



# Negotiating Cultural Values in Pesantren as Islamic Educational Institutions: A Case Study from Eastern Indonesia

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**Abstract:** This study examines the negotiation of cultural values in Lombok Islamic boarding schools through an intercultural perspective. Its main focus is to analyze how pesantren become an intercultural space for negotiating cultural diversity amid modernization, using Bourdieu's theory. A qualitative approach with critical ethnographic methods was used. Data were collected from 36 participants, in-depth interviews with key informants, and document analysis. The findings show that the negotiation of cultural values occurs through three main mechanisms: the transmission of religious knowledge, the formation of student habitus, and the accumulation of cultural capital. This process is revealed through curriculum adaptation, modernization of learning systems, strengthening social networks, strengthening religious practices, and the inclusion of vocational and technological skills. As a result, pesantren emerged as a space where cultural encounters encourage collaboration rather than conflict. These findings contribute to the study of intercultural communication by positioning education as an active and reflective arena for value negotiation. Practically, this study recommends that Islamic boarding school leaders and policymakers integrate inclusive curricula and cross-cultural activities to enhance students' capacity to adapt, collaborate, and lead in diverse societies.

**Keywords:** Interculturalism, Intercultural Space, Islamic Boarding Schools, Negotiation of Cultural Values, Traditional Islamic Education

## 1. Introduction

Lombok is the Island of Thousand Mosques, ethnically, culturally, and religiously diverse, although the Sasak Muslim constitute the majority of the population there (Koopman, 2023; Sirnopati et al., 2022). *Pesantren* is an Islamic educational institution that provides traditional education and protects local culture and social identity, serving as a junction point for religious and cultural values and reinforcing social, cultural, and religious ties among community members (Hanafi et al., 2021; Maemonah et al., 2023).

Facing the challenge of modernization, *pesantren* is accompanied by national education reform. On the one hand, they are supposed to promote classical Islamic values, i.e., teachings of the yellow books. At the same time, *pesantren* also requires a general curriculum, a digital skills course, and an entrepreneurial orientation to survive in these times (Anggadwita et al., 2021; Nurkhin et al., 2024). This dual demand generates tensions but also provides opportunities for negotiating Islamic values, local culture, and modernity within the *pesantren* setting. However, existing literature has not sufficiently situated these dynamics within the unique sociocultural context of Lombok, which exhibits distinct patterns of Islamic education and cultural identity.

However, previous studies have focused more on *pesantren* outside Lombok, particularly the authority of the kiai, traditional educational structures, or the modernization process (Assa'idi, 2021; Ruslana & Mulyono, 2022). Very few studies have positioned Lombok *pesantren* as intercultural arenas where Islamic traditions, local culture, and modern influences intersect and are renegotiated. This absence marks an important gap in understanding *pesantren* not only as religious institutions but also as cultural spaces where value negotiation actively occurs. Building on this identified gap, the present study focuses on how pesantren in Lombok actively negotiate cultural values in response to modernization and changing social environments. However, there are still limitations in empirical research that directly examines the process of value negotiation in Lombok Islamic boarding schools through the interaction between education and students' daily lives.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze three Islamic boarding schools in Lombok, namely Qomarul Huda Bagu, Nurul Hakim, and NW Anjani, as an intercultural space where cultural value negotiations take place in the eastern region of Indonesia. This research specifically focuses on:

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1. Analyzing the transformation of cultural capital in pesantren education practices.
2. Identify forms of interculturality in the interaction of Islamic values, local culture, and modernity.
3. Explain the institutional innovation of pesantren in responding to contemporary social and educational changes while maintaining traditional legitimacy.

The study contributes by investigating the case of *pesantren* in Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara, which, to the best of our knowledge, has not been studied in the context of cultural value negotiation, and by examining the role of *pesantren* as an intercultural space in East Indonesia. As a multicultural society, Lombok is a place where Islamic values come into conflict with local culture, creating a distinct dynamic in *pesantren* education. This paper will provide a new understanding of the role of *Pesantren* Qomarul Huda Bagu, Nurul Hakim, and NW Anjani as a medium for negotiating cultural values in the area.

In theory, such research would extend intercultural theory, as frequently employed in studies of multicultural education, migration, social interaction, and cultural and national identity policies. Based on the notion of interculturalism, this study illustrates the role of *pesantren* as a negotiable cultural space to address the conflict between tradition and modernization, thereby contributing to the development of intercultural theory in interpreting the practice of intercultural space within *pesantren*. Nonetheless, most prior studies remain focused on public schools or interethnic settings, leaving pesantren-based intercultural practices insufficiently theorized.

Despite these insights, the topicality of the framework is supported by recent works, e.g., Tuna (2024) on Islamic religious education that fosters pluralism and Putkonen (2025) on intercultural interaction in religious traditions (Putkonen et al., 2025; Tuna, 2024). Nevertheless, such studies are more likely to examine the context of public schools and interethnic relations within the framework of migration and have not yet contributed to the study of *pesantren* as traditional Islamic institutions that also serve as educational institutions and cultural centers of society (Assa'idi, 2021). These works, however, did not investigate *pesantren* within an intercultural setting or multicultural Lombok (Ruslana & Mulyono, 2022).

Intercultural theory describes the relationship between the need to hold onto traditional values and the capacity to adapt to societal change. Empirical evidence of how value negotiation occurs in daily educational and social interactions among students, teachers, and the community can be found in ethnographic studies conducted in three Islamic boarding schools in Lombok. Therefore, the study bridges a gap in the literature by employing intercultural theory in traditional Islamic education in East Indonesia, which has received minimal attention in the international literature.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Islamic Boarding Schools and Socio-Cultural Functions

The word '*pesantren*' is based on the word 'pe-santri-an', and 'santri' means 'student' in Javanese (Rosalia et al., 2024). The oldest Islamic educational institution and an Indonesian creation is *pesantren*, or *pondok pesantren* (Hanafi et al., 2021; Malik, 2024). *Pesantren*, as a religious institution, offers universal education that addresses students' diverse interests and trains the next generation of Muslims. It is hoped that when a learning system incorporates religious and cultural values, it will promote tolerant, balanced, and moderate attitudes (Faisal et al., 2022).

In Indonesia, including the eastern part, pesantren, besides being a symbol of Islamic education, also symbolizes cultural identity, for example, through the maintenance of traditions and its scientific role (Pribadi, 2022). According to Hanafi et al. (2021), the work of *pesantrens* that emphasize religious doctrines also influences local culture, popularizes Islam, and instills cultural values.

*Pesantrens* are significantly involved in social, cultural, religious, economic, agricultural, and educational integration, where social capital enables the community's sustainability and empowerment (Sarwenda et al., 2024). Students are also molded into humanist beings who are tolerant, humane, and understanding of one another because of the socio-cultural values they have been taught (Mukhibat et al., 2024). Studies on Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) emphasize that they play a role in negotiating diverse cultures in Eastern Indonesia, where they serve not only as spiritual and educational institutions but also as spaces for intercultural value negotiation.

Recent studies affirm that, in addition to being religious schools, *pesantren* also produce social capital, cultural identity, and social practices that affect the surrounding society. Quantitative and qualitative studies indicate that *pesantren* improve social status, social mobility, and social relations of students and contribute to strengthening the integrity of the community (Assa'idi, 2021). The health practices, morals, and social behavior of students are directly linked to the cultural values of *pesantren*, including politeness, religious customs, and shared norms, and therefore, affect their lives on a daily basis (Ruslana & Mulyono, 2022). Most of the international literature, however, is devoted to *pesantren* in Java or to macro studies, and contextual ethnographic studies of Lombok as a site of value negotiation remain limited.

### 2.2. Interculturalism in Islamic Educational Institutions

The phenomenon of integrating local culture with Islamic traditions is not unique to Indonesia. education. In Europe, for example, Islamic educational institutions play a crucial role in improving student quality. Educational policies and curriculum implementation can influence the development of intercultural values as a means of communication between teachers and students, enabling them to be implemented in a diverse and dynamic society (C-Nadarevi', 2023). A multicultural society in Indonesia affects education by fostering cross-cultural tolerance. The concept of multicultural education is grounded in the importance of diversity, mutual respect, and tolerance, as articulated in Islamic teachings on human unity (Mashuri et al., 2024; Mukhibat et al., 2024). The use of English, Arabic, Indonesian, and the local language by students also demonstrates the presence of interculturalism (Rohmah et al., 2024; Subair et al., 2024).

Understanding interculturalism in traditional Islamic educational institutions such as pesantren enables more profound analysis of their role as intercultural spaces, which is crucial for examining their significance in cultural interculturalism, particularly in Lombok, Eastern Indonesia. Recent intercultural theory in Islamic education reveals a paradigm shift toward pluralism-oriented education, Islamic ethics as an alternative epistemology, and pedagogical accommodations that discriminate

against cross-cultural dialogue in pesantren. Research also suggests intercultural competency and inclusivity models that do not erode the local culture (R'boul et al., 2024; Tuna, 2024). Empirical analysis reveals that the pesantren construct interculturalism through diverse means, including embracing multilingualism and tolerance in curricula and changing approaches to local settings such as sorogan and bandongan. However, little has been done in comparative cross-regional research on how they affect student identity and social cohesion. Although R'boul et al. (2024) and Tuna (2024) provide models of Islamic education designed to promote pluralism, there is a paucity of empirical studies evaluating their implementation in rural or multi-ethnic pesantren, such as in Lombok (R'boul et al., 2024; Tuna, 2024).

### 2.3. Cultural Diversity in Lombok

Lombok is a pluralistic society because, on the one hand, the native ethnic group is the *Sasaks*, and, on the other hand, the immigrant ethnic groups are Balinese, Javanese, and Bugis (Raya et al., 2023). The Sasak language is not only a symbol of the group's identity but also contributes to the development of cultural values through religious practices, traditional ceremonies, and celebrations, not to mention reinforcing social ties that connect the Lombok community (Setiawan et al., 2025). In addition, beyond language, the contextual definition of Islamic education that adopts the cultural values of the Sasak is also typical of Lombok; hence, it would be easy to tolerate students (Raya et al., 2023). Despite being a strength, diversity in Lombok comes with social issues that can be addressed through local judgment to eliminate disagreements in interreligious and intercultural approaches and to unify society (Kartika & Wisnu, 2025).

The ethnic-religious organization of Lombok contrasts with that of Java, and plurality is embodied in rituals, language, and affiliation to local religious groups. According to recent work, although the Lombok social structure provides pesantren with opportunities to build cultural capital to promote tolerance, modernization, and demographic change, these processes are also potential sources of conflict that require institutional solutions (Faisal et al., 2022). The study of religious and ethnic diversity in Lombok supports the heterogeneous nature of its customary practices. The relevance of Sasak values in education is also highlighted in the study by Raya et al. (2023) about the local wisdom-based leadership. Studies with an educational ethnography focus and taught in English are extremely scarce in Lombok. Based on this, it can be seen that in the context of traditional Islamic education in Lombok, cultural diversity can be integrated within the framework of Islamic boarding schools and society. Therefore, the study of the negotiation of cultural values in traditional Islamic education cannot be separated from the role of Islamic boarding schools as a medium or intercultural space in Lombok.

### 2.4. Past Research and Research Gaps

Previous studies of Islamic boarding schools have placed many of these institutions within the framework of traditional authority, patterns of religious knowledge transmission, and responses to modernization. However, these perspectives have not adequately used Bourdieu's theoretical framework of interculturalism and cultural capital as an analytical lens for understanding value negotiation in educational practice.

Studies on *pesantren* in Lombok have already been realized by (Rohman et al., 2023), who had underlined the necessity of balancing traditional and innovative in respect of *pesantren* education. The core subject of this study is how *pesantren* can preserve Sasak cultural values while innovating to keep up with the times. However, these studies tend to frame pesantren transformation as merely an outcome of modernization pressures, sementara interaksi antara modal budaya tradisional dan nilai baru belum dijelaskan secara sistematis menggunakan analisis medan sosial dan habitus Bourdieu. But this is not the way this research goes. It is our hope, within the framework of interculturalism and the Bourdieuan theory, that *pesantren* can be seen as a space of intercultural, where Islamic values, local culture, and the modern discourse can meet and interrelate to create new cultural capital. However, these studies are generally oriented toward the context of Islamic boarding schools in Java or urban societies, whereas Lombok has different cultural configurations and ethno-religious relations that enable the emergence of unique patterns of value negotiation. Therefore, this study not only fills the empirical gap, but also expands the theoretical understanding of the role of cultural capital and educational agents in the intercultural arena in regions with a multiethnic character.

The value of perceiving *pesantren* in a wider socio-cultural context is also confirmed by recent international research. Assa'idi (2021) focuses on the outcome of *pesantren* on the social status of students; Ruslana and Mulyono (2022) on the connection between cultural values and everyday practices in *pesantren*; Tuna (2024) on the relevance of Islamic education to the construction of pluralism; Putkonen (2025) on the intercultural negotiations in religious traditions; and Raya et al. (2023) on the religious and cultural diversity in Lombok as a complex social context (Assa'idi, 2021; Putkonen et al., 2025; Raya et al., 2023; Ruslana & Mulyono, 2022). This research bridges a gap in the existing literature by situating the *pesantren* in Lombok as a platform for negotiating cultural values within the context of eastern Indonesia, thereby contributing to the theoretical and empirical knowledge on the role of the *pesantren* in the dynamics of intercultural exchange. Thus, this study seeks to articulate how students' habitus, the teacher's cultural authority, and the pesantren's institutional structure influence the process of cultural capital conversion in the intercultural field, a perspective that has not been comprehensively explored in the international literature.

## 3. Methodology

This study uses a critical ethnographic design as the primary methodological framework, with a descriptive-qualitative orientation guiding the analytical process. The approach aims to understand educational practices in pesantren while critically examining power relations and cultural assumptions embedded in everyday interactions. Not only does this document the events, but it also critiques the assumptions, beliefs, and power structures behind those events, as Hammersley and Atkinson (2019) believe that ethnography plays a crucial role in understanding complex social change in education (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2019).

As part of critical ethnography, this approach allows for linkages between microsocial practices in pesantren and the broader context of social change. The more appropriate approach is thus ethnography, because *pesantren* is not necessarily a learning organization but rather a place of value, power, and the negotiation of cultural identity. Moreover, critical ethnography not only helps researchers describe phenomena but also critiques power relations and cultural assumptions embedded in the

practices of higher education in *pesantren*. The approach can be applied to Lombok's multicultural setting, where *pesantren* serve as centers of contact between Islam and Sasak culture, as well as with other sources (Kartika & Wisnu, 2025).

### 3.1. Sampling

This case study uses three Islamic boarding schools in Lombok, Qomarul Huda Bagu, Nurul Hakim, and NW Anjani Lombok Timur, as a research sample. Home interviews with religious leaders, staff, teachers, senior students, alumni, and community members, who were selected for their significant contributions to the development of the *pesantren*, were conducted to collect data. A total of 36 participants were involved in this study, consisting of 6 senior teachers, 12 teachers, 10 senior students, 5 alumni, and 3 community leaders around the Islamic boarding school. The selection of informants is based on their direct involvement in educational activities and institutional transformation in each *pesantren*. The site selection is based on the framework by Raihani (2018), who focuses on the history, teaching practices, and impact of *pesantren* on society (Raihani, 2018). Various perspectives were obtained by using the snowball sampling method to ensure representation across institutional roles and experience levels (Maxwell, 2013) to engage religious figures, teachers, students, alumni, and other stakeholders (Maxwell, 2013).

### 3.2. Data Collection Technique

Observations were made of various learning and extracurricular activities, including social interactions and religious practices. This observation process was supplemented by in-depth interviews with key informants and group discussions. This step is used as a data collection technique. Learning materials in the curriculum and *pesantren* archives are recorded and documented in the form of videos, recordings, and photos. This method adopts Creswell's (2017) thinking, which is used in educational ethnography (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The semi-structured interview method was chosen, with three *pesantren* administrators interviewed according to the Brinkmann method (Brinkmann, 2020).

### 3.3. Data analysis

Data analysis included curriculum documents, historical records of Islamic boarding schools, institutional archives, and Islamic boarding school publications. This method used Bowen's document analysis technique (Bowen, 2005). In addition, focus group discussions were conducted in six sessions with the ustadz, senior students, and alumni, following Krueger's procedures (Krueger, 2014). In addition, data analysis uses the interactive model of Miles & Huberman (1994) with the following stages: data condensation, data presentation, and drawing conclusions (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The validity of the data in this study applies Lincoln's trustworthiness criteria: 1) Credibility: member checking, prolonged involvement; 2) Transferability: thick description; 3) Dependability: audit trail; and 4) Confirmability: researcher reflectivity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

In analyzing the qualitative data, this study employed an ethnographic approach with iterative coding and cultural interpretation (Rabin et al., 2023; Liang, 2019). The coding process followed Saldaña's (2021) guidelines, beginning with open coding to identify initial patterns, then axial coding to connect categories to Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital and intercultural negotiation. This approach ensured that data interpretation moved beyond description toward critical reflection (Morse, 2022). To enhance trustworthiness, the study applied Lincoln and Guba's (1985) classic criteria, complemented by recent recommendations, including reflexive practice and peer debriefing (Collins & Levitt, 2021; Dodgson, 2019). This combination strengthened the credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the findings while aligning the analysis with current standards in qualitative and ethnographic research.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Transformation of Cultural Capital in Islamic Boarding Schools

The yellow books at Qomarul Huda Bagu Islamic boarding school, Nurul Hakim, and NW Anjani Lombok are both texts to be read and sources of cultural capital, shaping students' worldviews, social practices, and identities. The typical *pesantren* features mentioned in Figure 1 are *sorogan* (individual learning with a teacher correcting the student) and *bandongan* (the teacher reads a book, and then the students listen and make notes).



**Figure 1:** *Sorogan* with the Yellow Books of Qomarul Huda Bagu students

Interviews with Tuan Guru Haji and M. Turmuzi Badarudin stressed that the practice of teaching yellow books in *pesantren* can ensure the continuation of the intellectual heritage of Islam while also developing reading sensitivity, critical thinking, and comprehension of the text (to be included after review):

*“The Yellow Books provide a solid foundation in religious understanding, enriching students' perspectives on various issues of jurisprudence and morality in everyday life. Through studying the Yellow Books, students understand religious texts and apply them to real life with wisdom and consideration.”*

In Nurul Hakim Islamic Boarding School (Figure 2), the teaching is still based on classic books such as *Fathul Mu'in* and *Safinatun Najah*. But more active procedures, open enquiries, frequent reviews, and ample dialogue between the Kiai and the students have been adopted, indicating a balance between traditional and modern imperatives.



**Figure 2:** Sorogan with the Yellow Books at Pesantren

The Nurul Hakim Islamic Boarding School confirmed that Islamic boarding schools can maintain the authenticity of the yellow books while equipping students with critical and adaptive thinking patterns to global realities, as evidenced by the interview excerpt with TGH. Muharrar Mufidah (to be included after review):

*“Education in Islamic boarding schools must keep pace with the times while maintaining their traditional identity. Classical texts like Fathul Mu'in remain the foundation of our learning, but they are complemented by interactive instruction to prepare students for the complexities of the modern world.”*

Figure 3 shows the learning atmosphere at the NW Anjani Islamic Boarding School in East Lombok. Here, Sufism texts such as *Al-Hikam* are studied slowly and persistently. Students not only read but also strive to understand the text's contents with a calm heart and clear mind. Memorization is not simply for remembering; it is for incorporating these values into daily life.



**Figure 3:** Reciting the Yellow Books of at Pesantren NW Anjani East Lombok

Learning is achieved through leisurely reading, not by fixed grade requirements, and through concentration on inner clarity and behavioral attentiveness. Attitudes are not only formed by education here but also by words. Interview responses of Tuan Guru Bajang and Gede Zainuddin Tsani emphasized the same point (to be included after review):

*“Teaching Al-Hikam assists students to investigate Sufism and morality and guides an in-depth comprehension of the significance of life and the association with Allah.”*

Table 1 indicates that all three *pesantren* apply the yellow books in the learning process.

**Table 1:** Proportion of Learning and Study of the Yellow Books for Students at the Islamic Boarding School

Islamic boarding school	Number of Students	Study Hours	Yellow Books Used
Qomarul Huda Bagu	1,200	10	<i>Tuhfatul Muhtaj, Ihya Ulumuddin</i>
Nurul Hakim	1,500	8	<i>Fathul Mu'in, Safinatun Najah</i>
NW Anjani East Lombok	800	12	<i>Al-Hikam</i>

Source: Researcher Processed Data

Table 1 indicates the sustainability of teaching yellow books in 3 *pesantren* models. At Nurul Hakim Islamic Boarding School, sorogan is combined with recent discourses to make it relevant to the younger generation. NW Anjani is conservative and emphasizes memorization to preserve spirituality and morals, while Qomarul Huda Bagu developed *fiqh* through traditional study.

In addition to *fiqh*, Qomarul Huda Bagu also teaches the world of small business step by step through production, inventory management, bookkeeping, and social media marketing, with honesty as a central value. This claim is supported by the following interview with TGH. Zarkasi, which is as follows (To be included after review):

*“We have integrated entrepreneurship into our curriculum, allowing students to engage in small business ventures such as online stores and craft production. They were taught basic business principles, including financial management and digital marketing, which have become an integral part of their education.”*

To maintain the ideals of the *pesantren*, *Pesantren Nurul Hakim* is preparing technology-oriented training by offering computer courses and exposing students to graphic design, web management, and site development, according to an interview with TGH. Muzakkar Idris. One of the main purposes of the field is to teach the students to control the land, plant, harvest, and package the products directly and to inculcate the values of hard work, thrift, patience, and gratitude. TGH. Fahrurrozi further stated that *pesantren* combine entrepreneurship with innovative agricultural skills, where agricultural business development, such as organic food production and agricultural product processing, is taught, and students are trained to respond to market demand, which needs sustainable products.

**Table 2:** Data on Students Who Work After Islamic Boarding School

Islamic boarding school	Students Working in the Technology Sector	Students Start Their Businesses	Continuing Studies	Working at the International Level
<i>Pesantren</i> Qomarul Huda	25%	30%	30%	15%
<i>Pesantren</i> Nurul Hakim	40%	15%	40%	15%
<i>Pesantren</i> NW Anjani East Lombok	20%	25%	40%	15%

Source: Researcher Processed Data

Table 2 presents various training techniques used for graduates at some *pesantren*. While 40% of its alumni are employed in the technology industry, Nurul Hakim is notable for its success in digital training. Qomarul Huda Bagu is committed to economic independence, and 30% of its alumni are business owners, thanks to a robust entrepreneurship program. NW Anjani focuses on further learning and personality development; 40% of its alumni continue to study. Finally, all *pesantren* in Lombok are implementing applicable contemporary plans without losing their traditional character.

#### 4.2. The Dynamics of *Pesantren* as an Intercultural Space in Eastern Indonesia

Qomarul Huda Bagu, Nurul Hakim, and NW Anjani are struggling to maintain Islamic values while keeping up with the times. The yellow book is still taught, the mode is modified, and the impartation of values occurs in the communal life, in the teacher-pupil contact, and in the daily example, and is not reduced to the text only. This transmission of values is carried out as follows (to be included after review):

##### 4.2.1. Boarding Students (Students Living in the Dormitory)

Dorm life is crucial for developing students' character. Good manners, respect towards others, and collective responsibility are inculcated as part of daily life at Qomarul Huda Bagu. The student-teacher relationship, like the parent-child relationship, fosters respect, love, and social care, as highlighted in an interview with TGH. L. Hamim. (to be included after review):

*“Qomarul Huda Bagu Islamic Boarding School teaches students to live harmoniously within the Islamic boarding school community, respect religious teachings, and build social solidarity. They are taught the values of tolerance, cooperation, responsibility, and love as a foundation for building a social life based on Islamic principles.”*

##### 4.2.2. Sorogan and *Bandongan* Methods

Nurul Hakim Islamic Boarding School upholds classical traditions in sorogan and *bandongan* practices, which relate the values of the yellow books to modern contexts. This aligns with the following quote from an interview with TGH. Nawawi Sapoan (To be included after review):

*“At the Nurul Hakim Islamic Boarding School in Kediri, the sorogan method provides students with the opportunity to explore classical texts intensively through individual study, while the bandongan method supports collective understanding in an interactive atmosphere, building a sense of togetherness among groups of students studying alongside scholars.”*

##### 4.2.3. Implementation of Daily Religious Practices

Education at NW Anjani Islamic Boarding School in East Lombok is instilled through religious practices such as collective dhikr, daily recitation, and collective prayer, which shape the knowledge and teaching of Islamic values in everyday life. This is further reinforced by the following interview with TGH Aripin Munir, which will be included after review:

*“We at the Islamic boarding school focus on directly practicing the teachings of the book in the daily lives of students through congregational dhikr and regular reading activities, which help build students' discipline and spiritual character.”*

##### 4.2.4. Examples of Religious Teachers (Tuan Guru and Ustad)

The Tuan Guru's role in protecting values and serving as a role model at *pesantren* like Qomarul Huda is more effective at shaping students' character than lectures. Although teaching is his most effective area of influence, discussions in the focus group confirmed that he is not just a revered figure in the institution: *“The Tuan Guru embodies the very principles we teach here”* (to be included after review). The role of Tuan Guru also includes authority in decision-making. All activities in the Islamic boarding school environment must be in line with the Islamic values that are believed in and practiced. An interview with TGH. Zarkasi showed the same thing, namely as follows (To be included after review):

*“Tuan Guru plays a key role in decision-making, ensuring everything is in line with Islamic values, maintaining community harmony, and providing spiritual and moral guidance to students and the community to maintain a balance between tradition and modernity.”*

The Tuan Guru not only affected classroom life at the NW Anjani Islamic boarding school but also served as a bridge between Islamic and Sasak cultures. The role of Tuan Guru in the spiritual and cultural shaping of the students was highlighted in the interview of *Ustadz* Burhanudin (to be included after review):

*“We actively incorporate elements of Sasak culture into the religious curriculum, ensuring that our students learn not only about religion but also about culture, customs, and traditions.”*

TGH at the Nurul Hakim Islamic Boarding School. Muharrar Mahfuda stated that the Tuan Guru's position was not only to teach but also to mold students' character and spirituality. The tradition is the foundation of *pesantren* education, which evaluates students' overall development, including academic performance, faith maturity, and worldview.

#### 4.2.5. Interaction of Traditional Values and Locality

The three studied *pesantren* used various approaches to incorporate traditional values into both formal and informal education, though there were differences in the emphasis on Sasak and universal values. Table 3 below summarizes the forms of value transmission that develop in each Islamic boarding school.

**Table 3:** Comparison of Value Inheritance Processes in Islamic Boarding Schools

Aspects	Qomarul Huda Bagu	Nurul Hakim	NW Anjani East Lombok
Learning Methods	Memorizing <i>Sorogan</i> and the Yellow Book	<i>Sorogan</i> and <i>Bandongan</i>	<i>Bandongan</i> and <i>halaqah</i>
Focus on Traditional Values	Adab (ethics) towards the Guru and fellow students	Depth of Knowledge through the Yellow Book	Harmony between Islamic and Sasak values
Ritual Activities	Dawn prayer and <i>dhikr</i> (recitation) with students	Studying the Yellow Book and Reading the Quran	<i>Dhikr</i> rituals and the commemoration of the Prophet's birthday (Maulid)
Integration of Local Traditions	Utilizing Sasak traditions for education	Grave Visits and Community Involvement	Preserving local culture in education

Source: Researcher Processed Data

Table 4 summarizes the strategies used by the three *pesantren* to tackle social change, modernization, teacher-student relations, the preservation of traditions, and responses to external and internal pressures. There is consultation, but all relationships are under the master teacher's auspices. Religion, collective prayers, and discipline are preserved; modernization is achieved by reinforcing local traditions. The primary dilemma at Nurul Hakim is the transmission of cultural values to the next generation through participatory practice and technology, whereas the NW Anjani is a synthesis of teacher leadership, technology, Islamic values, and the whole tradition. Generally, the three *pesantren* employed various modernizations to reinforce their social presence, regulate their internal affairs, and adapt to societal changes, drawing on complementary intercultural values.

**Table 4:** Comparison of Islamic Boarding School Strategies

Aspects	Qomarul Huda Bagu	Nurul Hakim	NW Anjani East Lombok
Teacher-Student Relationship	The full authority of the Tuan Guru, a tradition of deliberation	Interactive with discussion; remains hierarchical	Tuan Guru as the absolute spiritual leader
Traditional Activities	Regular reading; strict discipline	Grave visitation; communal prayer	<i>Manaqib</i> ; <i>haul</i> celebration
Adaptation to Modernization Challenges	Focus on strengthening local traditions Changing the mindset of the younger generation	Technology integration; participatory approach Introduction to modern technology	Leveraging the Nahdlatul Wathan network Social and cultural change

Source: Researcher Processed Data

### 4.3. Institutional Management Innovation

Other Islamic boarding schools in Lombok, Qomarul Huda Bagu, Nurul Hakim, and NW Anjani modernized their administrative systems by incorporating religious teachings and the general syllabus, so that by graduation, students have acquired not only Islamic knowledge but also valuable skills. *Ustadz* Lalu Muhayat emphasized the significance of this updated curriculum, stating (to be included after review):

*“This curriculum combines the study of classical texts with general subjects. Spiritual and intellectual growth is fostered through integrated general and religious education, preparing students for modern society.”*

Meanwhile, at the Nurul Hakim Islamic Boarding School, curriculum effectiveness is evaluated periodically. This evaluation assesses whether the integration of religious and general material is balanced and accepted by students. According to *Ustadz* Makmun, their approach ensures the curriculum remains current and effective:

*“This allows us to continuously update the curriculum, equipping students with the skills needed to thrive in both religious and secular spheres.”*

The NW Anjani Islamic Boarding School in East Lombok uses a project-based approach to develop and deliver its educational programs. Each program is directly linked to learning outcomes, both religious and general academic. *Ustadz* Ridho Kamrullah emphasized this approach to help the Islamic boarding school build a structured learning system and to facilitate monitoring of curriculum quality. *Ustadz* Ridho Kamrullah stated the following (to be included after review):

*“We want our students to be not only proficient in religious knowledge but also able to compete in the modern world with relevant technical skills. Through this approach, each educational program is linked to clear learning objectives,*

both for the development of their spiritual character and their academic potential.”

Digitalization at the Qomarul Huda Bagu, Nurul Hakim, and NW Anjani Islamic boarding schools is evident in the implementation of the Dare management application, LMS, and project-based learning to equip students with practical skills and economic independence. The modernization strategies of each Islamic boarding school differ: Qomarul Huda Bagu integrates religious and general curricula, Nurul Hakim periodically evaluates curriculum effectiveness, and NW Anjani focuses on project-based education management to make learning more tangible.

**Table 5:** Information Support Table

Aspects	Qomarul Huda Bagu	Nurul Hakim	NW Anjani East Lombok
Curriculum Management	Special division for integrative curriculum	Continuous evaluation for effectiveness	Project-based management
Administration	Online <i>pesantren</i> management application	Online-based system for data efficiency	Cloud-based data integration
Digitalization	Digital material as a supplement	LMS with video conferencing	Digital technology-based projects
Online Learning	Entrepreneurship skills training	Collaboration with local industries	Use of technology for entrepreneurship
Economic Independence			

Source: Researcher Processed Data

Qomarul Huda Bagu has an online student data application, Nurul Hakim has a local system developed on an internal network, and NW Anjani uses cloud storage. Qomarul Huda Bagu trains students in MSMEs, Nurul Hakim in video-conferencing-based LMS, and NW Anjani in technology-based entrepreneurship in the agricultural and organic product industries, all of which are applied in face-to-face classes. This change seems practical: the Qomarul Huda students are better equipped to face the job market; the Nurul Hakim digitalization system enhances learning interaction; and skepticism towards digitalization at NW Anjani is addressed through dialogue to ensure the changes remain in line with Islamic values.

#### 4.4. Relevance and Interdisciplinary Implications

There have not yet been practical implications of intercultural communication of Islamic education or the theory of management innovation on curriculum innovation, administrative digitalization, technology-based learning, and economic empowerment at *Pesantren* Qomarul Huda Bagu, Nurul Hakim, and NW Anjani. Without enhancing the interdisciplinary features, research results are likely to be only applicable to the local context of *pesantren*.

*Pesantren*, as an intercultural space, is a dialogue among Islamic values, Sasak culture, and modernization, but it has not yet produced a model of intercultural communication that can be applied to other Islamic multicultural institutions. In the context of management innovation, the concepts of digital transformation and the integrative curriculum of *pesantren* may be associated with an educational governance system based on local wisdom, but research on educational management should further explore the diverse aspects of cross-institutional replication and comparison.

The interdisciplinarity of the present study can be extended in two ways; initially, by contributing to the existing body of information on intercultural communication in Islamic education with a model of dialogue based on tradition and modernity; and secondly, by contributing to the literature on management by illustrating how institutional innovation is propelled by local cultural underpinnings. Therefore, *pesantren* is perceived as both a traditional institution and a social laboratory in the construction of interdisciplinary theory.

## 5. Discussion

According to the study, the *pesantren* in Lombok are not only traditional religious institutions but also sites where values and cultural transformation are negotiated. Although the tradition of the yellow book, the dormitory lifestyle, and the power of Tuan Guru influence the santri habitus, it is transformed by the general curricula, digitalized management, and entrepreneurship. In this way, the cultural capital of *pesantren* is being constantly reorganized to suit the demands of modern socio-economic circumstances, in which classical education would be the source of moral legitimacy and digital-entrepreneurial capabilities the practical resource of graduates.

The findings are consistent with those of Tuna (2024), who notes that Islamic pedagogical designs must develop pluralism and intercultural competence. Whereas in Europe pluralism has frequently been instilled in formal curricula, in Lombok *pesantren* it is manifested through day-to-day dorm life, mass rituals, the study of yellow books, and the value-laden relations between students and the Tuan Guru and is thus a living practice, not a policy. On the same issue, R'boul et al. (2024) postulate that Islamic ethics offer a substitute epistemology in intercultural education. Digitalization and entrepreneurial change can be embraced in *pesantren* because Sasak values and Islamic ethics permit change as a form of modernization, while Islamic epistemology can help ease the transition between modernity and tradition.

The power relations in *pesantren* are evident in the teacher's authority, who is considered a charismatic protector of tradition but does not permit much creativity. There are different leadership styles, including hierarchical and participatory, which demonstrate that transformation in *pesantren* is heterogeneous and is defined by cultural capital. This is, in Bourdieu's terms, an attempt by actors to maintain or improve their social position through symbolic, social, and cultural capital. These observations affirm Bourdieu's definition of cultural capital as inherited, accumulated, and convertible. The art of the yellow book has been turned into symbolic capital, now well complemented by digital and entrepreneurial skills as economic capital. In line with Thomson & Hall (2022), cultural capital, in one form or another, influences social mobility, since graduates with both traditional and modern skills have a better chance of securing it than those with only conventional skills. *Pesantren*, therefore, facilitates the transformation of traditional capital to economic capital using Islamic values.

From an intercultural perspective, this paper shows that intercultural communication among Islamic values, Sasak culture, and modernity occurs not only in the classroom but also in everyday *pesantren* life. According to Putkonen et al. (2025), religious education can help people overcome existential issues and foster social cohesion. Here, *pesantren* combines

pragmatism with spirituality to enable learners to maintain their identity as religious persons while acquiring market-relevant competencies. Bourdieu's theory describes the functioning of cultural capital, and the interculturalism process explains why these relationships are characterized by tolerance and cooperation. This research also shows some discrepancies with previous work. *Pesantren* pluralism is more feasible and community-oriented than formal models used in European schools (Tuna, 2024). Although R'boul et al. (2024) emphasize the need to balance Islamic ethics with intercultural education, its introduction in the local context differs particularly in the rates of technology and entrepreneurship adoption. These disparities lead to differences among alumni, with transformation driven by leadership and institutional strategies. Therefore, although it largely concurs with previous studies, this study provides information on internal variation and community-based pluralism.

In theory, the paper builds on Bourdieu's concept, demonstrating that traditional cultural capital in the religious education of conservatism can be reformulated into economic capital without any loss of moral legitimacy. It also enriches interculturalism, where *pesantren* interactions do not just take place through the curriculum but also through dormitory life, rituals, and the position of Tuan Guru. In practice, it suggests combining yellow book learning with digital and entrepreneurial skills grounded in Islamic values, so that capital conversion reinforces, rather than weakens, *pesantren* authority. Therefore, *pesantrens* re-create traditions and are drivers of contemporary socio-economic change. This reconceptualization of *pesantren* as an intercultural space offers a new perspective to understand the interaction between religious education and socio-economic modernization in Muslim society. This approach not only extends the theory of interculturalism beyond the context of general education and migration but also adapts Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital into the transformative realm of traditional Islamic education.

## 6. Conclusions

The findings of this study highlight that *pesantren* in Lombok are not static institutions but dynamic arenas where Islamic teachings, local Sasak traditions, and the demands of modernity are continuously negotiated. The practice of teaching the yellow books, communal dormitory life, and religious rituals remains central, yet is increasingly intersected by digital literacy and entrepreneurial skills. This interplay demonstrates that *pesantren* function as intercultural spaces where tradition is reinterpreted in light of contemporary realities.

Theoretically, this research extends interculturalism theory and Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and field by situating them within the context of conservative Islamic education; at the same time, it offers a recontextualization of *pesantren* as an arena of intercultural interaction that mediates between religious values, local traditions, and the demands of modernity. This approach makes a new contribution to understanding the transformation of cultural capital in a changing Muslim society. Practically, the study suggests that *pesantren* leaders, educators, and policymakers should design educational models that preserve moral and spiritual continuity while accommodating modern competencies.

For future research, comparative studies across other Indonesian regions and longitudinal analyses could reveal whether similar value-negotiation processes occur elsewhere and how they shape cultural orientations across generations. Such inquiries will deepen the understanding of how Islamic educational institutions adapt to social change while sustaining cultural resilience.

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