

Islamic Classical Texts Learning to Foster Students' Moderate Attitudes

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ABSTRACT: *This study aims to analyse the internalisation of religious moderation at Al-Istiqamah Modern Islamic Boarding School through Islamic classical texts (kitab kuning) instruction amid religious polarisation and contemporary educational demands. The research addresses a gap in previous studies by presenting the integration of traditional and modern methods, a tiered curriculum, and social interaction within the pesantren as contributing factors in shaping moderate attitudes, including freedom in choosing a mazhab, tolerance, and openness. This research employs a qualitative approach with a case study method. This study collected data through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation, and analysed them through data reduction, data presentation, and verification stages. The findings reveal that kitab kuning learning in this institution is conducted formally in the classroom by modifying traditional methods into modern approaches based on the Tarbiyatul Muallimin al-Islamiyah curriculum. The materials include classical kitab and miniature kitab kuning covering fiqh, usul fiqh, hadith, tafsir, Arabic language, and other Islamic sciences. This process significantly contributes to fostering students' moderate attitudes, as reflected in their freedom to choose a school of thought, tolerance toward differing opinions, decisiveness in religious choices, and openness to interacting with various Islamic organisations. The study offers originality by demonstrating that moderation is shaped not only through curricular content but also through social interaction, teacher role modelling, and students' autonomy in choosing a school of thought. It also opens pathways for future research, including comparative studies among Islamic boarding schools or investigations into the sustainability of moderation values among alums.*

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis internalisasi moderasi beragama di Pesantren Al-Istiqamah melalui pengajaran kitab kuning (kitab klasik Islam) di tengah polarisasi agama dan tuntutan pendidikan kontemporer. Penelitian ini menjawab kesenjangan dalam penelitian sebelumnya dengan

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menyajikan integrasi metode tradisional dan modern, kurikulum bertingkat, dan interaksi sosial di dalam pesantren sebagai faktor yang berkontribusi dalam membentuk sikap moderat, termasuk kebebasan dalam memilih mazhab, toleransi, dan keterbukaan. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus. Penelitian ini mengumpulkan data melalui observasi, wawancara mendalam, dan dokumentasi, dan menganalisisnya melalui tahap reduksi data, penyajian data, dan verifikasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pembelajaran *kitab kuning* di lembaga ini dilakukan secara formal di kelas dengan memodifikasi metode tradisional menjadi pendekatan modern berdasarkan kurikulum *Tarbiyatul Muallimin al-Islamiah*. Materi yang digunakan meliputi kitab klasik dan *kitab kuning* miniatur yang mencakup *fiqh*, *usul fiqh*, *hadits*, *tafsir*, bahasa Arab, dan ilmu-ilmu Islam lainnya. Proses ini secara signifikan berkontribusi dalam menumbuhkan sikap moderat siswa, yang tercermin dalam kebebasan mereka untuk memilih aliran pemikiran, toleransi terhadap perbedaan pendapat, ketegasan dalam pilihan keagamaan, dan keterbukaan untuk berinteraksi dengan berbagai organisasi Islam. Studi ini menawarkan orisinalitas dengan menunjukkan bahwa sikap moderat dibentuk tidak hanya melalui isi kurikulum tetapi juga melalui interaksi sosial, teladan guru, dan otonomi siswa dalam memilih aliran pemikiran. Studi ini juga membuka jalan bagi penelitian di masa mendatang, termasuk studi perbandingan antar sekolah berasrama Islam atau investigasi tentang keberlanjutan nilai-nilai moderasi di kalangan alumni.

Keywords: *Kitab Kuning, Islamic Classical Texts, Moderate Attitude, Islamic Boarding School.*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Islamic Boarding Schools are among the primary centres for cultivating Islamic values and play a strategic role in shaping religious knowledge and moral character in Indonesia. These institutions have existed long before the country's independence and have served as key pillars in the transmission of religious knowledge, moral education, and the preservation of enduring Islamic traditions (Riduan et al., 2023). Since their early establishment, Islamic Boarding Schools have adopted a traditional educational system that places the religious leader (*Kiai*) as the central figure and highest authority in the dissemination of knowledge. Learning typically occurs face-to-face through the *bandongan* or *sorogan* methods, emphasising reading, explanation, and interpretation of religious texts by teachers to students (*santri*). Over time, many Islamic Boarding Schools have begun adopting modern educational models that integrate the national curriculum with contextual learning methods and educational technology, while maintaining their traditional characteristics (Mahatma, 2022; Memon, 2022). This transformation aims to address contemporary societal needs and prepare Islamic Boarding Schools graduates to compete across various sectors of life. Nevertheless, some Islamic Boarding Schools still retain conservative or teacher-centred learning models, where teachers remain the focal point of learning and students act as passive recipients of knowledge. Such models are still prevalent in studies based on classical Islamic texts (*Kitab Kuning*), classical works of Islamic scholars rich in intellectual and

spiritual values, but requiring advanced linguistic and methodological competence to comprehend (Hirzulloh, 2023).

Thus, contemporary Islamic Boarding Schools find themselves at a crossroads between preserving centuries-old Islamic intellectual heritage and innovating education to remain relevant in the age of globalisation. This situation highlights the importance of studying *kitab kuning* learning models in modern Islamic Boarding Schools, particularly in understanding how the combination of traditional and modern methods can produce graduates who are not only intellectually competent but also moderate, tolerant, and adaptive to social diversity.

One of the most distinctive features of Islamic studies in Islamic Boarding Schools is the learning of *kitab kuning* (*al-kutub al-qadimah*), the classical works of scholars written in Arabic, usually without diacritical marks, demanding a high level of linguistic skill to understand them (Tayeb, 2020). This tradition serves not only as a medium for transmitting religious knowledge but also as a means to develop the students' critical reasoning through text-based discussion and argumentation (Adibah et al., 2023). Mastery of *kitab kuning* requires a comprehensive understanding of Arabic grammar (*nahwu*), morphology (*sharaf*), rhetoric (*balaghah*), and style (*uslub*), which serve as keys to textual interpretation and contextual application of Islamic teachings in contemporary society (Memon, Nadeem A. et al., 2021). Accordingly, *kitab kuning* learning represents a distinctive identity of Islamic Boarding Schools, distinguishing it from other Islamic educational institutions and serving as a strategic instrument for maintaining the continuity of Islamic intellectual traditions amid modernity and pluralism.

Previous studies have shown that *kitab kuning* learning plays a strategic role in both the transmission of religious knowledge and the character formation of students, as it integrates the elements of *aqidah* (faith), *sharia* (law), and *akhlaq* (morality) into a unified whole (Mahatma, 2022; Riduan et al., 2023). Through this learning tradition, *santri* are not only equipped with a deep understanding of classical texts but are also trained to develop critical thinking, argumentation based on textual evidence (*dalil*), and humility (*tawadhu*) toward teachers and peers. Furthermore, recent research emphasises that Islamic Boarding Schools play a vital role as “houses of religious moderation,” instilling tolerance, inclusivity, and adaptability within both the Islamic Boarding Schools environment and the broader pluralistic society (Adibah et al., 2023; Memon, 2022). The study of Islamic moderation in education cannot be separated from historical and social contexts. Inayatillah et al. (2022) highlight that the history of moderate Islam in Indonesia has significantly influenced the content of national education, making *kitab kuning* learning in modern Islamic Boarding Schools a continuation of this tradition in building a peaceful and inclusive face of Islam.

In the context of globalisation and the Industrial Revolution 4.0, the role of Islamic Boarding Schools has become increasingly significant. These institutions function not only as centres of religious education preserving Islamic intellectual heritage but also as cultural entities shaping a generation that is critical, competitive, and technologically literate for *dakwah* (Islamic outreach) and community empowerment (Arar et al., 2022). Modern Islamic boarding schools now face the challenge of integrating the *kitab kuning* tradition with innovative, technology-based learning methods without losing their scholarly identity and noble values inherited through centuries. The integration of classical intellectual wealth with contemporary educational innovation is expected to

produce graduates who are not only knowledgeable in religious sciences but also responsive to social, economic, and political changes both locally and globally. Thus, Islamic Boarding Schools continue to serve as moral fortresses, centres of scholarship, and agents of social transformation in today's rapidly changing world. The combination of strong traditional values and relevant digital competencies becomes the key for Islamic Boarding Schools to nurture a generation of integrity, global competitiveness, and deep commitment to religious moderation. Through this approach, Islamic Boarding Schools can play a strategic role in preventing radicalism, promoting tolerance, and strengthening social cohesion in culturally and religiously diverse societies. Therefore, the success of Islamic Boarding Schools in the Industrial 4.0 era depends significantly on their ability to integrate *kitab kuning*-based curricula with innovative learning methods that utilise technology wisely, while preserving the spirit and identity of the Islamic boarding school itself.

Research on the relationship between *kitab kuning* learning and the development of moderate attitudes among students in modern Islamic Boarding Schools remains relatively limited. However, discussions on moderation are increasingly relevant amid the growing polarisation of religious understanding and the challenges posed by Indonesia's plural society. Islamic Boarding Schools, particularly those oriented toward Islamic moderation, hold great potential as centres of character education based on tolerance, respect for diversity, and cross-group interaction. However, literature specifically addressing the integration of traditional and modern learning methods in the context of *kitab kuning* remains scarce, especially regarding its implications for shaping students' moderate attitudes (Riduan et al., 2023). The importance of this study becomes more evident when considering that modern Islamic Boarding Schools often stand at the intersection between maintaining traditional values and responding to educational innovation demands. The *kitab kuning* learning model, often perceived as rigid, can actually be transformed into a flexible, contextual, and relevant learning medium when approached with appropriate pedagogical methods (Memon, Nadeem A. et al., 2021). A curriculum model that combines traditional and modern approaches is believed to accommodate the diverse backgrounds of *santri* while fostering critical thinking and social skills essential in plural societies.

Based on these conditions, this study aims to analyse in depth the implementation of *kitab kuning* learning at Modern Islamic Boarding School Al-Istiqamah, Sigi, which is known for integrating classical *kitab kuning* studies with a modern formal curriculum. The analysis seeks to understand how this learning method internalises the values of moderation reflected in tolerant attitudes toward differences of opinion, freedom to choose schools of thought (*mazhab*), and the ability to interact across Islamic organisations. This approach enables the researcher to identify the implications of the learning model in shaping moderate *santri*. Specifically, this study is expected to make a significant contribution to the development of Islamic Boarding Schools' learning models that not only preserve the traditional Islamic heritage but also remain relevant to the demands of plural societies in the era of globalisation and digital disruption (Memon, 2022). The findings are anticipated to serve as a reference for Islamic Boarding Schools administrators, Islamic education policymakers, and academics in designing learning strategies that effectively bridge tradition and modernity. Consequently, Islamic Boarding Schools can continue to play their roles as moral fortresses, centres of knowledge, and effective agents of religious moderation amid the complexities of social dynamics.

II. METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design to obtain an in-depth and comprehensive understanding of the implementation of classical *kitab kuning* learning as a means of shaping moderate attitudes among *santri* at Modern Islamic Boarding School Al-Istiqamah, Sigi. The qualitative approach was chosen because it enables the exploration of meaning, processes, and dynamics occurring naturally in the field, producing data not merely in the form of numbers but rich, contextual descriptions (Miles et al., 2014). The case study design focuses the research on a specific phenomenon, namely, the implementation of *kitab kuning* learning in the context of developing students' moderate attitudes while taking into account the unique characteristics of modern Islamic Boarding Schools that integrate traditional and modern educational systems. The research site was purposively selected at Modern Islamic Boarding School Al-Istiqamah in Sigi, Central Sulawesi, due to its dual learning model that integrates classical methods such as *halaqah* and *bandongan* with a modern structured curriculum. The purposive selection of the location was based on its contextual relevance to the research objectives and its potential to generate rich data. The research subjects consisted of *santri*, *ustadz* (teachers), and Islamic Boarding Schools administrators who are directly involved in *kitab kuning* instruction. The selection of informants employed purposive sampling based on specific criteria: 1) *santri* with at least one year of study experience; 2) *ustadz* serving as *kitab kuning* instructors; and 3) the Islamic Boarding Schools leader as the academic policymaker. Based on these criteria, ten key informants were selected, six senior students, three *ustadz*, and one Islamic Boarding Schools leader. This composition was expected to provide diverse yet complementary perspectives.

The research data consisted of primary and secondary sources. Primary data were obtained through participant observation, in-depth interviews, and field documentation. Participant observation was conducted to observe interactions during the learning process, the teaching strategies used by the *ustadz*, student responses, and the overall environment of the Islamic Boarding Schools that either supports or hinders the development of moderate attitudes. In-depth interviews were carried out using semi-structured interview guides, allowing the researcher to explore informants' experiences, perceptions, and views flexibly while maintaining focus. Documentation included the collection of official institutional records such as curricula, class schedules, activity archives, and visual media (photos and videos) depicting the learning process.

Meanwhile, secondary data were derived from scholarly literature, journals, books, and official regulations relevant to the study, such as the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs' regulations concerning the definition of *kitab kuning*. Data analysis was performed using the interactive analysis model proposed by Miles et al. (2014), which involves three main stages. Data reduction is the process of selecting, focusing, and simplifying raw data to ensure relevance to the research focus. Data display organising data into descriptive narratives, matrices, or tables to facilitate interpretation and Conclusion drawing and verification conducted continuously throughout the research process to ensure that the conclusions drawn are consistent with the evidence collected.

To ensure data validity, both source triangulation and technique triangulation were applied (Patton, 2015). Source triangulation was achieved by comparing information obtained from *santri*, *ustadz*, and *Kiai*. In contrast, technique triangulation was

performed by cross-checking the results of observation, interviews, and documentation related to the same themes. Through this process, the resulting data achieved a high degree of validity and could be scientifically justified. With this methodological design, the study aims to produce a comprehensive portrayal of how *kitab kuning* learning is implemented and to what extent it contributes to shaping *santri*'s moderate attitudes both within the Islamic Boarding Schools environment and in their interactions within the broader society.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of *Kitab Kuning* Learning

The discussion on the implementation of classical *kitab kuning* learning at Modern Islamic Boarding School Al-Istiqamah, Sigi, includes an overview of the learning concepts and methods, the types of *kitab kuning* used, the profile of the instructors, the curriculum applied, and the system of learning documentation. This section presents how *kitab kuning* is taught, beginning with its conceptual framework, the selected learning materials, and the practical strategies applied in the field. The purpose is to provide a comprehensive picture of the learning process so that the relationship between the applied methods and the goal of shaping *santri*'s moderate attitudes can be clearly understood. In summary, the implementation of *kitab kuning* learning at Modern Islamic Boarding School Al-Istiqamah can be seen in Table 1, which presents aspects of learning methods, types of texts, teacher profiles, curriculum, and documentation as follows:

Table 1. Implementation of *kitab kuning* learning

| Aspect | Implementation |
|------------------------------|---|
| Learning concepts & methods | <i>Bandongan, sorogan, and halaqah</i> methods combined with modern classroom approaches. |
| Types of <i>kitab kuning</i> | <i>Fath al-Qarib, Fath al-Mu'in, Bidayah al-Mujtahid wa Nihayah al-Muqtashid, Aqidah al-'Awam, Ta'lim al-Muta'allim, Jurumiyah, Alfiyyah Ibn Malik.</i> |
| Teacher profile | <i>Ustadz</i> who graduated from renowned Islamic Boarding Schools or Islamic universities are competent in Arabic and philosophy. |
| Curriculum & documentation | Integration of Integrated Islamic Boarding School (<i>Tarbiyatul Muallimin al-Islamiah/TMI</i>) and national curricula, oral and practical evaluations, documentation through attendance lists, teacher journals, photos, and videos. |

From Table 1 above, it can be seen that the *kitab kuning* learning at this Islamic boarding school not only emphasises the aspect of knowledge transmission but also the formation of a moderate attitude through integrative learning methods and systematic documentation, thereby supporting the findings of this study.

1. Learning concepts and methods

The *kitab kuning* learning at Al-Istiqamah Modern Islamic Boarding School, Sigi, adopts an integration between traditional Islamic Boarding Schools' methods, such as

bandongan, *sorogan*, and *halaqah*, with modern teaching innovations. In the *bandongan* method, the *ustadz* reads and explains the text systematically. At the same time, *sorogan* allows *santri* to read independently with direct correction from the *ustadz*, and *halaqah* encourages interactive discussions among students facilitated by the *ustadz*. All these methods are implemented in a modern way through formal classroom learning supported by instructional media, structured evaluation systems, and contextual material integration. This model aligns with the findings of Lasawali et al. (2022); Muthahari & Zaidan (2024), which affirm that the recontextualisation of *kitab kuning* through the integration of traditional values and modern approaches can strengthen moderate and “glocal” Islamic education grounded in local traditions yet globally relevant. The integration of *bandongan*, *sorogan*, and *halaqah* methods applied at Al-Istiqamah Modern Islamic Boarding School is not only practised traditionally but also contextualised within formal learning. This is illustrated in the following diagram:

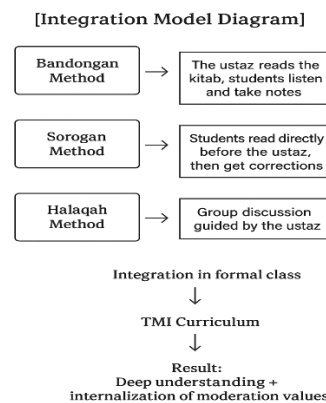


Figure 1. *The integration model of bandongan, sorogan, and halaqah methods*

The diagram above illustrates how the three traditional Islamic Boarding Schools' methods, such as *bandongan*, *sorogan*, and *halaqah*, are integratively connected within formal classroom learning through the TMI curriculum. This integration produces a *kitab kuning* learning model that supports the internalisation of moderation values among *santri*.

From Herbert Spencer's theoretical perspective, this approach reflects the principle of education as a means of adaptation for complete living, where the learning process not only prepares students to understand the intellectual heritage of the past but also equips them with life skills relevant to social change (Spencer, 2009). The integration of classical methods and modern innovations represents an educational adaptation that enables *santri* to preserve traditional Islamic values while developing critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and other essential competencies needed in a pluralistic society and the era of globalisation. Spencer emphasised that the survival of individuals and societies depends on their ability to adapt to dynamic environments. In this context, *kitab kuning* learning at Al-Istiqamah Modern Islamic Boarding School functions as a social mechanism that not only preserves the scholarly tradition of Islam but also transforms it into an instrument for shaping a generation ready to face modern challenges without losing their religious identity.

2. Types of *kitab kuning*

The learning materials at Modern Islamic Boarding School Al-Istiqamah include classical Islamic texts that serve as the primary foundation of religious instruction, such

as *Fath al-Qarib*, *Fath al-Mu'in*, and *Bidayah al-Mujtahid wa Nihayah al-Muqtashid* in the field of *fiqh*; *Aqidah al-'Awam* in the field of *tawhid*; *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim* for ethics (*akhlaq*); and *Jurumiyyah* and *Alfiyyah Ibn Malik* in Arabic grammar (*nahwu-sharaf*). These books are carefully selected based on the students' levels of competence and the relevance of the moderation values aimed to be achieved at each stage of learning. The types of *kitab kuning* taught at Modern Islamic Boarding School Al-Istiqamah are organised in stages according to the students' grade levels. These texts cover the areas of *fiqh*, *tawhid*, *akhlaq*, and linguistic sciences (*nahwu-sharaf*). Details of the texts taught, along with the students' levels and learning objectives, can be seen in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Types of *kitab kuning* taught

| Field of Study | Title of the Book | Student Level | Learning Objectives |
|---|--|---------------|--|
| <i>Fiqh</i> (Islamic Jurisprudence) | <i>Fath al-Qarib</i> , <i>Fath al-Mu'in</i> | Grades 2–6 | To understand the laws of worship (<i>ibadah</i>) and social transactions (<i>mu'amalah</i>), as well as the differences among Islamic schools of thought (<i>mazhab</i>). |
| | <i>Bidayah al-Mujtahid wa Nihayah al-Muqtashid</i> , <i>Bulugul Maram</i> | Grades 4–6 | To comprehend the legal reasoning behind <i>fiqh</i> rulings and to compare various <i>mazhab</i> interpretations. |
| <i>Tawhid</i> (Islamic Theology) | <i>Aqidah al-'Awam</i> | Grades 2–4 | To instil a sound foundation of Islamic creed and a correct understanding of Islamic theology. |
| <i>Akhlaq</i> (Ethics and Morality) | <i>Ta'lim al-Muta'allim</i> | Grades 2–3 | To shape the students' character, study ethics, and moral conduct (<i>adab</i>) as <i>santri</i> . |
| <i>Nahwu-Sharaf</i> (Arabic Grammar and Morphology) | <i>Jurumiyyah</i> , <i>Alfiyyah Ibn Malik</i> | Grades 2–6 | To master Arabic grammar rules in order to comprehend <i>kitab kuning</i> texts effectively. |

Fajrussalam (2020) emphasises that the study of classical texts such as *Tijan ad-Darari* and *Tafsir Jalalayn* holds excellent potential for instilling values of moderation, tolerance, and inclusivity, as both works historically represent a balanced and adaptive face of Islam toward diversity. Similarly, research conducted by Fitrah et al. (2024) indicates that the integration of formal curricula with traditional values in Islamic Boarding Schools creates a conducive learning environment for the formation of moderate character. They further explain that the success of this integration is influenced mainly by the selection of learning materials relevant to the *santri's* socio-religious context.

Comparable findings were also revealed by Rohmah (2024), who asserts that a contextual approach in *kitab kuning* learning can enhance *santri's* critical awareness and openness toward differing viewpoints while maintaining the authenticity of Islamic Boarding Schools' scholarly traditions. Through this approach, students are not only able to understand the text but also to relate it to the challenges of modern life and the dynamics of a plural society. In relation to Herbert Spencer's theory, as elaborated in

his work *Education: Intellectual, Moral, and Physical*, the selection of *kitab* materials in these Islamic Boarding Schools aligns with the concept of education as a process of complete living, which prepares learners to face all dimensions of life. Spencer highlights the importance of education that equips individuals with intellectual, moral, and physical skills that can be adaptively applied across various contexts. Thus, *kitab kuning* learning at Modern Islamic Boarding School Al-Istiqamah functions not merely as the transmission of religious knowledge but also as a comprehensive strategy to develop *santri* who are moderate, critical, and ready to contribute meaningfully within a pluralistic society (Spencer, 2009).

3. Profile of *kitab kuning* teachers

The *ustadz* at Modern Islamic Boarding School Al-Istiqamah are generally alumni of renowned Islamic Boarding Schools or Islamic universities who possess high competence in Arabic, linguistic tools (*'ulum al-alah*), and Islamic philosophy. The training they receive ensures that their role extends beyond the literal delivery of textual content; it also encompasses the internalisation of moderation values such as tolerance and non-violence throughout the teaching process. Mahatma (2022) research found that although moderation has not yet been formally integrated into the curriculum, values such as national commitment, tolerance, non-violence, and local cultural adaptation are instilled through a hidden curriculum, particularly within the study of *kitab kuning*. Moreover, a study conducted revealed that the implementation of a science-based curriculum integrated with *kitab kuning* studies also contributes to religious moderation by uniting scientific and religious approaches to develop *santri* with balanced, moderate character (Bahijah et al., 2022).

This approach aligns with Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory, which posits that learners acquire knowledge not only from written material but also through observing the behaviour of role models. The *santri* internalise the *ustadz's* exemplary conduct, courtesy, critical thinking, and moderation through social learning, thereby strengthening the Islamic Boarding Schools' role as a moral education institution. In addition, Herbert Spencer's Theory of Educational Evolution emphasises that education should prepare individuals to adapt holistically within society. In this context, the internalisation of moderation through *kitab kuning* instruction and the *ustadz's* exemplary behaviour functions as an adaptive instrument that maintains the Islamic Boarding Schools' relevance amid modern social change.

4. *Kitab kuning* curriculum

The *kitab kuning* curriculum at Modern Islamic Boarding School Al-Istiqamah is structured in a tiered manner, taking into account the alignment between the national curriculum and the Islamic Boarding Schools' internal curriculum. At each educational level, specific *kitab* texts are designated for mastery, along with the corresponding academic competencies, practical skills, and evaluation mechanisms. The assessment emphasises oral proficiency (*mushafahah*) and hands-on practice in reading, understanding, and teaching the content of the *kitab*. This approach not only preserves the continuity of the Islamic Boarding Schools tradition but also reflects the principle of *maslahah* (social benefit) as the central objective of Islamic education. The *kitab kuning* curriculum at Al-Istiqamah Modern Islamic Boarding School is not confined to theoretical mastery within the classroom; it is also integrated with various extracurricular activities. Classroom learning focuses on formal *kitab kuning* studies, Arabic language proficiency, and theoretical knowledge. At the same time, out-of-class

activities emphasise character development, direct kitab reading practice (*fath al-kutub*), and full participation in the 24-hour boarding environment. This model illustrates a balanced integration of the *santri*'s cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions. The integration pattern is illustrated in the following diagram:

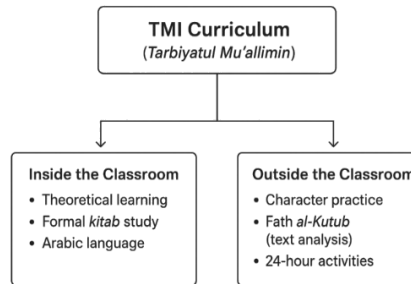


Figure 2. Integrated curriculum model of TMI

The implementation model does not stand alone but represents a concrete manifestation of the integrated curriculum framework developed by Al-Istiqamah Islamic Boarding School. The Islamic Boarding Schools curriculum combines traditional Islamic education, the national curriculum, classical scholarship, and modern knowledge. This integration serves as the foundation for the emergence of a moderate educational system, one that is capable of addressing contemporary needs while preserving the legacy of classical Islamic scholarship. Conceptually, this integration is visualised in the TMI Curriculum Integration Model, which positions the Islamic Boarding Schools curriculum, national curriculum, classical sciences, and modern knowledge as its core components. The intersection of these four elements produces a distinctive integrated curriculum characterised by moderation, adaptability, and contextual relevance to contemporary developments.

Integrated Curriculum Model (TMI)

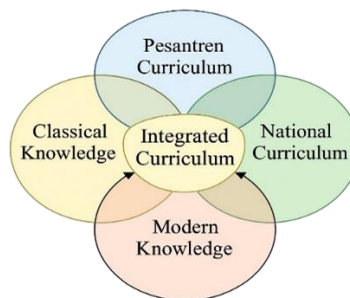


Figure 3. TMI curriculum integration model

These findings are in line with research conducted which emphasises the importance of integrating formal and informal curricula as the foundation for strengthening religious moderation within the Islamic Boarding Schools environment (Anam et al., 2023).

In addition, the study by Fitrah et al. (2024) in several Islamic Boarding Schools across Indonesia shows that the *kitab kuning* curriculum, which is designed in a layered structure, is capable of accommodating both the strengthening of Islamic literacy and the development of 21st-century skills, such as critical thinking, cross-cultural communication, and value-based leadership. This curriculum integration also aligns with the findings of Jati et al. (2022) research, which reveals that the practice of moderation does not only occur at the theoretical level but is also evident in interfaith

dialogue campaigns in Indonesia, where exclusive conservatism can be balanced through more open educational approaches, such as those found in modern Islamic Boarding Schools. Thus, the structured development of the *kitab kuning* curriculum is not merely a pedagogical strategy but also a strategic instrument for instilling the values of moderation, shaping adaptive character, and preparing students to become agents of change capable of contributing to a plural society.

5. Documentation of *kitab kuning* learning

All *kitab kuning* (classical Islamic text) learning activities at Modern Islamic Boarding Schools Al-Istiqamah are systematically documented through various instruments, such as student attendance lists, oral assessments (*mushafahah*), teacher journals, and visual media in the form of photos and video recordings of the learning process. This documentation not only functions as an administrative archive preserving the record of the teaching and learning process but also serves as an important instrument within the cycle of continuous educational improvement. Through routine analysis of documentation data, Islamic Boarding Schools administrators can evaluate the appropriateness of teaching methods, identify challenges faced by both students and teachers, and formulate innovative teaching strategies that are more effective and relevant. This practice is consistent with the findings of Muthahari & Zaidan (2024), who emphasise that a well-organised and systematically documented *kitab kuning* learning management system is a key factor in supporting moderate Islamic education that is adaptive to social change and transformative in shaping students' character. This approach also aligns with the research of Fikri et al. (2025), which shows that the implementation of learning management based on the POAC model (Planning, Organising, Actuating, Controlling) enables Islamic Boarding Schools to maintain classical scholarly traditions while integrating contemporary values needed in multicultural societies.

From the perspective of educational management theory, structured documentation can be positioned as part of evidence-based practice, a decision-making approach grounded in data and empirical evidence. This provides academic legitimacy to the teaching strategies employed while also serving as an accountability mechanism to both internal and external stakeholders of the Islamic Boarding Schools. Furthermore, in accordance with the structural functionalism theory proposed by Talcott Parsons, documentation functions to maintain the balance of the Islamic Boarding Schools' educational system through mechanisms of adaptation and integration of values. Thus, the documentation of *kitab kuning* learning at Modern Islamic Boarding School Al-Istiqamah is not merely an archival record, but a strategic component that plays a crucial role in strengthening educational quality, preserving the continuity of scholarly traditions, and ensuring the measurable formation of students' moderate character.

The Implications of Implementing *Kitab Kuning* Learning

After discussing the implementation aspects, this section elaborates on the real implications of *kitab kuning* learning for shaping students' moderate attitudes. The discussion focuses on four key indicators: freedom to choose a *mazhab* (school of thought), tolerance toward differing opinions, steadfastness in maintaining one's chosen *mazhab*, and the ability to engage with various Islamic organisations. This description aims to show the extent to which *kitab kuning* learning influences the perspectives, attitudes, and behaviours of students in their socio-religious life, both within the Islamic Boarding Schools environment and on the broader community.

1. Students' freedom to choose the mazhab taught

Modern Islamic Boarding School Al-Istiqamah is one of the Islamic educational institutions that consistently teaches *kitab kuning* as a core component of its curriculum. To support students' understanding of classical texts, the Islamic Boarding Schools provide comprehensive reinforcement in Arabic language proficiency. Arabic instruction includes mastery of vocabulary (*mufradat*), grammar (*nahwu* and *sharaf*), and the application of accurate sentence structures. This linguistic foundation becomes the primary basis enabling students to read, comprehend, and interpret classical texts, which are typically written without diacritical marks (*harakat*) and employ the distinctive linguistic style of early Muslim scholars.

The *kitab kuning* learning process at Modern Islamic Boarding School Al-Istiqamah is provided to students from the second to the sixth grade. However, the focus of the material differs according to the level of education. Materials discussing differences in *fiqh* opinions (*ikhtilaf al-fuqaha*) are only taught to students from the fourth to sixth grades. This is because, at that stage, students have already mastered the necessary linguistic and analytical tools, allowing them to critically understand the differences in scholars' opinions both in terms of evidential sources and legal reasoning methodologies.

Through this strategy, students can study *Kitab Kuning* critically and analytically. Upon completing their *kitab kuning* studies, students are granted the freedom to determine which *fiqh* opinion they will adopt as a reference in their religious practices. This freedom often results in a shift in perspective. For instance, some students, after studying *kitab kuning*, change their previous worship practices held from the first to the third grade because they discover new arguments or evidence that are more convincing. Conversely, some students become more steadfast in maintaining their previous practices after finding reinforcement in the texts they study. This dynamic fosters diversity of thought among students, both in theoretical understanding and personal practice. Such differences are not only acknowledged but also respected by the Islamic Boarding Schools, as long as they are based on valid sources and reasoned arguments. This inclusive attitude reflects the implementation of religious moderation values within the Islamic Boarding Schools environment, where differences in understanding are not sources of conflict. Instead, it means to enrich insight and cultivate tolerance.

This condition aligns with the findings of Daheri et al. (2023), who states that strengthening religious moderation can be internalised through the harmonious daily practices of believers, thereby positioning Islamic Boarding Schools as strategic institutions for nurturing tolerance and coexistence skills in multireligious societies. Thus, Modern Islamic Boarding School Al-Istiqamah not only plays a role in transferring religious knowledge but also in shaping students' character to be adaptive toward diversity and pluralism.

2. Students become tolerant toward differences of opinion

Tolerance is one of the core values that is practically implemented by students in the environment of Modern Islamic Boarding School Al-Istiqamah. The application of this value is clearly reflected in daily interactions, particularly when senior students are given the freedom to choose the *mazhab* they follow in performing religious rituals. This freedom does not make them act exclusively or highlight differences; instead, it is balanced by an attitude of respect and understanding toward junior students who may

not yet possess a deep comprehension of *mazhab* differences. In maintaining harmony and collective benefit, senior students often adjust their ritual practices to align with the *fiqh* traditions followed by their juniors. This adjustment is not seen as a compromise of personal conviction, but rather as an expression of respect for the diversity of understanding levels and a strategy to preserve social stability within the Islamic Boarding Schools environment. Such an approach reflects the implementation of *tasamuh* (tolerance), which aligns with the principles of religious moderation where differences are viewed as a source of mercy rather than division.

This tolerant attitude extends not only among students but also between students and *ustadz*. Relationships built on mutual respect and appreciation of differing opinions make Modern Islamic Boarding School Al-Istiqamah a peaceful community, free from conflict related to divergent views or variations in worship practices. This conducive environment indirectly supports the development of open-minded students who are capable of dialogue and prepared to live harmoniously in a pluralistic society.

Thus, the pattern of social interaction at Modern Islamic Boarding School Al-Istiqamah serves as a concrete example of how Islamic Boarding Schools' education goes beyond mere transmission of religious knowledge. It also emphasises the cultivation of character and social attitudes that are adaptive to pluralism. This approach aligns with the views of contemporary Islamic education scholars who highlight the importance of integrating religious instruction with the formation of multicultural character so that Islamic Boarding Schools graduates can become agents of peace amid the dynamics of modern society.

3. Students are not confused in determining their chosen school of thought (mazhabi orientation)

The implementation of *kitab kuning* learning at Modern Islamic Boarding School Al-Istiqamah has significant implications for students' thinking patterns and religious decision-making processes, particularly in determining their chosen *mazhab*. One of the most notable positive impacts is the elimination of doubt or confusion among senior students when choosing which *mazhab* to follow. Students are granted complete freedom to make their own choices based on personal conviction, supported by strong reasoning and a deep understanding of the relevant principles. In this process, the *ustadz* do not impose or direct students to follow any specific *mazhab*, allowing them full autonomy to conduct objective analysis. This condition indirectly enhances the learning experience of *kitab kuning*. With academic and intellectual freedom, students can study various opinions from scholars across different *mazhab* without prejudice or fear of instructor intervention. They learn not only to understand texts literally but also to grasp the context, reasoning, and *istinbath al-hukm* (derivation of law) methodologies applied by each *mazhab*. This fosters both critical thinking and a tolerant attitude toward diversity within Islamic thought.

Another unique aspect of these Islamic Boarding Schools lies in their openness to learning materials. The learning process gives students full access to differing opinions among the *mazāhib* without withholding any information. The learning process is conducted in depth through a comparative method (*muqaranah al-madzahib*), where each argument is critically analysed based on its sources, the Qur'an, Hadith, *ijma'* (consensus), and *qiyas* (analogy). This ensures that the *mazhab* a student adopts is the result of comprehensive study rather than mere imitation of habit or environment. For instance, in the discussion of the ruling on reciting Surah al-Fatiha while following an

imam in congregational prayer, students explore multiple perspectives. Some scholars deem it obligatory to recite it after the imam, others recommend reciting it simultaneously, while some view it as unnecessary. These variations are systematically examined through *Bidayah al-Mujtahid wa Nihayah al-Muqtashid* by Ibn Rushd, a classical work designed to compare legal arguments across *mazāhib*. Through studying this text, students gain the ability to understand the reasoning behind each difference and determine their personal stance in worship without invalidating others' opinions.

Thus, the *kitab kuning* learning system at Modern Islamic Boarding School Al-Istiqamah functions not only as a medium for transmitting religious knowledge but also as a vehicle for cultivating intellectual independence, analytical skills, and respect for diversity in Islamic understanding. This model aligns with the Islamic Boarding Schools' vision of being a centre of moderate, inclusive, and adaptive Islamic education that remains faithful to the intellectual legacy of the classical scholars.

4. Students can join different islamic organisations

Alums of Islamic Boarding Schools are among the most valuable assets for the sustainability and reputation of their institutions. Their presence and conduct within society reflect the image and quality of education they received during their time in the Islamic Boarding Schools. Therefore, alums are expected to uphold, practice, and transmit the noble values instilled during their education, even after they leave the Islamic Boarding Schools environment. These values include integrity, independence, tolerance, and a commitment to the teachings of moderate Islam. One of the significant implications of *kitab kuning* learning at Modern Islamic Boarding School Al-Istiqamah is the cultivation of healthy intellectual freedom, particularly regarding religious affiliation. Upon completing their education, alums have the freedom to join any Islamic organisations in Indonesia, including Muhammadiyah, Nahdlatul Ulama, Alkhairaat, Darud Da'wah wal Irsyad (DDI), the Front Pembela Islam (FPI), Jamaah Tabligh, and others. This freedom does not signify a directionless permissiveness; rather, it is the result of an educational process that emphasises the understanding and appreciation of diverse perspectives from an early stage of religious learning.

Empirical findings show that many alums of Modern Islamic Boarding School Al-Istiqamah are now active members of various Islamic organisations, each according to their interests, convictions, and chosen fields of *dakwah*. Differences in organisational affiliation do not hinder them from maintaining ties of brotherhood or engaging in inter-organisational cooperation. This harmony is possible because, during their time as students, the learning process trained them to view differences as part of Islam's intellectual richness rather than as a source of division. Their experiences engaging with diverse viewpoints in the Islamic Boarding Schools environment have shaped them into individuals who embody tolerance, inclusivity, and a dialogical spirit in society. As a result, they resist blind fanaticism, which often fuels internal conflicts among Muslims. On the contrary, their varied organisational affiliations become opportunities for mutual enrichment, support, and strengthening of *ukhuwah Islamiyah* (Islamic brotherhood). The bonds of fraternity nurtured during their Islamic Boarding Schools years continue to thrive, even grow stronger, as they engage in broader fields of service and struggle beyond the Islamic Boarding Schools walls. This aligns with the findings of Saleh and Melki, who argue that diverse religious experiences, when managed through positive religious coping strategies, can enhance individuals' quality of life including Islamic

Boarding Schools alums who successfully adapt to different Islamic organisations without losing their moderate identity (Moussa et al., 2023).

The above illustrates that *kitab kuning* learning at Modern Islamic Boarding Schools Al-Istiqamah not only enriches students' understanding of classical Islamic texts and scholarship but also shapes their character to contribute meaningfully to a pluralistic society. Education that fosters openness to differences thus becomes a valuable provision for alums to make constructive contributions across religious, social, and national spheres.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study aims to analyse the implementation of *kitab kuning* learning at Modern Islamic Boarding School Al-Istiqamah, Sigi, and to examine its implications for shaping students' moderate attitudes. The findings indicate that the implementation of *kitab kuning* learning in these Islamic Boarding Schools integrates traditional methods such as *bandongan*, *sorogan*, and *halaqah* with modern, structured teaching approaches within a tiered curriculum. The learning materials cover the fields of *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), *tauhid* (theology), *akhlak* (ethics), and *nahwu-sharaf* (Arabic grammar and morphology), which are adapted to the students' levels of understanding. Documentation of the learning process is conducted systematically as part of continuous evaluation and quality enhancement in teaching. The implications of *kitab kuning* learning in these Islamic Boarding Schools are evident in students' freedom to choose different schools of *mazhab*, their tolerance toward differing opinions, and their ability to engage and collaborate across various Islamic organisations without provoking conflict. These findings reinforce the notion that *kitab kuning*-based education, when managed in an integrative and contextual manner, can shape students' adaptive, inclusive, and moderate character. This research contributes to the development of an Islamic Boarding Schools learning model that merges the strengths of Islamic intellectual traditions with the needs of a plural society. For future studies, it is recommended to conduct comparative research between modern and traditional Islamic Boarding Schools concerning the effectiveness of *kitab kuning* learning in fostering moderation, as well as longitudinal research to measure the sustainability of moderation values among alums. Currently, the author is developing a follow-up study exploring the integration of digital technology in *kitab kuning* instruction to expand the reach and effectiveness of learning in the era of Industry 4.0.

V. REFERENCES

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