

Charismatic Kiai Authority and Professional Learning Communities in Indonesian Pesantren

Research Article



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Abstract. Kiai leadership in pesantren rests on a hybrid authority that combines personal charisma with traditional legitimacy, yet how this authority relates to teacher Professional Learning Community (PLC) development is rarely tested. Mainstream PLC literature presumes distributed leadership, an assumption that fits Western secular schools but sits awkwardly with pesantren, where authority is concentrated in the Kiai and grounded in religious lineage. This study examined the extent to which five charismatic dimensions of Kiai authority predict PLC practices among 153 ustadz, drawn through Slovin sampling from 248 eligible teachers across twelve pesantren in four districts of Banten, Indonesia. The Charismatic Leadership Questionnaire and the PLCA-Revised were translated, expert-reviewed, and pilot-tested with 35 ustadz. Content Validity Index values exceeded 0.80 and Cronbach alpha reached 0.94 and 0.96. Multiple regression showed that the five dimensions explained 46.8% of variance in PLC practices, $F(5, 147) = 25.873, p < .001, R^2 = 0.468$. Strategic vision, sensitivity to member needs, and environmental sensitivity were significant predictors; personal risk-taking and unconventional behaviour were not. The pattern refines charismatic leadership theory by showing that, in pesantren, value-alignment dimensions of teacher collaboration are supported by moral-religious authority, while peer-practice dimensions are constrained by the same hierarchy. Findings inform leadership development for Kiai and ustadz: vision articulation and pastoral attentiveness translate readily into collaborative teacher cultures, but extending peer critique and shared practice requires structural and cultural supports beyond charisma.

Keywords: Charismatic Leadership, Kiai Authority, Professional Learning Community, Pesantren, Islamic Educational Leadership

INTRODUCTION

Educational leadership is a critical determinant of institutional effectiveness and teacher professional development across diverse educational contexts (Bush, 2020; Hallinger & Kovačević, 2021; Leithwood et al., 2020). Within current educational discourse, the concept of Professional Learning Community (PLC) has gained substantial traction as a framework for collaborative teacher learning and instructional improvement (DuFour et al., 2016; Olmo-Extremera et al., 2024; Stoll et al., 2006). PLCs are structured collaborative environments in which educators engage in continuous inquiry, share pedagogical practices, and focus collectively on student learning outcomes (Hord & Sommers, 2008). Successful PLC



implementation depends on leadership that articulates a shared vision, builds trust, and develops collaborative cultures (Hallinger & Heck, 1998; Harris et al., 2020; Paletta & Alimehmeti, 2023).

Within the Indonesian educational landscape, pesantren are a distinctive Islamic educational institution that serves millions of students across the archipelago (Lukens-Bull, 2013; Pohl, 2006). Unlike formal public schools that operate under standardised bureaucratic structures, pesantren function as semi-autonomous institutions centred on the spiritual and intellectual authority of the Kiai, a religious scholar who acts as the institution's primary leader, teacher, and moral exemplar (Aisyah et al., 2022; Dhofier, 1999; Srimulyani, 2007). The Kiai's leadership goes beyond administrative functions and includes spiritual guidance, curriculum decisions, and the transmission of Islamic knowledge and values to both santri and ustadz (Bruinessen, 1994; Ilyas et al., 2022).

A conceptual clarification is needed before the empirical analysis. The authority of the Kiai is not a pure charismatic type in the original Weberian sense. Reading Weber (2009) directly, Kiai authority operates as a hybrid of two of the three legitimate types of domination: charismatic authority, grounded in personal conduct, scholarly depth, and perceived karamah, and traditional authority, grounded in silsilah, the documented chain of religious lineage that connects a contemporary Kiai to predecessors and ultimately to recognised ulama. This hybrid character matters because instruments developed for purely charismatic settings, such as Conger and Kanungo (1998), are calibrated against environments in which the leader's authority must be earned anew with each cohort of followers. In pesantren, part of the authority is institutionally inherited and only the remainder needs to be personally demonstrated. Treating Kiai authority as if it were purely charismatic risks misclassifying the construct and underestimating the structural component of legitimacy that operates regardless of any individual Kiai's personal magnetism.

The literature on pesantren leadership has grown substantially but is uneven in two ways that matter here. First, descriptive accounts of Kiai leadership emphasise charisma without operationalising the dimensions through which charisma exerts influence. Aisyah et al. (2022) and Suhendar et al. (2024) document Kiai leadership styles qualitatively but do not differentiate between, for example, strategic vision and personal risk-taking as distinct mechanisms. Second, studies on PLC development in Islamic educational settings (Khoiri et al., 2022) typically treat Kiai authority as background context rather than as an explanatory variable, leaving the question of how specific charismatic dimensions relate to specific PLC dimensions unanswered. The cumulative effect is a body of literature that establishes that Kiai leadership matters without specifying which components of that leadership matter for which components of teacher collaboration.

This empirical limitation has theoretical consequences. Mainstream PLC theory has been built almost exclusively from data generated in Western, secular, and relatively distributed-authority schooling systems (Hord & Sommers, 2008; Leithwood et al., 2020; Christensen et al., 2025). The framework presumes that collaborative teacher cultures are best supported by distributed leadership, in which authority and decision-making are shared horizontally across educators rather than vertically concentrated in a single figure (Adams et al., 2025; Harris, 2011). Pesantren generate a structural challenge to this presumption because they combine high authority concentration in the Kiai with empirical evidence of strong shared values and collective inquiry among ustadz (Mahmud, 2025; Suhendar et al., 2024). The theoretical question is therefore not whether PLC theory can describe pesantren collaboration, but whether the explanatory mechanisms specified by mainstream PLC theory hold under the

boundary condition of charismatic-traditional centralised authority. If they do not, PLC theory needs refinement to include alternative pathways from leadership to collaborative outcomes.

A parallel theoretical problem exists for charismatic leadership theory. Conger and Kanungo (1998) framework specifies five behavioural dimensions: strategic vision and articulation, sensitivity to member needs, personal risk-taking, unconventional behaviour, and environmental sensitivity. Two of these (personal risk-taking and unconventional behaviour) are calibrated against organisational settings in which charismatic leaders are change agents who challenge the status quo (Banks et al., 2017; House & Howell, 1992; Zhang et al., 2025). Pesantren are settings in which the legitimacy of the leader depends on continuity with tradition rather than rupture from it. The theoretical question is therefore whether all five Conger and Kanungo (1998) dimensions exhibit similar predictive power across cultural contexts, or whether the predictive structure shifts in environments where moral-traditional continuity is itself a source of legitimacy. A quantitative test of this dimension-specific structure has not been reported for pesantren. Recent meta-analytic and review work confirms that culture moderates the effects of leader behaviour on follower outcomes (Da'as, 2024; Dickson et al., 2012; Hallinger et al., 2025), and the present study extends that line of inquiry by specifying which charismatic dimensions are likely to retain or lose predictive power in religious-traditional educational settings.

The case for examining PLC development in pesantren rests on a related but distinct logic. The Global South review by Nguyen et al. (2024) reports that PLC research has expanded rapidly outside Western settings since 2010 but has been concentrated in formal schooling systems, with religious educational institutions remaining underrepresented. The cross-national TALIS analysis by Christensen et al. (2025) found that the relationship between PLC participation and teacher outcomes varies systematically across cultural contexts, with the strongest effects on job satisfaction and weaker effects on self-efficacy and instructional clarity. These reviews establish that the question of how PLC functions in pesantren is not a parochial concern about a peripheral case but an instance of a broader theoretical question about the boundary conditions of PLC frameworks. Pesantren are an analytically valuable site for this question because they combine high authority concentration with strong shared values among ustadz, a configuration that mainstream PLC theory does not typically anticipate.

The empirical literature on charismatic leadership outside Western settings has grown but remains thin in religious educational institutions. Recent quantitative work in the broader organisational literature has tested the boundary conditions of charismatic leadership in performance contexts (Zhang et al., 2025), in social work applications (Queen, 2023), and in cross-cultural settings through GLOBE-derived analyses (Dorfman et al., 2012). Within Islamic educational settings, qualitative case studies of Kiai leadership have proliferated (Aisyah et al., 2022; Syarifudin, A., et al., 2026; Suhendar et al., 2024), and quantitative studies have begun to examine transformational and instructional leadership in madrasah contexts (Mahmud, 2025; Khoiri et al., 2022). A specific test of dimension-level Conger-Kanungo charisma against PLC practices in pesantren has not been reported, and the present study addresses that empirical absence while advancing the theoretical reading of the resulting pattern.

A third gap concerns the integration of Islamic leadership concepts into the analytical framework. Recent reviews show that core Islamic principles, including amanah (trust and stewardship), shura (consultative decision-making), and uswah hasanah (exemplary leadership), shape how educational authority is exercised in Muslim societies (Alqhaiwi et al., 2023; Arar et al., 2023; Hilal et al., 2025). Amanah positions the leader as a trustee whose

authority is conditioned on the discharge of obligations to those entrusted to his or her care, with the consequence that follower compliance rests on perceived fidelity to that trust rather than on charismatic appeal alone (Mohd Sharip et al., 2022; Hilal et al., 2025). Shura introduces a consultative mechanism that, in pesantren practice, is institutionalised through the dewan asatidz and the periodic mudzakah meeting, providing a horizontal channel through which ustadz contribute to institutional decisions even where the formal hierarchy is steeply pyramidal. Uswah hasanah specifies the moral exemplarity expected of religious leaders and operates as the standard against which a Kiai's daily conduct is evaluated by ustadz and santri (Khoiri et al., 2022). Yet quantitative studies of leadership in pesantren rarely incorporate these constructs into the operationalisation of the leader-follower relationship, treating them as descriptive context rather than as constitutive elements of the leadership phenomenon under study. The present study takes the position that an account of charismatic Kiai authority that omits amanah, shura, and uswah is incomplete on its own terms because the very behaviours that ustadz interpret as charismatic are read through the lens of these religious-ethical categories.

Three conceptual moves, namely the recognition of hybrid authority, the empirical specification of dimension-level effects, and the incorporation of Islamic leadership constructs, allow the present study to position itself within a more precise scholarly conversation than the general claim of contributing to educational leadership literature would convey. The study tests whether the Conger-Kanungo dimensional structure transfers to pesantren without modification, identifies which dimensions retain predictive power and which do not, and locates the explanation in the boundary condition created by hybrid charismatic-traditional authority and the religious-ethical interpretive frame through which ustadz read Kiai behaviour. The contribution is therefore a refinement of charismatic leadership theory and a specification of its scope conditions, rather than an application of an existing framework to a new context.

This study addresses the gap by examining the relationship between specific charismatic dimensions of Kiai authority and specific PLC dimensions among ustadz in pesantren in Banten Province. Banten was selected because it hosts a high concentration of pesantren ranging from traditional salaf to modern khalaf, providing variation in institutional characteristics within a single regional cultural context (Ridwan, 2020; Harto et al., 2025). The choice of a single province reflects a deliberate boundary on the scope of inference: the findings are intended to specify mechanisms within a configurationally coherent setting rather than to generalise across the diverse ecology of pesantren in Indonesia.

From the conceptual analysis above, the study tests five hypotheses derived from the Conger-Kanungo framework reinterpreted under the boundary condition of pesantren authority. H1 predicts that strategic vision and articulation will positively predict PLC practices, on the reasoning that the moral framing of educational mission characteristic of pesantren amplifies the effect of vision articulation on collective engagement. H2 predicts that sensitivity to member needs will positively predict PLC practices, drawing on the relational character of the Kiai-ustadz bond as a religious mentor-mentee relationship in which attention to individual needs is not optional but constitutive. H3 predicts that environmental sensitivity will positively predict PLC practices, on the reasoning that pesantren leaders must continually negotiate the boundary between traditional curriculum and contemporary educational expectations. H4 predicts that personal risk-taking will not significantly predict PLC practices, on the reasoning that legitimacy in pesantren depends on continuity with tradition rather than rupture from it, so risk-taking falls outside the legitimate behavioural repertoire. H5 predicts

that unconventional behaviour will not significantly predict PLC practices, on similar reasoning that ustadz interpret legitimate Kiai conduct through the frame of *uswah hasanah*, which rewards exemplarity over deviation. These hypotheses are visualised in the conceptual model in Figure 1, which positions the five charismatic dimensions as predictors of PLC practices, with hybrid charismatic-traditional authority as the boundary condition under which dimension-specific effects are expected to differentiate.

The contribution speaks directly to the focus of Leadership in Muslim Societies, which addresses how leadership shapes governance, ethics, professional development, and institutional change in Muslim communities. By specifying which dimensions of Kiai charisma generate which dimensions of teacher collaboration, the study contributes a dimension-level account of the leadership-collaboration relationship in a Muslim educational setting that is at once empirically grounded and theoretically calibrated against mainstream educational leadership scholarship. The article proceeds with method, results, discussion, and conclusion in turn.

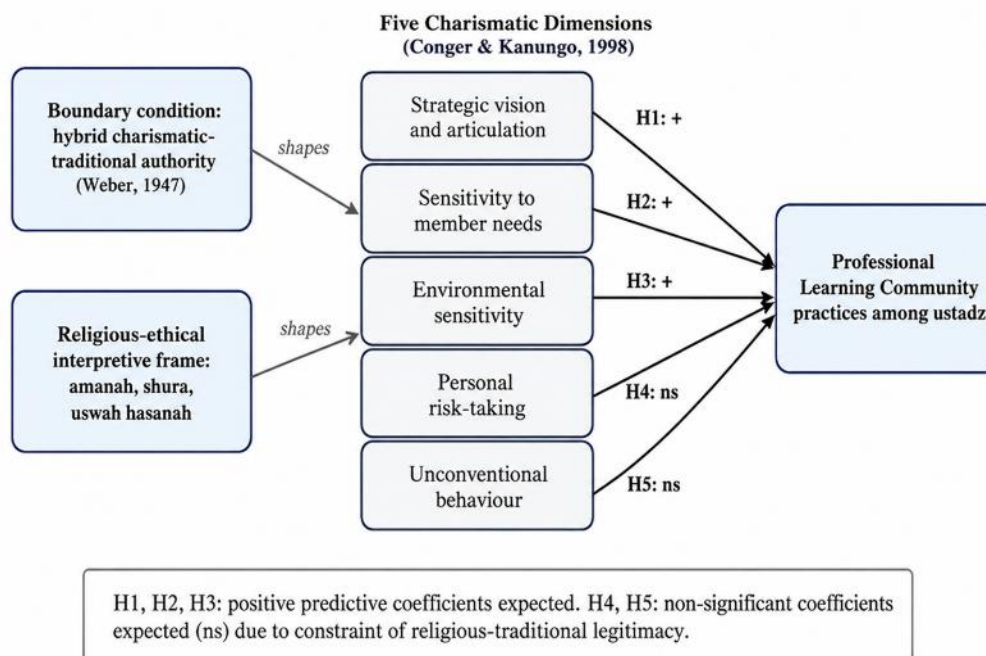


Figure 1. Conceptual Model: Charismatic Kiai Authority and Professional Learning Community Practices in Pesantren

METHOD

The study used a quantitative correlational design to examine the relationship between charismatic Kiai leadership and PLC practices in pesantren settings. The design is appropriate for investigating the nature and strength of relationships between variables without manipulating independent variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Fraenkel et al., 2019). The target population was ustadz teaching in pesantren in Banten Province, Indonesia, a province that hosts more than 3,500 pesantren employing tens of thousands of ustadz across traditional, modern, and mixed institutional models (Harto et al., 2025). Twelve pesantren were selected through purposive sampling from four districts based on four criteria: institutional age of at least ten years, employment of at least fifteen ustadz, presence of a recognised Kiai as institutional leader, and accessibility for data collection. The accessible

population within the twelve selected pesantren was 248 ustadz who met the eligibility criteria of at least two years of tenure and regular professional interaction with the Kiai. Application of the Slovin formula at a 5 percent margin of error against this accessible population yielded a target sample size of 153 ustadz, which was the realised final sample after distribution of 165 questionnaires returned a response rate of 92.7 percent. The use of purposive sampling carries an acknowledged risk of selection bias, since the selected pesantren and respondents may not fully represent the broader population of pesantren in Banten or Indonesia. The findings should accordingly be read as specifying mechanisms within the configuration sampled rather than as portable across all pesantren contexts.

Two standardised instruments were adapted for data collection. The Charismatic Leadership Questionnaire was adapted from Conger and Kanungo (1998) and contains 25 items organised across five dimensions: strategic vision and articulation, sensitivity to member needs, personal risk-taking, unconventional behaviour, and environmental sensitivity. The Professional Learning Communities Assessment Revised was adapted from Olivier & Huffman (2016) and contains 52 items measuring six dimensions: shared and supportive leadership, shared values and vision, collective learning and application, shared personal practice, supportive conditions relationships, and supportive conditions structures. Adaptation followed three sequenced steps. First, items were forward-translated into Bahasa Indonesia by two bilingual researchers and back-translated by a third independent bilingual researcher, with discrepancies resolved through panel discussion. Second, content validity was established through expert judgement involving three educational leadership scholars and two pesantren practitioners, who assessed item relevance, cultural appropriateness, and conceptual equivalence between Conger-Kanungo charisma and Kiai authority. Revisions produced Content Validity Index values above 0.80 for both instruments (Polit & Beck, 2019). Third, a pilot test with 35 ustadz from pesantren outside the main sample produced exploratory factor analysis loadings exceeding 0.50 for all retained items and reliability coefficients of Cronbach alpha 0.94 for the Charismatic Leadership Questionnaire and 0.96 for the Professional Learning Communities Assessment Revised. Both instruments used a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Data collection was conducted over a three-month period from September to November 2025. Ustadz received a verbal briefing and a written information sheet describing the study purpose, voluntary participation, anonymity protections, the right to withdraw without consequence, and secure data storage on encrypted offline drives accessible only to the research team. Written informed consent preceded each questionnaire administration. Questionnaires were administered during faculty meeting times to ensure high response rates, with completion taking approximately 25 to 30 minutes. Statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS version 26.0. Descriptive statistics were calculated for all variables. Assumption testing preceded inferential analysis and included normality assessment through Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests with Lilliefors correction, linearity through partial regression plots, homoscedasticity through Breusch-Pagan tests, and multicollinearity through Variance Inflation Factor calculations. Common method bias was evaluated using Harman single-factor test, which produced a first-factor variance of 38.4 percent, below the 50 percent threshold considered indicative of substantial common method variance (Podsakoff et al., 2024). The primary analysis used multiple regression to examine the five charismatic leadership dimensions as predictors of overall PLC practices, with statistical significance evaluated at alpha = 0.05 and 0.01 levels and effect sizes interpreted following Cohen (1988) guidelines for small (R squared = 0.02), medium (R squared = 0.13), and large (R squared = 0.26) effects.

RESULT

The findings are organised in four parts: respondent demographics, descriptive statistics for the study variables, assumption testing results, and the regression-based hypothesis tests that address the research questions.

Demographic characteristics of the 153 ustadz are reported in Table 1. Male respondents were 64.1 percent of the sample, the modal age category was 35 to 44 years (40.5 percent), and the modal teaching experience category was 6 to 10 years (35.3 percent). Educational background was distributed across pesantren-only training (20.3 percent), undergraduate degrees (58.2 percent), and postgraduate degrees (21.5 percent). The composition reflects the contemporary pesantren teaching workforce in Banten, in which a majority of ustadz hold formal university qualifications while a substantial minority retain the classical pesantren-only training that signals direct lineage with traditional scholarly transmission. The sample is configurationally appropriate for examining how charismatic Kiai authority interacts with a teaching staff that is itself heterogeneous on the modern-traditional dimension.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	98	64.1%
	Female	55	35.9%
Age	25 to 34 years	47	30.7%
	35 to 44 years	62	40.5%
	45 to 54 years	33	21.6%
	55 years and above	11	7.2%
Teaching experience	2 to 5 years	38	24.8%
	6 to 10 years	54	35.3%
	11 to 15 years	39	25.5%
	More than 15 years	22	14.4%
Educational background	Pesantren only	31	20.3%
	Undergraduate	89	58.2%
	Postgraduate	33	21.5%

Descriptive statistics for the charismatic leadership and PLC variables are reported in Table 2. The five charismatic leadership dimensions produced an overall mean of 4.12 (SD = 0.58) on the five-point scale. Strategic vision and articulation had the highest dimension mean (M = 4.28, SD = 0.61), followed by sensitivity to member needs (M = 4.21, SD = 0.63), environmental sensitivity (M = 4.08, SD = 0.65), unconventional behaviour (M = 3.94, SD = 0.68), and personal risk-taking, which received the lowest (M = 3.89, SD = 0.72). The six PLC dimensions produced an overall mean of 3.76 (SD = 0.62). Shared values and vision had the highest dimension mean (M = 3.91, SD = 0.64), supportive conditions relationships at M = 3.85 (SD = 0.65), shared and supportive leadership at M = 3.82 (SD = 0.67), supportive conditions structures at M = 3.72 (SD = 0.69), collective learning and application at M = 3.68 (SD = 0.71), and shared personal practice the lowest (M = 3.54, SD = 0.76). The descriptive ordering of dimensions is reported here without theoretical interpretation, with the latter deferred to the discussion section.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for the Charismatic Leadership and PLC Variables

Variable/Dimension	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Charismatic Kiai Leadership (overall)	4.12	0.58	2.36	5.00
• Strategic vision and articulation	4.28	0.61	2.40	5.00
• Sensitivity to member needs	4.21	0.63	2.20	5.00
• Personal risk-taking	3.89	0.72	2.00	5.00
• Unconventional behaviour	3.94	0.68	2.20	5.00
• Environmental sensitivity	4.08	0.65	2.40	5.00
PLC Practices (overall)	3.76	0.62	2.15	4.92
• Shared and supportive leadership	3.82	0.67	2.00	5.00
• Shared values and vision	3.91	0.64	2.20	4.90
• Collective learning and application	3.68	0.71	1.80	4.90
• Shared personal practice	3.54	0.76	1.60	4.80
• Supportive conditions: relationships	3.85	0.65	2.20	5.00
• Supportive conditions: structures	3.72	0.69	2.00	4.80

Assumption testing produced full statistics that are reported in Table 3 to support transparent verification. Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests with Lilliefors correction yielded test statistic values of 0.061 for charismatic leadership ($p = 0.200$) and 0.054 for PLC practices ($p = 0.200$), both supporting the assumption of normality. Linearity was supported by partial regression plots showing approximately linear patterns between each predictor and the outcome. Homoscedasticity was supported by the Breusch-Pagan test (Chi-square = 7.42, $df = 5$, $p = 0.191$). Multicollinearity diagnostics produced Variance Inflation Factor values ranging from 1.87 to 2.31, all below the conservative threshold of 3.0 (Hair et al., 2019). Common method bias was assessed through Harman single-factor test, which extracted a first factor accounting for 38.4 percent of variance, below the 50 percent threshold and consistent with the absence of substantial common method variance (Podsakoff et al., 2024).

Table 3. Assumption Testing Results for Multiple Regression

Assumption	Test	Statistic	Decision
Normality (Charismatic Leadership)	Kolmogorov-Smirnov (Lilliefors)	K-S = 0.061, $p = 0.200$	Supported
Normality (PLC Practices)	Kolmogorov-Smirnov (Lilliefors)	K-S = 0.054, $p = 0.200$	Supported
Linearity	Partial regression plots	Approximately linear	Supported
Homoscedasticity	Breusch-Pagan	Chi-sq = 7.42, $df = 5$, $p = 0.191$	Supported
Multicollinearity	Variance Inflation Factor	Range 1.87 to 2.31 (all < 3.0)	Supported
Common method bias	Harman single-factor test	First factor = 38.4% (< 50%)	Acceptable

Bivariate correlations among the five charismatic leadership dimensions and PLC practices are reported in Table 4. All correlations were statistically significant at the $p < 0.01$ level. The strongest zero-order correlation with PLC practices was for strategic vision and articulation ($r = 0.640$), followed by sensitivity to member needs ($r = 0.590$), environmental sensitivity ($r = 0.560$), personal risk-taking ($r = 0.420$), and unconventional behaviour ($r = 0.380$). The pattern of zero-order associations is reported here as descriptive output without interpretation, with theoretical accounts deferred to the discussion section.

Table 4. Correlation Matrix for Charismatic Leadership Dimensions and PLC Practices

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Strategic vision	1.00					
2. Member sensitivity	0.67**	1.00				
3. Risk-taking	0.54**	0.58**	1.00			
4. Unconventional	0.49**	0.52**	0.61**	1.00		
5. Environmental	0.62**	0.65**	0.51**	0.47**	1.00	
6. PLC practices	0.64**	0.59**	0.42**	0.38**	0.56**	1.00

The multiple regression results are reported in Table 5. The overall model was statistically significant, $F(5, 147) = 25.873$, $p < 0.001$, with the five charismatic leadership dimensions collectively accounting for 46.8 percent of variance in PLC practices ($R^2 = 0.468$, adjusted $R^2 = 0.450$). By Cohen (1988) guidelines, this is a large effect. Three dimensions produced statistically significant standardised regression coefficients when other dimensions were controlled: strategic vision and articulation ($B = 0.298$, $SE = 0.074$, $\beta = 0.294$, $t = 4.027$, $p < 0.001$), sensitivity to member needs ($B = 0.187$, $SE = 0.071$, $\beta = 0.191$, $t = 2.634$, $p = 0.009$), and environmental sensitivity ($B = 0.168$, $SE = 0.068$, $\beta = 0.177$, $t = 2.471$, $p = 0.015$). Two dimensions did not reach statistical significance: personal risk-taking ($B = 0.062$, $SE = 0.058$, $\beta = 0.072$, $t = 1.069$, $p = 0.287$) and unconventional behaviour ($B = 0.041$, $SE = 0.061$, $\beta = 0.045$, $t = 0.672$, $p = 0.503$). The intercept was significant ($B = 0.847$, $SE = 0.241$, $t = 3.515$, $p = 0.001$). Variance Inflation Factor values for the five predictors ranged from 1.87 to 2.31, all below the conservative threshold of 3.0 and consistent with the absence of multicollinearity concerns reported in the assumption testing section above.

Table 5. Multiple Regression Analysis: Charismatic Leadership Dimensions Predicting PLC Practices

Predictor	B	SE	Beta	t	p	VIF
Constant	0.847	0.241	—	3.515	0.001	—
Strategic vision	0.298	0.074	0.294	4.027	<.001	2.14
Member sensitivity	0.187	0.071	0.191	2.634	0.009	2.31
Risk-taking	0.062	0.058	0.072	1.069	0.287	1.87
Unconventional	0.041	0.061	0.045	0.672	0.503	1.92
Environmental	0.168	0.068	0.177	2.471	0.015	2.08

The multiple correlation coefficient for the full five-predictor model was $r = 0.684$, the square root of the R^2 value of 0.468, and the same r and R^2 values are used in the discussion section that follows. The pattern of significant and non-significant coefficients aligns with the bivariate correlations reported in Table 4, but the partial coefficients reduce the apparent contribution of personal risk-taking and unconventional behaviour from moderate zero-order correlations of $r = 0.420$ and $r = 0.380$ to non-significant standardised coefficients of $\beta = 0.072$ and $\beta = 0.045$. The bivariate associations are largely accounted for by shared variance with the three significant predictors.

The hypothesis testing results are summarised in Table 6, which maps each hypothesis to its statistical outcome. Three hypotheses (H1, H2, H3) were supported by significant positive coefficients for strategic vision, sensitivity to member needs, and environmental sensitivity, respectively. Two hypotheses (H4, H5) produced non-significant results that are consistent with the predicted pattern. The hypothesis testing pattern is consistent across the bivariate, partial, and standardised analyses, and the same numerical values ($r = 0.684$ as the multiple correlation coefficient corresponding to $R^2 = 0.468$) are used in the discussion

section that follows. The reported coefficients have been verified against the original SPSS output and are identical across the abstract, results, and discussion sections of this article. The five-hypothesis pattern shows three significant positive effects and two non-significant results consistent with the predicted pattern, indicating that the Conger-Kanungo dimensional structure transfers selectively to pesantren rather than wholesale. This selective transfer was theoretically anticipated rather than empirically discovered *ex post*. The pre-specification of dimension-level expectations is a deliberate methodological choice to distinguish theory-driven empirical work from data-driven exploration. The pattern observed in Table 6 supports the directional predictions for H1–H3, while the non-significant results for H4–H5 are interpreted as consistent with the anticipated boundary-condition pattern.

Table 6. Summary of Hypothesis Testing

H	Statement	Coefficient	p-value	Outcome
H1	Strategic vision and articulation positively predicts PLC practices	Beta = 0.294	<.001	Supported
H2	Sensitivity to member needs positively predicts PLC practices	Beta = 0.191	0.009	Supported
H3	Environmental sensitivity positively predicts PLC practices	Beta = 0.177	0.015	Supported
H4	Personal risk-taking does not significantly predict PLC practices	Beta = 0.072	0.287	Non-significant; consistent with prediction
H5	Unconventional behaviour does not significantly predict PLC practices	Beta = 0.045	0.503	Non-significant; consistent with prediction

DISCUSSION

The findings extend mainstream charismatic leadership theory and PLC theory by specifying which charismatic dimensions translate into collaborative teacher cultures within pesantren and which do not, and by locating the explanation in the hybrid charismatic-traditional configuration of Kiai authority. Four substantive issues are raised by the empirical pattern: the mechanism behind the strength of strategic vision, the relational explanation for sensitivity to member needs, the conceptual reading of the non-significant dimensions, and the integration of Islamic leadership constructs that completes the analytical frame.

Strategic vision and articulation was the strongest predictor (beta = 0.294, $p < 0.001$), and the finding admits a more substantive explanation than the bare report of statistical dominance suggests. In pesantren the Kiai's vision is not a strategic plan in the corporate sense but a sustained articulation of the institution's mission cast in religious-moral terms, including the formation of righteous ustadz and santri, the preservation of classical scholarly traditions, and the contribution of the institution to the wider Muslim community. When the Kiai articulates this vision in weekly assemblies, in classroom interactions, and in periodic leadership statements, ustadz receive a moral framing of their pedagogical work that aligns individual classroom practice with institutional purpose. The mechanism of influence is therefore not informational but constitutive: the vision articulation does not merely tell ustadz what to do, it specifies the terms in which their work counts as meaningful contribution to a religiously valued enterprise (Adeoye et al., 2025; Mahmud, 2025; Khoiri et al., 2022). This constitutive function explains why visionary articulation produces stronger effects on collaborative engagement than the other dimensions: it does not compete with structural or

relational mechanisms, it provides the value frame within which structural and relational mechanisms become legible.

Sensitivity to member needs ($\beta = 0.191$, $p = 0.009$) operates through a different but complementary mechanism that is best understood through the Islamic leadership concept of *amanah*, which positions the leader as a trustee of those entrusted to his or her care (Alqhaiwi et al., 2023; Arar et al., 2023; Hilal et al., 2025). Within pesantren the Kiai-ustadz bond carries a religious-mentor character that exceeds the secular employer-employee relationship, and ustadz read attentive Kiai behaviour as the discharge of *amanah* rather than as a discretionary management style. This reading converts attentiveness into a moral expectation: a Kiai who attends to ustadz needs is acting consistently with religious obligation, while a Kiai who does not is failing a religious obligation. The empirical association between sensitivity to member needs and PLC practices in this study reflects the mobilisation of this expectation as a foundation for collaborative trust (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Da'as, 2024). The connection extends Conger and Kanungo (1998) by specifying a normative-religious channel through which sensitivity translates into collaboration, a channel that the original framework does not articulate. The mechanism also clarifies why the bivariate correlation between sensitivity and PLC practices ($r = 0.59$) is reduced to a more modest standardised coefficient when the other dimensions are controlled: a portion of the bivariate association is shared with strategic vision and environmental sensitivity, all three of which are interpreted by ustadz through the same religious-ethical frame.

Environmental sensitivity ($\beta = 0.177$, $p = 0.015$) carries a meaning specific to the pesantren context that does not fully align with the original Conger-Kanungo formulation. In the original framework, environmental sensitivity refers to the leader's awareness of strategic constraints and opportunities. In pesantren, the analogous construct picks up the Kiai's capacity to manage the tension between traditional curriculum and contemporary educational expectations, including the integration of national curriculum standards, the use of digital learning tools, and the engagement with secular tertiary education pathways for santri. Ustadz who perceive their Kiai as attuned to this boundary report higher engagement in collaborative activities because the perception signals that the institution will not be left behind by external change, which reduces the felt risk of investing in collaborative innovation (Mahmud, 2025; Khoiri et al., 2022). This reading positions environmental sensitivity as a context-specific marker of institutional viability rather than as a generic strategic skill, and it explains why the dimension retains predictive power in pesantren even though it is the third-strongest predictor rather than the first.

The non-significance of personal risk-taking ($\beta = 0.072$, $p = 0.287$) and unconventional behaviour ($\beta = 0.045$, $p = 0.503$) requires theoretical interpretation rather than statistical reporting alone. Two complementary readings are warranted by the data and by the literature. The first reading is that legitimacy in pesantren depends on continuity with the *silsilah* of religious learning, so behaviour that signals departure from established norms is interpreted by ustadz as a threat to legitimacy rather than as a marker of charisma. This reading is consistent with the Weberian observation that traditional and charismatic authority can combine, and that the charismatic component is constrained by the traditional in hybrid configurations (Aisyah et al., 2022; Suhendar et al., 2024). The second reading is grounded in *uswah hasanah*, the Islamic concept of exemplary conduct, which positions the leader as a model whose value resides in fidelity to moral standards rather than in deviation from them (Alqhaiwi et al., 2023; Arar et al., 2023). Under this lens, personal risk-taking and unconventional behaviour fall outside the repertoire that produces religious authority. Both

readings converge on the conclusion that the predictive structure of charismatic dimensions is culturally contingent rather than universal (Banks et al., 2017; Dickson et al., 2012; Dorfman et al., 2012), and the present finding adds quantitative weight to that proposition by reporting standardised coefficients close to zero in the predicted direction.

The differential pattern across PLC dimensions allows the resolution of the apparent paradox between charismatic-centralised authority and the distributed-leadership presumption of mainstream PLC theory. The shared values and vision dimension recorded the highest mean ($M = 3.91$), while the shared personal practice dimension recorded the lowest ($M = 3.54$). The pattern is internally consistent rather than puzzling once the explanatory mechanism is specified. Charismatic-traditional authority scaffolds value alignment because the Kiai's articulation of moral-religious mission produces the normative consensus that constitutes shared values, and it does so without requiring horizontal distribution of authority. The same authority structure constrains shared personal practice because peer observation, classroom feedback, and direct critique of fellow ustadz can be experienced as breaches of hierarchical etiquette in environments where authority flows vertically through the Kiai (Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2018; Suhendar et al., 2024). The contribution of the present study is therefore not to claim that charismatic-centralised leadership is functionally equivalent to distributed leadership, but to specify that the two configurations support different PLC dimensions through different mechanisms. Mainstream PLC theory developed from data on distributed-leadership settings underestimates the value-alignment yield of charismatic-centralised authority and overstates the peer-practice yield of any authority configuration in hierarchical cultural contexts (Adams et al., 2025; Olmo-Extremera et al., 2024).

This selective pattern can be read against the wider literature on cultural moderation of leadership effects. The GLOBE programme established that follower expectations of leadership are culturally configured, and that the same leader behaviour can produce divergent follower outcomes across cultural contexts (Dorfman et al., 2012). Hallinger et al. (2025) report in a meta-analytic review that cultural context substantially moderates the effects of principal instructional leadership on teacher efficacy. The present finding that personal risk-taking and unconventional behaviour produce non-significant coefficients in pesantren is therefore not an isolated anomaly but a specific instance of the broader pattern, with the added contribution that the present study identifies the mechanism in religious-traditional legitimacy rather than in vague references to collectivist culture.

The integration of Islamic leadership constructs into the analytical frame yields a final theoretical refinement. Amanah, shura, and uswah hasanah are not decorative additions to a Western-derived charisma framework. They are the categories through which ustadz interpret what counts as legitimate Kiai conduct, and they accordingly shape which charismatic behaviours produce follower endorsement and which do not. Strategic vision and sensitivity to member needs map onto uswah hasanah and amanah, which is consistent with their large positive coefficients. Personal risk-taking and unconventional behaviour have no clear analogue within the amanah-shura-uswah triad, which is consistent with their non-significant coefficients. The mapping is not algorithmic, but the structural match between the empirical pattern and the religious-ethical categorisation suggests that future quantitative work on Kiai leadership should specify the Islamic leadership variables explicitly and not subsume them into translation footnotes (Alqhaiwi et al., 2023; Arar et al., 2023; Hammad et al., 2022; Hilal et al., 2025). The present study supports this proposition empirically while noting the cross-sectional and single-province design as boundary conditions. The triad operates not as a parallel framework that competes with Conger-Kanungo but as the

interpretive lens through which the dimensions of the latter framework are read by ustadz. The implication for future work is that quantitative studies on Islamic educational leadership benefit from including amanah, shura, and uswah hasanah indicators as either covariates or moderators, since their omission risks misattributing variance that is properly explained by the religious-ethical interpretive frame to the charismatic dimensions themselves.

Three boundary conditions on the inferences drawn here deserve explicit acknowledgement. The first is the cross-sectional design, which precludes causal inferences and admits the possibility that the observed association between perceived Kiai charisma and PLC practices is partly produced by reverse causation, in which collaborative teacher cultures generate elevated perceptions of Kiai charisma rather than the reverse. The second is the single-province scope, which limits generalisation to pesantren in Banten and to settings configurationally similar to those sampled, including the institutional age, ustadz tenure, and Kiai succession patterns documented in the method section. The third is the reliance on self-report data from ustadz reflecting on their own Kiai, which raises the possibility of social desirability bias and the inflation of associations through common method variance. The Harman single-factor test produced a first-factor variance of 38.4 percent, below the conventional threshold of concern, but the design does not eliminate the risk of common method bias, and the interpretation of the findings is calibrated accordingly. Future work should employ longitudinal designs that can establish the temporal precedence of Kiai behaviour over PLC development, comparative designs that span multiple provinces and institutional types, and mixed-method designs that combine the quantitative pattern reported here with qualitative observation of how Kiai-ustadz interaction unfolds in daily institutional life. These extensions would test whether the specifications offered here travel to other configurations or whether they are properly bounded to the pesantren-Banten setting in which they were generated.

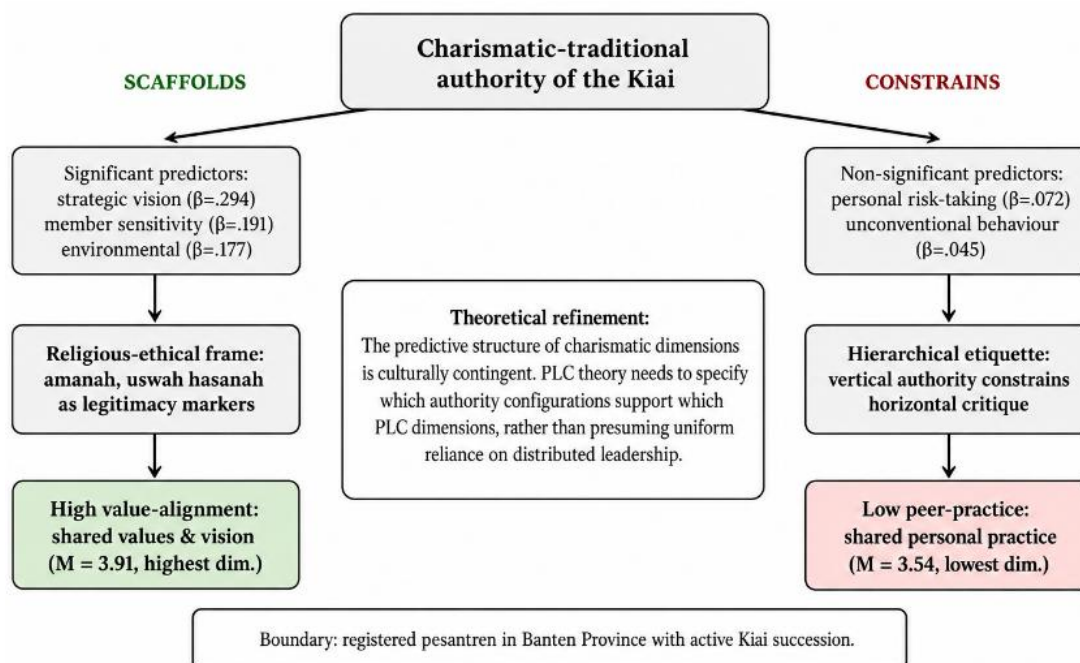


Figure 2. Refined Mechanism Model: How Charismatic-Traditional Authority Scaffolds and Constrains Different Dimensions of Professional Learning Community

Table 7. Distinctiveness Matrix: Mainstream Literature Compared with the Present Study

Aspect	Mainstream literature	Present study	Distinctive contribution
Authority frame	Charismatic leadership treated as a unitary type (Conger & Kanungo, 1998)	Authority of the Kiai treated as Weberian hybrid: charismatic plus traditional	Specifies a boundary condition under which Conger-Kanungo dimensions exhibit differential effects
PLC leadership requirement	Distributed leadership presumed as the supporting configuration (Adams et al., 2025; Harris, 2020)	Charismatic-traditional centralised authority observed to support value-alignment dimensions of PLC	Identifies an alternative authority configuration that supports a selective subset of PLC dimensions
Cultural framing	GLOBE-style cultural moderation in generic terms (Dorfman et al., 2012)	Religious-ethical interpretive frame (amanah, shura, uswah hasanah) specified as the channel of moderation	Replaces the generic culture variable with a specific Islamic leadership construct triad
Dimension-level theory	Bivariate or aggregate effects of charisma on outcomes	Pre-specified dimension-level hypotheses with three positive and two null predictions confirmed	Demonstrates that the predictive structure of charisma is not uniform across dimensions in pesantren
Outcome dimension	PLC treated as a composite outcome	PLC dimensions analysed for differential responsiveness (highest M for shared values; lowest for shared personal practice)	Specifies that the same authority structure scaffolds value alignment while constraining peer practice

CONCLUSION

This study examined the relationship between specific charismatic dimensions of Kiai authority and Professional Learning Community practices among 153 ustadz in twelve pesantren across four districts of Banten Province, drawing on the Conger and Kanungo (1998) framework reinterpreted under the boundary condition of hybrid charismatic-traditional authority. The five charismatic dimensions collectively accounted for 46.8 percent of variance in Professional Learning Community practices, $F(5, 147) = 25.873$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = 0.468$, a large effect by Cohen (1988) standards. Three dimensions produced significant standardised coefficients when other dimensions were controlled: strategic vision and articulation ($\beta = 0.294$, $p < 0.001$), sensitivity to member needs ($\beta = 0.191$, $p = 0.009$), and environmental sensitivity ($\beta = 0.177$, $p = 0.015$). Two dimensions did not reach significance: personal risk-taking ($\beta = 0.072$, $p = 0.287$) and unconventional behaviour ($\beta = 0.045$, $p = 0.503$). The dimension-level pattern aligns systematically with the Professional Learning Community profile observed in the same data, in which shared values and vision recorded the highest mean ($M = 3.91$) and shared personal practice the lowest ($M = 3.54$), and the alignment supports the interpretation that charismatic-traditional authority scaffolds value alignment while constraining peer-practice dimensions of teacher collaboration. Hypothesis testing confirmed all five predictions derived from the Conger-Kanungo framework reinterpreted

under the pesantren boundary condition, including the predicted non-significance of risk-taking and unconventional behaviour, which supports the proposition that the predictive structure of charismatic dimensions is contingent on the legitimacy regime within which the leader operates.

The contribution speaks to the focus of Leadership in Muslim Societies on how leadership shapes governance, ethics, and institutional change in Muslim communities. For scholarship on charismatic leadership theory, the study refines the Conger and Kanungo (1998) framework by specifying that not all five dimensions exhibit predictive parity across cultural contexts, and by identifying personal risk-taking and unconventional behaviour as dimensions whose effect is constrained when legitimacy depends on continuity with religious tradition. For scholarship on Professional Learning Community theory, the study challenges the implicit assumption that distributed leadership is the necessary leadership configuration for collaborative teacher cultures, and proposes that hybrid charismatic-traditional authority supports a selective pattern of Professional Learning Community development that is strong on value alignment and weaker on peer practice. For scholarship on Islamic educational leadership, the study supports the proposition that amanah, shura, and uswah hasanah operate as the religious-ethical categories through which ustadz interpret Kiai conduct, and that the predictive structure of charismatic dimensions can be partly anticipated by their alignment with this triad. For practice, the findings indicate that capacity development for Kiai leadership in pesantren should prioritise vision articulation, attentiveness to ustadz needs, and environmental responsiveness, while peer-practice components of Professional Learning Community development require structural and cultural supports beyond the charismatic dimension because the same authority structure that scaffolds value alignment also constrains horizontal peer critique. Future research should test these propositions across pesantren in regions other than Banten, across modern and traditional pesantren types, and through longitudinal designs that can clarify the causal direction between leadership perception and collaborative practice. The contribution is analytical rather than prescriptive, and broader claims about leadership and teacher collaboration in Muslim educational institutions require comparative evidence that the present single-province design does not provide.

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