical thinking and critical dialogue with the *kyai*.

1. In the teaching and learning process, what materials usually get critical questions from students?
2. In your opinion, is it permissible for *santri* to have different thoughts from the *kyai*'s both in the teaching and learning process and in everyday life? Give the reason.
3. In your opinion, is it permissible for *santri* to have critical thinking towards the *kyai* both in the teaching and learning process and in daily life? Give reasons.

### Reflection Inquiry

The following questions are made to find out your reflection regarding the students' critical thinking and critical dialogical abilities towards the *kyai* in the pesantren environment.

1. In your opinion, does *pesantren* education emphasizes *adab* or critical thinking in their teaching and learning? Give reasons.
2. In your opinion, should *santri* be given space to think critically and engage in critical dialogue with their *kyai*, both in teaching and learning activities or in daily life? Give reasons.
3. In your opinion, does having critical thinking towards the *kyai* still make the *santri* get *barakah*? Give reasons.

### Appendix 3: Sample of Real Interview Transcript

- Interviewer : Kyai of Case 1  
Inquiry : Perception  
Date of Interview : March 26, 2023
- Researcher OK, the first question is more about perception. So, if we talk about *pesantren*, there are what we call *barakah* and *karamah*. To people outside *pesantren*, especially Westerners, they might not understand what they are. Can you please specifically explain what are they actually?
- Kyai Implicatively, *barakah* is *ziyadatul khair minaallah*. Actually, Westerners know this [concept] too, but with another term. According to Westerners, *barakah* is a plus value. So, this is something good that develops into other good things. In our context, this is *ziyadatul khair* which is the added value of something good. With *barakah* of knowledge, people can be safe in this world and hereafter. With *barakah* of knowledge, people can also benefit others. *Barakah* indeed comes from something good.
- Researcher So, we have to be good first before we get *barakah*?
- Kyai Yes, it has to be. From one goodness, then the other goodness grows. How about *karamah*? *Karamah* can be gotten because of knowledge. You can do it with *taa'bud*. In the *pesantren* context, there is an idiom "*al-ilmu bitta'alum Wal Barokatul bilhidmat*". To get the knowledge is by studying, but to get *barakah* is by performing *khidmat* which is serving the teacher. It is called a person who serves the teacher, takes orders without reason, must be ready, ready. Meanwhile, *karamah* is *minal taqorrub*. *Taqorrub* is to maintain the best possible relationship with Allah. Then Allah will give you *Karomah*. *Karomah* can be a plus, kindness or provide other additional *maziah* which is not the same as the conditions in general.
- Researcher You mentioned earlier, to get *barakah*, we have to take orders without reason. Is obedience the only way for students to get *barakah*? Or is there another way?
- Kyai Obeying is not the only way, but it is the biggest influence in *barakah*. The *barakah* first comes from the intention, and it will be different from one person to another. Whether he will get knowledge or get *barakah*, depends on his intention. If his intention is to go to a *pesantren* to study, then he will gain knowledge. But if he is to do *khidmat* then he will get a *barakah*, so the cases are very varied.
- Researcher What is *khidmat* means? Is it obeying?

- Kyai No, obedience is different. What is it? In the Javanese language, it is *ngelateni* which means to serve, not to treat, not to nurture, to serve. Serving his teacher so that the case is very different. There are smart people, pious people but not necessarily get *barakah* and *karomah*. There are people who don't know anything but they get *barakah* because they serve their teacher. In Sufism, the words *barakah* and *karamah* actually appeared after the person got *Kassaf*. What is *Kassaf*? It is the opening of the *hijab* [cover] in our lives with Allah. One way is through obedience to the teacher. So, the idiom of *barakah* is not found in the science of Sharia but we find it in the science of Sufism.
- Researcher Your statement says that to get *barakah* is through performing *khidmat*, one of which is obedience. Is there a limit to obedience?
- Kyai Nothing. Obedience is totality in Sufism. It means a boarding school that implements it. So that obedient students have no reason not to accept.
- Researcher Because there was an element of *karamah* earlier?
- Kyai Yes. How far compliance is.
- Researcher Related to the obedience, there are cases out there where Kyai used *karamah* and *barakah* as modus operandi for abuse power toward *santri*, in whatever form it takes, so that it blows up in the media, not only local and national media but also even international media. Now, as someone from a *pesantren* background, how do you respond to this incident?
- Kyai That is the misrepresentation of trust. It happens not only in Islam but outside of Islam. Pastors do that, and this is casuistic. And yes, it's not just like that. Inside the history of accidents, accidents in education. It was told that there were 70,000 students who recited the Koran alone in space, but instead, they became infidels and so on. That's casuistic.
- Researcher Regarding the incidents of power abuse that are happening out there, do you think that students should also be able to think critically to minimize that risk?
- Kyai Yes. Indeed, that is taught. And *pesantren* must be selective. So that the big Islamic boarding schools have personal data from all existing students. All that remains is for the *pesantren* to accept these students.

Note: The interview continued to practice inquiry to find out the facilitation of *pesantren* of Case 1 on critical thinking and critical dialogue for the students, as well as reflection inquiry to the find the reflection on charisma and obedience at the *pesantren*.

## Appendix 4: Observation Report of Case 1

Date : Sunday, 26 March 2023  
 Place : Mosque of the *Pesantren*  
 Activity : Teaching and learning of Yellow Book  
 Book title : *Ta'limul Muta'allim*  
 Topic : Students' Moral or ethics

Time	Description/Facts
12:56	Students gathered around with random seats on the mosque's floor. They hold their yellow book. Boys and girls are separated. Boys on the right. Girls on the left.
13:09	The teacher arrived and sat between boys and girls at the front—also on the floor, facing the students. The teacher opened his book and put it on the small made-of-wood desk in front of him. He then turned on the microphone. The sound from the speaker was heard. The teacher read a prayer in Arabic text before starting.
13:10	The event started. The teacher read—word by word—the Arabic texts followed by the Madurese translation. Students listened and made notes.
13:15	After reading and translating, the teacher gave an explanation about the text. The teacher said “ <i>afdhalul ilmi ilmu hal</i> ” “the most important of all knowledge is the knowledge of attitude” and further explained what it meant. The explanation went on.
13:21	Amid his explanation, the teacher asked students to repeat what he just explained. “ <i>Sholat</i> is what?”... “ <i>Wajib</i> [obligatory]” said students loudly simultaneously together, repeating what the teacher has just said.
13:44	While reading and translating, the teacher arrived at a text “ <i>muamalat</i> ”, then asked: “What is <i>muamalat</i> ?” One male student was heard spontaneously answering the question: “ <i>Jual beli</i> (buy and sell)”, he said. The teacher replied, “good”. The teacher then explained further what <i>muamalat</i> is in detail. Reading, translating, and explaining continued.
13:59	The teacher arrived at a text “ <i>taqwa</i> ”, then asked: “What is <i>taqwa</i> ?” The students paused for a while until one student replied: “Do what Allah order”. The teacher responded by explaining further the complete explanation. The activity continued with reading, translating, and explaining.
14.28	The teacher said that the material lesson of the day was completed, then one female student raised her hand and asked if she could ask a question. The teacher allowed and said, “yes please, go ahead”. The

female student then started to speak. Before she came up with her question, she provided a bridging explanation first which she concluded with a question: "What are the differences in *santri*'s attitude between today and in earlier times?"

- 14:29 There was a few seconds of pause before the teacher finally responded to the question. In responding to the question, The teacher explained three points of difference in *santri*'s attitude between old times and today.
- 14:40 After responding to the question, the teacher asked if there are any additional questions. The teacher waited for a while. Knowing that it seemed there was no more questions, he said "If there is no more, please recite the prayer." The students read the prayer in the Arabic language loudly, they have rhythms and ended with *sholawat nabi* (devotional songs towards Prophet Muhammad).
- 14:45 The teacher left the venue, followed by students.
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## Appendix 5: Observation Report of Case 2

Date : Sunday, April 2, 2023  
 Place : Pesantren premise, Mosque of pesantren  
 Activity : Daily interaction; Teaching and Learning of Yellow Book  
 Teaching Topic : *Shodaqah* (charity)

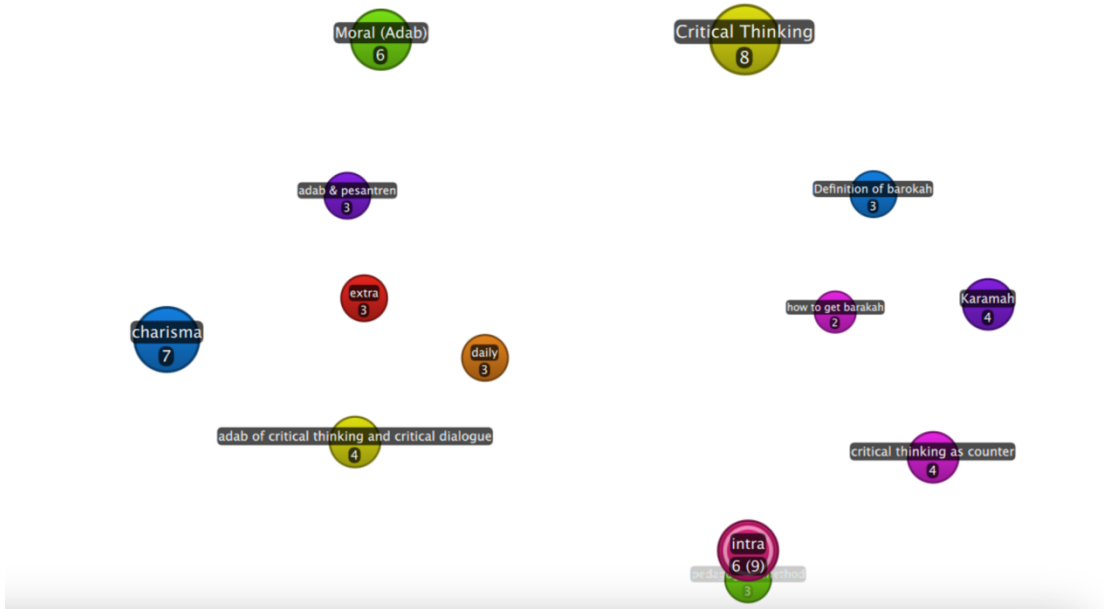
Time	Description/Facts
13:15	Observer arrived at the <i>pesantren</i> . At the gate of the <i>pesantren</i> , a man who drove a motorcycle, switch off his engine. He walked on foot while holding his motorbike, taking it to a parking area under a tree. The observer asked him: “Why do you do that?”. He replied in Madurese: “It is not polite toward Kyai if you drive while already near the Kyai’s home.” The gate to the Kyai’s home is around 200 meters.
13:30	<i>Pesantren</i> students gathered at the mosque. Only male students are there. They sit on the floor, and they have their yellow book with them.
13:33	The <i>Kyai</i> arrived and went to the front area which usually becomes the <i>imam's</i> place during <i>Jemaah</i> prayer. Instead of sitting, he chose to lie down on the floor; his body facing the floor, while he opened his book.
13:34	The <i>Kyai</i> read the prayer and started the event. He read the book through the microphone. The <i>santri</i> listened and took notes. The <i>Kyai</i> read the Arabic text, followed by the Madurese translation. Sometimes it is followed by an explanation, though only a little.
13:59	Reading and translating continued, while some students keep taking notes, and others sometimes talk with each other in low voices, especially at the back.
14:15	During the explanation, the <i>Kyai</i> made a joke which made the students laugh but not too loud. Reading and translating continued, while some students kept taking notes.
14:25	No significant development. Reading and translating continued. The observer asked a question to one of the students, “Is there a question-and-answer session?”. The student answered. “there is no. it’s <i>cangkolang</i> [presumptuous] to ask questions to <i>Kyai</i> .”
15:00	The event ended. <i>Santri</i> and <i>Kyai</i> prayed the ‘ <i>ashar</i> together. After prayer, <i>santri</i> read the prayer loudly.
15:10	When the <i>Kyai</i> stood up to leave the venue, the <i>santri</i> also stood up and made way for the <i>Kyai</i> . They stand still at the edge of the road and lower their head to the ground. They stand still until the <i>Kyai</i> left the venue. <i>Santri</i> dispersed themselves after the <i>Kyai</i> left the venue.

- 15:12 *Kyai* arrived at his home. The observer followed the *Kyai* as both observer and the *Kyai* agreed to have an interview session. A *santri* appeared to tidy up the *Kyai*'s sandals a moment after the *Kyai* took off the sandals.
- 16:05 After the interview with *kyai*, the observer saw a woman passing among the students. The students made way and stand still at the edge of the road, until she left the venue. The observer asked one of the students who she is. The students said that she is one of the *Kyai*'s daughter.
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## Appendix 6: Quirks Canvas Coding for Case 1

# Main Canvas Views

## Quirks Canvas - Primary



## Appendix 7: Quirks Canvas Coding for Case 2

# Main Canvas Views

## Quirks Canvas - Primary

