

Integrating Islamic Boarding School Values into Indonesian Language Learning

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Abstract

This study examines how *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU) values moderation (*tawasuth*), balance (*tawazun*), and tolerance (*tasamuh*) are integrated into Indonesian language learning in *pesantren*-based high schools in Jombang, Indonesia. Using a qualitative ethnopedagogical approach, data were gathered through observation, interviews, and document analysis involving 20 purposively selected teachers and students. The findings show that learning practices in these schools reflect the principles of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) rooted in NU's Islamic traditions. Moderation appears in educational sanctions that balance academic discipline and moral guidance, while tolerance emerges through heterogeneous student groupings that foster empathy and intercultural communication. These practices demonstrate how NU's moral-spiritual values shape classroom management, learning materials, and teacher-student interactions. The study introduces the concept of Islamic Culturally Responsive Pedagogy, expanding CRT theory by embedding Islamic ethnopedagogical principles that emphasize spiritual and social harmony. Theoretically, this research contributes to the development of culturally grounded learning models that integrate local religious values. In practice, the findings offer guidance for designing character-based, inclusive Indonesian language learning suitable for *pesantren*-based schools and other multicultural educational settings.

Keywords

Culturally Responsive Teaching; Islamic Ethnopedagogy; Moderation; *Nahdlatul Ulama* Values; Tolerance

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1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesian is a compulsory subject at all levels of education (Indrayana & Sadikin, 2020). From elementary school through high school, Indonesian is a compulsory subject with a large number of lesson hours. All students from various backgrounds at school levels, school types, cultures, and families will learn Indonesian in every classroom. Differences in background will be a problem if there is no good learning design. One problem that arises is the gap between the community's needs and the school's vision and mission, as reflected in the learning design developed by the school or existing educational institution (Apiola & Sutinen, 2020).



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High school students in Jombang are very diverse. This diversity often occurs in schools, such as the Tebuireng Islamic boarding school environment and Pondok Tambak Beras, among others. The students who study in several schools or madrasas come from diverse regions, with certainly diverse ethnicities, languages, and cultures. The diversity of students can be a valuable resource to provide meaningful learning experiences (Clarke & Roche, 2018; Harahap et al., 2023; Hernández & González, 2022).

Many of the students have a cultural background in the *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU) organization. They chose NU-based *pesantren* because the majority came from families and areas in NU, such as Pasuruan, Jember, Probolinggo, parts of Lombok, parts of Sumatra, parts of Sulawesi, parts of Jakarta, and various other regions. However, it does not mean that the NU cultures they bring to the *pesantren* are the same. Values that are often found in the NU community include the values of moderation, balance, and tolerance (Huang et al., 2018; Salleh et al., 2021; Suradi et al., 2021).

The concept of Culturally Responsive learning is one approach that can be used to accommodate diversity and enhance learning effectiveness (active role, enthusiasm, rewards, and meaningfulness). Students will feel valued and excited when their culture is incorporated into learning activities. The use of students' culture will also increase the usefulness of learning outcomes because learning is adjusted to their own needs and environment (Aisyah & Mahdia, 2023; Jang et al., 2020).

The urgency of culturally responsive learning has led many researchers to examine locality-responsive learning, locality-value-responsive learning, gender-responsive learning, and the effectiveness of culturally responsive learning implementation. The research was carried out in various subjects and at several levels of educational units. Most of the results of the study reveal the effectiveness of using this approach; for example, it can increase the active role of students and can reduce the gap between the goals of the school and the community (Noerhasmalina & Khasanah, 2023; Siswanto et al., 2024; Utami et al., 2024).

Learning that adapts the values of the NU community in Jombang is an interesting area for research because it is unique, makes a significant contribution to the development of distinctive learning, and is rich in useful values. Most of the students come from different cultural backgrounds, even though they are all from the NU base. The question is: are the cultural values of NU, as adapted for learning, the same as those of their respective environments or regions? If the same, where are the similarities? If it is different, where is the difference? Based on this background, the researcher formulated the research problem as follows.

How is NU's cultural diversity adapted in Indonesian language learning? How does the use of NU culture affect the active role of students in learning? The results of this study will illustrate the diversity of the NU community adapted to Indonesian learning at SMA Jombang. In addition, this research will describe how culture affects students' activities. To find out how cultural diversity is incorporated into Indonesian learning and how effective this adaptation is in increasing students' active roles, the researcher conducted observations of the implementation of learning that adapts to NU culture and interviews with teachers and students. Interviews were conducted to confirm various information obtained in observations. After the data is obtained from observation, the researcher will group the data based on the taxonomy as follows: first, how the typical tolerance culture of NU is adapted; second, how NU's typical *gotong royong* culture is adapted, and third, how NU's typical culture of justice is adapted in learning.

Some research on culturally responsive learning. Part of the study examined the implementation of culturally responsive learning at the elementary, junior high, and high school levels. From the aspect of the focus of the research, some of the studies examined the adaptation of local culture, effectiveness, and regional values in Indonesian language learning (Aydini & Syafril, 2024; Buchori et al., 2023; Csapó et al., 2020). Based on some of these studies, one discusses the culture of the NU community adopted and/or adapted to Indonesian language learning in high school in Jombang. Therefore, the purpose of

this research is to examine how the NU community's culture is adopted and/or adapted, and how effective it is in increasing students' active roles.

Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) was developed by Lai (2023) and Leonard et al. (2018) which emphasizes the importance of making student culture a source of learning, thereby making learning inclusive and meaningful. The concept of ethnopedagogy strengthens this approach, according to Oktaviana & Suasthi (2024) who view education as a vehicle for the inheritance of local values through contextual learning practices. In the context of NU Islamic boarding schools, values such as moderation, balance, and tolerance serve as the moral and spiritual foundations that can be internalized through Indonesian learning activities, including local text-based discussions, *muhadloroh practices*, and community-based literacy activities. The integration of CRT, ethnopedagogy, and NU values results in a learning model that not only improves students' linguistic competence but also cultivates humanist and religious character in accordance with the principles of civilized education.

Studies on culturally responsive learning have been widely conducted in the context of multicultural education, regional locality, and gender. However, there has been no research that specifically examines how the typical values of *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU), such as *tawasuth* (moderation), *tawazun* (balance), and *tasamuh* (tolerance) adapted in Indonesian language learning in *pesantren*-based schools. The novelty of this research lies in the integration between the Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) approach and the ethnopedagogy of NU Islamic boarding schools in the context of secondary education in Jombang. The integration not only explains how local culture serves as a learning context, but also highlights how NU's Islamic values can serve as a basis for strengthening students' character and active participation in Indonesian language learning. Thus, this research contributes to expanding the scope of the concept of CRT in the context of Islam Nusantara, grounded in moderation and tolerance.

The phenomenon of cultural diversity of students in Islamic boarding school-based high schools in Jombang, especially in the Tebuireng, Tambak Beras, and other NU Islamic boarding schools, shows a unique local dynamic because the majority of students come from families and regions with *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU) identity, but bring different cultural patterns, languages, and religious practices. This diversity can be both a strength and a challenge in Indonesian learning, especially when learning design is not responsive to students' cultural backgrounds. The typical values of the NU community, such as *tawasuth* (moderation), *tawazun* (balance), and *tasamuh* (tolerance), have not been widely researched so far as a basis for the development of contextual and meaningful learning. Although previous studies have highlighted culturally responsive learning in the context of locality, gender, and regional wisdom, no research has specifically examined how NU's distinctive values are adopted or adapted in Indonesian learning in *pesantren*-based schools. Therefore, this study contributes by offering the integration between Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) and the ethnopedagogy of NU *pesantren* as a learning model that not only increases student activity, but also strengthens the formation of moderate and tolerant character according to the Islamic context of the archipelago, thereby expanding the theoretical discourse of CRT and providing a practical basis for the development of learning in accordance with the NU culture in Jombang.

This research is designed to answer three main questions. First, what is the form of adaptation of the cultural values of the NU community in Indonesian language learning in *pesantren*-based schools in Jombang? Second, how does the application of NU cultural values affect the active role of students in the learning process? Third, what are the characteristics of NU's values-based culturally responsive learning strategies that are effectively applied in the context of *pesantren* education? The formulation of this problem serves as the basis for designing a data analysis approach through observation and interviews, with a focus on the adaptation process, the dynamics of teacher-student interaction, and learning outcomes that reflect students' active participation.

2. METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with an ethnopedagogical design to describe and interpret the cultural practices and pedagogical values of the *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU) community as they are adapted in Indonesian learning in *pesantren*-based schools. The conceptual framework of ethnopedagogy used is that of Ibrahim et al. (2017), who view education as a process of inheriting and transforming local values through learning activities. In this context, culture is understood as a living system comprising values, knowledge, and social practices that shape students' learning experience. Typical values such as *tawasuth* (moderation), *tawazun* (balance), and *tasamuh* (tolerance) are used as an analytical lens to examine how teachers internalize and contextualize these values in classroom learning practices.

The qualitative approach with ethnopedagogic design was chosen because this study seeks to understand how the typical values of the NU *tawasuth*, *tawazun*, and *tasamuh* communities are internalized in Indonesian learning practices. Thus, a method is needed that can capture cultural meanings and pedagogical practices in depth. Ethnopedagogy is relevant because it views education as a process of inheriting and transforming local values, in line with the NU *pesantren*'s rich tradition. The research was conducted at three *pesantren*-based high schools in Jombang Regency, under the auspices of the *Madrosatul Qur'an* (MQ) Islamic Boarding School in Tebuireng, Tambakberas, and at one other *pesantren* partner school with a strong NU base. The participants, up to 20 informants, included 6 Indonesian teachers and dormitory assistants who understood the *pesantren*'s pedagogical practices, as well as 14 students who had studied at the *pesantren* for at least 2 years. The selection of informants was purposive, based on their experience with culturally responsive learning. It was subsequently strengthened through snowball sampling to obtain additional informants with a deep understanding of NU's pedagogical values.

The data analysis process is carried out through the stages of reduction, presentation, and verification of findings using NVivo 12 Plus. Validation of the coding process is carried out through *peer debriefing* and *inter-coder agreement techniques*: the main researcher conducts the initial coding, which is then examined by two co-investigators to ensure category consistency and the suitability of interpretations with field data. Differences in interpretation are resolved through discussion until a final code agreement is reached. The validity of the data was strengthened by triangulation of methods (observations, interviews, and documents), triangulation of sources (teachers and students), and *member checking*, in which informants confirmed a summary of the interpretation. Dependability and confirmability are maintained through trail audits in the form of field notes, interview transcripts, and researchers' reflective journals. Meanwhile, transferability is ensured through a detailed description of the NU *pesantren*'s context, enabling the findings to be applied to other *pesantren*-based schools with similar characteristics.

This research was carried out in three *pesantren*-based high schools in Jombang Regency, namely *Pondok Madrosatul Qur'an* (MQ) *Tebuireng*, Jombang. The selection of the location was deliberate because the three represent a model of *pesantren* education that is firmly rooted in the tradition of NU and has a vision and mission aligned with the principles of Islam in *the archipelago*. The research subjects consisted of 20 informants from NU family backgrounds. The inclusion criteria for this study include teachers with at least 3 years of teaching experience in *pesantren*-based schools and students who have studied in the *pesantren* environment for at least 2 years. Meanwhile, participants who were not active in learning activities in *pesantren*-based schools were excluded from the study. The informant retrieval technique was carried out with purposive sampling based on their experience and involvement in culturally oriented learning practices, which was then strengthened with snowball sampling to obtain additional informants who had in-depth insights into NU's pedagogical values.

In this study, the researcher's positionality is an important aspect, given the researcher's academic and cultural attachment to the NU Islamic boarding school tradition. This position makes it easy to

build trust with participants, but it also has the potential to cause bias. To maintain objectivity, the researcher conducts self-reflection by keeping a reflexive journal that records assumptions, interpretations, and emotional responses throughout the research process, thereby accounting for the validity of the interpretation.

Data collection was conducted over four months, from August to September 2025, using three main methods: participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. Observation was conducted 12 times during Indonesian learning meetings lasting 90 minutes, using a moderate-participation observation approach in which the researcher was involved in the learning activities while maintaining an analytical distance. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with all informants, lasting 45–60 minutes, to explore perceptions, experiences, and meanings of the application of NU values in learning. Meanwhile, document analysis was carried out on lesson plans, teaching materials, learning notes, and school policies to complete and confirm field findings. All interviews were recorded with the informant's consent, then transcribed verbatim for thematic analysis.

The data analysis process uses Asipi et al. (2022) which comprises three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion/verification. The reduction stage involves selecting relevant data units, such as speech, actions, and learning practices that reflect NU values. Furthermore, the presentation of data involved compiling thematic matrices and patterns to identify categories such as "moderation in discipline," "tolerance in student grouping," and "integration of spiritual literacy." This process is done with NVivo 12 Plus software to improve the coding accuracy and consistency of the theme. The last stage is the drawing of conclusions, carried out iteratively by linking empirical findings to the theory of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) and ethnopedagogy.

To ensure the validity of the data (trustworthiness), this study applies four criteria, namely credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability (Forero et al., 2018). Credibility is maintained through triangulation of sources and methods, namely by comparing the results of teacher and student interviews (triangulation of sources) and confirming the results of observations through interviews and documents (triangulation of methods). The researcher also conducts member checking by returning a summary of the interpretation results to the informant to confirm their accuracy. Dependability and confirmability are maintained through trial audit recording in the form of field notes, transcripts, and reflective journals. Meanwhile, transferability is strengthened by a detailed description of the research context, enabling application in other similar *pesantren* settings.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Findings

This study identified two main themes that emerged from the results of observations and interviews, namely (1) the value of moderation (*tawasuth* and *tawazun*) and (2) the value of tolerance (*tasamuh*) as the dominant character in Indonesian learning in *pesantren*-based madrasah schools. These two values serve as the foundation for a learning model responsive to the culture of the *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU) community. Data analysis is carried out in three stages: reduction, thematic categorization, and interpretation of the educational values contained in learning practices. The findings show that moderation and tolerance are not only social norms but are also operationalized pedagogically through strategies, content, and classroom learning relationships.

The value of moderation is evident in classroom management and in the provision of educational sanctions. Based on interviews with teachers and coaches, it was found that sanctions are not punitive but are intended to improve and develop students' potential. For example, students who do not reach the memorization target are given the task of writing Qur'anic verses, prayers, or other religious reflections. This strategy reflects the values of *tawasuth* (middle path) and *tawazun* (balance) by combining discipline with compassion. The application of educational sanctions has been proven to

build responsibility, discipline, and religious literacy without creating negative psychological pressure. "We never punish children by being angry or cornering. If anyone has not reached the memorization target, we ask them to write a verse or a prayer. It is not a punishment, but part of the exercise so that they are calmer and understand the meaning." (Interview, Indonesian Language Teacher, September 12, 2025)

Interviews show that most students actually feel helped by the educational punishment. They stated that writing verses or prayers helps strengthen memorization and develop writing skills. Ethnopedagogically, this practice is a form of integrating religious and academic values into Indonesian language learning. This aligns with NU's ethnopedagogical principles, which emphasize a balance between cognitive and moral aspects. Thus, the application of educational sanctions can be categorized as a moderate pedagogy that fosters positive discipline rather than passive obedience.

Moderation is also reflected in learning content that is adaptive to students' cultural diversity. One of the forms is *muhadloroh* (public speaking practice), which allows students to use their respective regional languages, such as Madura, Makassar, or Javanese. This practice not only develops speaking skills but also reinforces confidence and appreciation for one's own cultural identity. The activity shows the application of the principle of Culturally Responsive Teaching in the *pesantren* environment, where students' cultural experiences are used as legitimate and meaningful learning resources.

The theme of tolerance appears in the patterns of social interaction and student grouping. Schools and Islamic boarding schools apply a heterogeneous grouping system, in which students from different regions, languages, and cultures are placed in one room or class that is proportionally diverse. This strategy creates intercultural meeting spaces that foster empathy, respect, and cross-cultural communication skills. Teachers and room coaches play an important role as mediators, maintaining social harmony and ensuring that interactions are in the spirit of *tasamuh* (mutual respect for differences). "At first I thought I was told to write a sentence that was a punishment, but it turned out to be very helpful. I became more memorized and felt that my responsibilities were increasing." (Interview, Class XI Students, September 18, 2025). "Let them use their regional language in muhadloroh. It is the best way for them to be confident and still appreciate their culture of origin." (Interview, Islamic Boarding School Supervisor, September 20, 2025). "One room is mixed: there are from Lombok, Madura, Kalimantan, and Jember. Therefore, we learn to respect each other's habits." (Interview, Class X Students, September 9, 2025).

Field data show that interaction among students occurs naturally in mixed languages such as Javanese, Madura, and Indonesian. This communication pattern not only strengthens familiarity but also becomes a means of social learning for students from different cultural backgrounds. The room coaches often facilitate joint activities, such as sports or light discussions, to strengthen relationships among members. This approach has succeeded in reducing the potential for conflict and building an inclusive and respectful learning environment.

The value of tolerance is also reflected in the concept of "limited freedom" in learning activities. Students are given the freedom to choose media and learning styles that suit their individual characters, provided they remain within the ethical boundaries of the *pesantren*. Teachers facilitate a wide space of participation without eliminating the values of order and adherence to the rules. This approach effectively increases student engagement and strengthens a sense of belonging to the learning process. Pedagogically, this shows that the values of *tasamuh* are not only taught verbally but also practiced through interaction and democratic learning structures.

Table 1. Implementation of the Values of Moderation (*Tawasuth & Tawazun*) and Tolerance (*Tasamuh*) In Responsive Learning in Islamic Boarding School-Based Schools

NU Value Aspects	Forms of Implementation in Learning	Observed Context or Activity	Contribution to Indonesian Language Learning
The Value of Moderation (<i>Tawasuth & Tawazun</i>)	Educational and measurable sanctions	Students who have not reached the target are given the task of writing verses, prayers, or religious reflections.	Establish positive discipline, responsibility, and strengthen religious literacy without causing psychological pressure.
	Integration of local culture in learning	Muhadloroh <i>activities</i> or speaking exercises using the language and style of their respective regions.	Valuing cultural identity, improving speaking skills, and strengthening confidence.
	Balance of individual and group tasks	The teacher organizes the task of writing and discussing in a balanced proportion between individual and collaborative work.	Foster collaboration, empathy, and a balance between individual autonomy and social responsibility.
	Diverse and contextual content	Learning materials include local texts, cultural discourse, and relevant general issues.	Broaden students' horizons, connect texts with cultural experiences, and increase learning engagement.
Tolerance Value (<i>Tasamuh</i>)	Heterogeneous and cross-regional grouping	The classes and rooms of the <i>pesantren</i> consist of students from different regions, languages, and cultures.	Develop an open attitude, respect differences, and build social cohesion among students.
	Inclusive multilingual communication	Students and teachers use a combination of languages (Javanese, Madura, and Indonesian) in daily communication.	Increase cross-cultural awareness and adaptive communication skills.
	Limited freedom in learning	Students are given the freedom to choose media and learning strategies while maintaining <i>pesantren</i> ethics.	Encourage creativity, independence, and responsibility for learning that are aligned with moral values.
	Assistance through room builders	Coaches serve as facilitators, mediating conflicts and strengthening social relationships among members.	Teaching peaceful conflict resolution and strengthening the value of brotherhood (<i>ukhuwah</i>).

This table shows that the practice of Indonesian learning in *pesantren*-based schools reflects the integration of the values of *moderation* and *tolerance* as a concrete form of *NU ethnopedagogy*. The value of moderation is manifested through balanced learning strategies that emphasize the development of potential and religious literacy. In contrast, tolerance is manifested in the management of heterogeneous

learning communities, cross-cultural dialogue, and guided freedom. Both contribute directly to increasing students' participation, emotional engagement, and social awareness in multicultural contexts.

Table 2. Thematic Categorization of Responsive Learning of NU Values

Theme	Subtheme of Findings	Form of Implementation	Contribution to Learning
The Value of Moderation (<i>Tawasuth</i> & <i>Tawazun</i>)	Educational Sanctions	Writing verses, prayers, and reflective tasks	Building positive discipline and religious literacy
	Integration of Local Cultures	Muhadloroh <i>activities</i> , the use of regional languages	Valuing cultural identity and strengthening communication skills
Tolerance Value (<i>Tasamuh</i>)	Heterogeneous Grouping	Composition of diverse ethnic and linguistic classes/rooms	Fostering empathy, cooperation, and social cohesion
	Multilingual Communication	Greetings and dialogue across languages (Javanese–Madura–Indonesian)	Developing cross-cultural competence
	Limited Freedom	Selection of media and learning styles according to character	Increase individual participation and responsibility

Thus, the study's results show that Indonesian learning in pesantren-based madrassas is a form of NU ethnopedagogical practice that integrates the values of moderation and tolerance systematically into learning. These values not only function as social norms but also serve as pedagogical instruments that shape students' character to be moderate, adaptive, and inclusive. These findings reinforce the idea that values-based local education can be an effective model for developing Culturally Responsive Education in Indonesia's multicultural society.

Discussion

The results of the study show that Indonesian learning in *pesantren-based* schools affiliated with *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU) has applied the principles of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) naturally through the values of *moderation (tawasuth)* and *tolerance (tasamuh)* (Hansen et al., 2016). These values not only become social norms but also form a pedagogical system typical of the *pesantren* environment. For example, the application of educational sanctions, such as writing verses or prayers, shows how discipline and character formation are combined with the strengthening of religious literacy. These findings confirm that learning practices in Islamic boarding schools are not just adaptations of the formal curriculum, but a transformation of the learning culture that places human values, morality, and balance at the core of the educational process. Thus, the context of NU *pesantren* functions as an *ethnopedagogical space*, where education serves as a means of inheriting and reconstructing local culture in harmony with moderate Islamic teachings.

The application of the value of moderation in the context of language learning in Islamic boarding schools reflects the principles of *tawasuth* (middle way) and *tawazun* (balance) taught in the NU tradition. Ethnopedagogy integrates local cultural values into educational practices, thereby serving as a means of forming character and collective identity (Asriyanto et al., 2022; Marchon & Fantinato, 2015). In this study, this principle is realized through a balanced learning strategy that integrates cognitive, affective, and spiritual domains. The educational sanctions given by teachers are not just a form of punishment, but an instrument of moral and literacy learning. The balance between firmness and compassion in *pesantren* education is a characteristic of the traditional Islamic education system in Indonesia (Aeni, 2017; Depict Pristine Adi et al., 2023; Khasanah et al., 2023). Thus, moderation in learning in *pesantren* is

not only a pedagogical approach, but also a form of *cultural resilience* to global influences that have the potential to erode local values.

The value of tolerance (*tasamuh*) is reflected in the strategy of grouping heterogeneous students by ethnicity, language, and region. Teachers and coaches play the role of mediators who ensure that differences do not become a source of conflict, but rather a social capital to build solidarity (Jamrizal et al., 2025; Usman et al., 2024). Culturally responsive learning is effective when teachers can make student diversity an asset of learning, not a barrier (Patandean & Indrajit, 2021). The findings of this study expand the concept by showing that tolerance in *pesantren* is not only a social practice, but also a pedagogical strategy that shapes the multicultural awareness of students (Agustian, 2019; Nurhaliza et al., 2025). Guided freedom in the use of regional languages, for example, strengthens cultural identity without neglecting the role of Indonesian as a unified language. *Pesantren* becomes an ecosystem of *spiritual multiliteracy*, where students learn to balance local and national identities through language (Juliani et al., 2025; Surbakti et al., 2024).

When compared to the Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) model developed by Crossley (2020) Learning practices in NU *pesantren* demonstrate a paradigm shift. Gay (2018) emphasizes the importance of students' cultural representation in learning materials and methods, while Villegas & Lucas highlight six characteristics of culturally responsive teachers, including critical awareness of biases and the use of students' cultural knowledge in learning (Muñiz, 2019). The findings of this study show that *pesantren* adds a dimension of moderate Islamic spirituality as the 7th element, which has not been explained in the classical CRT model. This dimension involves harmoniously combined moral, religious, and social aspects. Therefore, the context of NU *pesantren* makes a new contribution to the development of CRT theory, namely, *spiritually embedded cultural responsiveness, which is learning that is responsive not only to culture but also to the spiritual values and social ethics of the local community.*

The integration of moderation and tolerance values also demonstrates the practice of multiliteracy-based ethnopedagogy. Teachers develop learning content based on regional texts, *pesantren* stories, and socio-religious practices that are relevant to students' lives. This aligns with the concept of local wisdom pedagogy put forward by Fitrianto & Farisi (2025), which states that education based on local wisdom serves as a means of value transfer and social reflection. By using local and religious texts as teaching materials, students learn not only the structure of language but also values such as life, empathy, and social responsibility (Darong, 2022; Kusmaharti et al., 2023; Reddick et al., 2017). Learning becomes a dialectical space between language, culture, and morality. This is where the peculiarity of the NU *pesantren*'s ethnopedagogy lies: it fosters spiritual multiliteracy, in which textual literacy always goes hand in hand with value literacy.

The results of this study enrich the discourse on Culturally Responsive Pedagogy by adding a perspective on NU-based Islamic ethnopedagogy. If the classical CRT model emphasizes adaptation to cultural diversity, then the NU *pesantren* model emphasizes cultural and spiritual reconciliation through moderation and tolerance. The scientific contribution of this research lies in integrating local and religious values into Indonesian education, serving a dual function: strengthening national identity while maintaining social harmony. Academically, this model can serve as the basis for developing a curriculum grounded in Islamic culturally responsive learning. At the same time, practically, it can guide teachers in *pesantren*-based schools in developing a more inclusive, humanist, and contextually relevant learning strategy that reflects the character of the Indonesian nation.

Based on the results of the research, the discussion was arranged sequentially, starting from the value of moderation, which was seen through the practice of educational sanctions and balancing between discipline and compassion, then followed by an analysis of the value of tolerance reflected in the pattern of heterogeneous grouping, the use of mixed language, and the concept of guided freedom in learning. These two values show that Indonesian learning in the NU *pesantren* environment is not only an adaptation of the formal curriculum but also a pedagogical transformation that makes moderate

Islamic culture and values the foundation of learning. Scientifically, this research makes a new contribution in the form of mapping a learning model based on *Islamic Culturally Responsive Pedagogy*, which is an expansion of the concept of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) by including Islamic spirituality of the archipelago as a pedagogical dimension that has not previously appeared in the framework of classical CRT. However, this study has limitations because it focuses on only three NU-based pesantren schools in Jombang, so the findings may not be representative of the broader variations in practice within the wider NU *pesantren*. In addition, limiting observations to 12 meetings may limit the disclosure of other pedagogical practices that may arise over a longer span of time.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Indonesian learning in NU *pesantren*-based schools systematically integrates the values of moderation and tolerance, thereby increasing active student participation and harmonious interaction. Theoretically, this research makes an important contribution by expanding the framework of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) by adding an *Islamic ethnopedagogy dimension* that emphasizes the spiritual, social, and intellectual balance typical of the NU tradition. This contribution makes it clear that cultural responsiveness is rooted not only in social aspects but also in the foundations of religious values that inform local educational practices. These findings also strengthen the argument that NU *pesantren* can serve as an alternative model for developing a humanist, inclusive, culture-based pedagogy. In practice, the results of this research can serve as a reference for designing relevant curricula and learning strategies for Islamic boarding schools and multicultural educational institutions. In addition, this learning model can be adapted by public schools to strengthen character-based learning and multiculturalism. However, this study has limitations because it was conducted in only three pesantren-based schools, with a limited number of observations and informants. Hence, the findings are not fully representative of the variation in NU's pedagogical practices nationwide. Therefore, follow-up research is recommended to expand the location, involve more informants, and compare practices between Islamic boarding schools to enrich theoretical understanding and practical implications.

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