



Transformation of Pesantren Academic Traditions (A Study of Ma'had Aly Learning Innovations)

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Abstract

Learning in pesantren or Islamic boarding school is often identified with backward learning, old-fashioned thinking, and an inability to respond to current developments. Ma'had Aly Sukorejo Situbondo dismissed this view. The presence of Ma'had Aly broke the barriers of backwardness that had been running in the pesantren. This article examines the transformation of Ma'had Aly's academic tradition through its learning innovations. This study used a qualitative approach, the type of field research, and data collection techniques in the form of interviews, observations, and documentation. The analysis technique is formulated through the described data categorization and the interpretation of the data acquired through the theories used in this study. The results of this study show that Ma'had Aly Sukorejo Situbondo has transformed its education through learning innovation, combining the teacher-centered and student-centered approaches by developing learning methods in the form of al-Ta'lim wa Al-Tadris, structured assignments, dialogues, lectures, and general stadiums. In reviewing the books in the curriculum, Ma'had Aly Sukorejo provides the broadest possible opportunities for teachers to learn with various learning innovations. From the perspective of innovation, Ma'had Aly has adopted Neo-Modernism thinking. The learning strategies include textual, contextual, comparative, Maqasidiyah, and Naqdiyah. This study has implications for the scientific development of pesantren education in general and pesantren higher education in particular, that the tradition of thinking in pesantren is from stagnant to critical (dynamic) thinking.

Keywords: learning innovation, Ma'had Aly, transformation

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A. Introduction

Pesantren education has provided color and contribution to the Indonesian education system. There are at least two types of contributions provided by pesantren. They were first continuing and preserving the education system run by the people. Second, develop the education system from an aristocracy system to a democratic education system. Pesantren are generally born and grow from undercurrents initiated by the community's will. They exist as autonomous Islamic educational institutions that cannot be intervened by other parties outside them (Firdaus & Husni, 2021).

In the past few decades, almost all pesantren have undergone internal transformations, from institutional and organizational leadership transformations to educational transformations, including learning management. Institutionally, pesantren have established madrasahs, and quite a few have even established schools (Kamal, 2018). In organizational structuring, some pesantren now have legal entities as foundations (Sidiq, 2020). Meanwhile, in terms of education and teaching, pesantren are identical to a traditional education and teaching system (Jamal, 2015). In subsequent developments, since the publication of PMA No. 32 of 2020 concerning Ma'had Aly, pesantren have institutionally flocked to establish Ma'had Aly. Ma'had Aly is a level of pesantren education at a higher education level, which is equivalent to education at Islamic religious universities as stated in the Republic of Indonesia Minister of Religious Affairs Regulation No. 32 of 2020 concerning Ma'had Aly (Peraturan Menteri Agama Republik Indonesia, 2020).

Long before the publication of the Minister of Religion regulations above, according to Marzuki Wahid's notes, Ma'had Aly had been established and organized by at least three pesantren, namely Pesantren Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Sukorejo Situbondo, Pesantren Al-Hikmah Sirampog Brebes, and Pesantren Al-Munawwir Krapyak Yogyakarta (Halim & Mustafid, 2016). After the issuance of PMA Number 17 in 2015, before the PMA was changed to PMA Number 32 in 2020, many Pesantren have recently participated in enlivening the establishment of Ma'had Aly with different scientific specifications. In the records of the Ma'had Aly Association (Amali), there are 48 Ma'had Aly who have received operational permits from the Ministry of Religious Affairs spread throughout Indonesia.

Looking at the facts, the activity of pesantren to establish higher education in Islamic studies based on the Yellow Book is relatively high. In this way, the institutional transformation of pesantren is no longer strange. Of course, this transformation must be accompanied by a transformation of the quality of learning by carrying out various innovations in higher-quality learning. Ma'had Aly's students' yellow book reading ability is above the average of other students. However, several studies show that the students' yellow book reading ability is still doubtful; for example, the nahwu course (Imrithi and Alfiyah Ibnu Malik) is still studied at Ma'had 'Aly Darul Hikmah, West Nusa Tenggara (Taruna, 2012). The graduate competency determined at Ma'had Aly Mudi Mesra is being able to master books *Kanz al-Raghibin Syarḥ Minhaj al-Ṭalibin* and *Ghayat al-Wuṣul Syarḥ Lub al-Uṣul* well and correctly, and being able to memorize the book *Lub al-Uṣul* well and accurately (Muzakir, 2020). The same case was experienced by Pesantren Zainul Hasan Genggong Probolinggo; in recruiting prospective students, Ma'had Aly was required to accept students with minimal Yellow Book reading ability. According to the principal of Ma'had Aly, in his studies, Ma'had Aly Zainul Hasan Genggong still guides students in learning to read the yellow book.

Previous research illustrates that the institutional transformation of pesantren has not been able to keep up with the quality of education through various learning innovations. The problem of learning in pesantren is that it is still shackled to the romanticism of learning. It is synonymous with learning the Yellow Book, which has long been firmly rooted in pesantren traditions. Sometimes, pesantren cannot escape the traditional learning approach using the bandongan, wetonan, and sorogan (Shiddiq, 2015).

Based on this reality, researchers are interested in learning innovation, especially in learning approaches, methods, and strategies at Ma'had Aly Situbondo. Innovation in yellow book learning ideally occurs as a result of institutional transformation. Suppose the academic traditions of higher education at Pesantren continue the academic traditions at the lower level. In that case, Ma'had Aly still identifies and searches for its identity. In other words, pesantren will only carry out institutional transformation without being balanced with transformation in its essential aspects (Tasliyah & Anwar, 2022). On the other hand, pesantren higher education learning has been able to carry out dialectical thinking by referring to the academic traditions of scholars from the Middle Ages to the 19th century.

B. Literature Review

In the context of the transformation of pesantren higher education, previous research discussed the development of the curriculum for pesantren studies at Al-Ma'had Al-Aly Pondok Pesantren Situbondo, Al-Munawwir Krapyak, and Wahid Hasyim Sleman. The results of his research show differences in curriculum characteristics in the three Ma'had Alys, which reflect the vision, mission, and focus of each pesantren's study program. For example, Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Sukorejo and Al-Munawwir emphasize fiqh and ushul fiqh, while Wahid Hasyim is more oriented towards al-fiqh and tafsir. Apart from that, there are differences in learning approaches. Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Situbondo focuses more on methodology and masalah, while Al-Munawwir and Wahid Hasyim concentrate more on studying the yellow book. Thus, this research underlines the diversity and distinctiveness of developing pesantren curriculum in various locations (Millah & Machali, 2013).

Another study focused on the infrastructure and curriculum of Ma'had Aly Pondok Quran Bandung. This research indicates that the Ma'had Aly Pondok Quran curriculum follows content standards. However, Ma'had Aly Pondok Quran is still looking for an ideal curriculum model like Ma'had Aly in general. Apart from that, the surprising finding of this research is that many students of Ma'had Aly Pondok Quran are still weak in tahsin Al-Qu'an. Ma'had Aly's concentration is in the field of the Quran. Meanwhile, in the infrastructure sector of Ma'had Aly, the Quran hut does not yet have a dormitory. The status of the male student dormitory is still rented (Hidayat & Seftiani, 2019).

Other research focused on Nyai's leadership in maintaining the study of the Yellow Book. The findings of this research are that Nyai's leadership type is dominated by democratic and charismatic leadership. Meanwhile, the supporting factors for Nyai's leadership are influenced by internal and external factors. Internal factors are influenced by Nyai's religious competence and ability to operate technology. The existence of the family council supports external factors, the Yellow Book Takhasus Institution and the Yellow Book Guidance Institution. Other findings in this research show that Nyai's leadership is hampered by two factors, namely internal and external. Internal inhibiting factors are caused by Nyai's involvement in

various organizations, which results in Nyai's multiple roles. Meanwhile, the external inhibiting factors are students' interest in learning and the influence of technology (Amalia & Arifin, 2018).

Another study discussing Ma'had Aly explained that students' freedom of thought is demonstrated by fiqh studies by students across madzhab, without limiting it to one madzhab. This is to provide space and look for other thoughts to formulate Islamic law. Apart from that, fiqh studies are integrated with secular fields of science, such as philosophy, sociology, and anthropology. Fiqh studies at Ma'had Aly Situbondo often expand the scope of the study, such as discourses on inter-religious relations, gender, human rights, ecology, interfaith marriages, and other contemporary issues. Freedom of thought does not only stop at a culture of discussion; students of Ma'had Aly Situbondo are also given space to express their thoughts through writings published in reputable journals (Gazali & Malik, 2009).

A previous study discussed how pesantren, as Indonesia's traditional education system, are transforming over time and highlighted that in the Era of Industrial Revolution 4.0, education in pesantren is also experiencing modernization with a focus on foreign language mastery, entrepreneurship, use of Information and Communication Technology (Athoillah & Wulan, 2019). Another study revealed that Sidogiri, the oldest school in East Java, has maintained the tradition of Islamic education by innovating its learning system. One of the main innovations was introducing an Aliyah-level education system, which was generally limited to vocational schools or universities. Sidogiri has five departments at Madrasah Aliyah: MT, Da'wah, Islamic Law, Tafsir, and Hadith. The decision to implement this system is not simply without reason but rather an effort to maintain valuable traditions and adopt changes in line with current developments. The actual proof of this effort is the achievements that Sidogiri has achieved in creating a better education system (Rohmani, 2017).

The previous research mainly examined Ma'had Aly from a curriculum perspective with comparative studies, infrastructure, curriculum, Nyai leadership, students' freedom of thought, and learning the yellow book in pesantren in the Salaf. Meanwhile, this research focuses on Ma'had Aly's learning innovations from conventional to progressive-innovative learning. In this position, pesantren academic traditions will be transformed. Therefore, this gap is what differentiates this research from previous research.

C. Method

This study used a qualitative field study approach (field research). Therefore, the author focuses the study on data analysis and interpretation by utilizing data collection techniques through interviews, documentation, and observation (Miles & Saldana, 2014). Data obtained from interviews with the head of Ma'had Aly, five ustadz or teachers, and ten students will be primary data, while document data about the implementation of learning and data from observations about the learning process at Ma'had Aly Sukorejo Situbondo will be used as primary sources as well become secondary data. Furthermore, the above data will be analyzed by description (Creswell, 2009). The findings regarding the transformation of pesantren academic traditions, especially innovations in yellow book learning in aspects of approach, methods, and strategies, were then formulated in the form of categorization of the data that has been described and interpretation of data that has been formulated through the theories used in this research.

D. Findings and Discussion

1. Profil Ma'had Aly Sukorejo Situbondo

To anticipate issues of crisis for ulama, especially ulama who are experts in the field of fiqh, KH. R As'ad Syamsul Arifin felt called to prepare a cadre of Islamic scholars who were experts in fiqh (*Fuqaha'*). He achieved this desire in 1990 by forming a pesantren higher education institution named Ma'had Al-'Ali li Ulum Al-Diniyah Syu'bah Al-Fiqh. This institution for cadres of fiqh scholars is known as Ma'had Aly (Iswantir, 2022). This pesantren was the first to establish higher education that specifically studied medieval scholars' intellectual works in depth.

Apart from the reasons for establishing Ma'had Aly at Pesantren Sukorejo Situbondo with a concentration on fiqh and fiqh proposals, other fundamental reasons include, first, historical reasons. In this context, KH. R As'ad Syamsul Arifin received a mandate from KH. Hasyim Asy'ari to establish an educational institution whose function is to cadre scholars with expertise in fiqh. (Document 2021 profile of Ma'had Aly). The narrative of the mandate is more or less as follows: "You As'ad must produce many fuqaha' cadres at the end of time." Second, pragmatic reasons. The choice of fiqh as Ma'had Aly's field of concentration was because fiqh has a character in direct contact with society in answering public issues. Pesantren Sukorejo considers that fiqh does not deal with black-and-white issues (Halal-haram) with a stagnant character but rather a static character very attached to fiqh. Third, sociological reasons. The social development of Muslims is considered to have experienced quite significant progress. This condition encourages Pesantren Sukorejo to be involved in answering community problems by guiding them in social and political behavior with concrete answers from fiqh (Bashori, 2017). Pesantren Sukorejo sees Fiqh as a discipline that can respond to the complexity of reality (Gazali & Malik, 2009).

Education at Ma'had Aly Sukorejo Situbondo is based on a curriculum adapted to studies of the discipline of fiqh and fiqh proposals (Document 2021 profile of Ma'had Aly). Thus, the core subjects in learning at Ma'had Aly are fiqh with various explanations. Ma'had Aly has chosen different breakthrough steps that pesantren do not commonly use to increase understanding of fiqh studies and fiqh proposals.

2. Yellow Book Learning Approach Innovations (Combination of *Teacher-Centered and Student-Centered Learning*)

Ma'had Aly Sukorejo Situbondo has built an academic tradition from the start, designed in the form of a syllabus by each lecturer according to the characteristics of the course. Learning is managed by combining the traditional pesantren learning system with learning usually carried out in universities in general. This shows that Ma'had Aly Sukorejo Situbondo is genuinely aware of the institutional need to encourage students' ability to master fiqh studies and fiqh proposals. As the researcher observed during the research, one of the courses presented appeared to be delivered in bandongan form. When this observation occurred, the manuscript study course was offered using a bandongan approach. This finding shows that teaching the yellow book at Ma'had Aly Sukorejo Situbondo still uses a teacher-centered learning approach (Observation 2023). Learning activities are still centered on the teacher. Students just need to listen to the explanations from the teacher. The yellow book, presented as a course, simply conveys its understanding by Ustadz of Ma'had Aly, and the students add meaning to the yellow book. According to Ahmad Tholabi Kharlie, this bandongan method is

generally used to teach novice students (mubtadi')(Kharlie, 2019), and it is different for students of Ma'had Aly who can read the yellow book above the average junior student. From the observation, it appeared that the ustadz who often used this bandongan approach was KH. Afifuddin Muhajir (Observation 2023).

According to the interview results with Hamdi, one of the lecturers at Ma'had Aly Sukorejo Situbondo, he did something different from KH. Afifuddin Muhajir. Hamdi asked one of the students to read and then deliver the contents of the yellow book being studied correctly and adequately according to his understanding. After that, Hamdi gave an additional explanation.

“Kuleh nyoro santreh mecah kitab se ebahas. Santreh koduh bisah mecah sareng bhender mecanah. Ethotduk sareng kuleh. Lastraeh santren mecah sareng jelasaghi, kuleh langsung nambaen keterangnah kitab se ampon ebecah santreh” (A. Hamdi, personal communication, 6 March 2023).

(I told a student to read the book being discussed. Students must be able to read correctly. I immediately pointed to reading the book. After the student finished reading and explained the meaning, I added more detailed information about the book being read)

From the interview results, it can be understood that the approach used by Hamdi is student-centered learning. According to Ndaru Kukuh Masgumelar, this approach can encourage students to actively build their knowledge independently (Masgumelar & Mustafa, 2021). In learning theory, the knowledge students build is called constructivist learning theory. Shymansky explained that constructivism is an active activity of students in building their knowledge, finding out the meaning of knowledge, and building new concepts and ideas with their framework of thinking (Suparlan, 2019).

3. Yellow Book Learning Method Innovations

As a concrete step in a learning approach, there is a learning method in education. Learning methods function as steps to respond to the conditions of students with diverse abilities. Differences in how students learn, including physical aspects, thought patterns, and ways of responding to new knowledge, become a daily aspect of learning methods. For this reason, the position of learning methods in education answers the issue of individual differences in students. Learning methods are concrete steps teachers take to achieve learning goals (Herpratiwi, 2016).

Ma'had Aly Sukorejo Situbondo uses several methods to implement learning plans into activities and learning activities. The first is the *al-Ta'lim wa Al-Tadris* method. Usually, ustadz uses this method every time a manuscript study course takes place. In this method, the ustadz asks the students to take turns reading several paragraphs according to pre-planned limits. The steps taken in this method start from reading the text properly and correctly according to the rules of Nahwu and Shorof, interpreting, understanding, and explaining the meaning of the text. Sometimes, if there are errors in reading, translation, understanding, and explanation from the steps above, other students can comment on these errors. Likewise, at the final stage, the ustadz also comments on and corrects the reading, translation, understanding, and explanations deemed appropriate and relevant (Observation 2023). In Ridwan's view, the *al-Ta'lim wa Al-Tadris* method cannot

yet be used in learning that can improve effective learning of the yellow book (Ridwan, 2018).

The second is the structured assignment method. The target of this method is students doing assignments in groups or individually. Like universities in general, pesantren higher education (Ma'had Aly Sukorejo Situbondo) uses learning methods emphasizing students' independent learning by writing papers, articles, and even final assignments. Papers and articles that students have prepared will be presented in class seminars. Meanwhile, references to articles and papers must be from the yellow book. The paper that has been presented will then be discussed with other students through lecturer guidance (Observation 2023). At this point in the discussion, Ma'had Aly Sukorejo Situbondo students were free to think responsibly and scientifically. During the discussion, various new ideas and thoughts emerged that broke down previously frozen barriers. According to Moh. Ismail et al. state that this method positively affects students' learning motivation (Hadi & Sunaiyah, 2017).

Third is the dialogue and lecture method. Using this method, the lecturer conveys specific topics per the learning plan agreed upon between the lecturer and students since the beginning of the meeting. During the lecture, the lecturer provides opportunities for the students to respond, either in the form of questions, comments, or even refuting the lecturer's statements, which are considered irrelevant, disagree with, and not in line with the literature students have read (Observation 2023). Criticism of lecturers' thoughts is always open to students. So that the space for freedom of thought and disagreement with the lecturer's thoughts becomes a beautiful sight in the dialogue session. Of course, during this dialogue process, ethics and morals are always prioritized. According to Theophanni Paula, the dialogue method can improve critical thinking and problem-solving abilities (Paula & Rampisela, 2021).

Fourth is the general stadium (Muhadarah Al-'Am). Generally, this method is carried out by inviting figures with capacities in particular science fields. The function of this method is to provide additional insight into students regarding current issues. The figures invited to give a lecture were from within the country and a figure from abroad, such as KH. Bahaudin Nur Salim (Gus Baha'), KH. Ma'ruf Khozin, Dr. KH. Ahmad Musta'in Syafi'i, Sheikh Ammar Azmi (descendant of Sheikh Abdul Qodir Al-Jailani) (Observation 2023). According to Arifin, the general stadium is equated with the sorogan, bandongan, and wetonan approaches, forming one group (*halaqah*) (Arifin, 2018). Arifin's view above contradicts the general stadium term used in higher education. The general stadium is operationally understood as a forum to explain essential issues related to the latest information and invite experts in their fields (Riyadi et al., 2023).

4. Yellow Book Learning Strategy Innovations

Specifically, in the approaches and methods, Ma'had Aly applies several learning strategies to achieve effective learning. Apart from that, to optimize learning in higher education, lecturers must be able to teach students. This implies that lecturers as teachers are required to be able to condition students so that they can achieve the learning goals they want to complete following the students' abilities.

Apart from innovating in the learning approaches and methods, Ma'had Aly Sukorejo Situbondo has also innovated in his learning strategies. This leap of innovation that Ma'had Aly has taken seems to have opened up the frozen thinking

of pesantren in general in the field of yellow book studies. At least, Ma'had Aly Sukorejo Situbondo, through this yellow book learning strategy, often gets a liberal stigma. This can be seen from studies of Islamic law resulting from the thoughts of its figures considered to accommodate the ideas of liberalism (Observation 2023). Hamami Zada confirmed this view. He believed that the figures and the battle of Sharia thought of the students had fulfilled the requirements as one of the prototypes of pesantren that promote the ideology of liberalism (Musahadi, 2013).

Philosophically, the learning process at Ma'had Aly Situbondo refers to the mindset of Ahl Al-Hadis and Ahl Ra'y. However, openly, Ma'had Aly Sukorejo Situbondo claims to be a follower of the Syafi'i thought. Moreover, the Ma'had Aly Pesantren Sukorejo is called Salafiyah Syafi'iyah. Of course, the name of this pesantren is synonymous with pesantren that adhere to Shafi'iyah's thought. Thus, it can be understood that Ma'had Aly Sukorejo Situbondo, apart from upholding freedom of thought in religious discourse, also has a burden by continuing to preserve religious thoughts that have been painstakingly built by previous generations (Djalal et al., 2021).

To achieve that way of thinking, Ma'had Aly Sukorejo Situbondo chose various learning strategies that were considered appropriate. The learning strategies are as follows: first, contextualist. This strategy is used in learning to understand texts of religious thought by scholars, both classical and contemporary works (Observation 2023). Students' understanding of these texts is still linguistic (Lughawiyah), which includes harfiyah and tarkibiyah. There are two ways lecturers use this textual learning strategy, namely al-mudarasah (discussion) and al-tadris (guided tutorial). Usually, the lecturer directs studies of the thoughts of these Islamic scholars, sometimes carried out by studying the scope of one madhhab and sometimes across madhhabs.

"Bhedeh jughen dosen se ngangui cara ngajer kadieh biasanah se bedheh e ponduk. Biasanah santreh e pakon mecah dhibik. Bhedeh jugen dosen se makon santreh debad sareng santreh laen. Bhedeh jugen se a bimbing amerrik ketab-ketab napah beih se kodeh e becah santreh" (Asmuki, personal communication, 7 March 2023).

(Some lecturers use such teaching methods applied in pesantren. Usually, students are told to read alone; some lecturers ask for discussions and debates with other students. Some lecturers randomly hand out books to students to read)

This learning strategy was emphasized by Asmuki, Vice Principal of Ma'had Aly, who said that the textual strategy was used to ensure students' ability to read the yellow book properly and correctly. Asmuki's statement emphasized that this strategy was Ma'had Aly's attempt to respect tradition (turas) and avoid the impression of intellectual-textual arrogance. Muhammad Jayus said that these kinds of studies tend to revolve around a deductive, normative way of thinking (Jayus, 2017).

The second is contextual strategy. Ma'had Aly Sukorejo Situbondo does not want to be trapped in dead texts without meaning. For this reason, the learning method used to view the text as alive and moving following the times is the contextual method. Understanding the text using this contextual method is often used by the students to understand the Qur'an and legal Hadith (Ayah Al-Ahkam

and Hadith Al-Ahkam). Imam Nakha'i chronologically explains this contextual strategy.

"Biasanah kuleh sareng santreh nyareh ayat-ayat Al-Qur'an sareng Hadits se ngaghungin makna hokom. Santreh nyareh dhelel se dhesarah ulama e delem Al-Qur'an sareng Hadits, sak terosepon santren nyareh ketab se abahas Asbabun nuzul. Sak terosepon santreh e pakon nyocoaghi ayat otাবে hadits kalabhen kaodhien masyarakat samangken"(I. Nakha'i, personal communication, 7 March 2023).

(Usually, the students look for verses from the Quran and hadiths about law. After looking for normative arguments in the Qur'an and those used as a basis by Islamic scholars, look for the asbab nuzul and wurud simultaneously. In the final session, the students contextualized verses and hadiths regarding the problems of contemporary society)

When learning using this strategy, students choose verses from the Quran and Hadith that have implications for Islamic law. Imam Nakha'i, for example, illustrates this contextual strategy in that students are asked to look for the ulama's basis for presenting normative arguments. They look for Asbab Al-Nuzul and Asbab Al-Wurud in tafsir books and Syrah hadith books. After the context in which the verses and hadiths were revealed is found, they must relate these verses and hadiths to relevant today's social context. This strategy is a method of interpreting Islamic law using the hermeneutic method. In Lindra Darnela's view, the meaning of texts, especially religious texts, must link past and present contexts because it is impossible to remove the element of interpreter subjectivity from the interpretation product (Darnela, 2009).

Third, comparison strategy. Ma'had Aly Sukorejo Situbondo's awareness of the truth is not single. This awareness is expressed by providing opportunities for students to compare scholars across madhhabs. The students use this comparison strategy to open their minds to the idea that a single truth cannot solve social problems within the framework of fiqh studies. To compare the thoughts of fiqh scholars, students were allowed to study classical and contemporary books. Not just comparing, they are required to be able to reveal the points of difference of opinion of the mujtahids. According to Muhyiddin Chotib, the students could know the ijthihad procedures of the mujtahids at this point. Of course, to achieve knowledge of ijthihad procedures, they already have pretty strong provisions on the theories of fiqh so that the product of the fiqh thought of the students of Ma'had Aly Sukorejo Situbondo has a manhaji character.

"Saonggunah ghunanah tojjuknah menddhingagi ketab-ketab se ekarang sareng ulama kaktintosh engghi ponekah santreh bisah ngaonengen canahan ulama a ijthihad. Melanah santreh koduh sampon paham teori-teorinah usul fiqh salunnah a bhendhingaghi ketab" (M. Chotib, personal communication, 8 March 2023).

(In fact, the purpose of comparing books written by Islamic scholars is to familiarize the students with an understanding of how Islamic scholars carry out ijthihad. Therefore, students must understand the theories in *ushul fiqh* before making comparisons of these books)

Methodologically, Ma'had Aly Sukorejo Situbondo adheres to various madhhabs. Ma'had Aly consciously knows how to create four madhhabs from the

manhaji aspect. According to Imam Mustofa, methodologically, a madzhab does not only follow the methods and thought patterns of madzhab imams but also seeks to develop a methodology that allows for potential differences with other madzhabs. (Mustofa, 2013). This comparison of madzhabs will provide alternative views of students in solving society's social problems.

Fourth, the Maqasidiyah strategy. Ma'had Aly Sukorejo in learning emphasized that students should look for Maqasid Shari'ah points (shari'ah objectives) from each material discussion. According to Hamdi, student's learning at Ma'had Aly Sukorejo Situbondo is based on understanding religious texts written by Salaf Al-Salih scholars and Al-Qur'an and Hadith texts containing fiqh studies. In this context, in general, methodologically, Ma'had Aly Sukorejo Situbondo emphasizes that students should pursue Al-Syathibi's work in the form of Al-Muwafaqat.

"ghi.... Santreh epakon mecah kitab, Al-Qur'an otabeh Hadits, sakterossah santreh epakon nyareh tojuan esyareataghi hukum se ebecah santreh. Biasanah kaanggui paham de' Maqasid al-Syari'ah (tojuen syareat) santreh epakon mecah kitab Al-Muwafaqat"(A. Hamdi, personal communication, 6 March 2023).

(Yes... students are asked to read the yellow book, the Qur'an, or hadith. They are asked to determine the purpose of enshrining a law they are reading. For this reason, students are asked to read the book Al-Muwafaqat)

Al-Syathibi, in his book, explains that much of his discussion is spent on Maqasid al-Syari'ah issues. Al-Syathibi's writings discussing masalah are also crucial in the book. He emphasized that enacting the law aims to realize the benefits of humanity, both in this world and the hereafter. Therefore, the taklifi theory in Al-Syathibi's view is that Islamic law must be oriented towards realizing the objectives of the law. In the context of masalah, Al-Syathibi formulated masalah based on a priority scale, namely dharuriyat, hajiyat, and tahsiniya (Al-Syatibi, 1991). Asmuki added that learning by looking for the objectives of sharia in every discussion can help students discover the formation of a fundamentally produced law. At this point, students do not only emphasize their knowledge of rationality because, in this learning, they are required to search from various literature books by ulama.

Fifth, the Naqdiyah strategy. Students of Ma'had Aly conducted a study of the opinions of ulama in the field of fiqh (Fiqh Qouly) yellow book using the theories of fiqh genesis. The students, independently and in groups, formulate more rational and sincere opinions of ulama to answer the people's problems. In fact, according to Imam Nakha'i, students also criticized the views of ulama contained in the yellow book.

"Kaanggui deddiagi santreh ngaghungih kebiasaan kritis dek ka karangan-karangan e delem kitab fiqh, kuleh biasanah meri'in conto dek ka santreh sebedeh e delem kitab fiqh. Benyak essenah kitab fiqh ka'dissa' se abahas sobung hubungnah sareng faktanah, kadieh kemalo'nah oreng lakek setoghel"(I. Nakha'i, personal communication, 7 March 2023).

To build the students' critical attitude toward the works of the Islamic scholar, I always give them examples of issues in the book of fiqh. In the book

of Fiqh, many discussions are not relevant to reality, like severed male genital)

Students criticized the opinion of Ahmad Zainudin, author of the book *Fath Al-Mu'in*. In this book, Ahmad Zainudin firmly explains that one of the activities that requires an obligatory bath due to weight hadas is sexual intercourse. According to him, this sexual intercourse could result in the ablution of wudhu being invalidated and the obligation to take an obligatory bath. Ahmad Zainudin further explained that a woman can also carry out sexual relations by inserting the male genitals even though they have been cut (separated) from the body (Zainuddin, 1999).

Ahmad Zainudin's opinion, according to Mahasantri Ma'had Aly Sukorejo Situbondo, is an opinion that has no empirical basis. Ahmad Zainudin's statement in this context prioritizes imagination rather than factual data that occurred in society then. The use of imaginative power in fiqh matters deviates from the character of fiqh. For students of Ma'had Aly Sukorejo Situbondo, fiqh is a product of human thought that focuses on problems that occur using the basis of the Al-Qur'an and Hadith as a legal basis. Because fiqh, like its nature, assesses human deeds and actions only from external (factual) aspects, *Nahnu Nahkumu bi Al-Dhawahir*. The student's criticism illustrates how strong the student's critical power is towards religious texts presented in lessons at Ma'had Aly. However, researchers realize there are limitations in this research, because it only discusses the aspects of pesantren academic transformation in learning innovation related to learning approaches, methods, and strategies.

E. Conclusion

Ma'had Aly Sukorejo, in reviewing the books in the curriculum, provides the broadest possible opportunities for the ustadz to learn with various learning innovations. From the perspective of innovation, Ma'had Aly has adopted Neo-Modernism thinking. The learning approach model at Ma'had Aly combines teacher-centered and student-centered approaches. Likewise, Ma'had Aly has innovated with the learning methods even though it still maintains traditional methods that are still considered relevant, such as *al-Ta'lim wa Al-Tadris*, structured assignments, dialogue, lectures, and general stages. Meanwhile, the learning strategies used also made extraordinary leaps. These strategies are textual, contextual, comparative, *Maqasidiyah*, and *Naqdiyah*. It is recommended that further researchers study the comparative *maqasidiyah* and *naqdiyah* strategies in pesantren higher education to produce a comprehensive study of academic transformation in pesantren, especially in Ma'had Aly Sukorejo, Situbondo. Theoretically, this study has implications for the scientific development of pesantren education in general and pesantren higher education in particular, that the tradition of thinking in pesantren is from stagnant to critical (dynamic) thinking.

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