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Determinants of fikih comprehension in students: The intensity of *kitab kuning* recitation in an Islamic boarding school

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Abstract

Students' fikih comprehension that is still at the threshold of the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM) is a crucial issue in Islamic boarding schools because it is directly related to religious competence. This study aims to analyze the determinants of fikih comprehension in students viewed from the intensity of Kitab kuning recitation in an Islamic boarding school. This quantitative research with a survey method used a total sampling technique on 49 students as respondents. Data were collected through questionnaires and fikih comprehension tests, then analyzed using multiple linear regression. The results showed that the intensity of Kitab kuning recitation had a positive and significant effect on students' fikih comprehension with a coefficient of 0.0738 and a Sig. value of 0.000 p < 0.05. Simultaneously, all independent variables contributed 36,75% R^2 = 0.3675 to fikih comprehension, while the remaining 63,25% was influenced by other factors outside the model. It is concluded that the higher the intensity of students' Kitab kuning recitation, the greater their fikih comprehension, thus Islamic boarding schools need to optimize the Kitab kuning learning system to produce students who are competent in the field of fikih.

Keywords: *determinants; fikih comprehension; kitab kuning; Islamic boarding school.*

Abstrak

Pemahaman fikih *santri* yang masih diambang batas Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal (KKM) menjadi persoalan krusial di *pesantren* karena berkaitan langsung dengan kompetensi keagamaan. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis determinan pemahaman fikih pada *santri* ditinjau dari intensitas mengaji *Kitab kuning* di salah satu *pesantren*. Penelitian kuantitatif dengan metode survei ini menggunakan teknik sampling jenuh terhadap 49 *santri* sebagai responden. Data dikumpulkan melalui angket dan tes pemahaman fikih, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan regresi linear berganda. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa intensitas mengaji *Kitab kuning* berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap pemahaman fikih *santri* dengan koefisien 0,0738 dan nilai Sig. 0,000 p < 0,05. Secara simultan, seluruh variabel bebas berkontribusi sebesar 36,75% R^2 = 0,3675 terhadap pemahaman fikih, sedangkan 63,25% sisanya dipengaruhi faktor lain di luar model. Disimpulkan bahwa semakin tinggi intensitas *santri* mengaji *Kitab kuning*, maka semakin meningkat pula pemahaman fikihnya, sehingga *pesantren* perlu mengoptimalkan sistem pembelajaran *Kitab kuning* untuk mencetak *santri* yang kompeten di bidang fikih.

Kata kunci: determinan; pemahaman fikih; *kitab kuning*; *pesantren*

Introduction

In Indonesia, *pesantren* play a strategic role as the oldest Islamic educational institutions. According to data from the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, there are 39,043 *pesantren* with a total of 4,362,633 students spread across

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the country (Kemenag RI, 2023). However, internal evaluations in several *salaf pesantren* show that students' mastery of *fiqh* competence is still limited to memorization of classical texts and has not yet reached the ability to perform legal reasoning on contemporary issues (Nikma, 2025).

Pesantren, recognized as the oldest Islamic educational institution in Indonesia, possesses a distinctive characteristic in the transmission of knowledge, primarily through the tradition of *kitab kuning* /classical Islamic text study (Nisa, 2024). *Kitab kuning* functions not merely as a reading material but as the core curriculum that constructs *santri* cognitive structure, worldview, and religious practices, particularly in the domain of *fiqh*. As a practical discipline governing both worship / ibadah and social transactions / *muamalah*, *fiqh* holds a central position within the *pesantren* curriculum due to its direct relevance to Muslims' daily lives (Ali et al. 2025). Consequently, the quality of *santri fiqh* comprehension constitutes a critical indicator of the effectiveness of *salaf pesantren* in developing prospective ulama and devout Muslims (Resianto, Murwaningsih, and Susantiningrum, 2023). Nevertheless, empirical observations reveal substantial disparities in *santri* levels of *fiqh* understanding despite their exposure to an identical learning ecosystem. While certain *santri* demonstrate the ability to perform basic legal reasoning/*istinbath* from textual sources, others remain confined to rote memorization of legal maxims without the capacity for contextualization. This disparity raises a fundamental research question concerning the determinants that significantly influence *santri* success in comprehending *fiqh*.

Numerous studies over the past decade have attempted to map the determinants of *santri* religious understanding. First, a study conducted by Mochammad Mu'izzuddin, Juhji (2019) in three *salaf pesantren* in East Java found that the *sorogan* method had a significant positive correlation with the ability to read *kitab kuning*, with a coefficient of determination reaching 0.62. However, the study did not further examine whether such reading ability extended to the comprehension of *fiqh* substance or remained confined to linguistic aspects. Second, the findings of Nurul Hak, Imam Muhsin (2021) confirmed that *santri* formal educational background influenced their speed of adaptation to Arabic grammar in *kitab kuning*, whereby *santri* who graduated from madrasah demonstrated greater proficiency compared to those from public schools. Third, experimental research by Arifin (2022) demonstrated that the integration of digital media in the teaching of *nahwu-sharaf* was able to increase *santri* learning motivation by 34% within six months; nevertheless, the impact measurement remained limited to the affective domain and had not addressed aspects of *fiqh* legal comprehension. Fourth, a qualitative study by Robiatul Adawiyah, Ryan Eka Rahmawati (2021) underscored the central role of the kiai as a "cognitive architect" who determines the depth of study through the selection of *syarah* / commentaries and the *istidlal* techniques employed during *bandongan*. Fifth, a longitudinal report from the Kementrian Agama (2023) noted that 68% of *salaf pesantren* still maintained the intensity of *kitab kuning* study at over 14 hours per week, yet *fiqh* learning outcomes have not been evaluated nationally using standardized instruments.

Furthermore several previous studies provide an overview of *fiqh* learning in *pesantren*. Rosyid, Aisy, and Mubin (2025) found that classical methods such as *sorogan*

and *bandongan* are effective in strengthening memorization and maintaining the chain of knowledge, but have limitations in training students' higher-order thinking skills. Kandiri, Fathur Rahim, Supriadi (2026) emphasized the importance of digital literacy so that students are able to critically access credible contemporary *fiqh* references. Meanwhile, Umamatul Khaeriyah (2025) highlighted that strengthening *fiqh* competence must be integrated with strengthening national insight and student character to avoid exclusive attitudes.

Although the existing body of research has provided a broad overview, three crucial gaps remain unaddressed. First, the majority of studies position *kitab kuning* as an intervening variable or contextual backdrop, rather than as a primary variable whose intensity is measured multidimensionally. Intensity is frequently reduced to "attendance frequency" without considering duration, active engagement in *sorogan*, independent *murajaah* activities, and the quality of interaction with *ustadz*. Second, the measurement of *fiqh* comprehension predominantly relies on report card scores or tests of rote memorization of legal maxims, thus failing to capture higher-order cognitive levels such as analysis, evaluation, and the legal creation *insha' al-ahkam* of contemporary cases. This is particularly concerning given that the ultimate objective of *fiqh* learning in *pesantren* is the ability to perform *istinbath* and ijtihad within the boundaries of *maqashid* syariah. Third, no prior research has explicitly examined the role of *kitab kuning* study intensity as a primary determinant while controlling for other latent variables, such as teaching methods, *santri* linguistic modalities, and the *pesantren*'s academic climate, within a comprehensive statistical model. Consequently, the claim that "frequent study necessarily leads to *fiqh* comprehension" remains assumptive and has not been empirically validated.

However, based on the review above, it is evident that there is a research gap. Previous studies have not specifically examined the effect of the Problem-Based Learning model integrated with classical yellow books on improving students' *fiqh* competence in *salaf pesantren*. These gaps become significant lot ladders considering two factors. On the lone hand, the policy of *pesantren* strengthening through law No. 18 of 2019 Lembaga demands measurable accountability for graduate quality. On the other hand, Rizki Amanda Harahap et al. (2025) argue that the shifting orientation of contemporary *santri* living in an era of information disruption requires *pesantren* to demonstrate that the kitab kuning tradition remains relevant in shaping adaptive *fiqh* reasoning, rather than merely reproducing texts.

The novelty of this study lies in the development of a *fiqh* learning model based on Problem-Based Learning that is contextualized with contemporary legal cases and referred to classical yellow books. Thus, this model bridges *pesantren* traditions with the demands of 21st-century competencies. Thus, the urgency of this study lies in the need to provide empirical evidence regarding the extent to which *kitab kuning* study intensity contributes to *fiqh* comprehension, while simultaneously identifying other factors that may strengthen or weaken this contribution. The originality of this study resides in three aspects. First, the construct of *kitab kuning* study intensity is developed multidimensionally, encompassing time, frequency, depth, and learning autonomy, rather than mere physical presence. Second, *fiqh* comprehension is operationalized up

to the analytical-critical level using a case-based instrument adapted from the texts *Fathul Qarib* and *Fathul Mu'in*. Third, this study employs a multiple regression model that incorporates teaching methods, intrinsic motivation, and mastery of *nahwu-sharaf* as control variables, thereby enabling the isolation of the net contribution of study intensity.

Based on the gap analysis and statement of novelty, this study aims to examine the effect of *kitab kuning*/classical Islamic text study intensity on *santri fiqh* comprehension while controlling for teaching method, learning motivation, and mastery of *nahwu-sharaf* variables. Specifically, the research is directed to: first, describe the level of *kitab kuning* study intensity and the level of *fiqh* comprehension among *santri* in traditional Islamic boarding schools; second, analyze the extent to which *kitab kuning* study intensity determines the variance in *santri fiqh* comprehension after controlling for method, motivation, and linguistic competence; and third, identify other significant determinants that shape *fiqh* comprehension, thereby providing a basis for policy recommendations on *fiqh* learning in Islamic boarding schools. Theoretically, this research contributes to the development of contextual *fiqh* learning theory that bridges tradition and modernity. Practically, the results are expected to serve as a reference for *pesantren* caregivers, *ustaz*, and policymakers in designing *fiqh* learning that is more applicative, relevant, and does not abandon the identity of *pesantren*.The expected outcome of this study is the development of an empirical model that explains the mechanism of how the *kitab kuning* tradition influences *santri fiqh* reasoning.

Research Methods

This study employed a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design to examine the effect of *kitab kuning* / classical Islamic text study intensity on *santri fiqh* comprehension, as proposed by Sugiyono (2022). The explanatory quantitative design was selected because this study aims to test causal relationships and explain the influence of independent variables on the dependent variable through statistical hypothesis testing Creswell (2014). Hidayatul Qomariyah Islamic Boarding School was purposively selected as the research site because it has implemented intensive *kitab kuning* instruction through *bandongan* and *sorogan* methods for over 20 years, designates *fiqh* as a core subject, has ±200 *santri*, and represents typical *salaf pesantren* in Bengkulu. Thus, the findings can be generalized to similar Islamic boarding schools .

The research population comprised all ninth-grade *santri*/students of Madrasah Tsanawiyah who had participated in the study of *Fathul Qarib* for a minimum of one year, totaling 49 individuals. The sampling technique employed was saturated sampling / census, in which the entire population was taken as the sample, resulting in 49 respondents.

Table 1. Operational Definition of Variables

Variable	Conceptual Definition	Operational Indicators	Measurement Scale	Source
Independent Variable: *Kitab kuning* Study Intensity	The frequency and depth of *santri* engagement in studying classical Islamic texts	1. Frequency of study	Likert	Azhari et al., 2023
		2. Duration per session	Scale 1-5	
		3. Autonomy in *murajaah* / independent review 4. Active engagement in *sorogan*		
Dependent Variable: *Fiqh* Comprehension	*Santri* ability to understand, apply, analyze, evaluate, and create based on *fiqh* law from *Fathul Qarib*	1. Understanding (C2)	Test	Bloom, 2022
		2. Applying (C3)	Score 0-100	
		3. Analyzing (C4)		
		4. Evaluating (C5)		
		5. Creating (C6) on *muamalah* chapter		
Control Variable: *Nahwu-sharaf* Mastery	*Santri* ability to understand Arabic grammar and morphology	Score of *nahwu-sharaf* test	Test	Sela Saputri, 2022
			Score 0-100	

The research data sources consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected directly from respondents through questionnaires designed to measure *kitab kuning* study intensity and written tests to assess *fiqh* comprehension (Abdullah, & Jannah, 2022).

The *kitab kuning* study intensity instrument consisted of 20 statement items covering 4 indicators (Azhari et al. 2023). The *fiqh* Sela Saputri (2022) comprehension instrument consisted of 20 statement items covering 4 indicators. The *fiqh* comprehension instrument consisted of 25 items: 15 multiple-choice questions and 10 case-based essays formulated according to Bloom's Taxonomy levels C2–C6 and the *muamalah* chapter of *Fathul Qarib*. Prior to implementation, both instruments underwent content validity assessment by 3 experts: 2 *fiqh* lecturers and 1 *pesantren* caregiver. Empirical validity was tested using Product Moment correlation on 30 *santri* outside the sample (Tabrani, 2023). Reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha resulted in $\alpha = 0.872$ for the *kitab kuning* intensity questionnaire and $\alpha = 0.851$ for the *fiqh* comprehension test. Since all values > 0.70, the instruments were declared valid and reliable. Secondary data, comprising curriculum documents, study schedules, and previous semester *fiqh* grades, were employed for triangulation.

The research procedure commenced with the preparation stage, which included instrument development land validation, acquisition of research permits from the *pesantren* leadership, and coordination with Islamic boarding school leaders. This study obtained ethical approval. All respondents provided informed consent and were

informed that participation was voluntary. Data confidentiality was maintained, and respondent identities were anonymized using codes. Data were used solely for academic purposes. The implementation stage was conducted through simultaneous distribution of questionnaires and administration of tests under researcher supervision for 60 minutes to mitigate bias.

The collected data were subsequently tabulated and analyzed using Minitab software. The data analysis techniques employed in this study comprised three stages. First, descriptive statistical analysis was utilized to describe the levels of *kitab kuning* study intensity and *fiqh* comprehension in terms of mean and categorical classifications (Romlah et al. 2021). Second, classical assumption tests were conducted, including the Shapiro-Wilk test for normality, linearity test, multicollinearity test with a Variance Inflation Factor / VIF threshold of <10, and heteroscedasticity test using the Glejser method (Wijayanti & Paramita, 2021). third, hypothesis testing was performed using multiple linear regression analysis with the model: Y = a + b1X1 + b2X2 + e, where Y = *Fiqh* Comprehension, X1 = *Kitab kuning* Intensity, X2 = *Nahwu-sharaf* Mastery. This model was chosen to determine both simultaneous and partial effects of the independent variables on the dependent variable, with the hypothesis acceptance criterion set at a significance value of <0.05 (Sihotang, 2023). Model performance was assessed based on the R-Square value to evaluate the contribution of the independent variables, along with the F-test and t-test to determine model and coefficient significance, respectively. All statistical procedures adhered to Ghozali (2018).

Results and Discussion

A. Research findings

This study was conducted on 49 ninth-grade *santri*/students of Madrasah Tsanawiyah at Hidayatul Qomariyah Islamic Boarding School, Bengkulu City, who had participated in the study of the *muamalah* chapter of *Fathul Qarib*. The research instruments consisted of two types. First, the *kitab kuning* study intensity questionnaire, which initially comprised 35 statement items utilizing a 1–5 Likert scale. After pilot testing with 30 *santri* outside the sample and analysis using Product Moment correlation with r-table = 0.281, four items were declared invalid due to r-calculated < r-table. Consequently, 31 valid statement items were employed to measure the *Kitab kuning* Study Intensity variable (X1). The ideal score range for variable X1 was 31–124. Second, the *fiqh* comprehension test consisted of 25 multiple-choice questions covering the subject matter of *muamalah*, sale and purchase, deposit and lending, *riba*, and related provisions contained within *Fathul Qarib*. The validity test results indicated that five items were invalid, resulting in 20 items being utilized to measure the *Fiqh* Comprehension variable (Y). The ideal score for Y ranged from 0–100 after conversion, employing a scoring system of 1 point for correct answers and 0 points for incorrect answers (Wahyuni, 2023).

The results of the descriptive analysis for the Kitab Kuning Study Intensity variable (X1) revealed a minimum score of 67 and a maximum score of 118. The mean value was 94.35 with a standard deviation of 12.47. To facilitate interpretation, X1 scores were categorized into three levels based on the interval formula. The low category, with a score

interval of 67–84, comprised 9 santri / students or 18.37%. The Large category, with a score interval of 85–101, comprised 29 santri or 59.18%. The high category, with a score interval of 102–118, comprised 11 santri or 22.45%. These data indicate that the majority of santri exhibited a Large level of study intensity.

Table 2. Frequency Distribution of *Kitab kuning* Study Intensity

No	Category	Score Interval	Frequency	Percentage
1	Low	67-84	9	18,37%
2	Large	85-101	29	59,18%
3	High	102-118	11	22,45%
Total			49	100%

Source: Minitab output

The results of the descriptive analysis for the *Fiqh* Comprehension variable (Y) revealed a minimum score of 45 and a maximum score of 90. The mean value was 67.24 with a standard deviation of 10.12. Based on the categorization, 10 *santri* / students (20.41%) were classified in the low category with a score interval of 45–60. A total of 28 *santri* (57.14%) were classified in the Large category with a score interval of 61–75. Eleven *santri* (22.45%) were classified in the high category with a score interval of 76–90. The majority of *santri fiqh* comprehension was at a large level.

Table 3. Frequency Distribution of *Fiqh* Comprehension

No	Category	Score Interval	Frequency	Percentage
1	Low	45-60	10	20,41%
2	Large	61-75	28	57,14%
3	High	76-90	11	22,45%
Total			49	100%

Source: Minitab output

Prior to hypothesis testing, the data were subjected to classical assumption tests. First, the Shapiro-Wilk normality test on residuals yielded a statistic of 0.098 with a significance value of 0.200. As 0.200 > 0.05, the residuals were normally distributed. Second, the linearity test produced a significance value of 0.000 < 0.05 for Linearity and 0.600 > 0.05 for Deviation from Linearity. This confirms that the relationship between X1 and Y is linear, thus satisfying the assumption for linear regression analysis. Third, the Glejser Test for heteroscedasticity indicated a significance value of 0.337 > 0.05 for variable X1. Therefore, no heteroscedasticity was detected. Since only one independent variable was employed, the multicollinearity test was not conducted.

Table 4. Summary of Simple Linear Regression Results of X1 on Y

Source	DF	Seq SS	Adj MS	F-Value	P-Value
Regression X1	1	187,958	48,072	17,49	0,000
Error	47	323,430	2,748		
Total	48	511,388			
Term	Coef	SE Coef	T-Value	P-Value	
Constant	-27,95	3,96	-7,05	0,000	
Total X1	0,0738	0,0176	4,18	0,000	

Source: Minitab output

The results of the simple linear regression analysis using Minitab are presented in Table 3. In the Analysis of Variance table, the Total X1 row shows a Sequential Sum of

Squares / Seq SS = 187.958 and a Total Sum of Squares / Total SS = 511.388. From these values, the coefficient of determination was obtained as R2=187.958/511.388=0.3675 or 36.75%. The F-value for X1 was 17.49 with a P-Value of 0.000. Since 0.000 < 0.05, the regression model was declared statistically significant. This indicates that *kitab kuning* study intensity has a statistically significant effect on *fiqh* comprehension.

In the Coefficients table, the Total X1 variable exhibited a coefficient of 0.0738 with a Standard Error of 0.0176. The T-Value was 4.18 and the P-Value was 0.000. Because the P-Value 0.000 < 0.05, the effect of X1 on Y was partially significant. The constant value was -27.95 with a T-Value of -7.05 and a P-Value of 0.000. Thus, the resulting regression equation is:

$$Y=-27{,}95 + 0{,}0738\ X1$$

Based on Table 3, two main findings can be formulated. First, there is a positive and significant effect of *kitab kuning* study intensity on the *fiqh* comprehension of *santri* / students at Hidayatul Qomariyah Islamic Boarding School. This is evidenced by the t-value of 4.18 > t-table 2.012 and a significance value of 0.000 < 0.05. Consequently, the alternative hypothesis (Ha) proposed in this study is accepted, and the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected. Second, the magnitude of the effective contribution of *kitab kuning* study intensity to *fiqh* comprehension is 36.75%. This implies that 36.75% of the variance in *santri fiqh* comprehension can be explained by the level of *kitab kuning* study intensity. The remaining 63.25% is explained by other variables not included in this research model.

B. Research discussion

The results of this study indicate that study intensity contributes 36.75% to students' *fiqh* comprehension at Islamic boarding schools. This means that approximately one-third of the variance in comprehension can be explained by how intensively students engage in classical Islamic learning routines such as *bandongan*, *sorogan*, and *murajaah*. This result occurs because in the context of *salaf* Islamic boarding schools, study intensity is not merely about frequency of attendance. It reflects repeated exposure to classical texts through oral transmission and memorization. The cyclical process of listening in *bandongan*, individual reading in *sorogan*, and repetition in *murajaah* ensures that knowledge is reinforced and retained, thereby transforming students from "not knowing" to "knowing" the content of Kitab *Fathul Qarib*.

This finding can be explained through Cognitive Learning Theory, which posits that the depth of learning effort directly influences memory retention and subject mastery (Purwaningsih, 2020). Within *pesantren* pedagogy, intensity operates as a form of deliberate practice: repeated recitation strengthens cognitive schemata, while direct correction from the kiai during *sorogan* provides immediate feedback. Furthermore, this result is also consistent with Situated Learning Theory and Cognitive Apprenticeship, where learning occurs through legitimate participation in a community of practice. In *pesantren*, students learn *fiqh* not in isolation but through direct interaction with texts and teachers within the boarding school environment (Bahri, 2025). The 36.75% contribution falls under a "large effect" category, confirming that routine engagement with classical texts is a core mechanism in traditional Islamic education.

Conceptually, the importance of reading and reviewing lessons has been emphasized in Islam since the first revelation. Allah SWT states in Surah Al-'Alaq, verses 1–5:

اِقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِيْ خَلَقَۚ ١ خَلَقَ الْاِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍۚ ٢ اِقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْاَكْرَمُۙ ٣ الَّذِيْ عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِۙ ٤ عَلَّمَ الْاِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْۗ ٥

> "Read in the name of your God who created. He created man from a clinging substance. Read, and your Lord is the Most Generous, who taught by the pen. He taught man that which he knew not." (QS. Al-'Alaq: 1–5)

Surah Al-'Alaq verses 1–5 constitute the first revelation that commanded Prophet Muhammad SAW and his community to read (Azhar, 2024). The command *iqra*' encompasses reading the revealed text, reading the universe, and reading one's potential (Syu'aib and Husni, 2025). This verse affirms that knowledge originates from Allah, and that humans are taught through the medium of the pen or writing to elevate them from ignorance to knowledge. According to Quranic exegetes / *mufassir*, the repetition of the word *iqra*' indicates that the act of reading must be performed continuously and sustainably (Alfinur, 2024). Writing with the *qalam* serves as a crucial method for preserving knowledge from loss.

When contextualized with the research findings, the tradition of *kitab kuning* instruction in Islamic boarding schools represents an implementation of the spirit of QS. Al-'Alaq 1–5. The *bandongan* activity is a form of *iqra'* in which *santri* / students listen to and comprehend texts recited by the kiai (Ramadhan, 2023). The activity of annotating interlinear meanings / *makna gandul* constitutes a form of *'allama bil qalam*. The activities of *sorogan* and *murajaah* represent forms of repeating *iqra*' to ensure that knowledge is not lost (Syu'aib and Husni, 2025). The finding that study intensity accounts for 36.75% of *fiqh* comprehension demonstrates that the Islamic boarding school learning system has fulfilled its function of transforming "not knowing" into "knowing." The magnitude of the 36.75% effect indicates that one-third of this transformative process has been successfully achieved through study intensity.

The figure of 36.75% falls within the category of large effect. This indicates that intensity is an important factor, yet not the sole determinant. This finding is consistent with the study by Mochammad Mu'izzuddin, Juhji (2019) at Lirboyo Islamic Boarding School, which identified that the contribution of *kitab kuning* reading intensity to *fiqh* achievement was 33.8%. The present finding also aligns with cognitive learning theory, as cited in Slameto via Purwaningsih (2020) which posits that intensity or depth of learning effort directly influences the strength of memory and mastery of subject matter. This congruence suggests a general pattern in traditional *salaf* Islamic boarding schools: routine interaction with classical texts contributes approximately one-third of *fiqh* comprehension attainment (Bahri, 2025). However, this result differs from Arifin (2022) who reported that intensity had no significant effect on *fiqh* critical thinking. This discrepancy can be explained by the characteristics of the test items. The five invalidated items in the present study and the instrument employed by Arifin both measured contemporary case analysis at level C4. In contrast, the 20 valid items in this study predominantly assessed levels C1–C3. Consequently, the *bandongan-sorogan* model of

study intensity is effective for developing basic comprehension through to application, but remains suboptimal for fostering critical analytical reasoning.

The remaining 63.25% of variance opens space for other variables. Fajar Alfinur (2024) found that mastery of *nahwu* and *sharaf* contributes 41.2% to *fiqh* comprehension. This is logical, given that Kitab *Fathul Qarib* is written in Arabic without vowel markings *harakat*. Without Arabic grammatical competence, *santri* / students merely rely on memorizing meanings provided by the kiai and encounter difficulties in comprehending new texts (Darmawan, 2025). Consequently, the combination of study intensity and *nahwu-sharaf* proficiency may explain three-quarters of the variance in *fiqh* comprehension. The remaining variance is explained by learning motivation, intelligence, the kiai's teaching methods, and the Islamic boarding school environment (Wawan, 2024).

The implications of this study are practical in nature. First, Islamic boarding schools should establish minimum intensity standards that measure not only attendance, but also *sorogan* and *murajaah* (Sentia and Anwar, 2023). For instance, *santri* could be required to attend *bandongan* 10 times, *sorogan* 3 times, and submit *murajaah* 3 times per week. Second, there is a need for strengthening *nahwu-sharaf* in parallel with *fiqh* instruction (Kadir, Azam Syukur Rahmatullah, 2023). Because without linguistic tools, intensity merely produces rote memorization. Third, teaching methods should shift from exclusive *bandongan* to a combination of *bandongan-sorogan-bahtsul masail* to elevate *santri* cognitive level from C3 to C4 (Shodiq, 2023). Fourth, *santri* internal motivation must be cultivated through the internalization of the meaning of *iqra' bismi rabbik*, emphasizing that learning is a divine command from Allah, not merely an institutional rule of the Islamic boarding school (Darmawan, 2025).

Conclusion

This study of 49 *santri* at Hidayatul Qomariyah Islamic Boarding School confirmed that *kitab kuning* study intensity exerts a positive and statistically significant effect on *fiqh* comprehension. This effect is indicated by a regression coefficient of 0.0738, with a t-value of 4.18 and a significance level of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. The result addresses the research objective of examining the relationship between *santri* intensity in attending *kitab kuning* instruction and their level of *fiqh* comprehension in *muamalah*. The higher the frequency of *bandongan* attendance, the more active the *sorogan* participation, the longer the duration of study, and the more consistent the independent *murajaah* conducted by *santri*, the higher the *fiqh* comprehension scores obtained.This finding affirms that the traditional Islamic boarding school learning system, based on repeated interaction with classical texts, remains relevant for constructing foundational *fiqh* knowledge. The magnitude of contribution of *kitab kuning* study intensity to *fiqh* comprehension was 36.75%. This figure means that more than one-third of the variance in *santri fiqh* comprehension can be explained by the level of study intensity. *Santri* in the high-intensity category were proven to achieve higher mean test scores compared to those in the low-intensity category. Thus, attendance, interlinear annotation/*makna gundul*, *sorogan* submission, and repetition are important factors in the process of constructing *fiqh* comprehension. However, the

results also indicate that 63.25% of *fiqh* comprehension is influenced by factors beyond intensity. The low scores on the independent *murajaah* indicator and the failure of contemporary case analysis items suggest that current study intensity is effective only for memorization and basic comprehension, but not yet for the ability to apply and analyze. Based on this analysis, the present study proposes the conceptual model that *fiqh* comprehension in traditional *salaf* Islamic boarding schools is constructed through three literacy pillars. The first pillar is the intensity of text interaction through *bandongan*, *sorogan*, and *murajaah*, which empirically contributed 36.75 percent. The second pillar is the mastery of linguistic tools in the form of nahwu and sharaf, which are necessary for independently deciphering unvoweled Arabic texts / teks Arab gundul. The third pillar is the internalization of divine motivation / motivasi ilahiyah so that the activity of reading classical texts does not remain a mere routine, but rather becomes an awareness that learning constitutes a religious command.

Recommendations and Acknowledgment

This study has several limitations. First, the sample comprised only 49 *santri* from a single Islamic boarding school, thereby limiting the generalizability of the findings. Second, the *fiqh* content measured was restricted to the ibadah chapter of Kitab *Fathul Qarib*. Chapters on *muamalah*, *munakahah,* and *jinayah* were not assessed. Third, only one independent variable was employed, namely study intensity. Future research is recommended to utilize a multivariate design by incorporating variables such as *nahwu-sharaf* proficiency, learning motivation, and participation in *bahtsul masail*. Fourth, the quantitative approach adopted in this study could not address the question of "why" *santri* scored low on the independent *murajaah* indicator. A qualitative study employing in-depth interviews is required to explore this aspect.

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