

The Ngaji Online: Transforming Islamic Learning for Moslem Communities in the Digital Age

Z Muttaqin¹

Department of Religious Studies, Faculty of Ushuluddin UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta¹
{zmuttaqin@uinjkt.ac.id}

Abstract. Social media in various platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube have become an important part of society in accessing information, communicating with others, as well as learning media. This research presents a study of the phenomenon of Ngaji Online which is popularly carried out by Indonesian Muslim communities by utilizing social media features that grow in accordance with the development of digital communication technology. In the simple definition, Ngaji Online can be understood as an online learning activity of Islamic teachings through reading classical Islamic books by an Islamic Scholar (Ulama) and followed by an audience without a facial-spatial interface. The research was carried out by analyzing Ngaji Online activities on Facebook carried out by a number of Ulama such as Kyai Ulil Abshar Abdalla, Kyai Mukti Ali Qusyairi, Gus M. Ziyulhaq Syamsul Falahi Ponorogo, dan Syekh Rohimuddin Nawawi Al-Jahary Al-Bantany. The research was conducted from January-Agustus 2019 by utilizing the participant observation method in which researcher became member (jama'ah) of the Ngaji Online itself. This method allows the researcher to be the subject and object of study so that he has the opportunity to observe and analyze the activities of the Ngaji Online by the Islamic scholars who are the object of research. This research confirms that online Islamic learning is an unintended consequence as the benefit of digital communication technology and zeal of enthusiasm for learning among the Muslim community. Apart from the weaknesses of the social media features that facilitate Islamic learning online, the activities of Ngaji Online offer a wider range of participants in the process of learning Islamic teachings than conventional learning based on the textbook in Pesantren and Majelis Taklim which is limited by certain numbers. Furthermore, the results of this research are the classical Islamic books that were studied. Among them: Kitab Ihya Ulum al-Din by Abū Hāmed Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, al-Bidayah wa al-Nihayah or Tarikh Ibnu Katsir by Ismail bin Umar Al-Quraisyi bin Katsir Al-Bashri Ad-Dimasyqi or Ibnu Katsir, Adab ad-Dunya wa ad-Din by Abu al-Hasan Ali Ibn Muhammad Ibn Habib al-Bashri al-Mawardi, Syarah Al-Waroqot Fi Ushulil Fiqhi by Syaikh Imam Jalaluddin Muhammad bin Ahmad al-Mahalli as-Syafi'I, Muqaddimah at-Tashawuf wa Haqiqatuh wa Natijatuh, Dzikir al-Maqomat by Syekh Abdul Qadir Al-Jailani Al-Hasani Al-Husaini, Syarh al-Hikam by Ibn Athoillah al-Sakandary, Adab al-Muridin

by Abu al-Najib al-Suhrawardi and others. While the time of Ngaji Online is held periodically, weekly, bi-weekly, and monthly.

Keywords: Kitab Kuning, Pesantren, Kyai, Santri, Ngaji Online

1 Introduction

The study of *Kitab Kuning* is an important part of the process of Islamic scientific transmission of the Nusantara Muslim community by involving leaders in the *pesantren*, *kyai* and *santri* circles. *Kitab Kuning* with various Islamic scientific material both in the fields of interpretation of the Qur'an, the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad, Tawheed, Theology, Islamic History, and Islamic Law (*Fiqh*) written by Muslim scholars throughout the history of the development of Islamic scholarship continue to be studied from generation to the next in a serious and profound manner, starting from the basic *Kitab Kuning* to those classified into the main books with their scholars consisting of clerics and senior students. The continuation of the study of the *Kitab Kuning* goes hand in hand with the belief that the study of such books provides a guarantee for the worshipers in increasing their understanding of the teachings from the very first and foremost sources [1].

Martin van Bruinessen acknowledged the great role of the study of the *Kitab Kuning* as part of the great tradition of the Nusantara Muslim community. According to him, the study of the *Kitab Kuning* is one form of the great traditions that form a distinctive style of understanding and practice of Islam among the region's Muslim community [2]. Through the role of Islamic boarding school institutions that are popular in Java and various similar institutions in various regions of Indonesia such as *Surau* in West Sumatra or *Dayah* in Aceh, with the *kyai* and *santri* being the subjects in them, classical *Kitab Kuning* texts by Muslim scholars from centuries ago which is recognized or accepted by the *pesantren* (*al-kutub al-mu'tabaroh*) are studied as practical demands in their daily lives.

Kitab Kuning is simply understood as a work that contains an explanation of various dimensions of Islamic teachings in a printed book with yellow paper. In addition to the *Kitab Kuning*, various works of Islamic scholars are also referred to as the bare book. The use of the latter term refers to writings that use Arabic script without *harakat* so that the ability to read depends on the capacity of readers to understand Arabic grammar, including logic and literary style. In addition, these works are also often referred to as the *Kitab Kuna* referring to the period in which these works were written by scholars [3]. The mention of the *Kitab Kuning* itself is often used as a differentiator with contemporary '*Kitab Putih*' written by reformists or modernists, most of which contain interpretations of the Qur'an and hadith studies. Meanwhile, the contents of these books are usually divided into various Islamic disciplines with writing techniques in the form of comments (*syarh*), comments on comments (*hasyiyah*), translations, and adaptations [4].

Meanwhile, one of the peculiarities of the *Kitab Kuning* as a source of Islamic scholarship, learning is done with traditional teaching techniques such as *sorogan* or *bandongan*. Quoting Dhofier (1982), Endang Turmudi explained that the teaching technique in *bandongan* was carried out by *Kyai* or senior *Santri* by reading the books that were observed by their students. Thus, in addition to giving instructions on how to read it, the *kyai* and senior *santri* also explained the intentions contained therein to the *santri*. The *bandongan* way is followed by the *santri* as a whole without depending on their level of knowledge or age so it's no wonder the number can reach tens

of hundreds of *santri*. In contrast to *bandongan*, the *sorogan* system is carried out in a limited manner where a *santri* learns by reading and explaining his understanding to senior *santri* who are considered to have the capability of Arabic grammar as well as the meaning behind the text [5].

The learning of the *Kitab Kuning* by relying on the *bandongan* method or the *sorogan* method represents a traditional learning model for a traditional community when technology has not developed rapidly. The *Kyai* and *Santri* relationship takes place in a fairly close area where the teacher gives instruction and the student listens to it. This activity takes place continuously as an important process of transmitting Islamic knowledge. Later, information and communication technology developed rapidly and provided changes in various aspects of human life, including in Indonesia. An important technological development is marked by the presence of the internet which is revolutionizing the way of communicating and exchanging information between individuals and between communities. Not only that, the internet with its various media productions has developed into a source of community learning.

Departing from the various facts of the study of the *Kitab Kuning* carried out traditionally from the process of Islamic scientific transmission and the rapid advancement of internet access, this simple article will simply limit itself to the description of how the *Kitab Kuning* Islamic Studying activities among Muslim communities, especially *santri* and *kyai*, respond to media progress internet social as part of its learning. Did the *Kyai-Santri* adopt social media in their learning activities and how did they utilize social media and what *Kitab Kunings* did they study? Then, what is the perception of the *Jamaah* themselves with the presence of online *pengajian* delivered by the *kyai*? Any *Kitab Kunings* that are popular are studied in this online *pengajian*?

The novelty to be explored from this paper is to look at the response of the traditional academic community, the *kyai* and *santri*, and *pesantren* institutions, to the progress of the digital era on the traditional learning activities of Islamic teachings that they do. Others, studying the *Kitab Kunings* with what topics are widely read and how the influence of the study of the *Kitab Kuning* online on the freedom of learning opportunities among people in the same range of study.

Internet: between Communication and Education Functions

Mayfield & Ali's research (1996) notes that the distribution of the internet provides vast opportunities for teachers and students to access learning resources while building effective communication in the process [6]. Manir's research (2007) confirms the internet is an important part of the teacher and student learning activities in Nigeria. The use of the internet makes their learning activities more effective, where instructional learning and teacher-student communication take place more quickly and synchronously. In fact, students have flexible learning time without having to come to class and have plenty of time to indulge and absorb information [7]. Dogruer, Eyyam, and Revising (2011) research also strengthen the role of the internet as a medium as well as a source of learning. Their quantitative research of 150 students at Eastern Mediterranean University noted that the growth of the internet not only provided social connections and entertainment but also academic and scientific information also quickly to a wide audience by transcending time and space restrictions [8].

In its development, the modern educational community's learning system does not always depend on page-based internet, the education community is slowly also using social media as a

learning medium. Oswaldo Castro-Romero's (2015) research, for example, highlights the expansion of learning access for educated communities through the use of social media in Mexico and South Korea. His research notes that social media in both Mexico and South Korea has been applied in the domains of knowledge such as social science, education, and elective subjects. Students bring a stronger digital culture to university and they can carry out tasks and learning activities more efficiently using technology as well as using social media to develop technical-didactic teaching skills [9].

Social media itself, during the last decade, shows a dynamic development, both in form and number of users. In terms of form, social media shows the development of increasingly diverse variants such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and others. While from the user side, the number is also expanding as the public access to the internet and the proximity of technological facilities in their daily lives. The presence of a smartphone that encapsulates the functions of communication and information, the internet to social media in one hand allows the wider area of social media users. Indonesia is no exception as an area with the status of one of the countries with the largest population in the world, economic stability, and maintained purchasing power, smartphones that encapsulate cyberspace make it easier for them to access information and communication, including from social media.

2 Method

Research for the writing of this paper is a qualitative research which is expected to provide in-depth and detailed descriptions and analysis of the topics that are the focus of the research. As a qualitative research, as mentioned by Darlington and Scott (2002), Creswell (2014), and Denzin and Lincoln (1997), the collection of research data for this article is to rely on a number of qualitative research data mining techniques, namely in-depth interviews with Jamaahs, systematic observation by attending *Ngaji Online* themselves, and document analysis in order to understand what *Kitab Kunings* are used by *Kyai* and *Jamaah Ngaji*. In this case, the researchers themselves play an active role as participants in online study activities in order to get a better understanding of these study activities [10].

In this research, there are two subjects that need to be understood as the theoretical basis of the research described in this paper, namely the study of the *Kitab kuning* and social media. In language, the term Islamic Studying comes from the word *kaji* which is defined as a lesson (religious teachings) and an investigation of something. When used as an Al-Quran word, this word is interpreted as the activity of reading (*mengaji*) of the Qur'an, reading Arabic writing, studying. While if it becomes 'study' this word is associated with the activities of studying, examining, investigating, thinking, testing, and studying something [11].

There are several definitions of Islamic Studying (*Pengajian*). Alwi (2008: 491) for example defines Islamic Studying as teaching activities (Islamic religion) in order to instill religious norms through da'wah. Similarly, Muhzakir (1999: 3) defines Islamic Studying as a general term that refers to religious learning and teaching activities. While Sulandari et al define Islamic Studying as a form of religious activities undertaken by Muslims in order to increase religious understanding for the practical purposes of implementing the teachings of one's own religion. Likewise Alfishah (2009) as quoted by Sulandari who defines the *Pengajian* as an activity or preoccupation about the

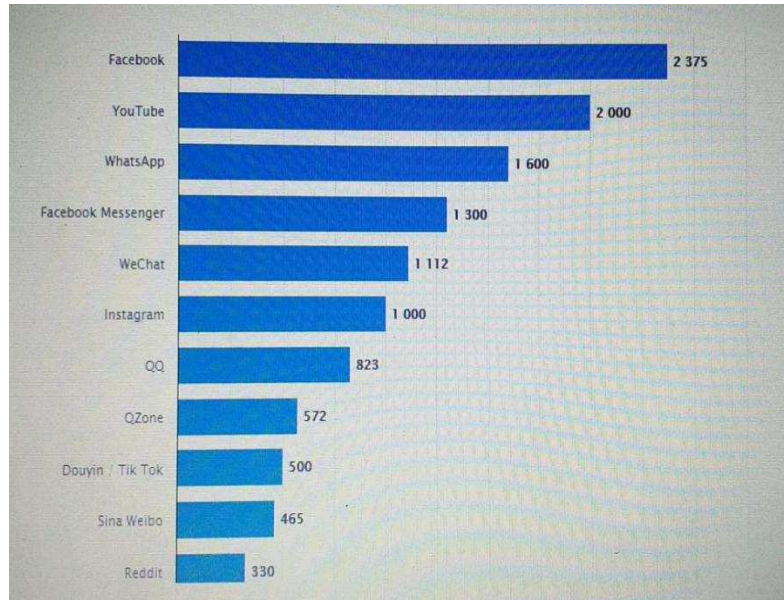
teaching of Islam, which teaching is in the form of tabligh events or also the reading of the Qur'an (Alfisyah, 2009) [12]. Referring to these various understandings, it can be said that *Islamic Studying* is a community activity in studying religious teachings for the benefit of their understanding and religious practice.

When the term '*Kitab kuning*' is attached to form a unity of the term 'Kitab kuning Islamic Studying' (*Pengajian Kitab Kuning*), this term refers to the learning activities of classical Islamic texts in the form of Kitab kunings or bare books. Borrowing the explanation of Uci and Rudi (2018), the study of the *Kitab Kuning* can be defined as the activity of delivering teaching material by a kyai to his students by using reference books or also called the Kitab kuning, the *Kitab Kunings* written by previous scholars (*Ulama Salaf*) in various Islamic scientific disciplines such as interpretation of the Koran, hadith, monotheism, morals, and fiqh [13], [3]. The Kitab kunings are studied in stages depending on the level of student learning [14]. The study of the Kitab kuning becomes the identity of the Pesantren Salafiyah (Salafiyah Islamic boarding school) with the *sorogan*, *bandongan*, classical method [15]. And *Pengajian*, is not only done in teacher-student relations, *kyai-santri*, but among the *kyai* themselves about actual topics in the review of religious teachings (Islam) [14].

Meanwhile, social media is often defined as an interactive technology that creates and simultaneously shares information, ideas and various other expressions through virtual community networks [16]. This interaction is mediated by technology devices such as web-based desktops and laptops or smartphone applications that offer social media services. Schwartz (2012 as quoted by OC Romero (2015) defines social media as a web-based social networking technology that allows users (individuals and communities) to connect with one another to create and share content, which arises with the potential for "social software" able to encourage dialogue, collaboration, networking and help build social relationships based on shared goals and interests (Mayfield, 2007; Ryberg, 2008; Safko & Brake, 2009; Mustonen, 2009; Joosten, 2012) [9]. Therefore, when users utilize social media, then they create a highly interactive forum for user interaction between individuals and communities to share, discuss, participate in an activity.

As a social network, social media has a number of important characteristics. Among them, participation where social media encourages every user who is interested in contributing and feedback, openness where social media gives broad access to every user without barriers to access, dialogue where social media encourages each other to engage in active communication, communities where social media builds communication and community quickly, and connectivity where social media are connected to each other [9]. In its development, social media takes the form in various forms of social media with the type of social media with the most number of users still occupied by Facebook. The position is followed by YouTube, WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, WeChat, Instagram and others.

Table. 1 Global Most Popular Social Media as of July 2019



Source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/272014/global-social-networks-ranked-by-number-of-users/>

From the table, it appears that various social media are present in today's virtual world of society such as Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, WeChat, Instagram and others. Each social media offers the advantages of connectivity among users, both individuals, and communities, including in creating and sharing information, ease of communication, contestation of ideas, and others. Furthermore, as the very first social media, Facebook still seems to be the most popular social media. Therefore, for the purposes of analyzing this topic, research in this paper will emphasize *Ngaji Online Kitab Kuning* activities delivered through Facebook's live streaming facility.

3 Results and Discussion

a. Kitab Kuning, Kyai, and Ngaji Online

The development of internet access and the massive use of desktops and smartphones connected to the internet in Indonesia, make it easier for people to communicate among themselves through social media. In line with its progress, the internet seems not only to play a function of the means of communication and information sharing of users, but also a means of effective and broad learning. In addition to the educated community in modern educational institutions that are full of internet support, a number of kyai and santri communities with

traditional Islamic academic community backgrounds cannot be separated from the massive influence of the internet, especially internet social media. The clerics present Islamic studies in the form of studying the *Kitab kuning* online. In this case, the kyai reads a particular *Kitab kuning*, gives an explanation of the purpose of the reading content, and online worshipers from various regions listen to him. This activity gave rise to the popular term or *Ngaji Online*.

By limiting personal figures (Kyai), using the *Kitab kuning*, and using social media Facebook, the research conducted by the writer found a number of *Kyai* who consistently used this social media for their online study activities. They regularly convey recitation activities online by reading the pages of the *Kitab kuning* and discussing the topics. Until this research was conducted, the writer found that there were a number of scholars who were quite consistent in carrying out online study activities.

Kyai Ulil Absbar Abdalla

Ulil Abshar is one of the pesantren elites who also initiated the *Pengajian Kitab Kuning Online*. Kyai Ulil began his *Pengajian Kitab Kuning* activity to fill the night of Ramadan in June 2017. At that time, he began his *Pengajian Kitab Kuning* activity by studying the work of Abu Hamid Muhammad bin Muhammad al Ghazali ath-Thusi as-Syafi'i or more popularly known as Imam al- Ghazali, a Persian Muslim philosopher, theologian, and Sufi (1058 M / 450 H-1111 M / 505, namely *Ihya Ulum al-Din*. It is known, the book of *Ihya Ulum al-Din* is a monumental work of Imam al-Ghazali who was quite influential in the Muslim world community, especially concerning the practice of Sufistic life.

Meanwhile, Kyai Ulil's study of the book of *Ihya Ulum al-Din* was read by reading the *Kitab* directly and broadcast live through Facebook's social media broadcasts. Until the end of August 2019, the *Ngaji Online* of the *Kitab Ihya Ulum al-Din*, guided by Ulil Abshar Abdalla, had reached the 153rd meeting. Although still focused on conducting the study of the *Pengajian Kitab Kuning* online, but Ulil occasionally did it by carrying out the reading of the *Kitab Kuning* in front of the congregation directly [17]. This activity is usually held in the midst of busy activities in various regions.

There are a number of motivations behind Ulil giving the online *Pengajian Kitab Kuning*. In addition to his own longing for the atmosphere of *Pengajian Kitab Kuning* in the style of a traditional Islamic boarding school, the *Ngaji online* of the book *Ihya Ulum al-Din* seems to have been deliberately done by Ulil to enlighten understanding of the Islamic diversity of the Muslim community more broadly through social media with the ability to reach unlimitedly. Socio-political polarization and shallowness of understanding and religious attitudes that occur in the midst of the community provide momentum for Ulil to give the *Kitab kuning* recitation as a reliable reference. Meanwhile, he admitted that he conducted online recitation with a fixed number of viewers in the range of 300 and 5000-7000 non-permanent viewers who became his online recitation congregation [18].

Mukti Ali Qusyairi

Kyai Mukti is another figure who began to explore the study of the *Pengajian Kitab Kuning* online through Facebook broadcast facilities. The graduate student of UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta who previously graduated from the Aqidah Philosophy Department of the al-Azhar University of Egypt and studied at the Lirboyo Islamic Boarding School is active in giving the *Pengajian Kitab Kuning Online* through his Facebook account. *Pengajian Kitab Kuning Online* activities complement Mukti's activities in providing direct Islamic lectures and lectures in various *Majelis Taklim* and mosques throughout Jabodetabek. There are several *Kitab Kunings* studied by Mukti, namely *the Book of Adab al-Dunya wa al-Din* and *Syarah Al-Waroqot Fi Ushulil Fiqhi*. Both of these books review Mukti routinely through his Facebook account where he reads and provides explanations for the editors of the books he reads.

It is known, the book *Adab ad-Dunya wa ad-Din* is one of a number of works of Abu al-Hasan Ali Ibn Muhammad Ibn Habib al-Basri al-Mawardi (972-1058 AD). The Book of *Adab ad-Dunya wa ad-Din* itself consists of five chapters, each of which explains the virtue of reason and the despicability of lust, the virtue of science, ethics in practicing religion, ethics in the world life, and personal ethics. While *Syarah Al-Waroqot Fi Ushulil Fiqhi* is the work of Shaykh Imam Jalaluddin Muhammad bin Ahmad al-Mahalli as-Shafi'i who is also better known as Shaykh Imam Mahalli as-Shafi'i. This book is one of the books of Usul Fiqh which is widely studied in *Pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools) in Indonesia.

Gus M. Ziyulhaq Syamsul Falahi Ponorogo

Another figure who gave the *Pengajian Kitab Kuning* online was Gus M. Ziyulhaq Syamsul Falahi Ponorogo or Gus Ziyulhaq. Gus, who is commonly called Gus Gondrong, is a cleric as well as a caregiver for Pesantren Waskita Jawi, located in Brotonegaran, Ponorogo, East Java. Through his Facebook account, Ziyulhaq, he gave the teachings of the book *al-Bidayah wa al-Nihayah* or *Tarikh* of Ibn Kathir is the work of Ismail bin Umar Al-Quraisyi bin Kathir Al-Bashri Ad-Dimasyqi, Imaduddin Abu Al-Fida Al-Hafizh Al-Muhaddits Ash-Shafi'i or Ibn Kathir. Like other kyai, Gus Ziyulhaq read directly the parts of the *Kitab Kuning* and explained the meaning of the texts he read. In addition to viewers from various regions who befriended him on his Facebook account, the Jamaahs of the study were kyai and santri who directly participated in their *Ngaji Online* activities.

It is known that the Book of *al-Bidayah wa al-Nihayah*. The book of history written by Ibn Kathir contains a discussion about the creation of the universe, the creation of heaven and earth, the existence of angels, the presence of the first man, the chain of stories of the prophets and previous peoples to the last Prophet. Furthermore, this book also parses the history of the figures, the existence of political dynasties (khilafah or daulah) and various events that

continue throughout Islamic history to the author's own period. In addition, the book also breaks down the history of human life in the future, including the last day and post-death life.

Sheikh Rohimuddin Nawawi Al-Jahary Al-Bantany

Furthermore, another figure who conducted the study of the *Pengajian Kitab kuning* online was Sheikh Rohimuddin Nawawi Al-Jahary Al-Bantany. Head of Al-Ajhariyah Islamic Boarding School Ceger Ds. Muktiwari, Cibitung Sub-district, Bekasi, is diligent in sharing his online teaching through his Facebook account, Sheikh Rohimuddin Nawawi Al-Jahary Al-Bantany. Unlike the others, Sheikh Rohimuddin Nawawi Al-Jahary Al-Bantany seems to give sermons with various titles such as *Muqaddimah at-Tashawuf wa Haqiqatuh wa Natijatuh*, Book of *Dzikir al-Maqomat* by Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jailani Al-Hasani Al-Husaini, *Syarh al-Hikam* of Ibn Athoillah al-Sakandary, the Book of *Adab al-Muridin* by Abu al-Najib al-Suhrawardi, and others. Various studies on this book were done by Sheikh Rohimuddin Nawawi Al-Jahary Al-Bantany, in addition to those who were present directly and those who were friends through his Facebook account. In addition, the various books he reads are almost entirely the work of Sufism scholars.

Referring to the *Pengajian Kitab Kuning* activities carried out online by several pesantren figures such as Ulil Abshar Abdalla, Mukti Ali Qusyairy, Gus M. Ziyulhaq Syamsul Falahi Ponorogo, Sheikh Rohimuddin Nawawi Al-Jahary Al-Bantany, and possibly many other scholars who did the same, the researcher found a tendency to transform the *Pengajian Kitab Kuning* model online. If during this time the study of the *Pengajian Kitab Kuning* was carried out in a limited space such as boarding schools, majelis taklim, and limited studies, but the presence of social media made it possible to carry out the study of the *Kitab Kuning* more broadly. The kyai and the study community gradually began to use social media as an open space for teaching as in the boarding school environment. By paying attention to the reach of his social media, a kyai can expand the congregation that listens to him.

Judging from his teaching techniques, *Ngaji Online* by a kyai is nothing more than the technique of teaching the *Kitab Kuning* in *bandongan*. In this case, the kyai reads the texts in the book and then explains the meaning of the content referred to the author of the book, while the *Jamaah* listens carefully. However, in *Ngaji Online*, perhaps a number of differences can be found from the direct reading of the *Kitab Kuning*. First, the study of the *Kitab Kuning* online necessitates that there is no face-to-face meeting between the Kyai and the congregation as well as the direct recitation of the *bandongan* in the *majelis taklim* and *pondok pesantren*. The *Jamaah* can listen to explanations in various areas of residence and between their busy activities. Secondly, online recitation allows *Jamaah Pengajian* to participate in a wider distribution because *Ngaji online* allows *Jamaah* from various separate areas and have their respective activities to continue following the *Ngaji Online* delivered by a kyai. Such conditions are certainly different from the

non-online study of the *Kitab Kuning*. The number of jamaah who attend will be very limited, consisting of the santri or jamaah in the environment around the clerics. Third, *santri* or *jamaah* who do not have time to take the *Ngaji* directly will be able to attend the *Ngaji Online* by reviewing the *Pengajian Kitab Kuning Online* program.

b. Ngaji Online: Study Islam without limits

Viewed from the perspective of the Jamaah who are the viewers themselves, the presence of the *Ngaji Online* allows them to access the *Pengajian* activities of the *Kitab Kuning* delivered by the Kyai. Some viewers who became the research informants said that *Ngaji Online* gives them the opportunity to continue to study Islamic doctrines from *Kitab Kuning* that are recognized by their authority from Islamic clerics who are also quite authoritative in explaining the field of Islamic doctrines. Not only that, the existence of *Ngaji Online* allows them to still have the opportunity to enjoy *pengajian* of the *bandongan* as do Kyai and Santri in Pesantren even though at the same time they also remain active in their respective busy activities.

Muhammad Furqon, a lecturer at the Faculty of Education in Jabodetabek routinely participates in the study of the book of *Ihya Ulum al-Din* delivered by Kyai Ulul Abshar Abdalla through his Facebook account. Like at the pesantren, Furqon listened to Kyai Ulil's reading and explanation by opening the page of the section under discussion at the time. The study of the *Kitab* which was carried out at night made it possible for him to continue to attend the *Ngaji* in with his family. Even later his activities listening to the study of the *Kitab Kuning* online were also followed by other families [19].

The same activity is also carried out by Feni Arfiani. The state civil apparatus who works as the head of administration at a faculty at the state Islamic religious college in Ciputat does not usually go home after office hours are over. Apart from his work which often requires him to go home from work after Isha, on certain nights such as Tuesday nights Wednesday he usually does not hurry home. While resting at his desk, he will turn on the computer at his desk that has been connected to the internet and take part in the *Ngaji Online* of *Ihya Ulum al-Din* delivered by Kyai Ulil. Through an internet connection, Feni also listened to the presentation delivered by Ulil via Facebook while still opening the sheets of the *Kitab Ihya* that had been prepared in the bookcase next to his desk [20].

Like Furqon and Feni, Buyung Pahlian who worked at Cempaka Putih, Central Jakarta, also did the same thing. In contrast to Furqon and Feni, Buyung, who has a managerial background in a national oil and gas construction company, only listens to the descriptions presented by Gus Ulil. He has no pesantren education background and therefore is not very fluent in reading and understanding Arabic texts, especially the bald Arabic text written in yellow books, but Buyung feels he still needs to learn even though he only relies on the presentation of the presenter without having to open the book. From the explanations he listened to, Buyung felt he always got

'something' from the *Ngaji Online* he got every Tuesday night Wednesday. More than that, his busy work as a manager does not make him lose the opportunity to learn Islam from religious leaders who are considered to have mastery of the Kitab Kuning-based Islamic studies [21].

The habit of Muhammad Furqon, Feni Arifiani, and Buyung Expertise to take part in the 'online' study described the trend of expanding people's opportunities to follow the yellow book recitation activities by utilizing digital internet-connected devices. The availability of the study of the yellow book as an authoritative source with clerics who are no less authoritative in their mastery allows them to still have broad opportunities in learning various Islamic explanations from various aspects such as fiqh, the morality of Sufism and others. Their busyness in their various professions does not become an obstacle for them to continue to participate in the sermon despite being separated from each other.

Viewed from the perspective of Islamic scientific tradition, the number of kyai who open the study of the yellow book online is a breath of fresh air for the continued growth of community scientific activities. The community, both those who have studied at Islamic boarding schools or only know Islamic studies in a limited family environment or not, have the same opportunity in getting access to the study of the yellow book. Especially if the online book study is done in a scheduled and ongoing manner. The study of the yellow book will further enrich the transmission of Islamic scholarship in the Muslim community of the country.

More than that, the study of the yellow book online will bring people closer to the use of reliable references in building Islamic understanding and religious practices that they run. This is in line with what Said Aqil Siradj said that the yellow book has a decisive role for Muslim communities as a guideline for universal religious procedures as well as references (*maraji* ') among *pesantren* (also Muslim communities) in addressing all challenges in their lives. Even with the wealth of intellectual traditions contained in it, the yellow book that has been written and maintained in the *pesantren* community has a role as a 'runway' in understanding as well as reformulating every Islamic thought in response to the various advances in life they face. The closeness of the *pesantren* community to the classical treasures in the form of yellow books is that the *pesantren* community can produce *tawasuth* (moderate), *tawazun* (balance), *I'tidal* (middle), and *tasamuh* (tolerant) attitudes as typical attitudes of *pesantren* communities [22].

4 Conclusions

Based on the analysis of research findings by the author, the progress of the internet has also colored the yellow book recitation activities among Indonesian Muslims. The clerics and students of traditional background creatively utilize the internet in social media products as an important medium in the delivery of the study of the Kitab Kuning that they do. They provide *Ngaji Online* such as the *bandongan* techniques at the *Pesantren*, but this model allows wider expansion of the number and reach of *Jamaah*. The *Kyai* open social media accounts with appropriate features such

as Facebook social media which has a live broadcast feature (live streaming). Thus, *Ngaji online* enriches the *Kitab Kuning* teaching model in the Muslim community of the country. While the time of *Ngaji Online* is held periodically, weekly, bi-weekly, and monthly.

The *Kitab Kuning* that read in *Ngaji Online* activities is quite varied. However, from several *Ngaji Kitab Kuning Online* activities, most of them are filled with the study of the *Kitab Kuning* on the topic of Sufism such as the Book of *Ihya Ulum al-Din* by Abu Hamed Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ghazālī, *Muqaddimah at-Tashawuf wa Haqiqatuh wa Natijatuh*, *Dhikr al-Din - Maqomat* by Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jailani Al-Hasani Al-Husaini, *Syarh al-Hikam* by Ibn Athoillah al-Sakandary, *Adab al-Muridin* by Abu al-Najib al-Suhrawardi and others. Furthermore, books on ethical topics such as *Adab ad-Dunya wa ad-Din* by Abu al-Hasan Ali Ibn Muhammad Ibn Habib al-Bashri al-Mawardi, topics on Islamic legal philosophy such as *Syarah Al-Waroqot Fi Ushulil Fiqhi* by Shaykh Imam Jalaluddin Muhammad bin Ahmad al-Mahalli as-Shafi'i, and history such as the book of *al-Bidayah wa al-Nihayah* or *Tarikh* of Ibn Kathir by Ismail bin Umar Al-Quraisyi bin Kathir Al-Bashri Ad-Dimasyqi or Ibnu Kathir.

Meanwhile, from the perspective of the Jamaah themselves, the presence of *Ngaji Online* gives them the opportunity to continue to access Islamic knowledge from authoritative books and clerical figures who have undoubted Islamic capabilities. Social media allows them to build religious understanding in the midst of their busy activities through *Ngaji Online*, religious learning activities without time and place limits.

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