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The Influence of Policy on the Development of Student Competence at Al Idris Islamic Boarding School: Integration of TPB Through the PLS-SEM Approach

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A B S T R A C T

This research examines the influence of Islamic boarding school policies on student competency development at Al Idris Islamic Boarding School. Using the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and PLS-SEM methodology, the study involved 54 students selected through purposive sampling. Analysis results reveal that self-awareness plays a crucial role as a mediator between boarding school policies and TPB in enhancing student competencies. The indirect effect of boarding school policies on competency development through self-awareness showed values of $\beta = 0.134$ ($T\text{-}_{Statistics} = 2.085$; $P\text{-}_{Value} = 0.038$), while the indirect effect of TPB on competency development through self-awareness yielded $\beta = 0.337$ ($T\text{-}_{Statistics} = 2.248$; $P\text{-}_{Value} = 0.025$). These findings highlight the importance of strengthening policies in Islamic boarding schools that foster student self-awareness. Recommendations include improving self-reflection-based learning systems, providing motivational support from religious teachers (kiai and ustaz), and integrating life skills into the curriculum. With appropriate policies, Islamic boarding schools can prepare students to excel not only in Islamic knowledge but also in competencies relevant to contemporary challenges.

1. Introduction

Islamic boarding schools (pondok pesantren) play a strategic role in shaping students' character and competencies, both in religious aspects and life skills. Along with the development of the times, Islamic boarding schools are required not only to focus on Islamic education but also to equip students with competencies relevant to modern challenges (Kamila et al., 2022 ; Mutaqin, 2023). In this context, the policies implemented within Islamic boarding schools become key factors in determining the success of competency development among students. These policies cover various aspects, such as curriculum, learning methods, extracurricular activities, and the provision of supporting facilities (Kamila et al., 2022).

The implementation of policies in Islamic boarding schools can influence students' behavior in developing their competencies, either directly or indirectly (Rohmah & Subiyantoro, 2021). To understand the mechanism of this influence, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) can be utilized as the theoretical framework. TPB explains that a person's intention to perform a behavior is influenced by three main factors: attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991a). In the context of Islamic boarding schools, students' attitudes toward the prevailing policies, the influence of the social environment, and their perceptions of the ease or obstacles in developing competencies become critical factors determining the success of policy implementation (Pas & Bradshaw, 2014).

Moreover, technological advancement and globalization demand that Islamic boarding schools become more adaptive in enhancing the quality of education and training for students. The ability to access information, develop digital skills, and understand the challenges of the labor market are crucial aspects of strengthening students' competencies (Febriani et al., 2021). Therefore, Islamic boarding school policies must be designed to adapt to the needs of the times while maintaining Islamic values as the fundamental basis of education (Purnomo et al., 2024).

This study aims to analyze the influence of policies on the development of students' competencies at Al Idris Islamic Boarding School using the TPB approach. The results of this study are expected to provide insights into the effectiveness of the policies implemented and to offer recommendations for improving policies that better support students' competency development. By understanding these dynamics, Islamic boarding schools are expected to formulate and implement more effective policies, enabling them to produce a generation with strong Islamic values and competencies that meet modern demands.

2. Methodology

Research Design

This study adopts a quantitative approach using the Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method (Hair Jr. et al., 2021). This technique is applied due to its capability to analyze causal relationships among complex latent variables, including mediation effects within the research model. The focus of this study is to examine how the personality traits of AI-using students influence their self-development in the learning process. PLS-SEM is particularly suitable for predictive models and studies with relatively small sample sizes.

This study adopts a quantitative approach employing the Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method (Hair Jr. et al., 2021). PLS-SEM is utilized for its strength in analyzing complex causal relationships among latent variables, including examining mediation effects within the proposed research model. The primary objective of this study is to investigate how policy factors influence the development of student competence at Al Idris Islamic Boarding School, using the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) as a theoretical framework.

Given the predictive nature of the model and the relatively small sample size, PLS-SEM is deemed an appropriate analytical tool to ensure the robustness and accuracy of the findings

Research Sample and Procedure

This study involved 54 students from Al Idris Islamic Boarding School as participants. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling, meaning respondents were selected based on specific criteria aligned with the objectives of the research. In this context, participants were students who had experienced the implementation of various school policies and were actively involved in competency development programs. Purposive sampling was chosen to ensure that the data collected came from individuals who had a clear understanding of how school policies affect their competence growth.

Although the sample was not selected randomly, the total of 54 respondents is considered sufficient for quantitative research, especially when using the Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach. PLS-SEM is known for its flexibility in analyzing complex models and is well-suited for studies with small to medium sample sizes, without requiring data to be normally distributed (Hair et al., 2021; Hair Jr. et al., 2021). In this study's structural model, there are three major paths leading to the dependent variable, student competence development. Based on general guidelines for PLS-SEM, which recommend a minimum sample size of ten times the number of structural paths, a minimum of 30 participants is sufficient. Therefore, with 54 students, the sample size is adequate to conduct valid analysis and support meaningful interpretation of the findings.

Data Collection Techniques

The data collection technique in this study used a questionnaire consisting of four variables. The independent variables includeIslamic boarding school policy (X_1) and Theory Planned Behavior (TPB) (X_2), while Self Awareness (Z), and the dependent variable is Competency Development (Y). This study applies a Likert scale with four answer choices(Hair et al., 2020a). ranging from never (1) to always. The research instruments and variables used can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. The Construct of the Research Variables

No	Variable	Indicators	Construction	References
1	Islamic boarding school policy (X_I)	Clarity of Rules	IP 1	(Khairani et al., 2023; Rohman et al., 2025; Sabila et al., 2024)
2		Discipline of Santri	IP 2	
3		Character Building	IP 3	
4		Skills Support	IP 4	
5		Consistency of Rules	IP 5	
6		Value Conformity	IP 6	
7		Student Participation	IP 7	
8		Policy Trust	IP 8	
9		Access to Information	IP 9	
10		Mental Wellbeing	IP 10	
11		Policy Support	TPB 1	
12		Motivation to learn	TPB 2	

No	Variable	Indicators	Construction	References
13	Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (X_2)	Kiai & Ustaz Support	TPB 3	(Ajzen, 1991; Bosnjak et al., 2020; Kan & Fabrigar, 2017)
14		Peer Support	TPB 4	
15		Time Availability	TPB 5	
16		Access Resources	TPB 6	
17		Personal Commitment	TPB 7	
18		Utilization of Facilities	TPB 8	
19		Application of Skills	TPB 9	
20		Participation in Training	TPB 10	
21	Self Awareness (Z)	Understanding Emotions	KD 1	(Basile et al., 2018; Lage et al., 2022)
22		Self Reflection	KD 2	
23		Self-awareness	KD 3	
24		Personal Values	KD 4	
25		Impact of Action	KD 5	
26		Response to Criticism	KD 6	
27		Emotional Control	KD 7	
28		Mindset	KD 8	
29		Self Motivation	KD 9	
30		Critical thinking	CD 1	
31		Skill Mastery	CD 2	
32		Effective Communication	CD 3	
33		Team Collaboration	CD 4	
34	Competency Development (Y)	Motivation to learn	CD 5	(Midhat Ali et al., 2021; Prabawati et al., 201)
35		Environmental Adaptation	CD 6	
36		Creativity Problems	CD 7	
37		Time Management	CD 8	
38		Confidence	CD 9	
39		Pressure Resistance	CD 10	

The use of the Likert scale enabled the researcher to quantitatively capture participants' attitudes, perceptions, and behavioral tendencies toward each variable. The questionnaire items were carefully developed based on specific indicators of each construct to ensure the validity and reliability of the data collected.

Data Analysis

Statistical analysis in this study employs the Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) technique. The analysis begins with the evaluation of the outer model, which aims to assess the validity and reliability of the indicators and constructs. At this stage, the minimum loading factor for each indicator should exceed 0.70, and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for reflective constructs must be greater than 0.50. Reliability is further evaluated through Cronbach's Alpha, Rho_A, and Composite Reliability (CR), all of which are expected to surpass the threshold value of 0.70. The next step involves assessing the model's Goodness of Fit, which examines the predictive capability and overall appropriateness of the research model (Azhari & Effendi, 2024). This evaluation includes checking predictive relevance using blindfolding procedures and measuring model fit indicators such as the Standardized Root Mean Square

Residual (SRMR), which should be below 0.10, and the Normed Fit Index (NFI), which should be above 0.50. Finally, the inner model evaluation is conducted to determine the significance of both direct effects (hypotheses H-DIR$_1$ to H-DIR$_5$) and indirect effects (mediating hypotheses H-IND$_1$ and H-IND$_2$) within the structural framework.

3. Result and Discussion

Testing of the Measurement Model (Outer Model)

The outer model analysis describes the relationship between each indicator and its corresponding latent variable. In assessing the measurement model (outer model), the evaluation begins with tests for convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability (Hair et al., 2020). The results of the path coefficient analysis using the PLS-SEM model are presented in Figure 1.

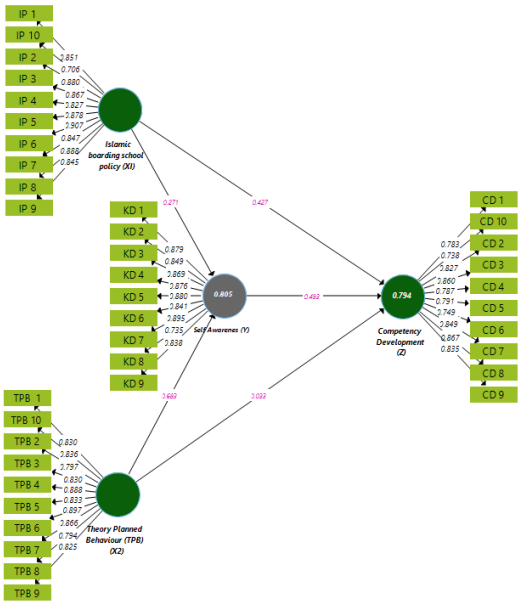

Figure 1. Testing of the Outer Model

In PLS-SEM, the outer model defines the connections between measurement indicators and their corresponding latent constructs. This analysis is crucial for evaluating the validity and reliability of the indicators used to represent latent variables. Convergent validity is assessed through the loading factor and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), with acceptable thresholds being loading factors above 0.70 and AVE values exceeding 0.50. Discriminant validity, on the other hand, is evaluated using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, which stipulates that a construct's AVE must be higher than its correlations with other constructs. Furthermore, internal consistency reliability is examined through Composite Reliability (CR) and Cronbach's Alpha (CA), where both indicators should surpass

0.70 to confirm reliability. Ensuring indicator validity and reliability through the outer model evaluation is critical for accurately and consistently measuring latent constructs. This step plays a vital role in structural equation modeling (SEM), as it establishes the measurement quality before analyzing the relationships among constructs. A valid outer model enhances the precision of result interpretation and strengthens the reliability of the conclusions drawn from the study.

Table 2. Outer Model: Convergent Validity and Reliability

No	Variable	Indicator	Convert Validity		Consistency Reliability		
			FL (λ>0.70)	AVE (>0.50)	CA (α>0.70)	rho_A (φ>0.70)	CR (δ>0.70)
1	Islamic boarding school_policy (X_1)	IP 1	0.851	0.656	0.957	0.957	0.963
2		IP 2	0.880				
3		IP 3	0.867				
4		IP 4	0.827				
5		IP 5	0.878				
6		IP 6	0.907				
7		IP 7	0.847				
8		IP 8	0.888				
9		IP 9	0.845				
10		IP 10	0.706				
11	Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (X_2)	TPB 1	0.830	0.706	0.954	0.957	0.960
12		TPB 2	0.797				
13		TPB 3	0.830				
14		TPB 4	0.888				
15		TPB 5	0.833				
16		TPB 6	0.897				
17		TPB 7	0.866				
18		TPB 8	0.794				
19		TPB 9	0.825				
		TPB 10	0.836				
20	Self Awareness (Y)	KD 1	0.879	0.727	0.953	0.955	0.960
21		KD 2	0.849				
22		KD 3	0.869				
23		KD 4	0.876				
24		KD 5	0.880				
25		KD 6	0.841				
26		KD 7	0.895				
27		KD 8	0.735				
28		KD 9	0.838				
29	Competency Development (Z)	CD 1	0.783	0.656	0.941	0.942	0.950
30		CD 2	0.827				
31		CD 3	0.860				
32		CD 4	0.787				
33		CD 5	0.791				
34		CD 6	0.749				
35		CD 7	0.849				
36		CD 8	0.867				
37		CD 9	0.835				
38		CD 10	0.738				

Referring to the SmartPLS output presented in the table, all constructs show strong internal consistency, with Cronbach's Alpha (CA) values ranging from 0.941 to 0.957, rho_A values between 0.942 and 0.957, and Composite Reliability (CR)

scores between 0.950 and 0.963. Since all these reliability indicators exceed the 0.70 threshold, it can be concluded that the instrument demonstrates excellent reliability across all aspects. Additionally, the correlation matrix shows that the strongest correlation exists between Islamic Boarding School Policy (IP) and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), with a value of 0.830. This correlation surpasses those of other variable relationships, such as Self-Awareness (0.879) and Competency Development (0.783). These correlation values help to further clarify the strength of relationships among the constructs.

Table 3. Discriminant Validity: The Fornell Larcker and HTMT

Variable	Y	X2	Z	X1
CD	0.810**			
IP	0.860* 0.825**	0.851**		
KD	0.893* 0.807**	0.791* 0.743**	0.913**	
TPB	0.807* 0.770**	0.743* 0.715**	0.913* 0.877**	0.840**

*NB: Fornell Larcker** And HTMT**

Based on the results of the Discriminant Validity assessment using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, all variables exhibit a higher square root of AVE compared to their correlations with other variables in the model. For instance, the Competency Development (CD) construct has a value of 0.810, which is greater than its correlations with other constructs. This finding indicates that each construct possesses good discriminant validity, as it explains its own variable more strongly than it relates to others. Additionally, the results of the Discriminant Validity test using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) show that all HTMT values are below the threshold of 0.90, ranging from 0.715 to 0.893. These results suggest that there are no discriminant validity issues within the model, and that each construct is distinct and free from serious multicollinearity problems. Overall, these findings confirm that the tested model has strong discriminant validity, allowing each construct to be clearly differentiated from the others based on both the Fornell-Larcker criterion and HTMT analysis. Moreover, the PLS-Algorithm results indicate that the HTMT (Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio) values across all constructs fall within the range of 0.436 to 0.841, well below the recommended threshold of 0.90, confirming that the constructs exhibit satisfactory discriminant validity.

Testing of the Structural Model (Inner Model)

The structural model is assessed by examining the R-squared (R^2) value for the dependent variable and the path coefficient for each independent variable, with significance determined by the corresponding t-statistics. The initial stage of structural model analysis includes evaluating the R^2 value, effect size (f^2), predictive relevance (Q^2), variance inflation factor (VIF), and overall model fit. The results of the SmartPLS bootstrapping process, conducted after testing the outer model, are illustrated in Figure 2.

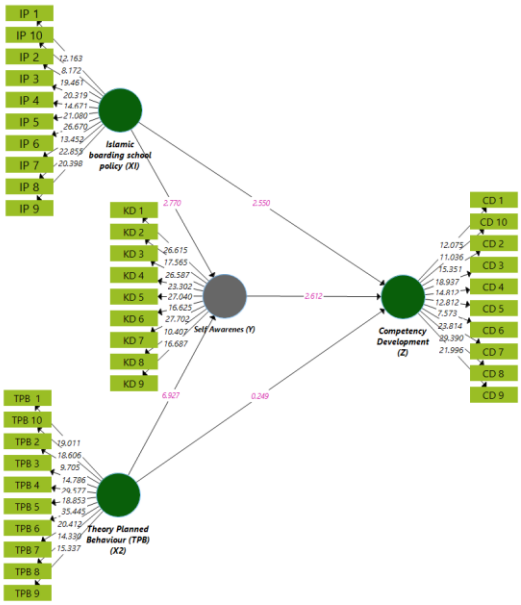

Figure 2. Structural Model Testing (Inner Model)

In PLS-SEM, path analysis is conducted to evaluate the relationships between latent variables. The path coefficients reflect both the magnitude and direction of the influence from exogenous to endogenous constructs. These coefficients are estimated using a multiple regression technique and are critical for testing the research hypotheses. Hypotheses are tested by examining the statistical significance of the path coefficients, typically through t-tests or by analyzing the corresponding p-values. A relationship is deemed significant if the p-value falls below a predetermined threshold, such as 0.05. To determine the standard errors and t-statistics, the bootstrapping method is frequently applied. If a path coefficient proves significant (p-value < 0.05), it supports the hypothesized link between the constructs. Consequently, path analysis combined with hypothesis testing in PLS-SEM enables researchers to systematically assess the strength and relevance of relationships among variables, offering deeper insights into the processes that drive the studied phenomena.

The ^{R}-squared value for Competency Development (Z) is 0.793, indicating that 79.3% of the variance in competency can be explained by the model, while the R-squared value for Self-Development (Y) is 0.805, meaning 80.5% of the variance in self-development is accounted for, suggesting a strong predictive relationship for both models, with self-development showing a slightly better explanatory power.f^2 value for Competency Development (Z) is 0.343, indicating a medium effect size, which shows that Islamic Boarding School Policy (X_1) has a moderate influence on competency development. R-squared value for Competency Development (Z) is 0.793, meaning approximately 79.3% of the variance in competency development is explained by the model, reflecting a strong predictive relationship.

Table 5. Measurement of Structural Model: R^2, f^2, Q^2

Variable	R^2		f^2		Construct Cross-Validated (Q^2)				
	Value	Decision	Value	Decision	Redundancy		Communal		Predictive
					SSE	Q2	SSE	Q2	Power
(C1) → CD	0.794	Substantial			269,689	0.501	231,724	0.571	Strong
(C1) → IP			0.365	Medium	540,000		190,313	0.648	Strong
(C1) → KD	0.794	Substantial	0.231	Small	206,882	0.574	168,272	0.654	Strong
(C1) →TPB			0.001	Weak	540,000		199,603	0.630	Strong
(C2) → IP			0.185	Small					
(C2) →TPB			1.169	Large					

f^2 value for Self-Development (Y) is 0.226, suggesting a small to medium effect size, indicating that the independent variables have a less significant impact on self-development compared to competency development. R-squared value for Self-Development (Y) is 0.805, indicating that about 80.5% of the variance in self-development is accounted for by the model, demonstrating a robust relationship. f^2 value for Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is 0.002, indicating a negligible effect size, suggesting minimal influence on both competency and self-development outcomes. R-squared value for TPB is 1.163, which is atypical since R-squared values usually range from 0 to 1, indicating a potential issue with the model or data interpretation

The predictive relevance (Q^2) results demonstrate that the values fall within the range of 0.501 to 0.654. These findings suggest that the model possesses strong predictive capability in explaining the variables under investigation. Specifically, the Competency Development (Y) variable shows a Q^2 value of 0.571, indicating that the model effectively captures the phenomena with a high degree of accuracy. Additionally, the Islamic Boarding School Policy (X_1), Theory of Planned Behavior (X_2), and Self-Awareness (Z) variables have Q^2 values of 0.648, 0.654, and 0.630, respectively, further reinforcing the model's robust predictive performance. Overall, the outcomes of these procedures confirm that the research model has substantial predictive strength and is dependable for assessing the relationships among the variables in this study.

Table 6. Results of Path Coefficients: Direct Effects

Hypothesis	Path Analysis	β-Values (+/-)	Sample Mean	SDV	T-Statistics (>1.96)	P-Values (<0.05)	Decision
H-DIR1	IP → CD	0.427	0.425	0.166	2,572	0.010	Accepted
H-DIR2	IP → KD	0.271	0.271	0.093	2,920	0.004	Accepted
H-DIR3	KD→CD	0.493	0.495	0.192	2,573	0.010	Accepted
H-DIR4	TPB→CD	0.033	0.032	0.122	0.268	0.789	N/A
H-DIR5	TPB→KD	0.683	0.685	0.093	7,361	0.000	Accepted

The results of the analysis show that Islamic Boarding School Policy (IP) has a significant effect on Competency Development (CD) (H-DIR_1 β = 0.427, T-$_{Statistics}$ = 2.572, P-$_{Values}$ = 0.010) and on Self Awareness (KD) (H-DIR_2 β = 0.271, T-$_{Statistics}$ = 2.920, P-$_{Values}$ = 0.004). This indicates that Islamic boarding school policy plays an important role in improving individual competence and self-awareness. In addition, Self Awareness (KD) has a significant effect on Competency Development (CD) (H-DIR_3 β = 0.493, T-$_{Statistics}$ = 2.573, P-$_{Values}$ = 0.010), indicating that self-awareness contributes to the development of individual competence. On the other hand, Theory Planned Behavior (TPB) does not have a significant effect on Competency Development (CD) (H-DIR_4 β = 0.033, T-$_{Statistics}$ = 0.268, P-$_{Values}$ = 0.789), so this hypothesis is rejected. However, Theory Planned Behavior (TPB) has a significant effect on Self Awareness (KD) (H-DIR_5 β = 0.683, T-$_{Statistics}$ = 7.361, P-$_{Values}$ = 0.000), indicating that good behavioral planning can increase individual self-awareness. Overall, this study confirms that Islamic Boarding School Policy (IP) and Self Awareness (KD) play a significant role in the development of individual competence, while Theory Planned Behavior (TPB) only affects Self Awareness (KD) without a direct impact on Competency Development (CD).

Table 7. Results of Path Coefficients: Indirect Effects

Hypothesis	Path Analysis	β-Values (+/-)	SDV	T-Statistics (>1.96)	P-values	Decision
H-IND1	IP → KD → CD	0.134	0.064	2,085	0.038	Accepted
H-IND2	TPB → KD → CD	0.337	0.150	2.248	0.025	Accepted

The results of the analysis show that Self Awareness (KD) acts as a significant mediator in the relationship between Islamic Boarding School Policy (IP) and Theory Planned Behavior (TPB) on Competency Development (CD), because both mediation hypotheses are accepted with T-$_{Statistics}$ >1.96 and P-$_{Values}$ <0.05. In H-IND_1, Islamic Boarding School Policy (IP) has an indirect effect on Competency Development (CD) through Self Awareness (KD) (β = 0.134, T-$_{Statistics}$ = 2.085, P-$_{Values}$ 0.038). This shows that Islamic boarding school policies can increase self-awareness, which ultimately has a positive impact on the development of individual competence. In H-IND_2, Theory Planned Behavior (TPB) also has an indirect effect on Competency Development (CD) through Self Awareness (KD) (β = 0.337, T-$_{Statistics}$ 2.248, P-$_{Values}$ = 0.025). This confirms that individuals with more planned behavior tend to have higher self-awareness, which then helps in improving their competence. Overall, this study shows that Self Awareness (KD) is a key factor that strengthens the influence of pesantren policies and planned behavior on individual competence development.

Discussion

The policies implemented in Islamic boarding schools play an important role in shaping the competence of students, both in religious, academic, and life skills aspects. Effective policies can create a conducive learning environment and support the development of students' competence holistically (Alderotti et al., 2023). In this

context, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) approach is used to analyze how Islamic boarding school policies can influence the intentions and behavior of students in improving their competence. TPB explains that individual behavior is influenced by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, so that appropriate Islamic boarding school policies can shape students' mindsets and actions in the learning process.

Policies that are oriented towards developing students' competencies involve various aspects, including skills-based curriculum, innovative learning methods, and extracurricular programs that support the development of students' personalities and social skills. In addition, policies in providing learning facilities and educational technology also play a role in improving the quality of learning in Islamic boarding schools. Environmental factors, both internal and external to the Islamic boarding school, such as community and parental involvement, also contribute to shaping students' competencies (Kamila et al., 2022). Therefore, an integrative and evidence-based policy approach is needed to improve the quality of education in Islamic boarding schools. The results of the analysis using PLS-SEM show that Islamic boarding school policies have a significant influence on the development of students' competencies, both directly and through mediating factors such as learning motivation and social support (Santoso et al., 2022). Policies that encourage active interaction between students and teaching staff, as well as optimizing educational facilities and technology, have been shown to increase students' intentions to continue developing their competencies. In addition, students' self-confidence as a moderating variable also plays a role in strengthening the relationship between Islamic boarding school policies and the competencies obtained (Sawitri et al., 2023).

The implication of this study is the need for a more adaptive policy formulation based on the needs of students in facing the challenges of the modern era. Islamic boarding schools need to continue to evaluate policies to be more responsive to changes in the times and the needs of students. In addition, collaboration with other educational institutions, the industrial world, and the use of digital technology can be strategic steps in improving the competence of students. With the right policies, Islamic boarding schools can continue to contribute to producing a generation that is not only superior in Islamic knowledge, but also has relevant competencies to face the global.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that Islamic boarding school policies have a significant influence on the development of students' competencies, both directly and indirectly through the variable of self-awareness. The results of the indirect effect analysis show that self-awareness acts as a mediator that strengthens the relationship between Islamic boarding school policies and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) on the development of students' competencies. This study found that Islamic boarding school policies that encourage discipline, skills support, and adequate access to information contribute to increasing students'

self-awareness, which ultimately has a positive impact on increasing their competencies. In addition, support from the Islamic boarding school environment, such as guidance from kiai and ustaz, as well as encouragement from peers, are also important factors in shaping students' mindsets and behaviors.

The implications of this study indicate that Islamic boarding school managers need to design more adaptive policies based on the needs of students, especially in terms of strengthening self-reflection-based learning systems, increasing learning motivation, and integrating educational technology to support the development of student competencies more optimally. Thus, Islamic boarding schools can continue to play a role in producing a generation of students who not only have a strong understanding of Islam, but also skills that are relevant to the challenges of the modern world.

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