

Typologies of *Pondok Pesantren* in Indonesia and Malaysia: A Comparative Analysis

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ABSTRACT

This research specifically examines the typology of *pondok pesantren*, both in Indonesia and Malaysia. This study is highly relevant because it provides an in-depth understanding of the typology of Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia and Malaysia, which can help in understanding the development and differences in culture and Islamic education in the two countries. The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative with the type of library research, using the Publish or Perish application as an instrument for identifying journal articles. At the initial stage, the number of articles obtained was 133, and they were reduced based on quality and novelty so that 85 articles remained. These articles were then filtered again based on the focus theme, leaving 44. These articles were read and eliminated again so that only 33 articles were obtained. The results of this study show that there are three typologies of Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia and Malaysia; salaf typology, modern typology, and convergence typology of *salaf* and modern.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Islamic Boarding School (known as *Pondok Pesantren*) is a traditional and culturally rooted Islamic educational institution that engages in the activities of studying, comprehending, delving into, educating, internalizing, and practicing Islamic teachings while emphasizing moral and religious aspects as guiding principles for everyday conduct (Mastuhu, 1994; Hanafi et al., 2021). *Pondok pesantren* emerged within society as a communal way of life that possesses the capability to engage in activities involving alternative education, combining the concepts of education and instruction with the development of the community (Baidhawi 2019). At its zenith, a *pondok pesantren* is an integral part of an educational system that focuses not only on general knowledge but also on Islamic education, coexisting harmoniously with diversity and religious pluralism (Latipah 2019). *Pondok pesantren*, with all its self-sufficiency, has the ability to endure and undergo highly significant changes continually (Maimun & Haris, 2021; Pulungan, 2019; Badri, 2022). By adhering to the core principles of Islam and education, Islamic boarding schools have the ability to adapt their methods, integrate technology, and

contribute to the development of education in an ever-changing environment. This makes the *pondok pesantren* an entity that not only preserves the tradition of Islamic education, but is also active in keeping up with the times and the needs of society.

Pondok pesantren in Indonesia have undergone numerous changes and evolutions (Rahim and Nor 2020). Several factors influencing the dynamics of *Pondok pesantren* include government policies, the advancement of information and communication technology, and changes in societal mindset. The government plays a crucial role in advancing *pondok pesantren* through various policies and programs, such as the modernization of *pondok pesantren* education and the enhancement of human resources quality within *pondok pesantren* (Nuraeni 2021). The government also strives to enhance public access to formal education by improving the quality of formal schools, thereby making *pondok pesantren* increasingly competitive.

Pondok pesantren began to be known in Malaysia with the arrival of Islam in the 19th century CE (Abidin et al. 2022; Yaakub & Ruskam, 2019). *Pondok pesantren* became an alternative for the Malay community in Malaysia to pursue religious studies. This system began to flourish in several regions of Malaysia, such as Kelantan, Terengganu, Kedah, Pulau Pinang, Perak, and Negeri Sembilan (Masyhurah et al. 2015). Through this educational system, the Malay community began to comprehend matters related to Islamic law, creed, and issues pertaining to Islam (Azizan, Ismail, and Zin 2022). Therefore, the *pondok pesantren* education system in Malaysia is no longer unfamiliar among the Malay community.

The dynamics of *pondok pesantren* in Malaysia have undergone several changes. Some *pondok pesantren* now offer more integrated and modern education programs, including formal curricula that encompass primary and secondary school subjects, as well as broader Islamic education (Kadir 2022). Some *pondok pesantren* also offer skill-based education programs such as foreign languages, computer skills, and technology. However, despite these changes, *pondok pesantren* education remains highly respected and recognized within Malaysian society (Kadir 2022). Many people consider education in *pondok pesantren* as a viable alternative for acquiring high-quality and authentic Islamic education (Hastasari et al., 2022; Hadi & Burhanudin, 2021).

The development of information and communication technology also influences the dynamics of the *pondok pesantren* (Mu'id 2019). Currently, many *pondok pesantren* are beginning to incorporate technology as part of their teaching strategies, such as utilizing technology-based learning media, enhancing the competence of their human resources by equipping them with technological knowledge, and improving community access to information through online media (Hadi and Burhanudin 2021).

Changes in societal mindset also influence the dynamics of *pondok pesantren*. Society is becoming increasingly aware of the importance of formal education and starting to pay more attention to the quality of education their children receive. This compels *pondok pesantren* to make greater efforts to enhance the quality of education they provide and meet the demand for quality education from the community (Fatiyah 2021).

Overall, the dynamics of *pondok pesantren* in Indonesia and Malaysia have undergone positive changes and evolution (Mas'ud, Fuad, and Zaini 2019). *Pondok pesantren* are increasingly striving to meet the community's demands for quality education and adapting to technological advancements and government policies. However, there are still areas that require improvement, such as enhancing community access to education and upgrading the quality of human resources within *pondok pesantren* (Suheri and Nurrahmawati 2019).

Research on the typology of *pondok pesantren* has been extensively conducted by academics. First, there are studies that focus on categorizing *pondok pesantren* into salaf and modern types (Niwan & Paisun, 2019; Hayati, 2019; Zakki & Hazinah, 2023). These research groups categorize *pondok pesantren* into three types: salaf, modern, and convergence. Second, there are studies on the typology of *pondok pesantren* lifestyles (Bali & Naim, 2020; Fahmi, 2015; M. L. Alfarisi, 2016). In this context, researchers pay attention to the discipline of the students (*santri*) and the exemplary values of the Asatidz (teachers). Third, research on the typology of the *pondok pesantren* leadership (I. Lailatul, 2020; Sari & Yani, 2013;

Sholichin, 2007). The typology of *pondok pesantren* leadership that they focus on includes charismatic aspects, social interactions, and the lineage background of the caregivers (*pengasuh*).

The focus of this research will specifically examine the typology of Islamic boarding schools, both in Indonesia and Malaysia. This *pondok pesantren* typology is very different from the three typologies above, because this study aims to analyze how the typology of Islamic boarding schools in the two countries? With attention to this typology, this study is expected to contribute to a full understanding of the similarities and differences in the typology of *pondok pesantren* in Indonesia and Malaysia, as well as the basic concept of *pondok pesantren* as religious educational institutions that not only carry out educational functions, but also exude culture, noble values, and noble missions.

2. METHODS

This research is library research by utilizing library studies to obtain research data. The data comes from books, journal articles, and other literature collections without having to go directly to the field (Zed 2008). This research method provides significant benefits and facilitates researchers in conducting in-depth analysis of a number of relevant research results. This contributes to a more comprehensive and balanced presentation of facts (Afsari et al. 2021).

Literature research in this study was conducted by collecting articles related to the typology of Islamic boarding schools published from 2016 to 2023. The literature study search was conducted on the Springer, Taylor & Francis Group, Eric, and Google Scholar databases with the help of the Publish or Perish application. Searches were conducted through the Springer, Taylor & Francis Group, Eric, and Google Scholar databases with the help of the Publish or Perish application. The article search used the keyword 'typology of Islamic boarding schools' in Indonesia and Malaysia from 2016-2023. The number of articles obtained in the data collection reached 133 which were then reduced based on the criteria; 1) Quality 2) The novelty of the article so that 85 articles remained. The articles were also filtered based on the focus of the theme, so that only 44 journal articles were obtained. Furthermore, the articles were examined in the title and abstract sections to obtain articles that were specific and in accordance with the theme of the discussion so that there were only 33 articles that could be used as references. These articles come from educational journals related to the typology of Islamic boarding schools, both national and international. The stages that have been carried out will be visualized as follows:

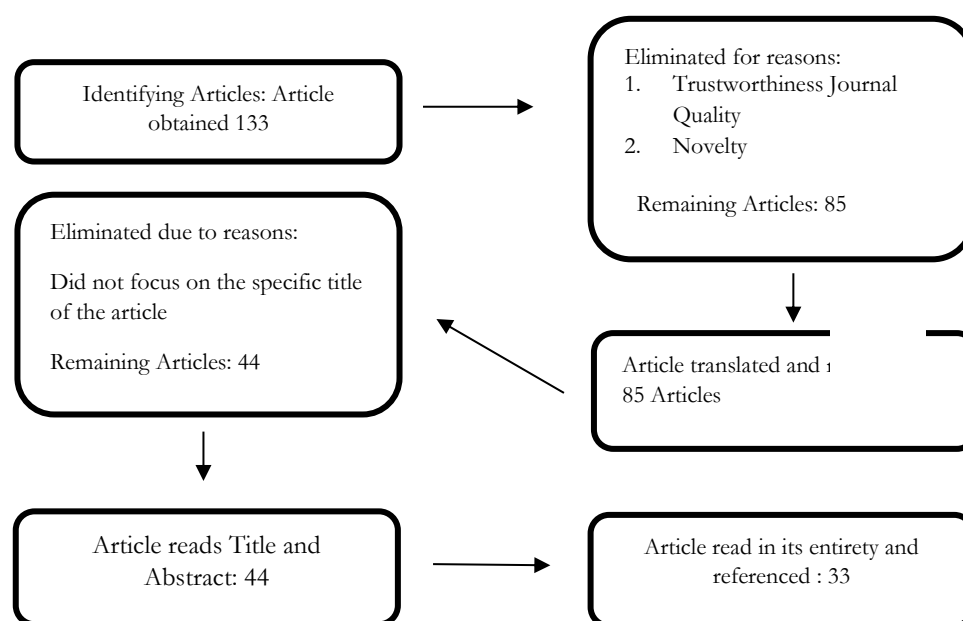


Figure 1. Stages of Reference Search

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Salaf Typology

The first typology of *pondok pesantren* is the Salaf typology. This typology is based on aspects of Salaf *pondok pesantren* gleaned from various articles, both in Indonesia and Malaysia. Some of these articles include "Characteristics of Preserving Salafiyah Islamic Boarding School Traditions: Lessons from Indonesia and Malaysia (Munir and Nor 2021), The Typology of Traditional and Modern Management in the Development of Pesantren Education (Tobroni and Firmansyah 2022), Pesantren Typology (Examining the Salaf and Modern Systems) (Niwan and Paisun 2019), Pesantren Typology: Salaf and Khalaf (Hayati 2019), Pondok Institutions in the Malaysian Education System (Rawi et al. 2015), and Pondok Institutions in the Malaysian Education System (Bakar et al. 2019).

From the analysis of the above-mentioned articles, the following findings were obtained regarding the aspects of Salafi *pondok pesantren*, both in Indonesia and Malaysia:

Table 1. Salaf Typology

Aspect	Indonesia	Malaysia
Kyai	Central Figure, the management center, and the primary source of the <i>pesantren's</i> value system.	Central Figure, the management center, and the primary source of the <i>pesantren's</i> value system.
Graduate orientation	Preparing a generation of religious leaders in society.	Preparing a generation of religious leaders in society.
Kitab Kuning Learning Orientation	Fundamental knowledge in Islam, such as <i>fiqh</i> (jurisprudence), <i>tasawwuf</i> (spirituality), <i>akhlak</i> (morality), and the Arabic language.	Fundamental knowledge in Islam, such as <i>fiqh</i> (jurisprudence), <i>tasawwuf</i> (spirituality), <i>akhlak</i> (morality), and the Arabic language.
Methods	<i>Sorogan</i> , <i>Bandhongan</i> , memorization, <i>halaqah</i> , tutorial, and <i>muzakarah</i> .	Memorization, <i>halaqah</i> , tutorial, and <i>muzakarah</i>
Certificate	Oral certificate and recognition from the <i>kyai</i>	Oral certificate and recognition from the <i>kyai</i>
Curriculum	Religious focus and dependence on the knowledge of the <i>Kyai</i>	Dependence on the teacher's field
Costs and finances	are somewhat covered and relatively inexpensive	-
The vision and mission	Depend on the <i>kiyai</i>	-
Learning system	-	Divided into three levels, namely, beginner, intermediate, and advanced, using the methods of <i>talaqqi</i> , <i>tafaqquh</i> , <i>itqan</i> , <i>munazara</i> , and <i>mujadalah</i> , similar to that in Masjidil Haram.

The table above indicates that salaf *pondok pesantren* in Indonesia and Malaysia share many typological similarities, including aspects related to the *kyai*, graduate orientation, orientation toward classic book learning, teaching methods, curriculum aspects, and the types of ijazah acquired by their graduates. However, when it comes to financing, financial systems, and the vision and mission of the *pondok pesantren*, these aspects are unique to Indonesian *pondok pesantren*.

Regarding the *kyai* aspect, both Indonesian and Malaysian Salafi *pondok pesantren* place the *kyai* as a central figure. The *kyai* plays a crucial role as the management centre of the *pondok pesantren*, the primary source of knowledge and the *pondok pesantren's* system, as well as a spiritual leader (Munir and Nor 2021). This indicates that the role of the *kyai* in Salafi *pondok pesantren* is significantly different from that in other educational institutions.

In terms of educational orientation, both in Indonesia and Malaysia, *pondok pesantren* of this typology are focused on mastering religious sciences such as *fiqh* (jurisprudence), *tasawwuf* (spirituality), *akhlak* (morality). They share the vision of producing individuals with a high level of religious knowledge, ready to become role models when they engage with society (Munir and Nor, 2021).

In the learning system, Salafi *pondok pesantren*, both in Indonesia and Malaysia, are highly unique and distinctive. The most prominent characteristic of learning in Salafi *pondok pesantren* is the use of the *sorogan* or *bandongan* method (Laili 2018). This *pesantren* method still maintains its original form, teaching from the *Kitab Kuning* in Arabic, which was written by a Muslim scholar in the 15th century (Styaningsih 2016).

The implementation of the madrasah system is aimed at facilitating the traditional *sorogan* method used in old-style educational institutions without introducing general knowledge instruction (Fauziah 2017). On the other hand, a distinctive feature of Salafi *pondok pesantren* is the scheduling of study times for the learned texts, which must be agreed upon by the *kiai* and the students based on mutual needs and interests. The allocation of time in the teaching and learning process is very flexible and is mostly carried out independently by the students.

The learning model is implemented through the application of the *halaqah* system (study groups) organized in mosques or *suraus*. The core of the *halaqah* teaching system is memorization, with the ultimate goal of producing students who are competent and knowledgeable (Cahyadi 2017). The science curriculum is entirely dependent on *kyai* who care for the *pondok pesantren* (Fahmi 2015). Some students live in huts (resident students), while others do not (non-resident students). Modern *pondok pesantren* represents a further development from the traditional *pondok pesantren* type because their programs tend to encompass all classical learning systems and deviate from the traditional teaching methods (Purnamasari 2016).

In terms of expenses, Salafi *pondok pesantren* in Indonesia are relatively much cheaper than modern or convergence *pondok pesantren*. Additionally, some *pondok pesantren* are closed in terms of fees (Niwan & Paisun, 2019; Rawi et al., 2016). Therefore, the typology of Salafi *pondok pesantren*, both in Indonesia and Malaysia, is still maintained as one of the oldest religious education systems in both countries. The earliest *pondok pesantren* established in Indonesia was traditional or Salafi *pondok pesantren*. Salafi *pondok pesantren* is unique in its education system. The most prominent characteristic of learning in Salafi *pondok pesantren* is the use of the *sorogan* or *bandongan* method (Laili 2018).

The main characteristic of Salafi *pondok pesantren* lies in its focus on religious education. Traditional *pondok pesantren* still prioritize teaching classical Islamic texts as the core of their education. They implement a madrasah system to facilitate the *sorogan* system used in old-style educational institutions, without introducing general knowledge instruction (Fauziah 2017). On the other hand, a distinctive feature of Salafi *pondok pesantren* is the scheduling of study hours for the books to be learned, which must be agreed upon jointly by the *kyai* (religious leaders) and the *santri* (students) in accordance with their collective needs and interests. The allocation of time in the teaching and learning process is quite flexible, with most of it being carried out independently by the *santri*. In the Salafi *pondok pesantren* education system, a diploma is not considered a reference point in the educational journey. This is one of the distinctive features of traditional education deeply rooted in the Islamic culture of Indonesia. Salafi *pondok pesantren* places a stronger emphasis on character development and deep religious understanding rather than the pursuit of formal degrees.

Within the *pondok pesantren* environment, knowledge and understanding of religion are viewed as more significant than a graduation certificate. The learning process in Salafi *pondok pesantren* is based on traditional methods that focus on understanding the sacred texts of the *Quran* and *Hadith*. A diploma is regarded as a secondary matter that is not the primary goal, and Salafi *pondok pesantren* often values students (*santri*) with a strong religious understanding over those who solely seek diplomas.

This approach reflects the philosophy that religious knowledge should be acquired for the betterment of oneself and society, rather than for prestige or social status. Consequently, Salafi *pondok*

pesantren provides students with the opportunity to delve deep into religious teachings without the pressure of formal achievement, promoting values such as simplicity, diligence, and integrity in their educational process. Although diplomas may not be the primary focus, Salafi *pondok pesantren* continues to play a significant role in preserving the intellectual heritage of Islam and upholding spirituality within the educational culture.

Pondok pesantren salaf in Indonesia and Malaysia share many similarities in various aspects such as the role of the *kyai* (religious leaders), the focus on religious education, teaching methods, curriculum, and funding. However, there are significant differences in terms of financial systems, as well as the vision and mission of *pondok pesantren* that are unique to Indonesia. With these unique characteristics, Salafi *pondok pesantren* continues to be one of the oldest and relevant religious education systems in both countries.

3.2. Modern Typology

The typology of modern *pondok pesantren* in Indonesia and Malaysia is based on a review of literature by researchers from both countries, which describes various aspects of modern *pondok pesantren*. Some articles that serve as sources of information regarding the typology of modern Islamic boarding schools include: "Traditional and Modern Management Typology in the Development of Islamic Boarding School Education (Tobroni and Firmansyah 2022), Typology of Islamic Boarding Schools (Examining the Salafi and Modern Systems; Niwan and Paisun 2019), Islamic Boarding School Typology: Salaf and Khalaf (Hayati 2019), and "Islamic Boarding School Education as a Quranic Tafsir Study Institution in the State of Johor (Isnin and Abdullah 2020).

Several aspects related to the modern typology of *pondok pesantren* in Indonesia and Malaysia can be seen in the following table:

Table 2. Modern Typology

Aspect	Indonesia	Malaysia
Leadership	Democratic Leadership Based on Foundation's Decisions	-
Curriculum	A modern curriculum augmented with religious education	-
Financial	Financial Transparency	-
Management	The concept of modern management is characterized by a systematic and technology-driven approach.	-
Vision and Mission	A Structured Vision and Mission along with Job Descriptions	-
Institutional Structure	There are both madrasah and school institutions from preschool to university level.	-
Institutional Setup	There are madrasah and school institutions available.	-
Building Structure	-	The building is sturdy, constructed with materials like stone and cement, without thatched roofs or wood on its walls.
Environmental Conditions	-	Clean, spacious, and strategically located buildings.

Based on an analysis of various aspects of modern Islamic boarding schools documented in the above table, significant differences can be discerned between Indonesia and Malaysia in the context of research on the typology of modern *pondok pesantren*. Studies on the typology of modern *pondok*

pesantren tend to be more frequently conducted in Indonesia compared to Malaysia. This phenomenon is influenced by several fundamental factors, including differences in history, culture, and the Islamic educational context in both countries.

The typology of modern *pondok pesantren* in Indonesia can be comprehensively understood through various aspects. These aspects encompass leadership, curriculum, finances, administration, management, vision and mission, as well as the institutional structure within the *pondok pesantren*. On the other hand, the typology of modern *pondok pesantren* in Malaysia places a stronger emphasis on aspects such as physical building structures and the physical environment surrounding the *pondok pesantren*. Despite these noticeable differences, they provide essential foundations in determining the typology of *pondok pesantren* in each respective country.

Modern *pondok pesantren* can be regarded as an advanced development from the typology of classical *pondok pesantren*. A key characteristic of modern *pondok pesantren* is the inclusion of all subjects from the salaf tradition (classical Islamic teachings) along with general knowledge in its curriculum (Purnamasari 2016). The instructional system in *pondok pesantren* of this typology adopts a classical approach, with the national school or madrasah curriculum serving as its foundation. In the context of modern *pondok pesantren*, the *kyai* assumes the role of coordinating learning and teaching in the classrooms. The primary distinction between *pondok pesantren* and madrasah or conventional schools lies in the stronger emphasis placed on religious subjects and the Arabic language (sometimes supplemented with English) as an integral part of the local curriculum (Fahmi 2015).

Modern *pondok pesantren* also incorporate general subjects typically taught in madrasahs within the *pondok pesantren* environment. In line with the statement above, Dhofier defines *khalafi pondok pesantren*, which encompasses general education and the development or establishment of madrasahs within the *pondok pesantren* environment, as public schools within the *pondok pesantren* setting (Rouf 2016). Similar to most *pondok pesantren* nowadays, they offer a classical educational system spanning from kindergarten, elementary, middle school, and even up to higher education levels.

Another significant characteristic of *khalafi/modern pondok pesantren* is the managerial approach employed in their administration. This approach involves planning, coordination, organization, supervision, and evaluation enriched with innovative concepts drawn from external institutions (Lundeto 2021). Management is often carried out through the utilization of technology. Many modern *pondok pesantren* has developed a classical education hierarchy encompassing levels from kindergarten, elementary school, Islamic elementary school, Islamic junior high school, Islamic senior high school, and up to higher education institutions (Hayati 2019). These differences reflect the complex dynamics shaping the development of modern Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia and Malaysia, with each country adopting unique approaches and focuses in the advancement of these educational institutions.

3.3. Typology of Salaf and Modern Convergence

Typology of Salaf and Modern Convergence *pondok pesantren* is a blend of Salaf and modern concepts in the implementation of the *pondok pesantren* system, both in Indonesia and Malaysia. This typology is based on various aspects gathered from several sources of literature, including "Typology Pesantren (Studying the Salaf and Modern Systems) (Niwan and Paisun 2019), Typology Pesantren: Salaf and Khalaf (Hayati 2019), and "Modernizing Education System in Pondok Sungai Durian, Kuala Krai, Kelantan (Abidin et al. 2020).

The aspects of the Salaf and Modern Convergence typology of *pondok pesantren* in Indonesia and Malaysia can be observed in the following table:

Table 3. Typology of Salaf and Modern Convergence

Aspect	Indonesia	Malaysia
Characteristics of Dominance	Resembles Salaf-based <i>pesantren</i> but adaptable to change.	Combines traditional (<i>umumi</i>) and modern (<i>nizami</i>) elements.
Institutions	Includes formal educational institutions.	-
Curriculum	Integration of religious and general education.	Includes classical texts, language, and general knowledge.
Teaching Methods	-	Utilizes both <i>halaqah</i> (circle of learning) and classroom methods.
Foundational Principle	" <i>Al-muhafadhoh Alal Al-qodiim As-soolihal-akhdzu bi aljadiidi al-ashlah</i> " (Preserve the good traditions of the past and adopt better new traditions).	-

Based on the description of the aspects of Salaf and Modern convergence typology in the table above, it can be understood that there are both similarities and differences between Indonesia and Malaysia. Notably, common aspects include dominant characteristics and curriculum aspects in the Salaf and Modern convergence typology.

Dominant characteristics in Islamic boarding schools with the Salaf and Modern convergence typology involve the implementation of traditions akin to Salaf-based *pondok pesantren*, while also being adaptive and responsive to changes across various fields. In terms of curriculum, this typology has successfully integrated both religious and secular education within its curriculum framework. Conversely, *pondok pesantren* with the Salaf and Modern convergence typology in Malaysia tend to keep their traditional characteristics separate from the modern ones, maintaining a clear distinction between the two (traditionally Salafic and modern with *nizami* characteristics).

These Islamic boarding schools represent a blend of traditional and modern educational systems. They incorporate traditional methods of teaching Arabic texts, such as *sorogan*, *bandongan*, and *weton*, while also actively developing a modern school system (Zakki and Hazinah 2023). Furthermore, they focus on skill development in a way that distinguishes them from both Salaf-based and modern *pondok pesantren*. The Salaf and Modern convergence *pondok pesantren* aim to address the weaknesses of both Salafic/traditional and modern/contemporary Islamic boarding schools

One key distinction of these convergence educational institutions is the inclusion of formal education within their structure. In addition to teaching traditional Islamic texts, these *pondok pesantren* also offer formal education to enable students to gain a comprehensive understanding of both secular and religious knowledge simultaneously (Zakki and Hazinah 2023). The typology is not solely based on traditional or modern education models but also on the concentration of religious studies being taught. Some are known as Quranic *pondok pesantren*, which focus primarily on Quranic education from *qira'ah* to *tahfidzin*, while others are hadith *pondok pesantren*, with a stronger emphasis on hadith studies (Styaningsih 2016).

In response to the demands of the contemporary era and the forces of globalization that require professionalism in human resource development, the management of educational institutions, including Islamic boarding schools, necessitates a professional approach (Anugrah, Amrullah, and Esha 2022). *Pondok pesantren* must enhance their professionalism and implement the Salaf, Khalaf, and Convergence systems.

The advantage of studying in *pondok pesantren*, coupled with the madrasah/school education system, lies in the fact that students not only acquire knowledge of religion by studying classical Islamic

texts like the "*kitab kuning*" but also gain general knowledge about applied technology (science). This enables students to integrate their knowledge more effectively, bridging the gap between theory and practice. For instance, in the madrasah education system, *pondok pesantren* offer courses in social sciences, natural sciences, and languages. Many *pondok pesantren* have also recognized the adequacy of their human resources and, in response to community needs, have established higher education institutions.

4. CONCLUSION

The renewal carried out by Islamic boarding schools, both in Indonesia and Malaysia, then gave birth to three typologies of Islamic boarding schools, namely: salaf typology, modern typology, and convergence typology of salaf and modern. However, this research still has limitations. This research only comparatively analyzes the typology of Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia and Malaysia and has not revealed the diversity of the typology of Islamic boarding schools in other countries. In addition, this study has not explored in depth the cultural, social, and economic factors that can influence the dynamics of the typology of Islamic boarding schools. Therefore, future research should explore more boarding schools, conduct in-depth case studies, and investigate the socio-economic context for a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics and contributions of boarding schools to society.

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