



Management Pattern of the Arabic Language Learning Program in a Kitab Kuning Based Islamic Boarding School at Nadwa Sinunukan Islamic Boarding School

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Article Info	Abstract
Accepted: 2026-05-23 Revised: 2026-06-25 Accepted: 2026-06-26 Keywords: Arabic Language Learning; Educational Management; Kitab Kuning; Islamic Boarding School DOI: 10.24256/ideas.v14i1.10770 Corresponding authors: Siti Sumaiah batubarasumayyah@gmail.com Program Pasca Sarjana Pendidikan Bahasa Arab, Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau	<i>Studies on Arabic language learning in Islamic boarding schools have predominantly focused on instructional methods, while limited attention has been given to how educational management supports the effectiveness of kitab kuning-based learning programs. This study aims to analyze the management model of the Arabic language learning program based on kitab kuning at Nadwa Sinunukan Islamic Boarding School and to examine its contribution to students' mastery of classical Islamic texts. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach, data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation involving the pesantren leader, Arabic language teachers, and students. Data were analyzed through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that the pesantren implements an integrated management model that combines systematic planning, teacher coordination, structured learning schedules, and continuous evaluation with traditional pesantren learning methods, including bandongan, sorogan, and discussion. This management pattern enables the alignment of institutional goals, instructional practices, and student learning outcomes in mastering nahwu and sharaf as the foundation for understanding kitab kuning. The study highlights the uniqueness of integrating modern management functions with traditional pesantren pedagogical practices. The findings contribute to the discourse on Islamic educational management</i>

by demonstrating that effective program management can strengthen the sustainability and effectiveness of kitab kuning-based Arabic learning. Practically, the study offers a management framework that may serve as a reference for other pesantren seeking to improve students' competence in reading and understanding classical Islamic texts.

1. Introduction

Arabic plays a central role in Islamic education, particularly within Islamic boarding schools (pesantren), where it functions not only as a language subject but also as the primary medium for accessing classical Islamic scholarship. Mastery of Arabic enables students to understand the Qur'an, Hadith, and kitab kuning, which remain the principal references in the study of Islamic sciences (Aulia, 2024). Consequently, Arabic learning in pesantren emphasizes the ability to read, comprehend, and analyze classical texts through mastery of nahwu and sharaf rather than communicative competence alone.

The teaching of kitab kuning constitutes one of the defining characteristics of pesantren education. According to Dhofier (2011), pesantren are built upon the interconnected roles of the kiai, santri, and the study of classical Islamic texts. Traditional learning methods such as bandongan and sorogan have been developed to facilitate the transmission of religious knowledge and maintain the continuity of Islamic intellectual traditions. Similarly, Azra (2012) argues that pesantren function not only as educational institutions but also as centers for the reproduction of Islamic knowledge and religious values. Within this framework, Arabic serves as both the language of instruction and the language of religious authority.

Despite the persistence of these traditions, contemporary educational demands require pesantren to strengthen their managerial capacity. Effective learning programs depend not only on pedagogical approaches but also on systematic educational management involving planning, organizing, implementation, and evaluation (Fikri, 2025). In management theory, these functions are commonly conceptualized through the framework of planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling (Terry, 1972). In this study, the term management pattern refers to the systematic configuration of these managerial functions in organizing, implementing, and evaluating Arabic language learning programs within the pesantren context.

Previous studies have highlighted the effectiveness of kitab kuning-based Arabic learning in improving students' mastery of classical texts through the reinforcement of nahwu and sharaf competencies (Rohman, 2021). Furthermore, Nasrullah (2025) examined the management of kitab kuning learning from the

perspectives of curriculum, instructional methods, learning resources, and evaluation. However, studies specifically investigating how educational management functions are integrated into the management of Arabic language learning programs based on kitab kuning remain limited. This gap indicates the need for empirical research focusing on the managerial dimensions of Arabic learning in pesantren.

Nadwa Sinunukan Islamic Boarding School provides a relevant context for such investigation. Preliminary observations indicate that Arabic learning based on kitab kuning constitutes the core educational program and is implemented through structured daily activities, including formal classes, reinforcement sessions, and evening halaqah. The pesantren also demonstrates functional teacher coordination and a strong academic culture in reading and interpreting classical Arabic texts. At the same time, learning planning, implementation, and evaluation continue to reflect a combination of traditional pesantren practices and contemporary management needs.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to analyze the management pattern of the kitab kuning-based Arabic language learning program at Nadwa Sinunukan Islamic Boarding School. Specifically, the study examines how planning, organizing, implementation, and evaluation are carried out within the program. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of pesantren educational management theory and provide practical insights for improving the effectiveness of Arabic language learning programs in Islamic boarding schools.

2. Method

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to analyze the management pattern of the kitab kuning-based Arabic language learning program at Nadwa Sinunukan Islamic Boarding School. A qualitative approach was selected because the study sought to obtain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon within its natural setting. The case study design enabled the researcher to explore a bounded educational system comprehensively and contextually, as suggested by Creswell (2014).

The participants were selected using purposive sampling because they possessed direct responsibilities and experience in managing and implementing the Arabic language learning program. The participants consisted of the pesantren leader (Abuya Abdurrahman Batubara), the curriculum coordinator (Ummi Maryam), and the teacher responsible for teaching the kitab kuning (Ellida). These participants were considered key informants due to their involvement in planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating the learning program.

The research was conducted from late January to May 2026. Data were collected through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies. Observations focused on classroom learning activities, student participation, teacher coordination, and the implementation of kitab kuning learning sessions. Interviews were conducted using semi-structured

interview guidelines developed based on the educational management framework of planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling proposed by Terry (1972). Documentation data included curriculum documents, learning schedules, teaching materials, and evaluation records related to the Arabic language learning program.

To ensure data credibility, the study employed source triangulation and method triangulation. Information obtained from interviews was cross-checked with observational findings and documentary evidence. According to Sugiyono (2022), triangulation is an important strategy for enhancing the trustworthiness of qualitative research findings.

Ethical considerations were observed throughout the research process. Prior to data collection, permission was obtained from the management of Nadwa Sinunukan Islamic Boarding School. Participants were informed about the objectives of the study, and their participation was voluntary. The information obtained was used solely for academic purposes and reported responsibly.

Data analysis followed the interactive model developed by Miles and Huberman (2014), consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. The analysis began with organizing and reducing field data, followed by categorizing information according to the management functions of planning, organizing, implementation, and evaluation. Relevant data were then displayed in a systematic manner to facilitate interpretation. Finally, conclusions were drawn and continuously verified through comparison among interview, observation, and documentation data to ensure the consistency and validity of the findings.

Table 1. Research Participants and Data Sources

Participant	Position	Role in Research	Data Source
Abuya	Pesantren	Policy maker and	Interview,
Abdurrahman	Leader	program supervisor	Documentation
Batubara			
Ummi Maryam	Curriculum	Curriculum planning and	Interview,
	Coordinator	academic management	Documentation
Ellida	Kitab Kuning	Learning implementation	Interview,
	Teacher	and evaluation	Observation
Learning Activities	-	Learning process	Observation
		observation	
Curriculum	-	Supporting institutional	Documentation
Documents		data	
Assessment	-	Evaluation data	Documentation
Records			

The interview protocol was developed based on the four educational management functions proposed by Terry (1972), namely planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling. The interview questions were reviewed and refined through discussions with experts in Islamic educational management to ensure their relevance to the research objectives. During data collection, source triangulation and method triangulation were employed to enhance data credibility and trustworthiness. According to Sugiyono (2022), triangulation enables researchers to verify findings through multiple sources and data collection techniques.

Ethical considerations were carefully observed throughout the research process. Prior to data collection, all participants were informed about the objectives of the study and their voluntary participation. Informed consent was obtained from each participant, and confidentiality was maintained by using research data solely for academic purposes.

Data analysis followed the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. The analysis began with open coding to identify meaningful statements related to learning management practices. Similar codes were then grouped into categories corresponding to planning, organizing, implementation, and evaluation processes.

Subsequently, thematic analysis was conducted to identify recurring patterns and relationships among categories. The emerging themes were continuously compared with field observations and documentary evidence to ensure consistency and credibility. The analytical process was conducted iteratively throughout the study until data saturation was achieved and no new themes emerged.

3. Results

Based on interviews, observations, and documentation, the management pattern of the kitab kuning-based Arabic language learning program at Nadwa Sinunukan Islamic Boarding School can be analyzed through four educational management functions: planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling. The findings indicate that the pesantren has developed a management system that combines traditional pesantren educational values with modern management principles. This combination contributes to maintaining the continuity of the kitab kuning tradition while supporting the effectiveness of the learning process.

Table 2. Summary of Findings on the Management Pattern of Kitab Kuning Based Arabic Learning

Management Function	Main Findings	Strengths	Challenges
Planning	Curriculum emphasizes nahwu and sharaf mastery and is supported by annual and semester programs	Strong foundation for understanding kitab kuning	Limited emphasis on communicative Arabic skills
Organizing	Division of tasks based on teachers' expertise and coordination through teacher consultation forums	Enhances collaboration and program implementation	Strong dependence on experienced teachers
Actuating	Learning employs bandongan, sorogan, and discussion methods	Develops students' textual analysis and reading accuracy	Learning remains relatively teacher-centered
Controlling	Weekly, mid-semester, and semester evaluations are implemented	Enables continuous monitoring of student progress	Assessment instruments are not yet fully standardized

Planning of the Kitab Kuning-Based Arabic Learning Program

The findings reveal that the planning of the Arabic language learning program is oriented toward enabling students to understand classical Islamic texts as primary sources of Islamic knowledge. This objective reflects the traditional educational philosophy of pesantren, where Arabic functions not merely as a communication tool but as an instrument for accessing Islamic intellectual heritage.

Curriculum planning is primarily based on the mastery of nahwu and sharaf, which are considered fundamental competencies for reading and interpreting kitab kuning. This finding is consistent with the view of Martin van Bruinessen (1995), who argues that the study of Arabic grammar forms the core of traditional pesantren curricula. The emphasis on grammatical competence contributes significantly to students' ability to analyze unvowelled Arabic texts.

However, the findings also indicate that the curriculum places greater emphasis on textual comprehension than on communicative language competence. While this approach strengthens students' ability to understand classical texts, it may limit opportunities to develop productive language skills such as speaking and

writing in Arabic. This condition reflects a continuing challenge faced by many traditional pesantren in balancing classical scholarship with contemporary language learning needs.

Planning is further supported by annual programs, semester programs, and learning schedules aligned with the Merdeka Curriculum. This finding suggests that the pesantren has attempted to integrate traditional learning objectives with formal educational requirements, thereby strengthening the sustainability of the learning program.

Organizing of the Learning Program

The organizing function is reflected in the division of responsibilities among teachers according to their academic expertise and teaching experience. The findings indicate that teacher specialization contributes to the effectiveness of instructional delivery because each teacher is responsible for subject areas aligned with their competencies.

In addition, the existence of teacher consultation forums serves as an important mechanism for coordination and collective problem-solving. Through these forums, teachers discuss students' learning progress, instructional challenges, and possible improvements to teaching strategies. This finding demonstrates that organizational management within the pesantren is not solely dependent on the authority of the pesantren leader but also incorporates collaborative decision-making practices.

From a management perspective, such coordination contributes to the consistency of instructional implementation and facilitates the achievement of learning objectives. Nevertheless, the study also found that organizational effectiveness remains closely linked to the experience and commitment of senior teachers. This reliance may become a challenge if institutional knowledge is not systematically documented and transferred to younger educators.

Implementation (Actuating) of the Learning Program

The implementation of the Arabic language learning program is characterized by the application of traditional pesantren instructional methods, namely bandongan, sorogan, and discussion. These methods have been maintained because they are considered effective in facilitating students' understanding of kitab kuning and strengthening their mastery of Arabic grammar.

Observational data showed that students actively participated in reading, translating, and analyzing Arabic texts during learning sessions. The bandongan method enabled teachers to provide comprehensive explanations of texts, while sorogan encouraged individual accountability and direct interaction between students and teachers. The discussion method complemented these approaches by allowing students to clarify difficult concepts and share interpretations.

The findings suggest that these instructional methods contribute positively to students' reading fluency and comprehension of classical texts. Students who regularly participated in learning activities demonstrated increased confidence in reading kitab kuning and identifying grammatical structures within the text.

However, the study also identified several challenges. Students frequently experienced difficulties in understanding complex grammatical rules and correct Arabic pronunciation. Furthermore, classroom activities remained largely teacher-centered, with students relying heavily on teachers' explanations. This finding indicates the need for instructional innovations that maintain the strengths of traditional methods while encouraging greater student autonomy and active participation.

Controlling and Evaluation

The controlling function is implemented through various forms of evaluation, including weekly assessments, kitab kuning reading examinations, mid-semester examinations, and final semester examinations. These evaluation activities are intended to monitor students' progress and ensure the achievement of learning objectives.

The findings indicate that evaluation serves not only as a measurement tool but also as a mechanism for reinforcing learning discipline and motivation. Students are continuously encouraged to improve their reading accuracy and comprehension because their performance is regularly monitored by teachers.

Observational evidence further showed that students who consistently participated in evaluation activities demonstrated better reading performance and greater confidence in interpreting kitab kuning. This finding suggests a direct relationship between systematic evaluation practices and the improvement of learning outcomes.

Despite these strengths, several limitations were identified. Assessment practices still rely substantially on teachers' observations and oral evaluations, resulting in limited standardization of assessment procedures. Consequently, variations in assessment practices among teachers may affect the consistency and objectivity of learning evaluation. Strengthening assessment instruments and documentation systems may therefore enhance the effectiveness of program supervision and quality assurance.

4. Discussion

The findings demonstrate that the management pattern of the kitab kuning-based Arabic learning program at Nadwa Sinunukan Islamic Boarding School reflects an integration between traditional pesantren educational practices and contemporary management functions. The implementation of planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling functions contributes to the effectiveness of learning

activities and supports students' ability to understand classical Islamic texts.

The study extends previous findings by Rohman (2021), who emphasized the importance of *nahwu* and *sharaf* mastery in improving students' comprehension of *kitab kuning*. Unlike previous studies that primarily focused on instructional aspects, the present study highlights the significance of educational management practices in supporting learning effectiveness. The findings also complement Nasrullah (2025), who examined curriculum and instructional management in *pesantren*, by demonstrating how management functions operate systematically within a *kitab kuning*-based Arabic learning program.

Overall, the study suggests that the effectiveness of Arabic learning in *pesantren* depends not only on traditional instructional methods but also on the quality of educational management. The integration of strong pedagogical traditions with systematic management practices can enhance learning outcomes while preserving the distinctive identity of *pesantren* education.

5. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that the management of the Arabic language learning program based on *kitab kuning* at Nadwa Sinunukan Islamic Boarding School has been implemented through the four functions of educational management, namely planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling (POAC).

First, in the aspect of planning, the Arabic language learning program was designed with the objective of helping students understand the sources of Islamic teachings authentically through mastery of *kitab kuning*. Learning planning was carried out through the development of a curriculum emphasizing mastery of *nahwu* (Arabic syntax) and *sharaf* (Arabic morphology) as the foundation for understanding classical Arabic texts. In addition, the learning program was supported by the preparation of learning schedules, annual programs, semester programs, and learning evaluation plans through mid-semester and final-semester examinations.

Second, in the aspect of organizing, the management of the Arabic language learning program involved all educational personnel within the *pesantren*, particularly Arabic language teachers. Program organization was carried out through the division of responsibilities and coordination among teachers, including through teachers' consultation forums used to discuss the implementation and evaluation of learning activities.

Third, in the aspect of implementation, Arabic language learning based on *kitab kuning* was conducted using traditional *pesantren* learning methods such as *bandongan*, *sorogan*, and discussion. These methods assisted students in understanding Arabic language structures and improving their ability to read texts without diacritical marks (*harakat*).

During the learning process, students demonstrated active participation by asking questions and making efforts to understand the material delivered by the teachers.

Fourth, in the aspect of controlling and evaluation, learning evaluation was conducted periodically through *kitab kuning* reading examinations, weekly evaluations, and assessments of students' daily learning activities. The minimum competency standard for Arabic language proficiency was set at 75%. If students' learning outcomes did not reach the expected target, teachers conducted joint evaluations and adjusted teaching methods to improve learning effectiveness.

Overall, this study demonstrates that the management of the Arabic language learning program based on *kitab kuning* at Nadwa Sinunukan Islamic Boarding School has been implemented quite effectively through the application of educational management functions. The integration between traditional pesantren learning practices and modern educational management principles has become an important factor in supporting the improvement of students' ability to understand *kitab kuning*.

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