Hybrid Pesantren in Indonesia; Analyzing the Transformation of Islamic Religious Education in the Digital Age

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Abstract

The involvement of Pesantren in digital media has led to the emergence of a brand-new Pesantren map in Indonesia, where Pesantren had previously played a traditional setting. Their engagement of religious leaders and institutions in cyberspace has fundamentally changed not only religious education practice but also the religious authority in digital media. This article aims to examine how the development of digital technology has altered the Pesantren learning tradition. Ngaji in the pesantren tradition, which is typically performed face-to-face, is currently conducted in a hybrid format through digital media. This article applied Netnography method which involves the systematic observation, analysis, and interpretation of online data. Based on Pierre Bordieau's structural construction theory, this study examines how individuals' habitus, shaped by digital media influences their engagement with digital Islamic practices. In line with that, the hybridization practiced by pesantren in Indonesia has become the new habitus of the pesantren learning tradition. Habitus is the collective entity by which and which dominant social and cultural conditions are established and reproduced. Furthermore, the Pesantren hybrid with its live-streaming Ngaji also constitutes a new Islamic public sphere that strengthens the existing Digital Islam in Indonesia. On the other hand, according to this study, the Kiai has transformed from "the cultural broker" to "the cultural creator" in the digital era, establishing a new tradition in pesantren education. They have achieved the establishment of a digital tradition of studying the yellow book (Kitab Kuning). This transition also facilitates the evolution of pesantren's learning tradition into a digital format. By continuing to adapt to shifting circumstances, hybrid pesantren bolster the evidence that pesantren are resilient and adaptable.

Keywords*: Hybrid Pesantren, Ngaji Online, New Media, Netnografi. Indonesia*

Abstrak

Keterlibatan Pesantren dalam media digital telah menyebabkan munculnya peta Pesantren baru di Indonesia, di mana Pesantren sebelumnya memainkan peran secara tradisional. Keterlibatan para pemuka dan lembaga agama di dunia maya secara fundamental telah mengubah tidak hanya praktik pendidikan agama tetapi juga otoritas keagamaan di media digital. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji bagaimana perkembangan teknologi digital telah mengubah tradisi pembelajaran agama di pesantren. *Ngaji Online* dalam tradisi pesantren yang biasanya dilakukan secara tatap muka, kini dilakukan dalam format hybrid melalui media digital. Artikel ini menggunakan metode Netnografi yang melibatkan pengamatan sistematis, analisis, dan interpretasi data online. Berdasarkan teori konstruksi struktural Pierre Bordieau, penelitian ini mengkaji bagaimana habitus individu yang dibentuk oleh media digital memengaruhi keterlibatan mereka dengan praktik Islam digital.

Sejalan dengan itu, hibridisasi yang dilakukan oleh pesantren di Indonesia telah menjadi habitus baru dalam tradisi belajar pesantren. Habitus yang dimaksud adalah entitas kolektif yang dengannya kondisi sosial dan budaya yang dominan dibangun dan direproduksi. Selain itu, pesantren hybrid dengan Ngaji live streamingnya juga menjadi arena publik Islam baru yang memperkuat Digital Islam yang ada di Indonesia. Di sisi lain, menurut kajian ini, Kiai telah bertransformasi dari "makelar budaya" menjadi "pencipta budaya" di era digital dengan membentuk tradisi baru dalam pendidikan pesantren. Mereka telah mencapai pembentukan tradisi digital dalam mempelajari kitab kuning (Kitab Kuning). Transisi ini juga memfasilitasi evolusi tradisi belajar pesantren ke dalam format digital. Dengan terus beradaptasi dengan keadaan yang berubah, Pesantren Hibrid memperkuat bukti bahwa pesantren adalah lembaga pendidikan Islam yang tangguh dan dapat mampu beradaptasi dengan perkembangan zaman.

Kata kunci: Pesantren Hibrid, Ngaji Online, Media Baru, Netnografi. Indonesia

INTRODUCTION

The production and transmission of religious knowledge faced dynamic changes in response to technological, social, and cultural advancements. This is because the process of transferring religious knowledge has become an essential part of the transformation of the Islamic intellectual tradition (Saeed, 2006). Furthermore, as the religious leader, Kiai plays a key role in transmitting religious knowledge to the larger Muslim community. The author divides this term into at least three phases: *first*, traditional teaching systems such as *halaqah*, *kuttab*, Al-Qur'an and Hadith teaching assemblies, and madrasas in the classical era (Berkey, 2014; Dhofier, 2011; Rahman, 1984); *second*, the development of the modern world has also influenced the tradition of Islamic learning with the existence of print media technology that facilitates the production process of religious material (Baso, 2012; Burhanudin, 2004; El Shamsy, 2022). Finally, in *phase three*, where digital media affects the process of transmitting religious knowledge, Larsson (2016) called that term New Media. According to the preceding explanation, the process of transmitting religious knowledge continues to evolve and change.

On the other hand, the Muslim community is also being engaged in digital development, which will eventually result in a paradigm shift from traditional to digital. Tsuria argued that with the Internet becoming an inseparable part of "real life," religious institutions and leaders have also become increasingly active and visible online. They have done so from a variety of perspectives and needs: to educate, to foster community, to reach out to new potential members, to offer religious tools and rituals, to engage in polemics, to brand, and to sell (Grant et al., 2019, p. 144). It also altered that digital media is a sacred and profane (Tsuria, 2021). Bunt called this term "Cyber Islamic Environment," which was, in his view, an essential component in the development of a new culture within the global Muslim community (Bunt, 2000). The use of social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, and even YouTube is further evidence that the practice of transmitting religious knowledge has evolved significantly in the digital age (Campbell & Tsuria, 2021). In addition, it is aware that the development of an understanding of Islamic religious doctrine all over

the globe has been aided by the proliferation of digital media (Aula, 2022). While digital technologies have expanded access to religious knowledge, the role of Kiai in transmitting religious knowledge in the digital era remains indispensable. Their expertise, authority, personal interaction, and adaptation to the digital age ensure the preservation and effective dissemination of Islamic knowledge while guiding Islamic students *(Santri)* and Muslim Community in Indonesia to navigate the digital world in accordance with Islamic principles.

The further development of the use of digital media in the production and dissemination of religious knowledge is also known as "Digital Islam." Digital Islam is a stage in which the Muslim community embraces technological, informational, and communication advancements. Currently, the Muslim community and digital media are negotiating in a variety of groups, including those that embrace, reject, reconfigure, and/or innovate (Dawson & Cowan, 2004). In addition, Campbell explained that digital media simultaneously challenges and empowers religious authorities in cyberspace, requiring them to engage in digital creative endeavors (Campbell, 2020a). In this case, the Kiai as the leader and holder of religious authority also gets the impact. Continue to be stunned if many religious education institutions, such as Pesantren in Indonesia, engage in mediatization or digitalization. Numerous Pesantren's accounts, including Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube channels and websites, demonstrate this phenomenon. Overall, Kiai in the digital era are actively embracing technological advancements, balancing traditional and digital methods, and addressing contemporary challenges. Their adaptation to the digital era ensures the continued relevance and effectiveness of pesantren in imparting religious knowledge and nurturing the next generation of Muslims.

Pesantren, the oldest and largest Islamic educational institution in Indonesia and a religious foundation due to the scholars they employ has become an essential component of the transformation of the Islamic learning tradition in Indonesia (Isbah, 2020a). Pesantren, with its three functions, namely the transmission and transfer of Islamic knowledge, the preservation of Islamic traditions, and the reproduction of scholars (Azra, 2019), have demonstrated their adaptability to technological

advancements. The emergence of various innovations such as the pesantren online (Ilaihi, 2019)*,* and pesantren virtual is indicative of the vigorous adaptability of this pesantren (Fakhrurrozi & Palu, 2021; Musthofa et al., 2021). This pesantren's adaptability is what allows it to endure and continue to develop with the times.

Previous researchers have found that the use of technology is one of the things that affect how Pesantren traditions change. Technology is also important in how Pesantren could change and grow in the future (Jamaluddin, 2012). Researchers additionally stated that Pesantren that rely only on the old way of learning and not on technological innovation will be left behind (Ansori et al., 2022). Compared to traditional ways of learning Pesantren with spoons online are now spreading religious knowledge over a wider range of topics. But, no one who has studied the event before has seen it. This is a big change from what Pesantren in Indonesia has always done in terms of science. The authors see that the rise of *Ngaji Online* is one of the signs that the Pesantren learning tradition is changing. There is only one step left in the long process of mediatizing Pesantren on the way to digitizing Pesantren in the future (Mustofa et al., 2022).

METHOD

This research is qualitative research with a Netnographic approach (R. Kozinets, 2019). This study aims to analyze the phenomenon of Pesantren religious education in the digital era, focusing on YouTube as a research object. Netnography is a method used to study society and culture in the digital space, more specifically, social media (Eriyanto, 2021). Digital field sites include the web - text, video, images, platform infrastructure, user behavior, social relationships, or information networks. This approach adapts and changes ethnographic analysis using new media as a means of expression (R. V. Kozinets & Gretzel, 2022). In addition, this approach is used to reflect the development of human culture in the digital space, especially in terms of the development of the religious education (Mustofa, Nadhifah, et al., 2023). This study uses data from social media sources which are used as platforms *Ngaji Online* especially on YouTube to see the process of

changing pesantren academic traditions. Through this approach, the author does not just place a finger on the screen or open an application but generates a feeling of being connected to the Santri, Kiai, and the learning experience in Pesantren during the research process. This study uses data from social media sources that become platforms *Ngaji Online* to explore an in-depth look at the process of changing the intellectual traditions of the Pesantren in the digital age. This research is based on participant observation research to see phenomena that occur in the intellectual tradition of Pesantren in the digital era.

This study tries to examine the impact of digital technology in religious learning in the pesantren, which the authors call Hybrid-Pesantren. Hybrid-Pesantren is a new way for Pesantren to teach Islamic Knowledge with the use of digital media. A hybridization of face-to-face and online learning Pesantren is not only a new style, but it will also become a new habitus of Pesantren's learning system in the future.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Hybrid Learning; The New Educational Model in Digital Era

The digital era has brought about significant changes in the field of education, and one of the emerging models that have gained prominence is hybrid learning. In recent years, hybrid learning has emerged as a fascinating educational issue, particularly after it became an alternative learning method during the Covid-19 pandemic (Iswanto et al., 2021; Wijaya & Budiman, 2021). Hybrid learning has become a topic for which a great deal of information is sought in cyberspace. This hybridity refers to the combination of physical and virtual space in a social environment generated by the mobility of technologically-connected users (De Souza e Silva, 2006). This also has implications for technological, social, and physical integration. Learners engage in human interactions as a component of the social environment, in addition to intellectual discussions pertaining to particular subjects (Eyal & Gil, 2022). This new educational model harnesses the power of technology to enhance learning experience, promote personalized learning, and adapt to the diverse needs of students.

Accordingly, Bonk defines hybrid learning as a combination of face-to-face and online learning (Bonk & Graham, 2012; Hwang, 2018). This circumstance enables simultaneous learning to occur in two distinct locations. The term hybrid learning is now widely used, particularly in the educational setting, as the use of technological devices for learning has shifted from nonexistent to widespread (Kostolanyova et al., 2015). Overall, there are three most common meanings for learning hybrid:

a. Integration of traditional learning with web-based online approaches;

b. The combination of media and tools (eg textbooks) used in the e-learning environment; and

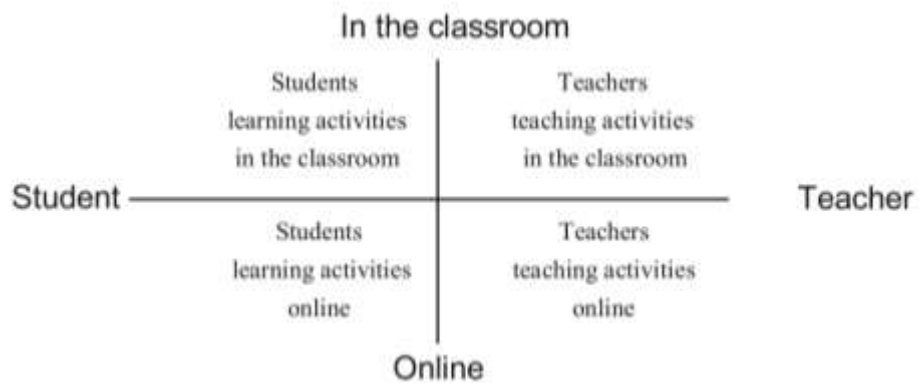c. A combination of a number of teaching and learning approaches regardless of the technology used (Li, 2015).

Figure 1
Hybrid learning model (Li, 2015)

Based on Figure 1, it is understood that hybrid learning is a combination of offline and online learning. In the context of Islamic Education, students can be interpreted as Santri and teachers as Kiai in this context. Learning activities are comparable to studying *Kitab Kuning* (the Islamic Yellow Book). Specifically, the media employed in this study are live-streaming YouTube and Facebook media. In this case, there are offline or face-to-face students and online or online learners. In general, it can be seen in the following diagram:
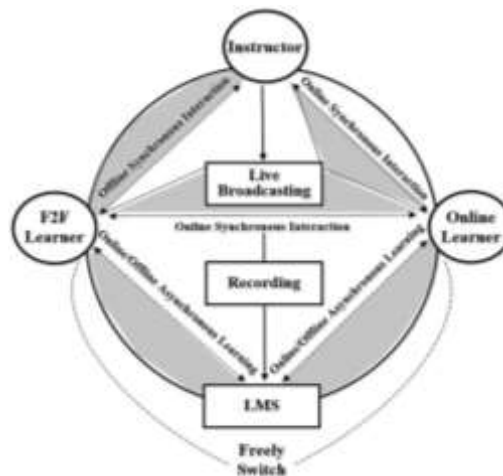
Figure 2
Hybrid learning with a live-streaming model *(Xiao et al., 2020)*

An example of hybrid learning is *Ngaji Online*. It is an Islamic religious education activity that takes place virtually via social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and so on. In this online recitation, Islamic preachers are typically read by Kiai and followed by a non-interface-spatial audience, and most Pesantren in Indonesia today understand this model well. The application of the hybrid learning model in pesantren in Indonesia aims to combine the strengths of both traditional and digital methods, enriching the learning experience for students. It provides flexibility, access to a broader range of resources, and opportunities for interactive and collaborative learning while maintaining the Islamic ethos and teachings within the pesantren environment.

Understanding Bordieau's Theory of Habitus

The author used the social theory of Pierre Bordieau to analyze the research findings. Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002) was a French sociologist who, at the close of the 20th century, became the most prominent sociologist (Grenfell, 2014). The field and habits are the central concepts promoted by Bordieau (Harker et al., 2016a). Habitus is the continuous internalization of the meaning of (Bourdieu, 2018). Habitus refers to dispositional systems that are durable, variable, and structure-based and tend to function as structures. According to him, habitus is a principle of generative judgment that is objectively classifiable and a classification

system (a division of principles) of practice. Habitus is internalized and transformed requirements that result in meaningful practices and perceptions. Bourdieu also argued about the field. The relationship between habitus and field is bidirectional. Fields can only exist if social agents possess the dispositions and perceptual schemes required to shape and give meaning to fields. Field can only exist if social agents possess the dispositions and set of perceptual schemes required to shape and lend meaning to the field.

Concurrently, by participating in the domain, the agent integrates sufficient knowledge (know-how) into their habitus, allowing them to form a field. Habits establish the structure of the field, while the field mediates between habit and practice. Field and Habitus, according to Bourdieu, can be used to analyze developmental phenomena in education; for him, the school is a fundamental factor in cultural consensus, as it represents the sharing of common sense, a precondition for communication (Harker et al., 2016b). Within the context of this study, Islamic boarding institutions serve as a school. As a system, the habit can endure for a long time and undergo change (Harker et al., 2009).

Findings and Discussions

***Ngaji Online* and the Transformation of Pesantren's Learning in the Digital Age**

Ngaji Online is the transfer of Islamic knowledge from teachers to pupils at Pesantren. *Ngaji online* is a hybrid learning alternative implemented in pesantren. *Ngaji online* is a virtual Islamic religious education activity that utilizes social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, etc. In *Ngaji Online*, this is typically read by Kiai from the classic texts of Islamic teachings and followed by an audience without interface-spatial constraints (Muttaqin, 2020). Fiqh, Hadith, and Sufism are among the books studied. These books are usually well-known, such as *Fatkhul Qarib, Uqudullujjain, Arbain Nawawi, Riyadhus Solihin, Wasiyatul Musthofa, Mukhtar al-Hadith, Ihya' Ulumddin*, and others. Unlike the conventional *ngaji*, the *ngaji online* has

hundreds of participants. This is due to the fact that the reach of social media is greater, if not infinite when compared to the conventional *ngaji* as usual.

Ngaji online is an extremely new phenomenon. This is also the result of the impact that the changing interest in tracking Islamic literature in Indonesia has had. The Muslim population in Indonesia now overwhelmingly favors using solely the internet to search for immediate answers to religious questions. As a result, many Kiai who are regarded as authoritative are now entering the area of digital publishing in order to reduce the likelihood of errors appearing in Islamic literature. Although *ngaji online* is considered to have many flaws, particularly in the relationship between kiai and santri or pesantren facilities as a support (Habibi et al., 2021), the fact that *ngaji online* has become one of the learning alternatives of Islamic education in the midst of an undeniable pandemic cannot be ignored.

Based on the observations from the data site of researchers, there are at least a number of pesantren that routinely conduct *ngaji online* with a live streaming system. This data site was used to analyze the transformation of changes in the religious learning model at Pesantren. In addition, this data also explain which books *(kitab kuning)* are often studied in online recitations. This data also shows the interactions between Kyai and santri online who take part in the study. It can be clearly seen in the table.1.

Table 1
List of Ngaji Online (Online Recitation) in Pesantren

No	Channel	Name of Yellow Book	Type of Study	Kiai	Start	Link
1	Gus Mus Channel	Tafsir Al-Ibriz	Al-Qur'an & Tafsir	KH. Mustofa Bisri	6/6/2020	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tqx2TfFGu3I&list=PLraSTVIsk-ywtznlYN9Vo2uUO9AJxSCWp
		Tafsir Jalalain	Al-Qur'an & Tafsir	KH. Syarofudin Islmail Qoumas	6/16/2020	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KaOu9ryv6ak&list=PLraSTVIsk-yxHDbdVpumVAHKPvLq2NpmO

		al-Adzkar An-Nawawiyah	Hadith	KH. Bisri Adib Hattani	4/25/2020	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uLPM2EZ2-l4&list=PLraSTVIsk-yxIetihEL35S1wZUhje3ilO
		Jawahir Bukhori	Hadith	KH. Bisri Mustofa	8/14/2021	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=66GtzaDRe_Q&list=PLraSTVIsk-ywTwnoybTJWObAwvXz0YO6y
		Arbain Nawawi	Hadith	KH. Bisri Mustofa	5/27/2017	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MUJpKRJG0-g&list=PLraSTVIsk-yxQFpG0pjJehfbT8AUh-zIM
		Akhlakul Muslim	Sufism	KH. Mustofa Bisri	4/24/2020	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U9l9k7cUzjw&list=PLraSTVIsk-yz-RRtMDUPGLrsyTaj1Ml8s
		Bidayatul Hidayah	Sufism	KH. Mustofa Bisri	5/27/2017	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IeLkaw1x6rA&list=PLraSTVIsk-ywW7f62Zw1DetKWK-d5dgcH
		Idhotun Nasyi'in	Sufism	KH. Mustiofa Bisri	2/25/2019	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d610hIh3Q6c&list=PLraSTVIsk-yxbx07Iqg0BjyM2cL_RafnW
		Minhajul Abidin	Sufism	KH. Yahya Cholil Tsaquf	4/14/2020	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9EXt1P1Eh1M&list=PLraSTVIsk-yxrUJ4fDv6Za1kA05NBQ813
		Tajul Arus	Sufism	KH. Mustofa Bisri	5/17/2018	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qou0g4-H3a0&list=PLraSTVIsk-yxwQBmD550sdFDAP7QTCW3Y
		Siyar Salafus Salihin	Other	KH. Mustofa Bisri	10/24/2020	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wdIgLlNspM8&list=PLraSTVIsk-yyGZx-8Av8Lnz6aD0jcWtCn
		Qasidah Burdah	Other	KH. Mustofa Bisri	5/27/2017	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EY-JTAYgA34&list=PLraSTVIsk-yyxwDrIHYjvNh0jcwiZZk9m

		Muhammad Insan Kamil	Other	KH. Mustofa Bisri	10/18/2022	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bNk43UqB00E&list=PLraSTVIsk-yxM0mXoCHrASB63g_U12TC3
2	Gus Yusuf Channel	Durrotun Nasihin	Hadith	KH. Muhammad Yusuf Chudlori	10/18/2017	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SicUFDrpX2M&list=PLzt5A-2ajVH5CqGNOSTd1WmDqk0CS7UEz
		Qamiut Tughyan 'ala Syu'abul Iman	Tauhid	KH. Muhammad Yusuf Chudlori	4/13/2021	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vY5m5x5axNY&list=PLzt5A-2ajVH6BF_gmb2ZT3V7Fnu0R_Wd2
		Risalatul Burdah	Other	KH. Muhammad Yusuf Chudlori	5/17/2018	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P96v2IGXVG0&list=PLzt5A-2ajVH5-jNuAl6kSVRoSxy_Btr0p
		Wasyiyatul Mustofa	Hadith	KH. Muhammad Yusuf Chudlori	5/7/2019	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Wn2LtC3M9M&list=PLzt5A-2ajVH4UCAAgtrYaIYLG1J5TbHmy
		Arbain Nawawi	Hadith	KH. Muhammad Yusuf Chudlori	4/5/2020	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MSW6lI5Vdx0&list=PLzt5A-2ajVH57V0WhTL8tHDFbiNdFZEHQ
		Ayyuhal Walad	Sufism	KH. Muhammad Yusuf Chudlori	4/24/2020	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KCkYXUeeD6A&list=PLzt5A-2ajVH7JXoHVtithwIPslRM0gtoy
		Lubbabul Hadits	Sufism	Gus A. Izzuddin Abdurrochman	4/8/2020	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3WvERWarthY&list=PLzt5A-2ajVH5cC3w2YALVnhaU_vWv2Tdc
		Risalatul Burdah	Other	KH. Muhammad	5/17/2018	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P96v2IGXVG0&l

				Yusuf Chudlori		ist=PLzt5A-2ajVH5-jNuAl6kSVRoSxy_Btr0p
3	Annursatu Channel	Riyadhus Salihin	Hadith	KH. Fahrurrozi	5/17/2018	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b2vGlMs8OI4&list=PL3lHCa6XWpGpJO9MxgpJ7G5ldbgj8UJAh
		Mukhtarul Ahadits	Hadith	KH. Fahrurrozi	5/17/2018	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vY5m5x5axNY&list=PLzt5A-2ajVH6BF_gmb2ZT3V7Fnu0R_Wd2
		Irsyadul Ibad	Fiqh	KH. Fahrurrozi	3/23/2023	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4EzFukfqrJM&list=PL3lHCa6XWpGqhc2UhUTz0Ifmzv28B6kqW
		Ihya' Ulumuddin	Sufism	KH. Fahrurrozi	5/18/2018	https://www.facebook.com/annursatu.bululawang/videos/1783380145353890/
		Nashoihul 'Ibad	Sufism	KH. Fahrurrozi	3/2/2023	https://www.facebook.com/annursatu.bululawang/videos/532526205635232/
		Ta'lim Muta'allim	Other	KH. Fahrurrozi	5/6/2023	https://www.facebook.com/annursatu.bululawang/videos/957014221984993
		Adabul Alim wal Muta'allim	Other	KH. Fahrurrozi	3/23/2023	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4S8DMWLucRc&list=PL3lHCa6XWpGqo6YVGc_fs6seKmcmopHiV

Table.1 displays a list of studies, and it's clear that the vast majority of them deal with Hadith. The most common options include the books *Arbain Nawawi, Riyadhus Shalihin, Mukhtar al-Ahadits, Jawahir al-Bukhari, and Sahih Bukhari.* This book is studied almost every Ramadan, even on the Gus Mus channel. Of greater interest is the fact that only three pesantren in all of Indonesia study hadith books, including major books like the *Sahih Bukhari* and the *Jawahir Bukhari*. These pesantren are Pesantren Raudhatut Thalibin in Rembang, Pesantren Lirboyo in Kediri, and Pesantren the Tebuireng in Jombang. Books on Sufism, education, and Fiqh are also widely read and studied. Other books like *Qasidah Imam Bushiri*, *Idhotun Nasyi'in*, and *Dalail Khoirot* have also been analyzed.

The author found that most of the books studied are books of Hadith and Sufism, rarely in his studies read books with fiqh nuances that are familiar in society such as *Safinatun Najah*, *Kasyifatus Saja* or *Fatkhul Qarib*. The author assumes that studying fiqh is usually accompanied by practice and it will be less effective if it is taught through *ngaji online*. But, apart from that, however, the amount recipe online emerging indicates the development of existing learning models in Pesantren. The emphasis on Hadith and Sufism in the books studied highlights the focus on prophetic traditions and spiritual aspects within the Islamic boarding school curriculum. These areas of study are considered essential for nurturing a strong foundation in Islamic faith and spirituality. Nevertheless, it is important to recognize the emerging trend of online resources in Islamic education. The proliferation of *ngaji online* has opened up new avenues for learning and knowledge dissemination within Pesantren. These resources provide an opportunity for Muslim community to access a wide range of materials, including books, lectures, and scholarly articles related to fiqh and other Islamic disciplines.

Hybrid Pesantren; the New Habitus on Pesantren's Religious Learning in the Digital Age

In Pesantren, Santri has long followed the practice of studying the yellow book (Kitab Kuning). Meanwhile, Kiai and Santri's digital technological assets amount to valuable wealth. In addition, both are expanded into emerging sectors by the incorporation of cyberspace in social media sites like Facebook and YouTube. The author uses Bordieau's (Harker et al., 2016c) theory for analysis of these three factors to develop a new approach to *ngaji online* instruction, which is called the Hybrid Pesantren.

Figure 3

The Ngaji Online held by KH. Mustofa Bisri/Gus Mus
(the leader of PBNU and Pesantren Raudhatut Thalibin Rembang, Indonesia)

The New Habitus involves *Ngaji Online*, with digital platforms serving as the New Arena. The Kiai's first stage for creating religious knowledge was the pesantren. As a result of technological advancements, the arena is now a virtual environment. The benefits and drawbacks of this new setting are also worth considering. One disadvantage is that the Santri have to rely on videos instead of actually meeting the Kiai in person. Despite the fact that Pesantren relies on direct instruction to foster the development of positive character traits (Ni'am, 2015). The spread of religious education is positive, nevertheless. If it was previously only available in a pesantren setting, then more people now have access to it. Pesantren's learning which originally took place traditionally in mosques, *surau,* or Pondok (Isbah, 2020b)*,* currently covers a new arena by entering the virtual world. This new habitus was initially in the mind of the Kiai as an actor which then turned into a new practice that was created out of necessity. The need to continue to carry out learning using digital media is what drives this practice.

Furthermore, this Hybrid Pesantren becomes the Kiai's capital as an agent to disseminate and transmit his religious knowledge to the wider community. Because the nature of social media is space-limited, the range of transmission of

religious knowledge carried out by Kiai will also have a wider effect. Hybrid Pesantren is a term used to refer to the *ngaji online* phenomenon that has emerged so far, especially among Islamic boarding schools. In general, the Hybrid Pesantren requires a process of learning the yellow book which is carried out by a Kiai in a pesantren's environment and is carried out by live streaming. Hybrid Pesantren has several elements such as Pesantren, Kiai, Yellow Book Learning, Offline Santri, and Online Santri. This Hybrid Pesantren requires two learning spaces, namely offline and online as the arena within it. In general, the concept of this hybrid pesantren can be seen in Figure. 4.
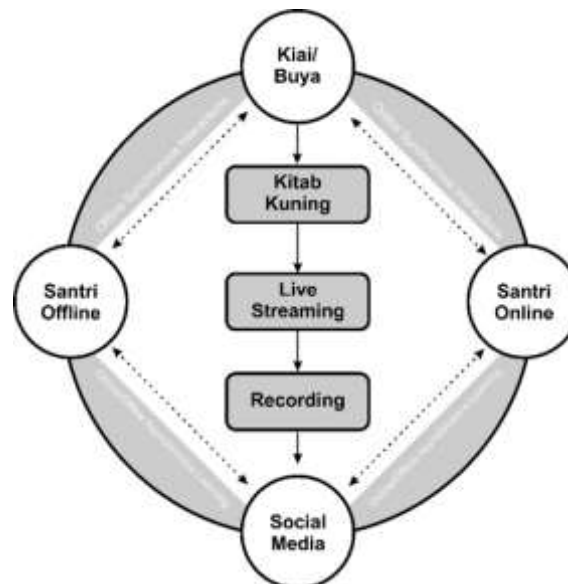

Figure 4
Hybrid Pesantren Model

A novel strategy of adaption for pesantren education is depicted in Figure 4. The Hybrid Pesantren is a new arena where an effort is being made to create knowledge of Islam among Indonesian Muslims. It is still possible for the pesantren tradition to gain wider recognition even if there is Kiai who performs online recitations in global languages like English. In addition, the author notes that Kiai's role as a cultural broker, as described by Clifford Geertz (1976), has evolved in meaning. When considering the Kiai in the context of the information age, the author labels them as **"cultural creators."** The Kiai have used their digital inventiveness to create and spread religious information online through the practice

of online recitation. This term is what Campbell (2020a) called digital creatives. Kiai has graduated from cultural mediator to cultural creator. The practice of *ngaji online* in this digital age is a departure from the Islamic norm in Indonesia. The Kiai is evolving into a new kind of digital actor. Currently, Kiai is no longer simply known as a member of the pesantren, but as a person who is also willing to leave and make their presence felt in the wider world.

This Kiai who is active on social media is referred to by the author as Kiai Digital. Digital Kiai refers to Kiai's social media activities as a new space for religious education. It was also proof that Tsuria stated that in the digital age, religious leaders will be more active and visible (Mustofa, Mamnunah, et al., 2023). The Kiai, who initially appeared archaic, had already begun to challenge this assumption. Kiai Digital represents a religious authority that is adaptable to technological and cultural developments. By using their digital creative (Campbell, 2020b), Kiai was not only playing a crucial role in the transmission of religious knowledge but also strengthening their authority in the digital age (Hoover, 2016). In an effort to disseminate religious knowledge to the larger community, Kiai is transforming digital space into a new Islamic public sphere, Hoover (2016) called this phenomenon the "legacy of media" Thus, digital media have in fact introduced something new and different that is increasingly determinative of practices, especially in pesantren.

Pesantren institutions which were historically the most prestigious in Indonesia, is currently developing digital media as their new arena. This also contradicts the notion that pesantren are exclusive and only accessible to a subset of the Muslim community (Nurtawab & Wahyudi, 2022) . In a rapidly evolving world, pesantren institutions recognize the need to adapt and embrace technology (Harnadi et al., 2021). Digital media provides an opportunity to transcend geographical limitations and extend the reach of Islamic education beyond the physical boundaries of pesantren campuses. Recognizing the potential of the digital realm, these institutions have started incorporating online platforms, live streaming, video lectures, and interactive learning materials into their curriculum. Finally, this

Hybrid Pesantren can serve as an alternative to Pesantrens' learning model. So that the pesantren tradition of studying the Yellow Book does not appear exclusive because it is only relished by students, but by the larger community as well.

The Ngaji Online; Negotiating between Tradition and Digitization

Ngaji online is evidence of the transformation process of Islamic religious learning in the digital era. The three *Ngaji online* platforms studied can prove that pesantren applies the virtual method to transmitting religious knowledge. However, Pesantren, which initially and until now have declared themselves as traditional Islamic defense forces have combined tradition and digitalization. Online recitation can result from this mixing where tradition and modernity influence each other through digital media and are strongly supported by the state of the Covid-19 pandemic (Pabbajah et al., 2021). The Covid-19 pandemic has also had a significant impact on the dissemination of religious knowledge through digital media. Activity restrictions are the main reason, and the fact that the students at the Pesantren were eventually sent home due to the pandemic was one reason behind the emergence of the *Ngaji Online* platform (Aly Najamudin, 2021). The finding was to prove the significant impact of digitization, especially on the pedagogical aspects of traditional education. Therefore, the Covid-19 pandemic has affected digital developments and further has implications for changing the academic tradition of Pesantren from traditional to digital. Although it is not entirely, it can be understood that this model is a hybrid learning model.

The model used by this pesantren makes it possible to continue carrying out academic traditions that have been running for a long time, only to change and modify the delivery method. Finally, the religious learning traditions of pesantren, such as *Sorogan* and *Bandongan,* can be carried out even in a pandemic with the help of digitalization. However, what is a shared task is that students must also be prepared in such a way to face this digital reality to avoid increasing digital inequality The paradigm of pesantren, which is synonymous with traditionality, has now changed. Therefore, digitalization is the primary key for pesantren to continue

to function as learning centers as they should (Zafi et al., 2021). Taking this reality into account, after the Covid-19 pandemic ended, the researchers argue that the academic tradition of Pesantren will not return to its traditional paradigm but will instead continue to develop its adaptive abilities. Therefore, Pesantren in the future may be very familiar with the digital world. We can see this since the digitization of the Islamic book has started and pesantren is or has even entered a new era.

However, there is something to be worried about from this kind of pesantren concept in the future. One of them is social relations which will also be transformed. For example, ease of access to religious knowledge may reduce interest in studying at Pesantren directly because everything can be accessed with just one hand. One that might be replaced is the *Tabarrukan* (engagement) tradition. It is a tradition that Santri usually carries out to gain knowledge from a Kiai, so it is not uncommon for a Santri to gain knowledge for years by moving between Pesantren. Now everyone can move from one *Ngaji* to another *Ngaji* even simultaneously to be in a different Pesantren.

In addition, the tradition of *Sanad* (license on the chain of transmission) and diplomas will also be transformed by changing this kind of Pesantren's paradigm. Many find virtual diplomas, for example. So, of course, this will influence the academic tradition of the pesantren in the Future. What was conveyed by Gus Yusuf that the real learning was *Wajhan bi Wajhin* or face-to-face for the author was true. So even though the academic tradition is currently changing due to the pandemic and digital developments, do not immediately abandon the Qur'an tradition. Because for the author, there are things that cannot be replaced by digital, namely *barakah* or blessings and the pleasure of meeting directly with the Kiai.

Digital Kiai; Reclaiming Religious Authority on the Internet

Currently, an increasing number of engaged pesantren and kiai on social media have altered the media landscape of religious authority. The author called by "Digital Kiai". These religious figures use social media to propagate their teachings and establish an online presence. They can use platforms such as Instagram,

Twitter, and YouTube to claim religious authority and influence the religious beliefs and practices of others (Rachmadhani, 2021). Using religious quotes or memes, they can spread religious knowledge more easily through their social media (Bellar et al., 2013). Figure. 5 shows one of the ways that the role of Kyai has changed from Traditional Kyai to Digital Kyai in Indonesia.

Figure. 5
Gus Mus as a Digital Kiai spreading Islamic Knowledge with his Meme

Furthermore, traditional religious authorities, such as Pesantren and Kiai, have also benefited from the proliferation of online recitation. The online platform has allowed Kiai to be both traditional and digitally authoritative. It examines debates and discussions pertaining to the nature of religious authority and the function of traditional Islamic institutions in the digital era. Borrowing Evolvi (Evolvi, 2017) statement, that Kiai currently has a hybrid identity that lacks the authority of religious text sources but has digital media capabilities on the other hand. The existence of moderate Kiai like Gus Mus in digital media also further confirms the rise of moderate Islamic da'wah in digital media.

Thus, the rise of online recitations performed by Digital Kiai has a significant effect on the practice of Islamic education and further demonstrates the authority of Digital Kiai in the digital age. While digital media enables individuals to access Islamic knowledge and engage in discussions and debates about Islamic teachings, it also raises questions about the veracity and accuracy of Islamic teachings posted online. To ensure the authenticity of religious sources, so that online proselytizing can continue to be a valuable resource for Muslims, it is

essential to define clear standards for online religious authority and expertise, as well as to encourage critical thinking and skepticism among online audiences.

CONCLUSION

The advent of digital technology has altered the traditional pesantren learning environment. Ngaji online is a new habitus in Pesantren's tradition. In addition, *ngaji online* is an activity to maintain the pesantren's religious authority by validating their religious authority. Eventually, online recitation will transform cyberspace into a new Islamic public sphere that constitutes The Cyber Islamic Environment, particularly in Indonesia. By combining face-to-face ngaji and live streaming, hybrid pesantren create a new learning paradigm for Ipesantren. In order to enhance the future adaptability of pesantren, learning hybridization must be implemented in pesantren. Through this hybrid pesantren, the Kiai is viewed not only as a cultural broker but also as a cultural creator who will alter the future appearance of the pesantren learning tradition.

In response to this digital transformation, hybrid pesantren have emerged, which combine face-to-face *ngaji* with live streaming. This new learning paradigm offers a new way of enhancing the future adaptability of pesantren. Through hybridization, the Kiai is no longer merely a cultural broker but also a cultural creator, capable of shaping the future of the pesantren learning tradition. Therefore, it is essential to implement learning hybridization in pesantren to stay relevant and adaptive in the changing times. By doing so, pesantren can continue to thrive and offer meaningful religious education to the community, both online and offline. In conclusion, the digital age has brought about a new era for pesantren, and those who can adapt to these changes will continue to play a vital role in shaping the future of Islamic education in Indonesia. While this transition has already showcased remarkable progress, further research is necessary to fully explore the implications and potential challenges of pesantren in the digital age. Exploring the Claiming of religious authority, innovation on the platform, and the dissemination of religious moderation through digital media of pesantren.

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