



Integration of Tradition and Modernization of Education at the Riyadhul Jannah Islamic Boarding School, Subang

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ABSTRACT

Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), as the oldest Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia, face major challenges in the era of globalization, which demands adaptation without the loss of identity. This study examines the process of *pesantren* modernization through a case study of the Riyadhul Jannah Islamic Education Foundation in Subang, which has undergone significant transformation since its establishment in 1996. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach through document and literature analysis, this research reveals how modern *pesantren* have successfully integrated traditional Islamic values with the demands of contemporary education.

The findings indicate that Riyadhul Jannah has transformed from a single *pesantren* into a foundation overseeing 32 educational institutions, implementing an integrated *pesantren*-national curriculum model, developing students' entrepreneurship, and applying professional, technology-based management. The vision, "Creating a *Muttaqin* Generation that is Intellectual, and Intellectuals who are *Muttaqin*," reflects the success of balancing spiritual depth (faith and piety/*IMTAQ*) with academic excellence (science and technology/*IPTEK*). This study concludes that successful *pesantren* modernization is characterized by the ability to integrate the tradition of *tafaqquh fiddin* with modern educational innovation, institutional diversification, economic self-reliance, and a global orientation without sacrificing the core values of *pesantren* education.

Keywords: *pesantren* modernization, curriculum integration, institutional transformation, Islamic education, globalization

ABSTRAK

Pesantren sebagai lembaga pendidikan Islam tertua di Indonesia menghadapi tantangan besar dalam era globalisasi yang menuntut adaptasi tanpa kehilangan identitas. Penelitian ini mengkaji proses modernisasi *pesantren* melalui studi kasus Yayasan Pendidikan Islam Riyadhul Jannah Subang yang mengalami transformasi signifikan sejak didirikan tahun 1996. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan analisis dokumen dan literatur, penelitian ini mengungkapkan bagaimana *pesantren* modern berhasil mengintegrasikan nilai-nilai tradisional Islam dengan tuntutan pendidikan kontemporer. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa Riyadhul Jannah telah bertransformasi dari sebuah pondok *pesantren* tunggal menjadi yayasan yang menaungi 32 lembaga pendidikan dengan model integrasi kurikulum *pesantren*



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dan nasional, pengembangan kewirausahaan santri, serta penerapan manajemen profesional berbasis teknologi. Visi "Menciptakan Generasi Muttaqin yang Intelpek, dan Intelpek yang Muttaqin" mencerminkan keberhasilan menyeimbangkan kedalaman spiritual (IMTAQ) dengan keunggulan akademik (IPTEK). Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa modernisasi pesantren yang berhasil ditandai oleh kemampuan mengintegrasikan tradisi tafaqquh fiddin dengan inovasi pendidikan modern, diversifikasi kelembagaan, kemandirian ekonomi, dan orientasi global tanpa mengorbankan nilai-nilai dasar kepesantrenan.

Kata Kunci: *Modernisasi pesantren, integrasi kurikulum, transformasi kelembagaan, pendidikan Islam, globalisasi*

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A. INTRODUCTION

Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) are Islamic educational institutions with deep historical roots and represent a unique subsystem within Indonesia's national education system. As centuries-old institutions, pesantren function not only as centers for the transmission of religious knowledge but also as agents of social transformation and the reproduction of Islamic scholars (ulama). Their continued existence reflects the dynamic character of Indonesian Muslim society, which consistently adapts to changing times while maintaining its Islamic identity (Millah, 2017).

However, in the era of globalization—characterized by rapid advancements in information technology, the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and the emergence of Society 5.0—pesantren face increasingly complex challenges. Educational modernization, the penetration of global culture, and the demand for twenty-first-century competencies compel pesantren to undertake fundamental transformations. They are confronted with a dilemma: preserving the classical scholarly tradition (tafaqquh fiddin) while simultaneously producing graduates who are competent in general sciences and technology (Rachman & Annuqayah, n.d.).

Previous studies have examined the modernization of pesantren from various perspectives, including curriculum reform (Zaini, 2022), institutional typology (Muhammad Zainuri & Mu'alimin, 2025), and the integration of faith and piety with science and technology (IMTAQ-IPTEK) (Roqib, 2021). Nevertheless, most of these studies remain conceptual in nature or focus primarily on large and prominent pesantren, such as Pesantren Tebuireng in Jombang, East Java (Amrul Mu'arif, 2015). Empirical research on the transformation of pesantren operating under multi-institutional foundation systems in regional contexts—particularly in Subang Regency—remains limited. Therefore, more in-depth investigation in this area is necessary (Rahmah, 2025).

The Riyadhul Jannah Islamic Education Foundation in Subang represents a compelling example of a pesantren that has undergone significant transformation in response to modernization demands. Established in 1996 by Dr. KH. Moch. Ujang Saefullah, M.Pd., under the motto "Standing Firm Once Established," the foundation has evolved from a single boarding school into a large-scale educational institution overseeing more than 32 educational units, ranging from kindergarten to higher education. The transformation of Riyadhul Jannah reflects the efforts of a modern pesantren to balance the preservation of traditional Islamic values with

contemporary educational innovation (Subang, n.d.).

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B. Literature Review

1. The Concept Pesantren Modernisation

Pesantren modernization is defined as a systemic transformation undertaken by Islamic boarding schools to adapt to contemporary developments without losing their foundational identity and core values. According to Azyumardi Azra, modernization in the context of pesantren does not imply Westernization or secularization; rather, it represents an effort to integrate Islamic intellectual traditions with the advancement of modern science and technology. This perspective emphasizes a balanced approach between preserving classical Islamic heritage (*turats*) and fostering innovation and adaptation within contemporary contexts (Hayati, 2019).

Modernization encompasses several key dimensions. First, curriculum modernization involves integrating classical Islamic sciences with general knowledge and twenty-first-century competencies. This integration aims to produce graduates who possess both strong religious foundations and the intellectual skills required in a globalized world. Second, methodological modernization entails moving beyond traditional instructional models—such as *sorogan*, *bandongan*, and *wetonan*—by incorporating active learning strategies, critical thinking approaches, and technology-based instruction. Third, institutional modernization includes restructuring organizational systems, implementing professional management practices, and strengthening governance mechanisms to enhance institutional sustainability. Fourth, the functional modernization of pesantren expands their traditional focus on *tafaqquh fiddin* (deep religious scholarship) to encompass broader social, economic, and community empowerment roles (Heriyudanta, 2016).

Nevertheless, the modernization of pesantren is not without challenges and potential risks. Some scholars express concern that modernization may erode the essential identity of pesantren as centers of Islamic scholarship and diminish the central authority of the *kyai* as the spiritual and intellectual leader. Others argue that an increased emphasis on general education and vocational skills could potentially reduce students’ mastery of classical Islamic texts and scholarly traditions. Consequently, modernization must be carefully designed and guided by clear principles to ensure the preservation of the pesantren’s fundamental elements—namely the *kyai*, the *kitab kuning* (classical Islamic texts), the mosque, and the boarding system (*pondok*)—which collectively constitute the core identity of the institution (Asyari et al., 2024).

2. **Typology of Pesantren: From Salafiyah to Khalafiyah**

In the literature on pesantren education, Islamic boarding schools are generally classified into three principal typologies: *salafiyah* pesantren, *khalafiyah* (modern) pesantren, and comprehensive pesantren. This typological framework reflects the dynamic evolution of pesantren in responding to socio-educational changes while maintaining their foundational Islamic identity (Rahmah, 2025).

Salafiyah pesantren represent the traditional model that preserves classical systems of Islamic learning with an exclusive focus on the study of *kitab kuning* (classical Islamic texts) and religious sciences. Instructional methods rely heavily on traditional pedagogical approaches such as *sorogan* (individual reading before the teacher), *bandongan* (collective listening to the teacher's explanation), and *wetonan* (periodic lecture-style sessions). The teacher-student relationship tends to be paternalistic, with the *kyai* serving as the central religious authority. The curriculum is purely religious, encompassing disciplines such as *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), *tafsir* (Qur'anic exegesis), *hadith*, *tauhid* (theology), *tasawuf* (Islamic mysticism), *nahwu* (Arabic grammar), and *sharaf* (Arabic morphology). The primary objective of *salafiyah* pesantren is to produce religious scholars and experts deeply grounded in the classical Islamic intellectual tradition (Asyari et al., 2024).

In contrast, *khalafiyah* or modern pesantren integrate religious curricula with general education and adopt formal educational systems such as madrasah and schools. These institutions employ more varied instructional methods, including classical classroom systems, discussions, experimental learning, and the use of educational technology. Students in *khalafiyah* pesantren study not only religious subjects but also general disciplines such as mathematics, science, languages, and social studies. The educational goal is to produce graduates who possess balanced mastery of both religious and general knowledge, along with broader life skills necessary for participation in contemporary society (Zahro & Khobir, 2025).

The comprehensive pesantren model represents a synthesis of the strengths of both *salafiyah* and *khalafiyah* traditions. This model seeks to integrate the study of classical Islamic texts with the national curriculum, vocational training, and holistic character development. Comprehensive pesantren embody an effort to preserve the tradition of *tafaquh fiddin* while simultaneously equipping students with competencies required to compete in the modern era (Rahmah, 2025).

3. **Integration of Pesantren Curriculum and the National Curriculum**

Curriculum integration constitutes a central issue in the modernization of pesantren. The concept refers to efforts to unify the pesantren-based curriculum—primarily focused on Islamic religious sciences—with the national education curriculum, which encompasses general subjects. Such integration is not merely the accumulation or juxtaposition of subject matter; rather, it represents a process of synchronization and harmonization aimed at creating an organic unity between religious knowledge and general knowledge (Madrasah & Santri, 2024).

Studies conducted in various pesantren indicate that curriculum integration can be implemented through several approaches. First, integration at the level of educational objectives involves formulating institutional goals that simultaneously emphasize the development of religious character and mastery of academic competencies. In this model,

spiritual formation and intellectual development are conceived as complementary rather than contradictory aims (Machendrawaty, 2024).

Second, integration at the level of curriculum content and structure entails incorporating pesantren subjects—such as the study of *kitab kuning*—into the formal school schedule as local content or additional subjects. This structural alignment ensures that religious and general subjects are institutionally coordinated rather than administratively separated (Madrasah & Santri, 2024).

Third, integration at the level of instructional strategies and methodologies combines traditional pesantren methods—such as *sorogan* and *bandongan*—with modern pedagogical approaches, including discussions, experiments, and project-based learning. This methodological synthesis allows pesantren to preserve their distinctive instructional heritage while adopting more interactive and student-centered learning models.

The implementation of curriculum integration, however, is not without challenges. Differences in students' foundational competencies, limited instructional time, difficulties in comprehending Arabic texts, and divergences in educational philosophy often complicate the process. Furthermore, balancing academic rigor in both religious and general subjects may lead to curricular overload. Despite these obstacles, successful integration is supported by several key factors: strong institutional leadership, competent and adaptable teachers, flexible curriculum design, and a conducive learning environment that fosters both spiritual and intellectual growth.

Several models of curriculum integration have been identified in practice. The first is the full integration model, in which the complete national curriculum and the full pesantren curriculum are implemented in parallel. The second is the selective integration model, whereby certain pesantren subjects are embedded within general courses, or general knowledge elements are incorporated into religious instruction. The third is the interconnection model, which integrates knowledge through the epistemological framework of *hadlarah an-nash* (religious texts), *hadlarah al-'ilm* (scientific knowledge), and *hadlarah al-falsafah* (philosophical reasoning). This model seeks to bridge textual, empirical, and rational dimensions of knowledge, thereby fostering a more holistic and interconnected educational paradigm (Muhtadin & Laksono, n.d.).

4. Technology Based Pesantren Management

In the era of Society 5.0 and the Fourth Industrial Revolution, the integration of technology into pesantren management has become a strategic necessity to enhance efficiency, transparency, and the overall quality of educational services. The concept of a “digital pesantren” or *Pesantren 4.0* refers to Islamic boarding schools that systematically adopt information and communication technologies across various domains of institutional management and learning processes (Pesantren et al., 2024).

The application of technology in pesantren management encompasses several critical dimensions. First, administrative management includes student data management, academic information systems, digital attendance tracking, and electronic correspondence. The implementation of an Education Management Information System (EMIS) or School Management Information System (SMIS) enables pesantren to manage data in an automated, real-time, and integrated manner, thereby improving organizational efficiency and minimizing administrative errors (Pesantren et al., 2024).

Second, financial management benefits from digital payment systems, automated

transaction recording, and transparent financial reporting mechanisms accessible to administrators and parents. Such systems not only streamline financial operations but also strengthen accountability and institutional credibility.

Third, instructional management is supported through the use of Learning Management Systems (LMS), the digitalization of *kitab kuning*, and e-learning platforms that complement traditional instructional methods. Rather than replacing classical approaches such as *sorogan* and *bandongan*, digital tools function as supportive instruments that enhance accessibility, interactivity, and flexibility in learning.

Furthermore, the digitalization of pesantren facilitates improved communication and parental engagement. Dedicated applications or online portals allow parents to monitor students' academic progress, attendance, and daily activities in real time. This development enhances transparency and strengthens institutional accountability to stakeholders (Nikmah, 2020).

Despite its advantages, the implementation of technology in pesantren faces significant challenges. These include limited digital infrastructure, cultural resistance from traditionally oriented administrators, low levels of digital literacy among educators and staff, and the relatively high cost of technological investment. Addressing these challenges requires strategic capacity-building initiatives, including human resource training, infrastructure development, and the adoption of technological solutions that align with the cultural values and contextual needs of pesantren. Sustainable digital transformation must therefore be gradual, adaptive, and rooted in the institutional ethos of the pesantren itself (Mubin & Moh. Arif Furqon, 2023).

5. Character Education in Modern Pesantren

Character education constitutes one of the primary comparative advantages of pesantren compared to other formal education systems. Pesantren are often regarded as a "gold mine" for character development, as moral formation is not merely a supplementary component but a central variable within the educational process. In modern pesantren, character values cultivated among students include sincerity (*ikhlas*), simplicity (*kesederhanaan*), self-reliance (*kemandirian*), brotherhood (*ukhuwah*), and responsible freedom (Zahro & Khobir, 2025).

For example, at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, character education is grounded in the philosophical framework known as *Panca Jiwa* (The Five Spirits), which serves as the foundation of institutional life and movement. The *Panca Jiwa* consists of: (1) The Spirit of Sincerity, emphasizing actions performed solely for worship and devotion to God (*lillahi ta'ala*); (2) The Spirit of Simplicity, which does not imply poverty or passivity but reflects inner strength, resilience, and perseverance; (3) The Spirit of Self-Reliance (*berdikari*), referring to the ability to stand independently in various aspects of life; (4) The Spirit of Islamic Brotherhood (*ukhuwah Islamiyah*), fostering close bonds regardless of social, ethnic, or economic background; and (5) The Spirit of Freedom, meaning freedom of thought and action within positive boundaries and accompanied by responsibility (Jannah, 2023).

he implementation of character education in modern pesantren is carried out through several interrelated strategies. First, value internalization occurs through direct instruction in Islamic teachings, including classical text studies and regular religious lectures. Second, habituation is developed through structured daily routines such as

congregational prayers, voluntary fasting, Qur'anic recitation, and other religious practices. These repeated actions cultivate discipline and moral consistency. Third, exemplary leadership plays a crucial role; the *kyai*, teachers, and administrators serve as living role models whose conduct shapes students' ethical development. Fourth, the cultivation of pesantren culture creates an environment conducive to character formation, embedding values into the social fabric of daily life. Fifth, co-curricular and extracurricular activities support the development of soft skills such as leadership, cooperation, communication, and problem-solving (Cahyono et al., 2024).

In the digital era, character education in modern pesantren has also adapted to emerging challenges. While integrating technology into learning processes, pesantren strive to maintain their core moral values. Modern pesantren recognize that preparing students for the future requires not only intellectual competence but also strong character, discipline, ethical awareness, and moral resilience to navigate the negative influences of globalization (Rachman & Annuqayah, n.d.). In this regard, character education functions as the moral anchor that ensures modernization does not undermine the spiritual and ethical foundations of pesantren life

6. Entrepreneurship and Institutional Self-Reliance in Pesantren

The development of student entrepreneurship and institutional economic self-reliance constitutes a crucial dimension of pesantren modernization. Economic independence aligns closely with the principle of *berdikari* (self-sufficiency), which represents one of the foundational spirits of pesantren life. Pesantren not only cultivate spiritual and intellectual independence among students but also seek to foster economic resilience as an integral component of holistic education (Rachman & Annuqayah, n.d.).

Entrepreneurship development within pesantren is implemented through several strategic approaches. First, the establishment of professionally managed business units—such as cooperatives, retail shops, catering services, laundry services, livestock farming, agriculture, and small-scale industries—serves both as a revenue-generating mechanism and as a practical training laboratory for students. These enterprises provide experiential learning opportunities that allow students to apply managerial, financial, and operational skills in real-world contexts.

Second, entrepreneurship education is integrated into the pesantren curriculum through dedicated courses, vocational skills training, and internship programs within pesantren business units or partner industries. This curricular integration ensures that entrepreneurial competencies are not treated as peripheral skills but as structured educational outcomes aligned with institutional goals.

Third, pesantren deliberately cultivate entrepreneurial character traits such as creativity, innovation, calculated risk-taking, resilience, and results-oriented thinking. These qualities complement religious and moral formation, producing graduates who are not only ethically grounded but also economically productive

Institutional self-reliance is further strengthened through the professional management of assets and productive *waqf* (endowment) resources. Modern pesantren increasingly adopt structured asset management systems by establishing specialized bodies responsible for the development and expansion of endowed properties. For example, Yayasan Pemeliharaan dan Perluasan Badan Wakaf Pondok Modern, affiliated with Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, manages endowment assets in a sustainable and

professional manner to ensure long-term institutional growth (Jannah, 2023).

Such models demonstrate that economic independence is not merely a financial strategy but a structural foundation for educational sustainability. By strengthening entrepreneurship and asset management, pesantren can reduce dependence on external funding, maintain policy autonomy, and preserve their educational vision. In this sense, economic self-reliance becomes both a practical necessity and a manifestation of pesantren's enduring commitment to institutional dignity and independence.

C. METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach using an intrinsic case study method. The intrinsic case study is a qualitative strategy aimed at gaining an in-depth understanding of a unique, specific, and contemporary case—whether an individual, group, or event—because of its particular characteristics, rather than for the purpose of generalization or theory building (Emzir, 2021). A qualitative approach was selected as it is well suited to exploring complex phenomena such as the institutional transformation of a pesantren in a comprehensive and holistic manner. Case study research enables the investigation of a phenomenon within its real-life context by utilizing multiple sources of evidence, thereby allowing for a nuanced and contextualized analysis (Aziz et al., 2021).

The research site was the Riyadhul Jannah Islamic Education Foundation, located on Jalan Raya Prapatan Bandung, Jalancagak District, Subang Regency, West Java. This institution was selected purposively as the locus of the study because it has undergone significant transformation—from a single Islamic boarding school established in 1996 into a large educational foundation overseeing more than 32 educational institutions by 2025. (Subang, n.d.). Its substantial institutional expansion and organizational restructuring make it an appropriate and compelling case for examining pesantren modernization.

The research subjects consisted of documentary sources, including: (1) institutional documents of the foundation; (2) curriculum documents and educational program records; (3) organizational structure and governance documents; and (4) historical narratives detailing the foundation's development. These sources were chosen to provide comprehensive insight into the structural, curricular, managerial, and historical dimensions of institutional transformation.

Data were collected primarily through document analysis. The documents analyzed included the institutional profile of the foundation, organizational structure records, vision and mission statements, strategic planning documents, curriculum frameworks and flagship programs, as well as documentation of business units. Document analysis enabled the researcher to examine formal policies, structural changes, and strategic directions that reflect the modernization process within the institution.

Data analysis was conducted using the interactive model proposed by Miles and Huberman, which consists of three main stages. First, data reduction involved selecting, categorizing, and focusing the collected data on aspects relevant to the research questions, including institutional transformation, curriculum integration, managerial professionalism, and economic self-reliance. Second, data display involved organizing the reduced data into systematic narratives and thematic matrices. The findings were grouped according to the dimensions of modernization under investigation, facilitating pattern recognition and analytical interpretation. Third, conclusion drawing and verification were carried out by

continuously comparing the data with relevant theoretical frameworks and prior studies to ensure consistency and analytical rigor.

To ensure the trustworthiness and validity of the findings, the study applied source triangulation by comparing institutional documents with scholarly literature on pesantren modernization in Indonesia. This triangulation process helped validate the findings and enhance the credibility of the research outcomes (Sugiyono, 2020).

D. RESULT AND DISCUSION

1. Institutional Profile of Riyadhul Jannah Islamic Education Foundation

Riyadhul Jannah Islamic Education Foundation was established in 1996 by DR. KH. Moch. Ujang Saefullah, Drs., M.M.Pd., under the motto "*Sekali Berdiri Tetap Tegak*" (Once Established, Forever Steadfast). This motto reflects a firm institutional commitment to sustaining Islamic education through resilience, continuity, and principled leadership. The founder was an educator raised in a family with a strong teaching tradition and possessed formal academic qualifications up to the doctoral level in Educational Management. In addition, he received non-formal religious education from several respected Islamic boarding schools, including Pondok Pesantren Nurul Iman Cisalak, Pondok Pesantren As-Suada Cijerah Bandung, and Pondok Pesantren Al-Jawami Bandung.

This dual educational background combining formal academic training and traditional pesantren scholarship significantly shaped the institutional character of the foundation. It laid the groundwork for a model of leadership that integrates religious authority with managerial professionalism, a hallmark of modern pesantren transformation.

Following the passing of the founder, institutional leadership was continued by his wife, Hj. Ru'yatul Hasanah, SKM., M.M.Pd., who holds a Bachelor's degree in Public Health and a Master's degree in Educational Management. This transition illustrates the implementation of structured and professional leadership regeneration. Unlike traditional pesantren models that often rely primarily on charismatic authority, the continuity of leadership at Riyadhul Jannah demonstrates an organizational shift toward competency-based governance and sustainable management. Such a transition reflects the broader characteristics of pesantren modernization, where institutional resilience is anchored not solely in personal charisma but also in administrative capacity and strategic planning (Subang, n.d.)

The foundation's vision—"*Menciptakan Generasi Muttaqin yang Intelekt, dan Intelekt yang Muttaqin*" (Creating a Pious and Intellectual Generation, and Intellectuals Who Are Pious) represents a clear articulation of integrative educational philosophy. This vision embodies the synthesis between spiritual devotion (*muttaqin*) and intellectual excellence, aligning with the contemporary paradigm of integrating IMTAQ (Faith and Piety) with IPTEK (Science and Technology). Rather than positioning religious depth and academic excellence as competing priorities, the formulation emphasizes their harmonious coexistence. Conceptually, this integrative orientation situates the foundation within the reformist stream of pesantren development that seeks to respond to modern societal demands without abandoning Islamic identity.

The institutional mission is elaborated into six interconnected objectives:

1. Forming students and santri who possess faith and devotion to Allah SWT.

2. Cultivating noble character (akhlakul karimah).
3. Enhancing intellectual capacity with national insight.
4. Preparing a generation capable of competing in the era of globalization.
5. Producing competent human resources across various fields.
6. Integrating IMTAQ and IPTEK in personal and academic development.

These mission statements demonstrate a balanced orientation toward religious character formation, intellectual empowerment, civic consciousness, and global competitiveness. Importantly, the emphasis on national insight indicates an awareness that pesantren modernization is not only theological and pedagogical but also socio-national in scope. The institution seeks to produce graduates who are religiously grounded, academically capable, socially responsible, and globally adaptive.

Geographically, the foundation is located on Jalan Raya Prapatan Bandung, Jalancagak District, Subang Regency, West Java. This strategic position facilitates accessibility from various surrounding areas and supports institutional expansion across multiple districts within Subang Regency. The geographical advantage has played a significant role in enabling organizational growth, which will be further analyzed in the section on institutional transformation.

Overall, the profile of Riyadhul Jannah Islamic Education Foundation reflects the convergence of visionary leadership, structured regeneration, integrative educational philosophy, and strategic geographical positioning. These elements collectively form the foundational infrastructure that enables the institution's ongoing modernization and expansion.

2. Institutional Transformation: From a Single Boarding School to a Multi-Institutional System

The institutional transformation of Riyadhul Jannah Islamic Education Foundation represents a concrete example of how modern pesantren evolve through systematic and strategic development. This transformation can be mapped into several significant phases reflecting both vertical and horizontal expansion strategies. The process demonstrates not merely quantitative growth but structural maturation and organizational sophistication

a. Establishment and Consolidation Phase (1996–2000)

The initial phase began with the establishment of Pondok Pesantren Modern Riyadhul Jannah in 1996 as the core institution. During this formative period, the primary focus was consolidating the pesantren foundation through a boarding school system that integrated religious instruction with general education. This integrative model reflects early awareness of the need to respond to societal demands while maintaining Islamic identity.

In 1997, the foundation established SMK Riyadhul Jannah, introducing vocational education for students. This was followed by the establishment of Madrasah Aliyah in 1998. These developments demonstrate an early strategy of diversification, both in terms of educational level and program orientation. Rather than remaining solely a traditional religious institution, the pesantren positioned itself as a provider of comprehensive education that addresses academic and vocational needs simultaneously.

This phase can therefore be interpreted as a period of institutional consolidation, where the foundation built structural legitimacy, developed

administrative systems, and strengthened its educational identity before entering broader expansion.

b. The Horizontal and Geographical Expansion Phase (2010–2025)

was marked by the establishment of educational institutions across various locations in Subang Regency. Data indicate that by 2025, the foundation oversees no fewer than 32 educational institutions distributed across five districts: Jalancagak, Cijambe, Cibogo, Cisalak, and Ciater. This expansion includes: (1) five Islamic boarding schools, namely Pondok Pesantren Modern Riyadhul Jannah in Jalancagak, Pondok Pesantren Al-Muttaqin Cimenteng in Cijambe, Pondok Pesantren Nur Ihsan Cirangkong in Cijambe, Pondok Pesantren Hubbul Wathon in Cibogo, and Pondok Pesantren Al-Kudus in Cisalak; (2) five Islamic kindergartens distributed across five different districts; (3) eight junior secondary schools (SMP), including SMP Modern Boarding School Riyadhul Jannah and seven other SMPs in various locations; (4) three senior secondary schools (SMA and Madrasah Aliyah); (5) seven vocational high schools (SMK) offering training in various fields of specialization; and (6) STAI and KBIHU (Haji and Umrah Guidance Group) Riyadhul Jannah.

This geographical expansion reflects a strategy of decentralizing educational services, thereby facilitating broader community access across different regions. The multi-institutional model under a single umbrella foundation offers several advantages. First, it promotes managerial efficiency through the centralization of strategic policies while granting operational autonomy to each institution. Second, it enables programmatic synergy among institutions, allowing for the sharing of resources and best practices. Third, it enhances sustainability through a system that does not depend solely on a single institution or a single charismatic leader.

The transformation from a single Islamic boarding school into a foundation overseeing 32 institutions within less than three decades demonstrates remarkable exponential growth. This development is evident not only in the quantitative increase in institutions but also in qualitative improvements, program diversification, and expanded service coverage. The institutional transformation model of Riyadhul Jannah aligns with broader patterns of modern pesantren development in Indonesia, characterized by systematic expansion aimed at amplifying both social and educational impact..

3. Curriculum Integration Model: Balancing Tradition and Modernity

One of the most significant dimensions of modernization at Riyadhul Jannah Islamic Education Foundation is its curriculum integration model, which harmonizes the traditional pesantren curriculum with the national education curriculum. This model reflects a deliberate effort to balance the pesantren's classical function as a center of *tafaqquh fiddin* (deep understanding of Islamic sciences) with the academic competencies and practical skills required in contemporary society. Rather than abandoning tradition, the institution reformulates it within a broader educational framework that remains responsive to modern demands..

a. Classical Islamic Text Learning (Kitab Kuning) as the Core of Pesantren Identity

Yayasan Riyadhul Jannah maintains the study of kitab kuning (classical Islamic texts) as the central marker of its pesantren identity. The texts studied

include:

- a. Aqidatul Awwam (Islamic creed),
- b. Durusul Fiqhiyah and Safinatun Naja (Islamic jurisprudence),
- c. Sulamut Taufiq (ethics and spirituality),
- d. Al-Ajurnumiyah and Imrithi (Arabic grammar),
- e. Arba'in Nawawi and Mukhtarul Hadist (Prophetic traditions).

The selection of these works demonstrates a comprehensive curriculum covering five principal domains of Islamic scholarship: creed (aqidah), jurisprudence (fiqh), ethics and spirituality (akhlaq-tasawwuf), Arabic linguistics, and hadith studies. This structure affirms that modernization does not imply the erosion of classical scholarship but its preservation within an organized and contextualized system.

The pedagogical methods employed likely combine traditional and modern approaches, as is common in contemporary pesantren. Traditional methods such as *bandongan* (teacher-centered reading and explanation), *sorogan* (individual student recitation before the teacher), and memorization remain integral components. At the same time, dialogical and analytical methods—such as discussion forums (*munazharah*), problem-based deliberation (*bahtsul masail*), presentations, and interactive questioning—are utilized to cultivate critical thinking skills.

Importantly, the study of classical texts is not limited to cognitive transmission (*ta'lim*) but also serves as a process of character formation (*ta'dib* and *tarbiyah*). Through engagement with classical scholarship, students internalize ethical virtues such as humility, sincerity, discipline, intellectual rigor, and spiritual consciousness. Thus, tradition functions not only as academic heritage but as moral and civilizational formation.

b. The 3 Basic Program: Expanding Student Competencies

In response to contemporary challenges, Riyadhul Jannah introduced the “3 Basic” Program, comprising Basic English, Basic Arabic, and Basic Tahfidz (Qur’anic memorization). This initiative reflects an awareness that modern santri must possess multilingual competence and strong Qur’anic literacy to remain competitive and relevant

1) Basic English

English proficiency is considered essential in the era of globalization, where English functions as the primary language of international communication, scholarship, and professional engagement. The Basic English program includes grammar instruction, daily conversation practice, and the incorporation of English into selected pesantren activities. Mastery of English broadens students’ access to global literature, higher education opportunities abroad, and participation in international networks.

2) Basic Arabic

strengthens the pesantren tradition that emphasizes mastery of Arabic as the language of the Qur’an, Hadith, and classical Islamic texts. However, in the context of modern pesantren, Arabic instruction does not focus solely on *nahwu* and *sharaf* (grammar), but also on active communication skills (*muhadatsah*) and the comprehension of contemporary texts. This program enables students not

only to read classical Islamic texts (*kitab kuning*) but also to communicate in Arabic in their daily lives.

3) **Basic Tahfidz**

is a Qur'anic memorization program that represents one of the distinctive strengths of modern pesantren. The tahfidz program not only enhances students' cognitive abilities through intensive memory training but also fosters a deeper spiritual connection with the Qur'an. Graduates of pesantren who have memorized portions of the Qur'an possess added value within Indonesian Muslim society and have greater opportunities to pursue further studies in various Muslim countries.

The **3 Basic Program** reflects a horizontal integration approach, which involves adding new competencies that complement the pesantren curriculum without reducing or replacing the traditional curriculum. Thus, students at Riyadhul Jannah are expected to master *kitab kuning* (Islamic scholarly tradition), become proficient in Arabic (Islamic communication), develop competence in English (global communication), and memorize the Qur'an (spiritual foundation).

c. **Integration with the Formal Education Curriculum**

As a foundation that oversees formal educational institutions ranging from kindergarten to higher education, Riyadhul Jannah integrates the pesantren curriculum with the national curriculum established by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia. At the junior and senior secondary levels (SMP, SMA, and SMK), students study general subjects such as Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, Indonesian Language, Civic Education, and other disciplines in accordance with national curriculum standards.

The integration model applied is most likely a full or parallel integration model, in which students follow 100 percent of the national curriculum during formal school hours and 100 percent of the pesantren curriculum outside regular school hours. This model requires strict time management and a relatively heavy learning load; however, it produces graduates with dual competencies: formal academic qualifications recognized by the government and a strong mastery of Islamic religious knowledge.

Curriculum integration is also evident in the presence of Madrasah Aliyah and Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Riyadhul Jannah, both of which inherently combine religious and general academic curricula. In Madrasah Aliyah, students study general academic subjects alongside religious subjects in relatively balanced proportions. At the higher education level, students at STAI deepen their understanding of Islamic sciences such as Qur'anic exegesis (*tafsir*), hadith studies, Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), principles of jurisprudence (*usul fiqh*), Islamic civilization history, and other related fields, while also studying research methodology, languages, and broader academic disciplines.

The success of curriculum integration at Riyadhul Jannah is supported by several key factors. First, strong leadership commitment is reflected in the foundation's vision and mission. Second, the competence of educators—many of whom possess strong academic backgrounds in both religious and general fields—ensures the effective delivery of the integrated curriculum. Third, adequate learning

facilities, such as laboratories, libraries, and conducive classroom environments, support the learning process. Fourth, flexible and adaptive curriculum management enables the institution to continuously adjust its educational programs to evolving academic and societal needs.

d. Modernization of Management and Professional Leadership

Management modernization represents one of the key pillars in the transformation of the Riyadhul Jannah Islamic Education Foundation. Unlike traditional pesantren, which are often managed informally and largely depend on the charisma of a *kyai*, modern pesantren require a professional management system to handle the complexity of a multi-institutional organization.

e. Organizational Structure and Leadership

Riyadhul Jannah Foundation adopts a formal organizational structure with clearly defined roles and responsibilities. At the highest level is the Chairperson of the Foundation, who is responsible for strategic policy and the overall development of the institution. Under the chairperson, each educational institution within the foundation has its own management structure, such as school principals, madrasa heads, or the rector of Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Riyadhul Jannah, who maintain operational autonomy while remaining aligned with the policies established by the foundation.

The leadership of the foundation reflects a high degree of professionalism. The founder, Moch Ujang Saefullah, held doctoral-level qualifications in Educational Management, demonstrating a commitment to managing educational institutions through scientific and professional approaches. The continuation of leadership by Hj. Ru'yatul Hasanah, who holds a master's degree in Educational Management and has professional experience as a public health center head, further illustrates strong managerial capacity in overseeing a complex organization.

This leadership model reflects a transformation from traditional charismatic leadership to a professional and managerial leadership system. While the moral authority and charisma of religious figures remain important in pesantren culture, professional leadership ensures that institutional governance does not rely solely on individual figures but instead operates through structured systems and managerial competencies.

f. Integration of Technology in Management

As a modern pesantren, Riyadhul Jannah has likely adopted information technology in various aspects of institutional management, although detailed documentation may not explicitly specify these systems. Based on common practices among modern pesantren in Indonesia, technology integration may include several areas.

- a. First, the use of an Education Management Information System allows administrators to manage student data such as personal information, academic records, attendance, and learning progress. This system enables administrators to access real-time information and make data-driven decisions.
- b. Second, a digital financial management system may be used to record tuition payments, other educational fees, and foundation financial transactions in a

transparent manner. Such a system enhances accountability and allows parents or guardians to monitor payment status more easily.

- c. Third, digital communication platforms—such as mobile applications or web portals—may connect the pesantren with parents. Through these platforms, parents can monitor their children’s development, receive institutional announcements, and communicate with teachers or boarding supervisors.
- d. Fourth, a Learning Management System (LMS) supports online or blended learning environments, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic and the post-pandemic period. Through an LMS, students can access learning materials, participate in virtual classes, and submit assignments digitally.

The adoption of technology does not diminish the essence of pesantren education; rather, it strengthens the effectiveness and efficiency of institutional management. Modern pesantren must balance the preservation of traditional values with the utilization of technological tools to enhance educational service quality.

g. Multi-Institutional Management

With 32 educational institutions located in various areas, the Riyadhul Jannah Foundation faces complex management challenges. Managing multiple institutions requires an effective system of coordination, supervision, and monitoring to ensure that all institutions operate in accordance with the foundation’s vision, mission, and quality standards.

The management model applied is likely a combination of centralized strategic policy and decentralized operational implementation. Strategic decisions—such as vision and mission formulation, curriculum standards, teacher recruitment, and program development—are determined centrally by the foundation. However, operational implementation is delegated to each institution, allowing school principals or boarding school leaders to adapt policies to their local contexts.

To ensure quality consistency across institutions, the foundation likely implements regular monitoring and evaluation systems, along with coordination forums among institutions to share best practices and address common challenges. This management model enables the foundation to expand significantly while maintaining institutional identity and quality control.

h. Development of Entrepreneurship and Economic Self-Reliance

One distinctive aspect of the modernization of the Riyadhul Jannah Foundation is the development of independent business units that demonstrate a commitment to economic self-reliance. The foundation operates seven business units, including catering services, laundry services, egg-laying chicken farming, drinking water production, RJ Mart (a minimarket), Cafe RJ, and partnerships with national retail outlets such as Alfamart and Indomaret located in strategic areas.

The laundry service primarily supports the needs of students living in dormitories. Given the large number of boarding students, this service remains sustainable while also reducing the students’ daily workload so they can focus more on their studies.

The egg-laying chicken farm produces eggs both for internal consumption within the pesantren and for sale in local markets. This agricultural enterprise also

provides students with practical exposure to agribusiness and responsibility in managing livestock.

The drinking water business likely operates as a refill water depot or bottled drinking water production facility serving both the pesantren community and surrounding residents. The drinking water sector typically offers stable demand and favorable profit margins.

Retail businesses such as RJ Mart, Cafe RJ, and the partnered outlets with Alfamart and Indomaret serve the daily consumption needs of students and the surrounding community. The presence of minimarkets within the pesantren environment provides convenient access for students to purchase daily necessities without needing to travel far from the campus. Partnerships with national retail brands also indicate the foundation's capacity to develop professional business collaborations.

Overall, the development of these business units not only strengthens the economic sustainability of the foundation but also serves as a practical platform for fostering entrepreneurial awareness within the pesantren community.

i. Formation of Entrepreneurial Character

Through involvement in various business units, students of Riyadhul Jannah are expected to develop entrepreneurial character traits, including creativity in generating value, innovation in developing products or services, the courage to take calculated risks, perseverance in facing challenges, and a results-oriented mindset. These characteristics are particularly important in the modern era, where formal employment opportunities are increasingly limited and the ability to create one's own employment has become a vital competency.

Entrepreneurship development in pesantren is also closely aligned with the foundational values of simplicity and self-reliance that characterize pesantren culture. Students are taught not to depend excessively on others, to be capable of fulfilling their own needs, and even to contribute positively to society. This entrepreneurial spirit becomes an important asset for graduates after completing their studies, enabling them to achieve economic independence while continuing to carry out missions of *dakwah* and community service.

j. Innovation in Educational Facilities and Learning Methodologies

The modernization of the Riyadhul Jannah Foundation is also reflected in the development of modern educational facilities designed to support high-quality learning processes. These facilities include the following components:

a. Comprehensive Educational Infrastructure

The foundation provides separate male and female dormitories, reflecting its commitment to the boarding school system that characterizes pesantren education. The dormitory system enables twenty-four-hour character education, where students learn not only in classrooms but also through daily interactions within the boarding environment. Dormitory life cultivates discipline, independence, simplicity, and Islamic brotherhood (*ukhuwah islamiyah*).

The mosque and the Student Community Center Hall function as central

spaces for both spiritual and social activities. The mosque serves not only as a place for congregational prayer but also as a center for religious learning through classical text studies, sermons, and other religious programs. Meanwhile, the Student Community Center Hall functions as a venue for meetings, major events, and extracurricular activities that foster students' soft skills.

The existence of a pesantren health post (*Poskestren*) demonstrates the foundation's attention to the health and well-being of students. Health services within the pesantren environment are essential considering the large number of boarding students and the need for prompt medical attention. In addition, the health post can serve as an educational facility where students learn about hygiene, health awareness, and sanitation practices.

A well-equipped sports center supports the physical development of students through various sports activities. Sports activities not only maintain physical fitness but also cultivate sportsmanship, teamwork, and a competitive spirit. The emphasis on maintaining a healthy body as one of the educational ideals of modern pesantren is realized through the availability of adequate sports facilities.

b. Modern Educational Laboratories

The availability of multiple laboratories reflects a strong commitment to practice-based and experimental learning.

A language laboratory supports the learning of English and Arabic through audio-visual methods, conversation practice, and communication simulations. The facility enables students to develop listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in an interactive manner.

A computer laboratory equips students with digital literacy and information technology skills. In the digital era, the ability to operate computers and utilize technology is considered a fundamental competency for graduates. The laboratory also supports technology-based learning approaches such as e-learning and access to digital educational resources.

A natural sciences laboratory facilitates science learning through experiments and practical activities. Laboratory-based learning encourages the development of scientific thinking, observation skills, and experimental competence, which are essential components of science education.

The presence of a pharmacy laboratory and an office administration laboratory indicates the existence of vocational programs at SMK Riyadhul Jannah. The pharmacy laboratory supports pharmaceutical training that requires intensive laboratory practice, while the office administration laboratory facilitates practical learning related to administrative management and professional office skills.

The library functions as the intellectual heart of the institution by providing access to a wide range of learning resources, including classical Islamic texts (*kitab kuning*), general academic books, journals, and digital collections. A well-developed library supports literacy culture and encourages independent learning among students.

c. The EXPERTISE Program: Internationalization of Education

One of the most notable innovative programs at Riyadhul Jannah is the EXPERTISE program (*Extraordinary Basic Program and Students Reflective Activities*), which includes educational visits to various destinations both within Indonesia and abroad. These destinations include RJ Goes to Pare (the “English Village”), Bali, Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand. This program reflects the pesantren’s commitment to the internationalization of education by exposing students to global perspectives.

Visits to Pare, often known as the English Village in Kediri, East Java, provide students with an opportunity to deepen their English proficiency through an immersion-based learning environment in which English is used in daily communication. This method has proven effective in improving students’ communication skills within a relatively short period.

Educational visits to Bali provide students with opportunities to learn about cultural diversity and religious tolerance. Through these experiences, students gain insight into interacting with communities of different cultural and religious backgrounds while strengthening their own Muslim identity within a pluralistic society.

Visits to Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand broaden students’ perspectives on the development of Muslim and multicultural societies in Southeast Asia. Through these international experiences, students can learn about educational systems, economic development, and social structures in neighboring countries while also building international networks. Furthermore, such programs train students to adapt to diverse cultural contexts and strengthen their intercultural communication skills.

The EXPERTISE program is closely aligned with the foundation’s mission to prepare a generation capable of competing in the era of globalization. Students are expected not only to possess local knowledge but also to develop global awareness; not only to understand Islamic traditions but also to engage constructively with the dynamics of the contemporary world.

E. CONCLUSION

This study confirms that the modernization of Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) is not a linear process that merely adds elements of modern education to a traditional system. Rather, it constitutes a multidimensional transformation that is systemic and sustainable. The case study of the Riyadhul Jannah Islamic Education Foundation in Subang demonstrates that modernization occurs through institutional reconstruction, curriculum integration, management professionalization, and the strengthening of the pesantren’s economic base.

First, in the institutional aspect, the transformation does not only involve the expansion of the number of educational units but also the restructuring of the organization into an integrated foundation system. This change indicates a shift from a traditional leadership pattern based on a central figure toward a system-based institutional governance model. This condition suggests that the modernization of pesantren requires the institutionalization of values and work systems so that the sustainability of the institution does not depend solely on a single central figure.

Second, in the curriculum aspect, the integration between diniyah education and the

national curriculum reflects an epistemological synthesis between the Islamic scholarly tradition and the demands of global competencies. The hybrid model implemented represents an integrative rather than a dichotomous approach. Thus, the pesantren is not trapped in the polarization between traditional and modern education but instead develops an adaptive educational format while maintaining its Islamic identity.

Third, the professionalization of management becomes a key factor in accelerating the modernization process. The implementation of strategic planning, task division based on organizational structures, and the strengthening of administrative governance demonstrate that pesantren modernization requires a systematic managerial approach. This transformation also indicates that modern pesantren must adopt contemporary educational management principles without eliminating the spiritual values that form the institution's foundation.

Fourth, the development of business units as a basis for economic independence emphasizes that pesantren modernization is not only academic in nature but also involves financial and institutional sustainability dimensions. Economic independence strengthens the institution's autonomy in determining educational policy directions and reduces dependence on external resources.

Conceptually, this study proposes a model of pesantren modernization based on systemic integration that consists of four main pillars: (1) institutional transformation, (2) curriculum integration, (3) management professionalization, and (4) economic independence. These four pillars are interconnected and form a sustainable modernization ecosystem.

The theoretical contribution of this study lies in expanding the perspective of pesantren modernization from a partial approach to a multidimensional and systemic approach. This study emphasizes that the success of pesantren modernization is determined by the institution's ability to integrate structural and cultural changes simultaneously.

Practically, the findings of this study may serve as a reference for pesantren administrators who intend to undertake adaptive institutional transformation in response to globalization. The systemic integration model proposed in this study can be replicated with adjustments according to the local contexts of different pesantren.

However, this study is limited by the use of a single case study approach and therefore is not intended for broad generalization. Future research is recommended to conduct comparative studies across different pesantren or to employ mixed methods approaches in order to test the validity of the modernization model more comprehensively.

Thus, pesantren modernization should not be viewed as a threat to tradition, but rather as a strategic process to maintain the relevance of pesantren within the evolving global educational landscape. Adaptive and integrated transformation is essential for pesantren to remain authentic centers of Islamic education while also being competitive in the era of globalization.

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- Aziz, A. A., Budiyanti, N., Suhartini, A., & Ahmad, N. (2021). *Peran Pesantren dalam Membangun Generasi Tafaqquh Fiddin* Pendahuluan Pesantren merupakan lembaga pendidikan Islam yang memiliki akar historis yang cukup kuat sehingga menduduki posisi relatif sentral dalam dunia keilmuan . 1 Keberadaan pondok pesantren di Indonesia , dalam perkembangannya sangat berpengaruh terhadap masyarakat di sekitarnya , terutama dalam hal pendidikan . 2 Hal ini disebabkan bahwa dari sejak awal berdirinya pesantren disiapkan untuk mendidik dan menyebarkan ajaran Islam kepada masyarakat melalui pengajian , baik dengan sistem tradisional maupun modern . 3 Pesantren pada umumnya memiliki kesamaan antara satu pesantren dengan pesantren yang lain , yaitu adanya kesamaan ideologi serta memiliki kesamaan referensi dengan metode pengajaran yang sama , sehingga menjadikan pesantren memiliki kekuatan yang cukup signifikan dan dapat diperhitungkan oleh siapapun juga . 4 Kekuatan yang dimiliki oleh pesantren diantaranya karena pondok pesantren tumbuh dan diakui oleh masyarakat sekitar dengan sistem asrama . Santri menerima pendidikan agama melalui sistem pengajian atau madrasah yang sepenuhnya berada di bawah kedaulatan kepemimpinan seorang kiai , dengan ciri khas yang bersifat kharismatik serta independen dalam segala hal . 5 Perkembangan pendidikan pondok pesantren merupakan perwujudan dari kebutuhan masyarakat akan suatu sistem Pesantren telah membuktikan dirinya sebagai suatu lembaga pendidikan Islam yang established (mapan) dan memiliki posisi strategis dalam dunia pendidikan di Indonesia . Perubahan-perubahan sosial , politik , budaya dan lain- lain sejauh ini nampaknya tidak begitu berpengaruh terhadap eksistensi pesantren . Ia memberikan sentuhan tersendiri bagi masyarakat . Hal tersebut telah dibuktikan oleh pesantren berupa kontribusi besar bagi semangat mencerdaskan generasi bangsa dan penguatan peradaban . Tiga fungsi ganda pesantren adalah sebagai berikut . Pertama , sebagai lembaga pendidikan keagamaan yang berfungsi untuk menyebarluaskan dan mengembangkan ilmu- ilmu keagamaan Islam . Kedua , sebagai lembaga pengkaderan yang berhasil mencetak kader umat dan kader bangsa . Umumnya kader-kader tersebut memperoleh pengakuan sosial (social recognition) yang luas . Ketiga , berfungsi sebagai agen reformasi sosial yang menciptakan perubahan dan perbaikan dalam kehidupan masyarakat . Hal terakhir ini mungkin saja terjadi karena pesantren dengan figur sentral kyai mempunyai pengaruh yang kuat di . 7(1), 1–11.
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