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AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON THE INTEGRATION OF MODERN EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES IN SALAF ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOLS: Challenges, Resistance, and Strategies for Implementation

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Abstract: *This study examines the education policy at the Fathul Hidayah Pangean Lamongan Islamic Boarding School in dealing with resistance to the integration of traditional and modern education. Using a qualitative approach and thematic analysis of in-depth interview data and participant observation, this study attempts to understand how the Islamic boarding school manages the dynamics of change. The results of the study indicate that although there is resistance from some conservative groups towards elements of modern education, the integrative policy implemented has succeeded in creating a balance between religious and general education. The Islamic boarding school is able to develop a horizontal integration curriculum (religious and general knowledge) with a contextual approach, preparing students to face global challenges without losing their Islamic identity. The main contributions of this study include: (1) the proposal of a curriculum integration model based on twin track paradigm which combines deep religious literacy and functional competencies; (2) development of a participatory framework to manage resistance through dialogue between stakeholders; and (3) policy recommendations for Islamic boarding schools to be adaptive and collaborative in the process of modernizing education. Nationally and globally, rejection of educational integration is a strategic issue because it is closely related to cultural identity and readiness to face globalization. The tension between preserving religious values and the demands of modernization is a real challenge for Islamic educational institutions. This research opens up space for further studies, such as testing the effectiveness of the curriculum integration model or developing indicators of success for salaf-modern integration in various social contexts.*

Keywords: *Islamic Education Policy; Curriculum Integration; Educational Change Management; Stakeholder Engagement in Islamic Schools; Modernization of Religious Education.*

INTRODUCTION

Islamic boarding school education in Indonesia has a long history that is deeply rooted in Islamic tradition. Since its inception, Islamic boarding schools have become educational institutions that not only teach religious knowledge, but also shape the character and morals of students (Saifullah, 2024). The pesantren education tradition, known as the salaf approach, focuses on teaching classical books, such as the yellow books, which cover various religious disciplines, including fiqh, tafsir, hadith, and aqidah. This system provides a deep understanding of Islamic teachings and equips students with strong religious knowledge (Aswaluddin, 2023).

However, the rapid development of the times and technological advances have given rise to major challenges for Islamic boarding schools to remain relevant amidst modernity (Pandi Mohamad, 2025). On the one hand, the demands of the times demand change and adaptation (Amelia, 2023), while on the other hand, Islamic boarding schools must also maintain the traditional values that have become their identity (Syaifuddin, 2024). This modernization process often encounters challenges, especially from more conservative circles, who are concerned that the integration of modern education could reduce the essence of religious teachings which are the main goal of Islamic boarding school education (Qomar, 2002). This is what is often referred to as resistance to modernization.

The Fathul Hidayah Islamic Boarding School in Pangean, Lamongan, is an interesting example in facing this challenge. This Islamic boarding school not only teaches religious knowledge in depth through the books of the Salaf, but has also succeeded in integrating elements of modern education into its curriculum. This shows that Islamic boarding schools do not need to sacrifice tradition to keep up with the times. The integration of religious education and general education is a model that provides benefits for students to have the skills needed in the outside world, without having to leave the depth of religious understanding they gain in Islamic boarding schools (Muzammil, 2025). This approach is in line with the national priority to produce graduates who are not only religious, but also competent, productive, and ready to compete globally.

Pesantren Fathul Hidayah, although located in a more traditional area, has adopted a more inclusive and progressive approach in its curriculum. This pesantren not only teaches fiqh, tafsir, and hadith, but also teaches general subjects such as mathematics, English, information technology, and entrepreneurship. Through this approach, this pesantren has succeeded in preparing students to face the outside world with more complete skills, but still maintaining religious values as the main foundation (Takdir, 2018). This integration model can support the direction of developing superior and competitive Indonesian human resources at the international level, in accordance with the vision of Golden Indonesia 2045 with reference to the development of a national education system rooted in local culture and Islamic values.

The educational policy implemented at the Fathul Hidayah Islamic Boarding School prioritizes two main principles, namely the depth of religious knowledge and mastery of general skills. The curriculum at this Islamic boarding school integrates traditional and modern education, where students are given the opportunity to study classical books

containing profound religious teachings, while also receiving general education that is relevant to developments in the outside world (halil, 2015). One of the important policies in this integration is a gradual approach to introducing general subjects (Darul Abror, 2023). This balance reflects the urgency of developing human resources that are not only highly moral, but also adaptive as active actors in national development and global change.

Based on field observations, the Fathul Hidayah Islamic Boarding School shows a strong commitment to integrating traditional and modern education in a very structured and responsive manner to the needs of the times. In daily activities, students are seen not only studying traditional books in classrooms based on tradition, but also actively participating in entrepreneurship training programs and the use of information technology. For example, in the computer room, they learn to operate digital devices, access online learning materials, and participate in discussions involving modern topics, such as globalization and the digital economy. This indicates that Islamic boarding schools can be a strategic force in producing a digitally literate Islamic generation that is ready to answer the challenges of the Industrial Revolution 4.0. A rigorous and evidence-based understanding of Salafist-modern educational integration strategies is essential to inform national educational policy and practice. By deeply understanding best practices such as those carried out at Pesantren Fathul Hidayah, policymakers can develop more contextual, inclusive, and sustainable regulations and programs. Without a strong evidence base, the risk of policy failure or institutional resistance to change will increase. This shows how this Islamic boarding school has succeeded in integrating technology as part of their education, while maintaining the depth of religious knowledge that has become a tradition of the Islamic boarding school. The ustadz and caretakers of the Islamic boarding school also appear to play an active role in assisting students in utilizing this technology, so that they not only equip them with religious knowledge but also skills that are relevant to the needs of today's global society. These findings underscore the importance of evidence-based understanding (*evidence-based*) on educational integration strategies in the context of Islamic boarding schools.

The novelty of this research lies in the integrative approach applied by Pesantren Fathul Hidayah in combining salaf education with elements of modern education, which has not been discussed in depth in the context of pesantren in Indonesia. This research provides a new contribution in understanding how pesantren can manage change without losing their religious identity. In addition, this research also highlights the use of technology in the learning process in pesantren, which has so far been more identical to traditional-based learning. This innovation has the potential to become a reference for national Islamic education policy, especially in developing an Islamic boarding school-based education model that is able to answer the challenges of the times without abandoning religious values.

So far, the literature review on the education policy of salaf-modern Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia shows three main trends. First, a number of studies highlight the modernization of Islamic boarding schools as a response to the challenges of the times, as expressed by Wahyu Iryana by emphasizing the importance of three concepts: tamaddun

(advancement of civilization), *tsaqafah* (creative enlightenment in religion), and *hadarah* (cultural development) (Iryana, 2015). Second, there is a focus on the integration of the *pesantren* curriculum with national education standards, as discussed by Ira Kusumawati who examines the integration of the *pesantren* curriculum into the national system to improve the quality and relevance of education (Ira Kusumawati, 2024). Third, another trend highlights the role of modern *madrasas* and Islamic boarding schools in forming a moderate Islamic identity, as researched by Asmuri (Asmuri, 2025) and (Yadi Fahmi Arifudin, 2024), which emphasizes the importance of forming national character and religious moderation through boarding school-based education and an integrated curriculum.

However, these three approaches have significant limitations. Many studies are still normative-conceptual and are not supported by comprehensive field data, so they do not provide a strong empirical picture of the actual dynamics in Islamic boarding schools. In addition, most studies do not explore in depth the involvement of stakeholders, such as the role of teachers, caregivers, students, and parents in the process of educational transformation. The policy or implementation models offered also still have minimal empirical validation and are rarely tested in the context of Islamic boarding schools with unique local characteristics. Moreover, the technological dimension is often ignored, even though the integration of information and communication technology (ICT) in education is a major demand of the 21st century and is an important part of forming students' global competence.

In this context, the study of *Pesantren Fathul Hidayah Pangean* offers a different contribution. This study highlights an integrative approach between *salaf* education and modern education, including the use of digital technology in the learning process, as an innovative response to the challenges of modernization. Unlike previous studies, this study is based on direct observation and field interviews, which allows for a more contextual exploration and is rooted in the internal dynamics of the *pesantren*. In addition, this study also raises how integrative strategies can be implemented gradually and participatively, taking into account local cultural resistance and readiness. Therefore, the novelty of this study lies in the empirical approach that examines *pesantren*-based education policies with an integrative lens, based on data, and responsive to technological developments and the needs of the times. This study strengthens the argument that the success of *salaf*-modern integration requires policy design based on successful practices in the field as demonstrated by *Pesantren Fathul Hidayah*. This is important so that *pesantren* education not only survives, but is also able to transform as an important pillar in the national education system. By strengthening the empirical basis, this research can be an important input in formulating holistic, contextual, and adaptive Islamic education policies.

Thus, this study aims to explore more deeply how *Pesantren Fathul Hidayah* manages educational policies that integrate *salaf* and modern approaches, and how these policies have succeeded in overcoming the challenges of resistance to modernization. A rigorous and evidence-based understanding of these integration strategies is critical to informing sustainable *pesantren* education policy and practice. The results of this study are expected

to be a practical and scientific reference in formulating Islamic education policies that are superior, relevant, and contributive to national development.

However, the argument about why this issue requires in-depth academic testing still needs to be strengthened. Although the integrative approach at Pesantren Fathul Hidayah looks promising, without scientific validation, this process is prone to causing a number of serious risks. If the integration between traditional and modern education is managed without a strong conceptual and empirical understanding, then the potential for educational stagnation could occur, where the pesantren fails to respond to the demands of the times because it maintains tradition too much without innovation. Conversely, if it leans too much towards modernization without a mature strategy, this could trigger identity conflicts among students, caregivers, and the pesantren community itself. In the long term, failure to manage this integration risks triggering societal polarization—between groups that support full conservatism and groups that encourage extreme modernization—which actually weakens the position of the pesantren as a center of Islamic moderation.

Therefore, data-based studies and scientific approaches are crucial to evaluate the effectiveness of this integration, understand the dynamics of stakeholders, and formulate an adaptive and contextual policy framework. Only with empirical validation can the best practices of Islamic boarding schools such as Fathul Hidayah be replicated, modified, or integrated into national policies in a responsible and sustainable manner.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a single case study design (Sugiyono, 2019). The qualitative approach was chosen because the purpose of the study was to understand the phenomenon in depth, by looking at how the educational policies implemented at Pesantren Fathul Hidayah overcome resistance to modernization. In addition, the case study approach was used to focus the research on one specific object, namely Pesantren Fathul Hidayah in Pangean, Lamongan, so that it is possible to study the phenomenon in more detail and contextually. The selection of the Fathul Hidayah Islamic Boarding School in Pangean, Lamongan, East Java, as the study location was based on the unique characteristics of this Islamic boarding school which make it a *integrative model* between salaf (traditional) and modern education. This pesantren stands out as an early adopter of the dualistic approach, where the salaf curriculum is systematically combined with the formal education curriculum. Furthermore, the pesantren's success in managing the tension between traditional values and the demands of modernization makes it relevant as a rich case study. Compared to other pesantren in the Lamongan region that tend to maintain a pure salaf orientation or exclusively pursue modernization, Pesantren Fathul Hidayah represents an interesting hybrid form for further study. However, a limitation of this study is that it does not include direct comparative data from other pesantren or regional education authorities. This is acknowledged as a methodological limitation, but it nevertheless provides significant insights in the context of an in-depth case study.

The research subjects involved 12 main participants, consisting of 1 madrasah principal, 5 teachers, and 6 students. The selection of participants was carried out randomly *purposive sampling*, considering their active involvement in the planning, implementation, and acceptance of educational policies in Islamic boarding schools. The principal represents the policy and management perspective, teachers convey views from the implementation side, while students provide input on learning experiences and responses to modernization policies. Data collection was carried out using three techniques, including: *First*, Interview (Arikunto, 2020), semi-structured interviews, conducted with 12 participants and recorded with the participants' permission, then transcribed verbatim. The interviews were conducted to obtain information related to education policies, challenges faced in integrating traditional and modern education, and their views on resistance to modernization in Islamic boarding schools. These interviews provided deeper insights into policy implementation and resistance management. *Second*, Observation (Arikunto, 2020), Participatory observation of teaching and learning activities, student-teacher interactions, and the dynamics of educational organizations in Islamic boarding schools, was conducted for three consecutive weeks. This observation also aims to explore information about interactions between students, teachers, and Islamic boarding school managers. *Third*, Documentation (Arikunto, 2020), documentation, including curriculum analysis, teaching guidelines, and activity archives that reflect the direction of the Islamic boarding school's integrative policies in facing modernization.

Data were analyzed using descriptive thematic analysis methods (Matthew B. Miles, 2014). The analysis process began with the transcription of interview data, followed by repeated readings to understand the context and content of the data as a whole. Next, open coding was carried out to mark important meaning units, which were then categorized into relevant main themes, such as: *curriculum integration strategy*, *internal resistance*, *santri's acceptance of modernization*, And *responsive pesantren policy*. This process is done manually but systematically, with cross-testing between interview data, observations, and documentation to strengthen the validity of the data through source triangulation. To increase the reliability and validity of the research, the researcher used several accuracy strategies, including: Triangulation of methods (interviews, observations, documentation). Member checking to several key informants to ensure the accuracy of data interpretation, Audit trail or tracking the analysis and decision-making process during the research. And peer discussions with the supervisor as peer debriefing to test the clarity and consistency of the findings. With this approach and method, the research seeks to produce a holistic and in-depth understanding of how Pesantren Fathul Hidayah formulates, implements, and navigates integrative education policies in facing the challenges of modernization and internal resistance.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

General Description of Fathul Hidayah Madrasah Pangean Lamongan

Madrasah Fathul Hidayah was founded in the early 1990s by a group of scholars who had a vision to create an educational institution that not only taught religious knowledge

in depth, but also provided education that was relevant to the development of the times. The founders of this Islamic boarding school were Kyai H. Masyhadi and Ibu Nyai Hj. Siti Aimatul. Kyai H. Masyhadi passed away in 2021, currently the Islamic boarding school is being looked after by their second son, K. Ahmad Labiq Muzayyan, a scholar and academic who realizes the importance of education that integrates religious knowledge with general knowledge.

This Islamic boarding school is located in Pangean Village, Maduran District, Lamongan Regency, East Java. Its strategic location, even though it is outside the big city, provides its own advantages for students who want to focus on studying religion and academics without disturbance. Pangean, which is known to be calm and religious, is a conducive environment for character formation and deepening of students' knowledge. Quantitatively, the number of students recorded until the 2024/2025 academic year reached 412 people, consisting of male and female students who are studying at various levels (Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, Tsanawiyah, to Aliyah). The teaching staff consists of 28 permanent teachers, with a composition of graduates of salaf Islamic boarding schools and universities, and 6 education staff. Since 2010, this Islamic boarding school has begun to integrate a curriculum based on a combination of the classical Islamic boarding school curriculum (salaf) with the national curriculum and local skills content.

Fathul Hidayah Islamic Boarding School has a distinctive characteristic that distinguishes it from other traditional Islamic boarding schools. This Islamic boarding school implements an integrated education system, where the teaching of yellow books such as Tafsir Jalalain, Fathul Qorib, and Ihya Ulumuddin is carried out intensively, but at the same time, the students also receive computer training, foreign languages (Arabic and English), and entrepreneurship based on Islamic boarding school MSMEs. The goal is that the students are not only able to read classic books, but also able to compete in the digital era and creative economy.

However, this success is not without challenges and limitations that must be faced. One of the main challenges is limited infrastructure, such as unstable internet access, limited classrooms for multimedia-based learning, and the uneven distribution of teachers' digital competence. In addition, because this Islamic boarding school is located in a rural area, the majority of students come from farming and laborer families with lower-middle economic conditions, which has an impact on limited financial support in procuring modern learning facilities. This distinguishes Fathul Hidayah's experience from urban Islamic boarding schools which generally have wider access to technology and collaboration networks. In addition, other challenges arise in efforts to maintain the identity of traditional Islamic boarding schools amidst the push for modernization. Some internal circles still show resistance to the integrative approach, especially in the use of technology and interactive learning methods that are considered "foreign" to the Islamic boarding school tradition. This requires a strong internal communication strategy, including ongoing training for asatidz and strengthening a shared vision.

Currently, Pesantren Fathul Hidayah has become one of the leading pesantren in the Lamongan region, known for its balanced and future-oriented salaf-modern educational

approach. With the growing need for comprehensive education in society, this pesantren has succeeded in producing graduates who not only have a deep understanding of religion but are also able to compete in academic and professional environments. This success has become an alternative educational model that can be replicated by other pesantren in Indonesia, especially in facing the pressures of globalization and demands for higher quality education. However, it is important to consider the socio-economic and geographical context in adopting this model so that there is no unrealistic generalization of the success of Fathul Hidayah.

Education Policy of Fathul Hidayah Pangean Madrasah

The education policy at Madrasah Fathul Hidayah pays close attention to the balance between religious education and general education. The curriculum implemented in this Islamic boarding school includes Islamic religious studies covering interpretation, hadith, fiqh, and tasawuf, as well as general subjects such as mathematics, Indonesian, English, social sciences, and natural sciences. As conveyed by the head of the madrasah, Ustadz Moh. Zainul Abidin.

"We design a curriculum that combines religious lessons such as interpretation, hadith, fiqh, and tasawuf with general lessons. The goal is for students to not only be spiritually strong, but also capable of facing the challenges of the times."

The teaching methods used in this Islamic boarding school combine traditional and modern methods. One of the educators, Ustadzah Nihla, explained:

"We still teach yellow books using the sorogan and bandongan methods. But for general lessons, we use LCD, learning videos, and even direct practice in the computer lab."

Teaching ancient books is still done in the traditional way, namely by reading and writing ancient books directly, but on the other hand, teaching general knowledge is done in a more interactive way using technology. One of the students in class IX, Ahmad Rizki said:

"Now we learn Arabic through an application. There is also a computer class once a week, so we are not left behind in public schools."

The organizational structure of this Islamic boarding school also supports the successful implementation of existing educational policies. In it, there are Islamic boarding school managers consisting of caretakers, ustadz, and other educators who have expertise in both religious and general knowledge, who work together to achieve the educational goals that have been set. Ustadz Sugiatmo, M.Pd as the head of the junior high school said:

"We have a clear division of tasks between caregivers, Islamic religious educators, and general educators. All work together in one vision: education that combines knowledge and faith."

The formal process of education policy at Madrasah Fathul Hidayah shows a systematic yet adaptive approach. Based on interviews with administrators and educators, the policy of integration between religious and general education has been formalized in the madrasah curriculum document, including in the structure of the Operational Curriculum of the Education Unit (KOSP). This document lists the division of religious and general subjects, teaching methods, and technology-based and skills-based learning strategies. However, the

policy is also dynamic, as administrators open up space for revision and continuous development based on field evaluations and input from the pesantren community.

In decision-making, the process is collective and collaborative. Strategic decisions are not only determined by the head of the madrasah, but also involve a team of caregivers, religious teachers, general teachers, and coordinators of skills and technology programs. They routinely hold coordination meetings, especially towards the beginning of the new school year, to prepare or review the curriculum and learning methods. This inclusive approach also includes input from guardians and senior students, especially in responding to issues of resistance to modernization.

In terms of monitoring and evaluating the success of the integrated curriculum, madrasahs implement several mechanisms:

1. Periodic academic evaluation, through daily tests, mid-term and final semester exams for all subjects, both religious and general.
2. Survey of student and guardian satisfaction, especially regarding learning experiences and acceptance of new teaching methods such as the use of digital media and laboratory practices.
3. Monthly evaluation forum between teachers, where educators submit reports on student development and obstacles to implementing methods.
4. Informal alumni tracking, to find out to what extent graduates are able to continue their education to a higher level or adapt to the world of work, especially in the fields of religion and entrepreneurship.
5. Monitoring of skills practices, such as computer and entrepreneurship training, which are assessed based on performance rubrics and final products produced by students.

Table 1: Evaluation of the Success of the Integrated Curriculum at Madrasah Fathul Hidayah

Evaluation Aspects	Evaluation Method	Findings
Academic Evaluation	Daily tests, mid-term exams, final exams	> 75% of students showed an increase in grades in general subjects without a decrease in achievement in religious subjects.
Satisfaction of Students and Guardians of Students	Survey scale 1–5	82% of respondents were satisfied with the integration of traditional and digital methods (especially learning videos and laboratory practices).
Teacher Evaluation Forum	Monthly meetings, student progress reports	Teachers reported increased active participation, especially in English and science learning.

Alumni Tracking	Informal interviews and post-graduation observations	60% of alumni continue to higher education; 25% start small businesses based on skills from the Islamic boarding school.
Skills and Product Monitoring	Rubric-based assessment, observation of training results	70% of students produce real products (herbal soap, snacks) which are sold in the Islamic boarding school environment and on simple digital platforms.

The evaluation table of the success of the integrated curriculum at Madrasah Fathul Hidayah shows that the implementation of integration between religious and general education has been running effectively. From an academic perspective, more than 75% of students experienced an increase in learning outcomes, both in religious subjects such as fiqh and tafsir, and in general subjects such as science and English. This shows that the integrated curriculum does not cause disparities in achievement, but rather strengthens both in a balanced way.

The level of satisfaction of students and guardians of students is also quite high, reaching 82%. They feel that the teaching method that combines traditional approaches and modern technology, such as the use of learning videos and laboratory practices, is very helpful in the process of understanding the material. This satisfaction reflects the success of Islamic boarding schools in responding to today's educational needs without losing their religious identity.

Regular teacher evaluation forums report that active participation of students has increased significantly, especially in discussion-based and practical learning activities. In addition, informal alumni tracking indicates that around 60% of graduates are able to continue their education to a higher level, while some have succeeded in starting small businesses based on the skills they acquired while at the pesantren. These achievements show that graduates not only have strong religious provisions, but are also prepared to face social and economic challenges.

In terms of skills, as many as 70% of students are able to produce real products from the training they have attended, such as entrepreneurship products and computer training results. These products have even been marketed in the Islamic boarding school environment, and some through digital media. This is proof that practice-based learning integrated into the curriculum has succeeded in forming productive and independent characters.

In general, the data in the table indicates that Madrasah Fathul Hidayah has successfully implemented holistic and contextual education policies. Evaluations are carried out comprehensively and continuously, while maintaining the relevance between formal curriculum documents and real practices in the field. The combination of the codificative approach and adaptive flexibility is the main factor in the success of integrated education in the pesantren environment.

With this strategy, Pesantren Fathul Hidayah not only formalizes educational policies in official documents, but also keeps the policies relevant and responsive to the development of the times and the needs of students. This combination of codification and flexibility is the key to the success of the pesantren in implementing integrated education.

Integration between religious education and general education is the main foundation of educational policy at Pesantren Fathul Hidayah. The curriculum that combines these two aspects provides a holistic educational experience for students. Students not only learn about profound religious teachings, but also learn knowledge that is relevant to the demands of the times, such as natural sciences, language, and technology. This aims to prepare students to be able to face an increasingly modern world without abandoning religious values that have long been part of the pesantren tradition (Galuh Prabowo, 2024).

In addition, this Islamic boarding school also facilitates practice-based learning aimed at improving students' skills in various fields (Imam Mashuri, 2023). For example, through entrepreneurship training organized by the Islamic boarding school, students are taught to develop small businesses or work in the digital economy. This skills-based education, which also includes computer training and technology development, provides them with useful provisions when they enter the outside world (Evi Muafiah, 2022).

Pesantren Fathul Hidayah realizes that integrating traditional and modern education presents its own challenges, especially in overcoming resistance from more conservative parties. Therefore, the approach used by this pesantren is an inclusive and collaborative approach. The management of the pesantren actively involves all existing elements, from caregivers, ustadz, to students in the process of planning and implementing educational policies. Through open dialogue, related parties can convey their views on the proposed changes, so that resistance to modernization can be minimized.

Pesantren also ensure that the educational policies implemented remain based on the traditional values of the pesantren (Asmar Habibi, 2025). In this way, the changes made are not seen as a threat to the pesantren's identity, but as an effort to improve the quality of education (Amrina Rosyada, 2025). This approach allows pesantren to maintain the traditions of the Salaf, while preparing students to face the challenges of modern education (Munawir Saharuddin, 2024).

Resistance to Educational Change

Modernization of education at Pesantren Fathul Hidayah is not free from challenges, especially in the form of resistance that comes from various parties: teachers, students, to parents. To provide a more systematic and in-depth understanding, this resistance can be classified into three main categories, namely: value-based resistance, pedagogical resistance, and technological resistance.

1. Value Based Resistance

This resistance arose from concerns that modern education would erode religious values that had long been upheld by Islamic boarding schools. Several ustadz, especially those who taught yellow books, voiced doubts about modernization because they considered it potentially disrupting sincerity and the depth of religious knowledge:

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"I personally was worried that this modernization would shift the values of sincerity and depth of religious knowledge that we uphold in Islamic boarding schools."(Islamic cleric teaching grammar)

Likewise, some guardians of students reject the idea that their students should learn general material or technological skills that are considered inconsistent with the main goals of pesantren education:

"We want our children to become religious scholars, not just computer experts. Don't let their focus on the world reduce their memorization of the Quran."

This value-based resistance shows the existence of an ideological conflict between the orientation of the Salaf which prioritizes classical religious knowledge, and the demands of the times which require the integration of general knowledge and technology.

2. Pedagogical Resistance

At the santri level, resistance appears in the form of methodological confusion, namely the difficulty of adapting to two very different learning systems:

"Sometimes I'm confused, after studying the book using the traditional method, I immediately move to science lessons using power point. So I have to adapt quickly."(Class VIII students)

The traditional methods based on memorization, talaqqi, and bandongan are in stark contrast to the interactive and technology-based approaches used in general learning. This confusion has an impact on the consistency of the students' enthusiasm for learning, who have to switch approaches in a short time.

3. Technology Resistance

This type of resistance comes from the unpreparedness and reluctance of some teachers to use technology as an educational tool. A computer class instructor stated:

"There are educators who are reluctant to learn technology, even though it is important. So sometimes students learn by themselves first before being taught. This takes time."

Lack of skills and motivation to use technology creates barriers to introducing digital media, as well as slowing down efforts to integrate modern education as a whole.

Impact and Strategies for Dealing with Resistance

Resistance from various directions has a significant impact on the process of educational transformation in Islamic boarding schools. Some of the consequences include: Delay in the implementation of digital education policies. Lack of understanding of the importance of integrating salaf and modern. The emergence of social tensions in the teaching and learning process. However, this resistance does not occur statically. Fathul Hidayah Islamic Boarding School has implemented strategic and participatory strategies to reduce resistance and build shared understanding.

In the context of Pesantren Fathul Hidayah, data shows that the level of resistance has changed gradually: At the beginning of implementation, resistance was very high, especially

from senior teachers and guardians of students who had a strong Salaf educational background. Their concerns focused on the potential shift in traditional values. However, over time and through an intensive dialogue process, some parties began to understand that modernization was not intended to eliminate religious values, but rather to strengthen the quality of Islamic education with the support of relevant and contextual methods. The curriculum development team stated:

"We routinely hold discussion forums, everyone can express their opinions. After that we hold training, both for religious educators and general educators."

Open dialogue forums and intensive training programs are the main steps in: Reducing the tension of value-based resistance through clarification of the educational vision. Increasing pedagogical and technological readiness among teachers and students. Building a collective understanding that modernization can actually strengthen the quality of religious education. These steps have succeeded in reducing tensions and increasing support from several groups that were initially resistant, especially: Some young teachers who are starting to get used to technology. Students who realize the benefits of mastering general material and technology. Parents of students who are starting to see positive results from the integrative approach, such as increasing children's abilities in two domains: religion and science. However, resistance has not completely disappeared. There are still conservative groups who view this change with skepticism. This shows that the transformation process takes time, and resistance does not suddenly disappear, but rather experiences reduction and reorientation.

This classification of resistance not only facilitates mapping of problems in an empirical context, but also provides theoretical contributions to the study of value-based educational transformation. By understanding the forms of resistance thematically and intersectorally, policy approaches can be adjusted to: Provide a transformative approach that considers local values. Build a space for dialogue between traditional and modern interests. Develop integrative and adaptive programs for future Islamic boarding school education. Thus, educational transformation in Islamic boarding schools is not just a matter of adding a modern curriculum, but uniting two educational systems through reconciliation of values, approaches, and time. Resistance that was originally an obstacle actually functions as a source of critical reflection for the improvement of more inclusive and sustainable educational policies.

The Role of Madrasah Policy in Maintaining Tradition

One of the main roles of policy in Pesantren Fathul Hidayah is to maintain and preserve the pesantren tradition based on salaf education, despite the growing influence of modern education. This was emphasized by the pesantren caretaker:

"For us, the yellow book is the soul of the Islamic boarding school. But we are also aware that students need modern knowledge. So we maintain that balance."

This Islamic boarding school does not only focus on learning the yellow books and religious studies that have long been a tradition of Islamic boarding schools, but also tries

to instill strong religious values in each of its students. The Ustadzah who teaches shorof said:

"We will not abandon talaqqi kitab, because it is part of the chain of knowledge that must be preserved."

The policies implemented in this Islamic boarding school focus on strengthening in-depth Islamic religious education, while still prioritizing noble morals and comprehensive understanding of religion. Along with that, the Islamic boarding school also does not ignore the development of general knowledge that can support the quality of life of students in the future.

The implementation of this policy is also seen in the management of the curriculum which provides space for religious subjects, such as fiqh, tafsir, hadith, and aqidah, which are still taught in the traditional way using the books of the Salaf. However, in addition, general education such as mathematics, Indonesian, and English are also introduced, with the aim of providing practical skills for students. One of the students in grade X said:

"I can now write papers using a computer. But every night I still recite the yellow book. Both go hand in hand."

This shows that the Fathul Hidayah Islamic boarding school is trying to maintain the strong tradition of the Islamic boarding school, while opening up opportunities for students to develop the skills needed to compete in the modern world. This policy makes this Islamic boarding school an example of successful educational integration, without reducing the religious values that are the main foundation.

In addition, the pesantren policy also includes character building in accordance with Islamic teachings. The caretakers and teachers at this pesantren act as role models in terms of ethics, discipline, and how to interact with the community. Guidance and counseling educators said:

"We give examples, not just teach. Children see how we pray in congregation, behave politely, that is the main moral education."

The holistic education process not only emphasizes the teaching of science, but also forms the character of students into good individuals, who are not only intelligent in academics, but also have high moral integrity. With this policy, Pesantren Fathul Hidayah ensures that even though students are prepared to face the challenges of an increasingly complex world, they still adhere to deep religious values and practice Islamic teachings in their daily lives.

The policy implemented by Pesantren Fathul Hidayah also aims to maintain the traditional values of the Salaf pesantren despite the influence of modern education. The management of the pesantren is very aware that the success of the integration between religious education and general education is very dependent on how to maintain a balance between the two. Although modern elements such as technology and digital-based teaching methods are introduced, the Salaf values are still maintained in every educational process given to students. This is an effort to ensure that students not only gain the general

knowledge needed for a career, but also have a strong religious foundation to become individuals with noble morals and a social soul. An information technology educator said:

"We teach digital interpretation applications and e-books, but we still direct them not to replace direct study from educators."

One of the policies implemented is training for teachers and administrators of Islamic boarding schools on the importance of integrating religious education and general education in a mutually supportive manner (Irvan Destian, 2024). Religious education based on the books of the Salaf remains the core of learning in Islamic boarding schools, while general education based on science, technology, and practical skills is integrated to complete the curriculum (Latifah, 2024). This policy helps students to understand that religious knowledge and worldly knowledge are not contradictory, but can complement each other to prepare them to face an increasingly modern and developing world.

To maintain the tradition of the Salaf, this Islamic boarding school also ensures that religious activities such as regular religious studies, sermons, and interpretations are carefully maintained. In addition, the teaching of the yellow books that are characteristic of the Salaf Islamic boarding school is not only maintained but also updated by inviting students to delve deeper into the contemporary context of these books. However, it should be noted that not all integrations are frictionless. There are still tensions that have not been fully resolved, especially in determining the portion of time between religious and general lessons. Some ustadz feel that general lesson hours reduce the depth of talaqqi books. There are also concerns that the use of gadgets for learning could open the door to content that is not in accordance with the values of the Islamic boarding school.

A concrete example of this tension is when some students are given the task of typing tafsir papers using laptops, some teachers feel that this process reduces their focus on memorizing the text of the book. Some conservative teachers still ask students to write by hand as a form of Salaf discipline, while general teachers consider typing and summarizing skills to be the demands of the times. This situation requires ongoing compromise, one of which is by preparing a separate learning schedule and regulating the use of digital devices only at certain times and spaces. Although this solution is temporary, it shows that the integration process is taking place gradually and with great care.

In practice, Pesantren Fathul Hidayah has succeeded in maintaining a balance between traditional and modern education, although not without challenges. One example of its success is the application of technology in teaching that still prioritizes religious teaching. The use of digital interpretation applications and in-depth e-books allows students to access broader and more up-to-date religious reading materials, without neglecting the depth of religious understanding. This allows students to have a more holistic understanding of Islamic teachings, not only limited to classical texts, but also related to contemporary issues faced by society.

The balance between tradition and modernity implemented by Pesantren Fathul Hidayah has not only had an impact on the education system, but also on the personal experiences and social development of the students. From the results of interviews and

observations, the students showed an increase in self-confidence, a strong religious identity, and life skills that are relevant to the challenges of the times. One of the students in grade XI said,

"Before, I could only read the scriptures, but now I can also give presentations using PowerPoint in Islamic history lessons. I am more prepared when I go to college or work."

The strengthening of the students' identity can be seen from the way they interact in society. Students involved in local community service programs demonstrate a contextual understanding of religion and are able to dialogue with the general public without losing the values of the Salaf. In fact, some alumni of the students are now accepted to work as teachers in formal madrasas or become drivers of Islamic-based digital literacy in villages. This indicates that the integrative education model applied not only forms morals and knowledge, but also competitiveness. Thus, the students' learning experience at this Islamic boarding school not only strengthens their spiritual and traditional side, but also expands social involvement and opens up career opportunities. The testimonies of the students and teachers show that tradition is not an obstacle, but rather an ethical foundation that strengthens readiness to face the future.

Thus, Pesantren Fathul Hidayah has managed these challenges wisely, creating an educational environment that is able to prepare students to face the global world without losing their religious identity. However, challenges remain in maintaining a balance between the traditional pesantren traditions and the application of modern technology (Mustarsyidah, 2021). One of the biggest challenges is resistance from some of the more conservative teachers (Saffina Muzdalifa An nadya, 2025). They are concerned that the application of technology can reduce the depth of religious understanding and change the learning patterns that they have long been accustomed to. Some teachers feel that technology can distract students from their main focus, namely religious teaching. To overcome this, the pesantren holds regular training and discussions with teachers to educate them about the importance of using technology wisely to support the learning process without damaging existing religious values. The caretaker of the pesantren said:

"We do not force. We invite dialogue. We believe that if the intention is good and in accordance with sharia, technology can also be a means for good."

Despite the challenges, Pesantren Fathul Hidayah has managed to navigate these differences of opinion in an open and inclusive manner. The careful approach adopted by the pesantren, involving open dialogue between administrators, teachers, and students, has allowed them to reach agreement on the best ways to integrate technology into education. However, this dynamic is also a reminder that the integration of the traditional and modern is not a static endpoint, but rather an ongoing process that requires constant adjustment as times change. This approach suggests that careful change that involves all parties involved can be key to maintaining the balance between maintaining the traditional pesantren tradition and incorporating elements of modern education (Hasyim, 2023). Thus, Pesantren Fathul Hidayah has managed these challenges wisely, creating an educational environment that is able to prepare students to face the global world without losing their religious identity.

Discussion

The findings of this study confirm that the resistance that emerged in Madrasah Fathul Hidayah Pangean Lamongan against the pressure of educational modernization is a form of cultural resistance, as explained by James C. Scott (1985). This form of resistance is not frontal or open, but is manifested in subtle daily actions, such as maintaining the yellow book curriculum, halaqah learning patterns, and traditional teacher-student relations. This strategy has proven quite effective in maintaining the identity of the pesantren amidst demands for national standardization.

Within the framework of Stephen J. Ball's Educational Policy Theory (1994), the policy practices in this madrasah are the result of negotiations between external regulations and local values of the pesantren. The educational policies implemented do not necessarily follow national policies, but are selectively adapted, such as the use of a modern administrative system that does not eliminate traditional elements. This emphasizes that the madrasah is not merely an implementer of policies from above, but also an active actor that interprets and shapes its own policies according to institutional values and goals.

However, this success did not come without challenges. Internal tensions still arise, especially in the implementation of the dual curriculum. Some teachers and students admit that they have difficulty balancing the national curriculum and traditional religious activities, both in terms of time burden and learning outcomes. In addition, some educators are not yet optimally prepared to operate a technology-based administration system, so that the reporting and documentation processes are often delayed or out of sync.

In relation to the discourse of Modernization vs Traditionalism in Islamic Education, Madrasah Fathul Hidayah is indeed able to creatively combine the two poles. Modernization is chosen critically and is directed to strengthen institutions, not erode tradition. However, this harmonization is not yet completely stable. There is an imbalance in access to technology training between senior and young teachers, as well as doubts from some stakeholders regarding the added value of the innovations implemented.

Observation results show that madrasahs remain active in organizing yellow book studies and halaqah in between the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. This shows a concrete form of adaptive cultural resistance. However, from an institutional perspective, there is a dependence on key figures in decision-making, which has the potential to hinder leadership regeneration and long-term innovation. This proves the concrete practice of cultural resistance at the technical level of learning, as explained in James C. Scott's theory of everyday resistance to the dominance of external culture.

Meanwhile, interviews with madrasah leaders also showed that policies were formulated through internal deliberations, but in practice, these deliberations were still dominated by traditional authorities. This risks limiting the participation of young teachers and students in a more inclusive and democratic educational decision-making process. This is in line with Ball's concept that educational policy is the result of a tug-of-war between external

and local interests, where Madrasah Fathul Hidayah shows its adaptive-selective capacity in responding to these changes.

Thus, although Madrasah Fathul Hidayah has demonstrated a resistant, adaptive, and contextual policy model, it is necessary to realize that this model still faces various structural limitations and dynamic challenges. These challenges include inconsistent curriculum implementation, limited resources, technological skills, and strengthening the internal evaluation system.

This section provides a strong argument for adaptive resistance as a positive model, but it must be acknowledged that the discussion has not touched on the aspect of scalability: the extent to which this model can be replicated in other Islamic boarding schools with different human resource characteristics, institutional culture, and leadership styles. The successful adaptive resistance model at Madrasah Fathul Hidayah is highly influenced by the local context, including the power of the *kiai*'s authority, the legitimacy of tradition, and harmonious internal social relations. Thus, the potential for generalization of this model needs to be considered carefully. This adaptive resistance model does provide a promising framework for other Islamic educational institutions, especially in integrating tradition and modernity contextually. However, the success of replication depends on the capacity of local leadership, the readiness of human resources, and the flexibility of the organizational structure. This model has the potential to be a reference, but cannot be applied uniformly without modifications that take into account the local characteristics of each institution. Therefore, it is important to develop context-based adaptive guidelines so that this model is truly applicable and sustainable in a wider spectrum of Islamic boarding schools.

CONCLUSION

This study teaches that managing the tension between tradition and modernity in education cannot be resolved solely through curriculum design, but requires a strategic approach that is inclusive, adaptive, and communicative. The case of Madrasah Fathul Hidayah shows that the success of the integration of traditional-modern education lies in the institution's ability to build trust and collective awareness among stakeholders—especially teachers and parents—and in bridging traditional values with the demands of the times. In other words, the transformation of pesantren-based education requires visionary leadership and ongoing social dialogue.

More broadly, these findings provide an important contribution to the debate on Islamic education policy, particularly in terms of formulating an educational model that is able to answer contemporary challenges without losing its Islamic identity. This study strengthens the argument that Islamic education does not have to be trapped in the salaf-modern dichotomy, but can develop a contextual and relevant form of synthesis. Such a model offers a productive middle ground for the development of curriculum, teaching strategies, and institutional governance in Islamic education environments, both in pesantren and madrasah.

As for the recommendations of this research, *First*, For Madrasah Fathul Hidayah Pangean Lamongan in: Resistance Management. Curriculum Evaluation and Stakeholder Involvement *Second*, For Other Madrasahs Adopting the Salaf-Modern Model in: Resistance Management. Curriculum Evaluation and Stakeholder Engagement.

Table 2: Policy Recommendations: Based on the Findings of the Study of Madrasah Fathul Hidayah Pangean Lamongan

Aspects of Findings	Madrasah Fathul Hidayah	Other Madrasahs (Salaf-Modern Model)
Resistance Management	Forming transformative dialogue spaces (parent forums, thematic halaqah).	Conduct an initial social assessment to map local sources of resistance.
	Use religious narratives (islah/tajdid) to bridge traditional and modern values.	Prepare a communication strategy based on local values and religious figures.
Curriculum Evaluation	Conduct periodic evaluations of the balance of yellow book content and general subjects.	Develop dual evaluation indicators (academic and religious).
	Involve all teachers in evaluating the effectiveness of learning integration.	Implement a system <i>assessment</i> contextual and morally based.
Stakeholder Engagement	Form a curriculum development committee involving teachers, parents, and students.	Involve Islamic mass organizations, alumni, and local governments in transformation planning.
	Increase regular meetings between the madrasah and the community.	Build networks with other Islamic boarding schools and Islamic universities.

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