

## Digital Media as a Dynamic Transformation Tool of Islam: From Traditional to Modern *Pesantren* (Islamic Boarding School) in Indonesia

Nurul Aini

English Department, State Islamic Institute of Kediri, Indonesia  
florida\_aini@iainkediri.ac.id

### Abstract

Breaking the Indonesian society's perception about *pesantren* only focuses on learning Islam in a traditional way is a new challenge in this modern era. *Pesantren* needs to adjust to the development of digital era right now in order to spread and shape the information related to Islam with the easiest way in which people in society can get the Islamic teaching and knowledge fast and efficiently. This research was intended to scrutinize the implementation and challenge of using digital media in 3 *pesantren*: Muhammadiyah Modern Boarding School, Al-Amien, As Sa'adiyah in Kediri and their challenges in transforming from *ngaji* (reciting Holy Qur'an) with traditional to modern digital media. The research used qualitative descriptive in analyzing the data related to the implementation and challenge of using digital media in learning. 10 *ustadz* and 10 *ustadzah* (teachers in *pesantren*) participated as the respondents in the study. The data were collected through observation and in-depth semi-structured interviews. The findings revealed that this *pesantren* applies teaching and learning integrated with *ngaji* digital through social media: live streaming on social media YouTube, Instagram, Facebook and Spotify with some reasons to; introduce and Islam as a part of (da'wah), get positive feedback and trust from society, break the society's perception about conservative *pesantren*, and build connection. However, it was also found some challenges related to the society's perception of conservative culture regarding the role of *pesantren* itself. In short, the digital media can a tool of a dynamic transformation process in spreading the information regarding Islam.

**Keywords:** Digital Media, Dynamic Transformation, Tool, Traditional and Modern *Pesantren* (Islamic Boarding School)

### Introduction

Facing the 4.0 Revolution era, students, are expected to realize a chance of taking part not limited to any institutions and levels of both formal and non-formal such as schools and *pesantren*. It is an Islamic boarding school that has a long history and tradition in Indonesia. It serves as a center for Islamic education and provides an environment for students to learn about Islam, memorize the Quran, and practice Islamic values and rituals. Students at *pesantren* live in a communal setting, usually with a teacher or a spiritual leader, and are expected to participate in daily activities such as prayer, study, and work.

The history and significance of *pesantren* in Indonesia can be traced back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century when Islamic scholars established Islamic schools to counter Dutch colonialism and promote Islamic education. Over the years, *pesantren* has evolved and adapted to the changing needs of society, and today it remains an important institution for Islamic education in Indonesia. There are many different types of *pesantren* in Indonesia, ranging from traditional to modern, and from small-scale to large-scale. While some *pesantren* continue to uphold a strict traditional approach to education, others have embraced modern technology and teaching methods, including the integration of digital media. Then, *pesantren* continues playing an important role in Islamic education and the development of the Muslim community in Indonesia.

The existence of *pesantren* (Islamic Boarding Schools) in Indonesia plays an important role in shaping the future of Islam by spreading the information regarding Islam teaching itself. Based on the data from Indonesian Religion Ministry 2021 as cited by Fadli (2021), there are around 4,373,694 students of Islamic center in 30,495 *pesantren* in Indonesia consists of about 9,310 in West Java, 5,344 in Banten, 5,121 in East Java, 3,927 in Central Java and 1,286 around Aceh and some more in other regions and the number is predicted to increase all the time up to now as also supported by Thohir (2015).

Based on my observation, *pesantren* in Indonesia has been significantly changing during the time. Generally, there are terms called traditional and modern *pesantren* in which the differences are on physical building and facility from simple to luxurious, the number of students is also varied from less to more, few to thousands, aims of learning from *tahfidz* (memorizing of Qur'an) to non *tahfidz*, method of teaching from conventional to semi-modern and modern ways of teaching and learning and types of media used in learning; the printed book and digital media. Nowadays, the rise of technologies has marked the difference in many contexts of society especially in Islamic society such as in *pesantren*.

The existence of digital technology in the modern era also can connect between *pesantren* and the surrounding community. Digital skills gaps between *pesantren* and modern society does exist in Indonesia because of the responsibility to preserve the *pesantren* culture itself. *Pesantren* needs to adjust to the development of digital era right now in order to spread and shape the information related to Islam with the easiest way in which people in society can get the Islamic teaching and knowledge fast and efficiently. In an increasingly digital society, *pesantren* as the place for students to study now becomes imperative to develop their students' capacity to use, understand and manage resources in digital learning activities. Digital media improves the ability of students in not only learning from and by using technology itself but also as a medium to promote the *pesantren* itself so that it will be well-known to public.

Integrating Islamic teaching and learning with digital media in *pesantren* is a part of transformation now needed to share and spread various information to people outside who do not know at all or half about how *pesantren* takes a role in this opportunity to face the global challenge in modern society also to break the society's perception about the inability or the left behind situation of *pesantren* teachers and students to use digital media to learn. By using the digital media, it is expected that people in general can catch the message of the Islamic teaching or speech as the transformation to develop the quality of *pesantren* itself also can be the point to attract them to study in *pesantren*. By the time of course the process of using digital media has challenges especially from the society's perception and expectation about the role of *pesantren* itself in preserving the culture. Starting from the previous phenomena stated, this research then aims at describing the implementation and challenge of using digital media in *pesantren* as the key information and spreads Islamic teaching.

Studies on digital media for *pesantren* education have been carried out by several researchers are Nasrudin & Durotun (2023) optimizing *ngaji* yellow book through digital media in Islamic boarding schools showing that through digital media can improve the quality of education in Islamic boarding schools. Other research also was described by Kardi, Makin, Anis (2020) *maktabah syumila nu fiha* and *maktabah syamilah*: digital transformation and contestation in *pesantren* which aims to describe the *pesantrens'* response to the use of digital applications of classical books as open sources of education.

## Literature Review

### *Pesantren*

*Pesantren*, which might be translated as "the place for *santri*," is the root of the word *pesantren*. *Santri*, a term created by Taman Siswa University for use in its boarding system, is derived from the word *cantrik*, which meaning "people who always follow the teacher" in Sanskrit or probably Javanese. According to C.C. Berg, the word "*santri*" derives from the Indian word "*shastru*," which refers to a scholar of Hindu literature or someone who is familiar with Hindu holy texts (Fatah, 2005).

The terms '*pondok*' (lit. 'hut') and '*pesantren*' (lit. 'hut') are frequently used interchangeably. The name '*pesantren*' refers to a typical Islamic boarding school and is derived from the word '*santri*' meaning devout Muslim students (Azyumardi, 2005). Despite the fact that some tiny *pesantren* had existed in Java since the 16<sup>th</sup> century, it was not until the 19<sup>th</sup> century that *pesantren* acquired traction when returning hajjis and students from Mecca and Medina established *pesantren* in several parts of Indonesia. *Pesantren* were the only educational institutions available to Indonesian Muslims after this period. *Pesantren* often include a mosque, classrooms, dorms, and the *Kiyai*'s residence. Over the last two decades, an increasing number of *pesantren* have permanent brick and concrete buildings; some have very remarkable building complexes (Zarkasyi, 2020)

*Pesantren* is divided into three categories by Mardiyah (2012): modern *pesantren*, salaf *pesantren* (Traditional *Pesantren*), and modern-salaf *pesantren*. *Salaf pesantren* is a type of *pesantren* that is inextricably linked to the *Kiai* figure. The primary role of the *kyai* in the *pesantren* plays a significant role in determining whether it advances or declines. *Kiai* and *pesantren* are crucial in each other's lives. *Pesantren* can grow because of their active, effective leaders. However, because of the unstable leader who is unable to govern effectively, *pesantren* do not develop (Kesuma, 2014). The name "modern" was coined by society to describe its different nature, as it was neither traditional *pesantren* nor a typical modern school institution. Lance Castle produced the first investigation that established modernism in *Pesantren* (Castles, L. 1966 as cited in Zarkasyi, 2020).

Imam Zarkasyi's idea of modernization in *pesantren* has been carried out in a superficial or partial manner resulted in a new model of *pesantren*, addressed modernization solely from the educational and institutional framework (Bukhory, 2016). Imam Zarkasyi's modernization, solely focused on the change of Islamic education, which was more about the development of *pesantren* in brief from its birth till the present condition (Purnama, 2013).

Amal Fathullah identified four aspects of modernization of *pesantren*: 1) the general manner of instruction 2) Arabic and English Teaching Method 3) Educational strategy, which includes the innovation of digital media used in education; and 4) educational organization and management (Zarkasyi, 2011). However, Saiful states four factors: 1) education system and approach 2) curriculum content 3) structure and management of the institution 4) Strategy for influencing the learner's mentality, or strategy for instilling ideals in the student (Daryaman, 2017)

### *Tool*

Technological changes rapidly in all aspects of life in the world. When the influence of the digital world is expanding, such as applications, websites, social media, and the learning environment will also experience changes that must pay attention to their integration, as well as *pesantren* transformation. It cannot be separated from the current digital developments. Innovations parts of transformation process in the development process can be carried out through tools that can be called digital platforms. This is supported by global technology companies that help provide the platform publicly (Van

Dijck et al., 2018). This platform can even be specifically designed to focus on monitoring behavior, student activities during learning, and facilities that are acceptable to the wider community, of course (Hillman et al., 2020; Robertson, 2019; Williamson, 2019). Moreover, after the COVID-19 pandemic, the platform has grown rapidly (Williamson, 2020). This indicates that more and more platforms are providing learning resources without having students face-to-face. This can also be used by students outside the *pesantren* and the general public to participate in *pesantren* activities without having to come face to face at the *pesantren*. As an example of one of the platforms, namely Instagram, *pesantren* can do live Instagram which can be watched by the wider community so that the target of *da'wah* can be more. There are still many platforms that can be used in the learning process so that they can convey material without limits.

#### Digital Media

Parsons (2017) explains that if you want an organizational system to survive, then the system must have four things, namely adaptation, goal attainment, integration, and latency. It is an adaptation that can maintain an organizational system even though it has gone through complex changes. *Pesantren* education has solid resilience because it is under a social structure that has been designed to deal with change and modernization (Rohmana, 2021). One of these changes and modernization is digital media. Digital media refers to any form of media that is created, stored, and distributed digitally, including text, images, audio, and video. In the context of this research, digital media specifically refers to the use of technology, such as computers, smartphones, and the internet, to transform traditional *pesantren* into modern *pesantren*. The implementation of digital media in *pesantren* education will have a positive impact on the learning process because it can increase students' interest and motivation to learn. This will also help the teacher in conveying the material to make it more interesting and interactive.

#### Dynamic Transformation

Dynamic transformation refers to a process of significant and ongoing change that takes place within an organization or institution, in response to internal and external factors such as shifts in technology, social norms, and cultural expectations (Bughin et al., 2017). In the context of this research, dynamic transformation specifically refers to the use of digital media to transform traditional *pesantren* into modern Islamic boarding schools that are better equipped to meet the needs and expectations of their students and communities.

Dynamic transformation can be a complex and challenging process, as it often involves fundamental changes to an institution's culture, values, and practices. However, it is also a necessary process in today's rapidly changing world, as organizations and institutions must adapt to keep pace with new technologies and changing social and cultural norms. For *pesantren*, dynamic transformation through the use of digital media can help to ensure that they remain relevant and effective in their role as providers of Islamic education (Sabic-El-Rayess, 2020).

The requirement to be attentive to students' needs and expectations as well as those of their communities is at the core of dynamic transformation. Institutions must continuously evaluate their practices and values in light of evolving conditions, which calls for a constant process of reflection and change. For *pesantren*, this means exploring new approaches to teaching and learning, leveraging digital media to enhance the educational experience, and adapting to the changing needs and expectations of their students and communities. While dynamic transformation can be a challenging process, it also presents significant opportunities for growth and innovation (Patriadi et al., 2015). By embracing digital media and other technologies, *pesantren* can create new opportunities for learning and collaboration, foster a more dynamic and responsive

educational environment, and position themselves for long-term success in a rapidly changing world.

## Method

This study is intended to scrutinize the implementation and the impact of digital media in 3 *pesantrens*: Muhammadiyah Modern Boarding School, Al-Amien, Assa'idiyyah in Kediri and their challenges in transforming from *ngaji* from traditional to modern digital media. To reach these objectives, a qualitative descriptive was applied. Descriptive qualitative research design is a methodology that focuses on describing and interpreting social phenomena. It is often used in the social sciences to understand the attitudes, beliefs, experiences, and behaviors of individuals or groups in a particular context. This research design is particularly suitable for exploring complex and nuanced issues that cannot be fully captured through quantitative methods.

For this research on the use of digital media as a tool of dynamic transformation in *pesantren*, descriptive qualitative research design is the most suitable research design. This is because the aim of this study is to gain an in-depth understanding of the information, experiences and perspectives of *pesantren* leaders, teachers, and students on the use of digital media for teaching and learning. Through in-depth interviews, focus groups, and observations, the study will provide a detailed and nuanced understanding of how *pesantren* are adapting to the use of digital media and the challenges they face in this process.

Descriptive qualitative research design also allows for flexibility and adaptability in data collection and analysis. It allows for the researcher to modify the research questions and data collection techniques as new insights emerge from the data. Additionally, this research design allows for the researcher to consider multiple perspectives and understand the complexities of the social phenomena being studied.

The data were collected through observation and in-depth semi-structured interviews. To ascertain the implementation and the perception of the participants towards digital media, the researcher used observations to *santri* (students) and *ustadz* (teachers). The researcher comes multiple times to observe the use of digital media as a tool in *ngaji*. To explore how is the impact of the use of digital media in *ngaji*, semi-structured interviews were conducted. In collecting the data, the researcher came to *pesantren* to interview *ustadz* (teachers in *pesantren*).

The interview blueprint was adopted from Harmer (2007). There were totally 10 *ustadz* (teachers in *pesantren*) and 30 students were interviewed as the respondents. There were two main research questions with totally 4 questions of interview. The first research question is about how is the implementation of *ngaji* using digital media in *pesantren* with 3 indicators with totally 3 question items asking about kinds of digital media, the way teachers use digital media and to what extent teachers use digital media in *pesantren*. The second research questions are about the challenge of using digital media in *pesantren* with 1 question item.

## Results

### General Description of *Pesantren*

Muhammadiyah Modern Boarding School (MMBS) is a modern Islamic Center located in Kediri District, East Java. It is under the MMBS of Indonesia where the center is in Jogjakarta, Central Java. This *pesantren* at the same level of Senior High School focuses on the program of memorizing Holy Qur'an (*tahfidz*) in which the students should memorize 30 Juz of Qur'an within 3 years divided into grade 1,2,3. Another program is that reciting holy Qur'an with the method of UMMI and practicing Islamic speech in which the male students have to be the leader of pray (imam of sholat) in a mosque inside

*pesantren*. There are totally 22 male students and 15 female students with 14 *ustadz* (male teacher) and 6 *ustadzah* (female teacher) live in *pesantren* being the students' guide. MMBS named itself as a Modern Boarding School due to the use of modern technology such as digital things of laptop, phone, camera used in live streaming of social media to show santri's activities in *ngaji* to introduce the nuance of *pesantren* to people in general out there. *Ustadz* and *ustadzah* of this *pesantren* must be graduated from at least Bachelor Degree with Lc Degree from Middle Eastern Countries such as: Arab. There are also guest teachers coming from Arab who visit *pesantren* bi annually to examine the students in final test. They become one of the teams to decide whether or not the students can pass the exam and can continue to the next grade or level. It was first built in 2016 and has reached 45 santri with 15 *ustadz* and 7 *ustadzah* up to now.

Al-Amien Islamic Boarding School was established in 1995 by KH. Muhammad Anwar Iskandar. He established this boarding school motivated by the willingness to provide a religious atmosphere. After graduating from *pesantren*, he hopes that students can get religion knowledge well both theoretically and practically in a balanced manner and get their best experience in life to be able to live independently to survive in community. In this *pesantren*, they can learn to interact with their friends and the community. This *pesantren* is semi traditional modern *pesantren* in Kediri in which *Kyai* and *santri* preserve the Javanese culture and nuance of traditional *pesantren* in the way the students learn Holy book as well as their activities regarding Islamic celebration.

Al-Amien is one of the Ahlussunah wal jama'ah-based Islamic boarding schools located in Kediri City which was established with vision and mission; preparing moslems who are strong, intellectual, religious and have character of *santri*. This *pesantren* has formal schools in the level of Kindergarten, Elementary School, Junior and Senior High School. *Pesantren* itself focuses the programs on Qur'an recitation, Yellow Book Study with some religion activities *Manaqib* and *Maulid*, *Istighotsah* and *Tahlil* and *Bahtsul Masa'il diniyah*.

Assa'idiyyah Islamic Boarding School is located in Kediri City. This boarding school was founded by *Kyai Sa'id*, the father of *Nyai Qoni'atus Zahro*, the wife of K.H. Anwar Iskandar who is now the leader of *pesantren* Al Amien. In line with the system applied in Assa'idiyyah, *pesantren* Al Amien is also a semi traditional *pesantren* which still uses and applies traditional method in learning. Both Assa'idiyyah and al Amien were traditional *pesantren* in time. They are now shifting to do transformation by using technology of digital social media as a part of the process of teaching and learning. Al amien has totally 470 *santri* and 45 *ustadz* and 15 *ustadzah*.

### **The Implementation of Using Digital Media in Pesantren**

MMBS, Al Amien and Assaidiyah implement the use of digital media in *pesantren*. MMBS focuses on spreading the information regarding the Islamic speech in *pesantren*. This Islamic speech is given by *ustadz* as the leaders in *pesantren* who deliver different topics each week. The topics consist of Islamic teachings, *fiqh* and method of reciting Holy Qur'an. MMBS first began to use digital social media when the first time this *pesantren* was officially operated in 2017. *Santri* practices the application of digital social media and create content dealing with their activities in *pesantren*. Al Amien and Assa'idiyyah first started using digital media when pandemic in 2019 when every *santri* studied from home. They then make broadcasting room and implements *ngaji* digital. By the time, this program is developed into the daily program of broadcasting *ngaji* digital. The links of social media are: <https://www.facebook.com/mmbokediri?mibextid=ZbWKwL> (facebook), <https://open.spotify.com/show/04VpGMwo6VggAh8uERLlhh> (spotify), <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...>

[s://youtube.com/@MMBSTV](https://youtube.com/@MMBSTV)(youtbe),<https://instagram.com/mmbskediri?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=> (instagram) .

Al Amien and Assa'idiyyah focus their content on *ngaji* traditional book written in Arabic called "*kitab kuning*" (yellow book) in which the students understand the meaning of *kitab kuning* by translating the arabic version into pegon (also known as Pegon letters, is a product of Indonesian cultural heritage. *Pegon* letters are Arabic letters that have been modified mixing traditional Javanese and Arabic letters without using *harakat*. Three of these *pesantren*: MMBS, Al Amien and Assa'idiyyah are same in using digital social media those are: Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and Spotify for live streaming with the content of *ngaji*, deliver Islamic speech and Islamic activities such as: *mauludan* (commemoration of the birth of Prophet Muhammad), *Idul fitri*, *Id Adha*. It is fact that the youths have dominant access to social media. The high quantity of them accessing social media takes the possibility to also access the information about *pesantren*.

Here is the link of digital social media used by Al Amien: <https://www.facebook.com/ponpesalaminkediri?mibextid=ZbWKwL> (Facebook), [https://instagram.com/santri\\_ngasinan?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=](https://instagram.com/santri_ngasinan?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=) (Instagram), <https://youtube.com/@ponpesalamienkediri7570> (YouTube). And the links of social media of Assa'idiyyah are: <https://instagram.com/assaidiyyahjamsaren?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=> (Instagram), <https://www.facebook.com/assaidiyyah.jamsaren.9?mibextid=ZbWKwL> (Facebook), <https://youtube.com/@ponpesassaidiyyahjamsaren1525> (YouTube)

MMBS, Al Amien and Assa'idiyyah implements digital media with the purpose of first, they expose in positive ways the activities related to reciting Holy Qur'an and *Kitab Kuning* and other Islamic celebration because they want to introduce Islam to people in general unlimited to any societies, communities in and out of Indonesia out there to get to know more about life in *pesantren*. By introducing the life in *pesantren*, it is expected that people can be more interested in learning about Islam therefore there is a possibility of people to send their kids studying in *pesantren*. This is as a part of efforts to *da'wah* as stated in An Nahl:125 spreading Islam to whoever the people are. They do not need to come to the spot directly if they want to know about what Islam is, how life in *pesantren* is and how the teaching and learning Qur'an in *pesantren* is. In addition, they have the good message of the more they share good things, the more rewards from Allah they will get as it is in line with the message of Allah that. This reason is proved by the fact that students who are now studying in *Pesantren* knew the information about it from social media they access.

Second, to promote the system of *pesantren* through students' activities during in *pesantren* such as *ngaji* and celebrating Islamic events so that they can positively influence the people's idea and get positive feedback from the society such as trust as the good support system. This reason is proved by the positive feedback to put positive trust to *pesantren* as the place to study for *santri*. In fact, the good reputation *pesantren* has makes them survive to receive hundreds of students who study there.

Third, to break the society's perception about *pesantren* often known as non-formal education which is left behind because of the tradition, culture without modern innovations especially the use of technology. For some people, the use of technology can connect them to the modern world where not all *pesantren* implement this. In this part, not all people are interested in learning or studying in *pesantren* only because they have their perception that *pesantren* is synonymous with traditional ways of life, teaching and learning though this situation still exists in some *pesantren* partly.

Fourth, to build connection among *pesantren* to any institutions or Islamic organizations out there as support systems to make *pesantren* stand stronger. In fact, as

they mentioned that every *pesantren* or institutions in general needs strong support system to add and upgrade their knowledge and develop the quality of *pesantren* itself and the quantity of the students. In addition, by knowing *pesantren* from social media, it is expected that people can give support both spiritually or even financially to get and invite more people to *sadaqah* (charity) for example. They believe that the more they can invite people to do *sadaqah*, the more they will get rewards from Allah. In *pesantren*, there is a term called “donor” as the people who give fund and support.

Fifth, the use of social media as a dynamic transformation tool to create peace of Islam among moslems in the world. Media can connect people in the world and it is a good tool to rebuild trust of trust issues felt by people in general as the result of bad cases happened in *pesantren*. By exposing the good activities about *pesantren*, it is expected to make a peace and minimize the conflict among moslems.

### **The Challenges of Using Digital Media in Pesantren**

It is agreed that the use of digital media is challenging neither about the facilities nor the cost but mostly about the society’s expectation on the origins of *pesantren*’s value itself. As it is said that some traditional *pesantren* prefer to keep the culture and traditions away from public and especially social media. It is aimed at preserving the origin of the *pesantren* to be more inclusive focusing on the center of the purpose of *pesantren* itself. On the other hands, some *pesantren* tend to do transformation in the area of innovations using technology in digital media with the positive purposes expected. However, every transformation does not always pick the positive response as a thing generally has pros and cons. In this case, the challenge of using digital media in *pesantren* comes from the negative perspective of the society that *pesantren* tends to expose and show everything off to get advantages and or sympathy (having great name) from societies such as: financial, endorsement, political intervention. They think that the exposure through the media can lose the origins ad value of *pesantren* itself because they tend to be more modern close to the world rather than focusing on the value driving to hereafter. They are afraid that modern *pesantren* can lead to the mortal life worldly.

### **Discussions**

*Pesantren* has often been perceived as a conservative institution, isolated from modern society and resistant to change. This perception has been reinforced by the media and popular culture, which have tended to portray *pesantren* as anachronistic and out of touch with the modern world. However, this perception does not accurately reflect the reality of the *pesantren*, which has a rich history of adapting to changing circumstances and meeting the needs of the community it serves.

Despite the challenges posed by modern technology and digital media, *pesantren* must adapt if it is to survive and remain relevant in the long run. The Al-Qur'an surah Ar-Rad emphasizes the importance of individual and collective change in order to effect broader social transformation. This principle can be applied to the *pesantren*, which must adapt and evolve in order to meet the needs of the community it serves. As it is applied by MMBS, Al Amien and Assa’idiyyah Kediri where these *pesantren* adapt to the use of digital media to meet the needs of society.

The integration of digital media into the teaching and learning approach of *pesantren* is one way in which the institution can adapt and evolve. By embracing digital media, *pesantren* can reach a wider audience, engage with students in new and innovative ways, and promote the relevance and importance of the institution in modern society. This approach can help to break down the perception of *pesantren* as conservative and out of touch, and promote a more positive and dynamic image of the institution in the eyes of the wider community.



While it may take some time for society to fully embrace the changes that *pesantren* is making, the institution must be committed to this process of adaptation and evolution if it is to survive and thrive in the long run. This goes well with Al-Qur'an surah Ar-Rad verse 11:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّى يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ

“Indeed, Allah will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves”.

This verse showed that change must come from within, and that the *pesantren* must be willing to embrace new ideas and approaches if it is to remain relevant and effective in meeting the needs of the community it serves.

The dynamic transformation of four *pesantren* in the study, Muhammadiyah Modern Boarding School, Al-Amien and Assa’idiyyah in Kediri, highlights the importance of adapting and evolving in response to changing societal needs and technological advancements. These *pesantren* have recognized the potential of digital media as a tool for education and have integrated it into their teaching and learning approach. This strengthens the theory from Parsons (2017) who explains that if you want an organizational system to survive, then the system must have four things, namely adaptation, goal attainment, integration, and latency

However, the integration of digital media into the traditional approach of *ngaji* presents several challenges for these *pesantren*. The traditional approach emphasizes face-to-face interaction between the teacher and the student focuses on inside *pesantren* by not involving any influence from outside, and the use of digital media may be seen as a threat to the traditional way of teaching. Additionally, there may be concerns about the quality of education provided through digital media, and the effectiveness of this approach in promoting the values and traditions of the *pesantren*.

Despite these challenges, these *pesantren* have taken steps to integrate digital media into their approach. For example, Muhammadiyah Modern Boarding School has implemented a digital library and provides online access to activities related to *pesantren*. Al-Amien has incorporated digital media and provides online classes for students via YouTube. They develop to facilitate people following them in online and to provides access to online resources and virtual classrooms.

The integration of digital media has not only improved the quality of education provided by these *pesantren* but has also had a positive impact on their reputation. By embracing digital media, these *pesantren* have been able to reach a wider audience, engage with students in new and innovative ways, and promote their relevance and importance in modern society. This has helped to break down the perception of *pesantren* as conservative and out of touch, and promote a more positive and dynamic image of the institution in the eyes of the wider community.

The dynamic transformation of the three *pesantren* in the study highlights the importance of adapting and evolving in response to changing societal needs and technological advancements. While the integration of digital media presents several challenges, these *pesantren* have taken steps to overcome them and have successfully integrated digital media into their teaching and learning approach. The positive impact of digital media on the reputation of these *pesantren* emphasizes the importance of embracing new ideas and approaches in order to remain relevant and effective in meeting the needs of the community they serve. It strengthens the theory from Bughin which said that dynamic transformation refers to a process of significant and ongoing change that takes place within an organization or institution, in response to internal and external factors such as shifts in technology, social norms, and cultural expectations (Bughin et al., 2017)

In conclusion, while the *pesantren* may have been perceived as a conservative institution, it has a rich history of adapting to changing circumstances and meeting the needs of the community it serves. The integration of digital media into the teaching and learning approach of *pesantren* is one way in which the institution can continue to evolve and adapt to meet the needs of the community it serves. The Al-Qur'an surah Ar-Rad reminds us that change must come from within, and that the *pesantren* must be willing to embrace new ideas and approaches if it is to remain relevant and effective in the long run.

## Conclusion

Following the flow of the 4.0 era, *pesantren* must be shifted through innovations to assist in adaptation. It also cannot be separated from digitalization because communication technology must continue to develop, one of which is in *Pesantren*. This research was intended to scrutinize the implementation and the impact of digital media in 3 *Pesantren* (Islamic Boarding Schools): Muhammadiyah Modern Boarding School, Al-Amien, and Asssa'idiyyah, in Kediri and their challenges in transforming from *ngaji* with traditional to modern digital media. The research used qualitative descriptive analyzing the data related to the implementation and challenges of using digital media in learning. 10 *ustadz* and 10 *ustadzah* (teachers in *pesantren*) participated as the respondents in the study participated as the respondents in the study. The result showed that *pesantren* implement the use of digital social media of YouTube, Instagram, Facebook and Spotify in teaching and learning because of reasons: to introduce and Islam as a part of (da'wah), get positive feedback and trust from society, break the society's perception about conservative *pesantren*, and build connection. The challenges are found about the society who have perception of conservative culture regarding the rule of *pesantren* which is said as a threat. In short, the digital media can be away as a part of dynamic transformation process in spreading the information regarding Islam teaching.

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