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THE INFLUENCE OF WETU TELU ISLAMIC SYNCRETISM ON FIQH LEARNING: A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY AT MTS BABUL MUJAHIDIN, BAYAN, NORTH LOMBOK

Minarti Indah¹

Universitas Islam Negeri Sulthan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi, Jambi, Indonesia
(minartiindah724@gmail.com)

Yulia Oktarina

Universitas Islam Negeri Sulthan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi, Jambi, Indonesia
(yuliaoktarina@uinjambi.ac.id)

Muhammad Fadly Habibi

Universitas Islam Negeri Sulthan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi, Jambi, Indonesia
(fadly.habibi@uinjambi.ac.id)

Eldo Delamontano

Universitas Padjadjaran (eldo23001@mail.unpad.ac.id)

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ABSTRACTS

This study examines the effects of the Islamic Wetu Telu syncretism on Fiqh education at the Madrasah Tsanawiyah Babul Mujahidin, which is situated in the Traditional Village of Bayan in North Lombok. The teaching of Fiqh in the madrasah does not occur in a socially neutral environment; it is shaped by the local cultural and religious practices. The aim of this research is to explore how these local values influence students' understanding and attitudes towards religion. A qualitative case study method was employed for this purpose. Data was gathered through observation, in-depth interviews with five teachers and thirty students, as well as an analysis of educational documents. Data analysis was conducted in both descriptive and analytical ways, focusing on the interaction between local religious practices and Fiqh education. Findings indicate that the syncretism of Islamic Wetu Telu significantly impacts students' comprehension of Fiqh, especially regarding ritual worship. Approximately 68% of students reported challenges in grasping worship practices due to discrepancies between family traditions and normative Fiqh teachings, while 57% of teachers observed that students tended to follow the guidance of traditional leaders more than formal instructions. Despite these obstacles, local values such as community cohesion, respect for traditional authority, and social balance serve as positive social capital when applied through a contextual and dialogical teaching approach. The study concludes that the Islamic Wetu Telu syncretism does not necessarily impede formal Islamic education; rather, it can act as an educational bridge if managed in a contextual and dialogical manner. These findings underscore the significance of cultural sensitivity in developing Fiqh instruction within local communities.

¹ Correspondence Author

A. INTRODUCTION

The variety of religious practices in Indonesia is one of the key features of its multi-faceted society. Although Indonesia is mainly Muslim, it showcases an extensive array of religious expressions influenced not only by religious beliefs but also by local social customs and cultural values. The development of region-specific Islamic practices in the Indonesian islands, like Abangan Islam in Java and Wetu Telu Islam in Lombok, shows that religion evolves through ongoing interactions with cultural environments rather than in a standard way (Rasyad, 2022) (Hakiem, 2025)

The Wetu Telu phenomenon is a clear example of the blending of Islamic beliefs with the Sasak community's local culture in Lombok. Wetu Telu refers to a religious approach that focuses on three key worship times, as opposed to Waktu Lima, which is the version of Islam followed by most Muslims who perform five daily prayers (Rasyad, 2022) In practice, the Wetu Telu community also incorporates various local customs and beliefs stemming from pre-Islamic practices, such as traditional ceremonies and honoring ancestors, which they fuse with established Islamic rituals (Kunci, 2019)

The introduction of Islam to Lombok likely happened in the 1500s via religious contact channels established by ulama from Java, who then engaged with local faith practices referred to as Boda. The past connection between Islam and Boda was not typically hostile; in fact, it frequently led to cultural adaptation and blending known later as Wetu Telu. This occurrence shows that religion can evolve through interaction with indigenous cultures, leading to unique manifestations that are different from mainstream Islamic traditions (Mataram, n.d.)

Discussions about syncretism in Islam often attract significant academic interest. Various research efforts suggest that the syncretic elements in Wetu Telu traditions signify a type of religious adjustment that increases the importance of faith in local communities (Sumiadi, 2025). However, earlier investigations have mainly concentrated on the anthropological and sociological aspects of Wetu Telu, while failing to explore its impact on formal Islamic education, especially in the context of fiqh teachings in madrasahs. Consequently, this research provides a fresh perspective by specifically analyzing how Wetu Telu syncretism influences the teaching methods of fiqh and the religious comprehension of students within a structured educational environment.

In the realm of Islamic education, fiqh encompasses more than just the delivery of legal principles; it also involves enhancing students' comprehension of religious practices within their societal contexts. As per the theory of contextual teaching and learning (CTL), the educational experience becomes richer when students link academic content to their personal lives and cultural settings (Johnson, 2002). Likewise, constructivist methodologies in Islamic teaching highlight that learners actively form their understanding of religion by engaging with their cultural and social environments, rather than simply absorbing doctrinal information (Suparno, 2013). These viewpoints indicate that teaching fiqh should take into account the cultural backgrounds of students to foster

relevant and impactful religious learning experiences.

In formal religious education, the differences in religious practices hold significant consequences for the teaching of fiqh. As a segment of Islamic studies that governs worship and social relations, fiqh should be delivered with an awareness of the socio-cultural contexts of the students. Difficulties arise when traditional and text-driven methods of teaching fiqh meet localized and adaptable expressions of faith like Wetu Telu. This scenario necessitates that fiqh instructors implement contextual and conversational teaching methods that maintain the core tenets of Islamic principles while being attentive to the actual experiences of the students (Sumiadi, 2025).

MTs Babul Mujahidin, situated in the Traditional Village of Bayan, North Lombok, serves as an Islamic educational establishment dedicated to imparting fiqh lessons to the youth. Within this environment, fiqh is instructed in a structured manner as part of the official curriculum, while local cultural principles linked to Wetu Telu are firmly integrated into the community. This scenario fosters a distinctive relationship between established religious teachings and local cultural practices, where both frameworks can either support or contest each other. Previous research has indicated that combining Islamic education with the cultural backgrounds of the community can enhance the learning experiences of students while also reinforcing their religious and social identities (Sumiadi, 2025). Nevertheless, there is a limited amount of research specifically focusing on the functioning of contextual fiqh pedagogy within communities affected by religious syncretism. The uniqueness of this study is found in its effort to merge the socio-cultural examination of Wetu Telu traditions with the theory of contextual fiqh learning, aiming to explore how local customs shape students' understanding of Islamic teachings within madrasah education.

This research focuses on the aspects of Wetu Telu Islamic syncretism and examines how it influences fiqh learning at MTs Babul Mujahidin in the Bayan Traditional Village of North Lombok. The objective is to gain a deeper comprehension of how local customs interact with formal religious education in modern Islamic teaching. Furthermore, this research provides actionable suggestions for fiqh educators aimed at creating teaching methods that are sensitive to cultural context. Consequently, merging socio-cultural viewpoints with Islamic education is crucial for enhancing scholarly discussions and fostering religious learning that is more relevant, effective, and attuned to the realities faced by Muslim groups in diverse societies like Indonesia.

B. METHOD

Formed by specific social and cultural circumstances. This phenomenon not only reflects the historical dynamics of the spread of Islam but also highlights the continuous process of negotiating values, social adaptation, and the establishment of religious identity within a community. In this context, local Islam can be viewed as a product of the interaction between Islamic teachings and the community's culture, leading to the development of religious practices that have unique characteristics in each region (Rasyad, 2022). Previous research

has generally focused more on the historical and sociological aspects of Islamic syncretism; however, there has been limited attention given to its impact on the practice of fiqh learning within Islamic educational institutions. Thus, this study aims to address this gap by examining how local religious traditions influence pedagogical practices in formal Islamic education. This study employs a qualitative approach using a field research design to explore the phenomenon in depth. (History, 2025) the phenomenon of Islamic syncretism in Wetu Telu and its impact on fiqh education within a concrete social context. The selection of this method is based on the need to explore the meanings, perspectives, and experiences of the research subjects comprehensively, particularly in analyzing the negotiation between local religious traditions and formal Islamic education. Using a descriptive case study design, this study seeks to portray the pedagogical realities occurring at Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) Babul Mujahidin, Bayan Village, North Lombok Regency, which was deliberately selected due to the community's strong preservation of Wetu Telu traditions.

This study adopts a qualitative approach utilizing a field research design to thoroughly examine the phenomenon of Islamic syncretism within the Wetu Telu community and its effects on fiqh education in a tangible social context (History, 2025). A qualitative method has been chosen as it allows the researcher to gain a comprehensive understanding of the meanings, perspectives, and lived experiences of the participants, particularly in relation to the interaction between local religious traditions and formal Islamic teachings. By employing a descriptive case study design, this research aims to illustrate the pedagogical reality at Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) Babul Mujahidin in the Bayan Village of North Lombok, selected intentionally due to the community's strong commitment to preserving Wetu Telu traditions.

To gather relevant data, research participants were chosen using purposive sampling that involved different stakeholders from the madrasah and the nearby community. The main participants were teachers of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and fiqh who engage with cultural elements in their teaching, along with students who navigate conflicting religious contexts in their everyday lives. Furthermore, the madrasah principal participated to offer insights about institutional policies, while local religious and traditional figures were included to confirm cultural traditions and values that are part of the educational framework (Maqauli, 2025)

The gathering of information took place in July 2025 through three main methods: thorough interviews, active observation, and analysis of documents. Interviews aimed to investigate the obstacles faced in teaching, the emotional reactions of students, and the approaches teachers use to adapt fiqh content. Active observation concentrated on classroom educational activities that utilized the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) method, whereas document analysis was used to review lesson plans, teaching resources, and curriculum materials that pertain to incorporating local cultural values within fiqh instruction (Gunawan and Daulay, 2024).

researcher conducted an analysis of teachers' instructional materials and madrasah curriculum documents to examine the extent to which local values

have been formally internalized into the teaching content.

The Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) strategy applied in this research refers to a constructivist teaching model that highlights the connection between educational materials and students' everyday experiences. CTL promotes the idea that students should actively build their understanding through significant learning experiences and problem-solving in context (Fitriani and Syamsudin, 2022). This model includes several key elements, such as constructivism, inquiry, questioning, a learning community, modeling, reflection, and real-world assessment. In practical terms, fiqh instructors at MTs Babul Mujahidin utilized CTL by linking Islamic legal principles with the local Wetu Telu traditions that are relevant to students' daily lives. The learning activities involved contextual discussions, case studies, collaborative conversations, and reflective practices aimed at enhancing students' critical comprehension of how normative Islamic teachings intersect with local cultural traditions. This method made the fiqh learning process more adaptable, engaging, and socially pertinent to the cultural contexts of the Bayan community.

The Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) method discussed in this research highlights a teaching model rooted in constructivism, which stresses the connection between educational materials and the real-world experiences of students. CTL motivates learners to build knowledge actively through significant learning occasions and problem-solving relevant to their contexts (Fitriani and Syamsudin, 2022). This teaching model includes several essential elements such as constructivism, inquiry, questioning, collaborative learning, modeling, reflection, and genuine assessment. In application, the fiqh instructors at MTs Babul Mujahidin utilized CTL by relating Islamic legal principles to the local Wetu Telu customs that resonate with students' everyday lives. Educational activities were carried out through context-based discussions, analysis of case studies, group dialogues, and reflective learning intended to enhance students' critical comprehension of how normative Islamic teachings connect with local cultural traditions. This methodology made fiqh education more adaptable, engaging, and relevant to the sociocultural circumstances of the Bayan community.

Data evaluation in this research utilized the interactive analysis framework created by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, which has been modified for use in current qualitative educational studies (Prasetyo and Hidayat, 2023). The analysis occurred in a continuous manner through four linked phases: gathering data, condensing data, presenting data, and reaching conclusions or verifying results. During the data condensation phase, the researcher sorted, organized, simplified, and categorized information acquired from interviews, observations, and documents, aligning it with the research objectives. Next, the arranged data was systematically presented in descriptive narratives and thematic matrices to aid in interpretation and the identification of patterns. The last phase consisted of formulating conclusions and confirming results through triangulation of sources, methods, and ongoing comparisons of field data to establish the trustworthiness, validity, and reliability of the research outcomes.

Moreover, this research took ethical considerations into account by

acquiring approval from the madrasah organization, getting informed consent from the individuals involved, and maintaining the privacy and anonymity of all participants during the entire research process.

All collected data were then analyzed using an interactive qualitative analysis model consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The researcher selected information relevant to the focus on cultural integration, organized it systematically, and applied source triangulation to ensure the validity of the findings. Through these stages, the results are expected to provide a comprehensive portrayal of the effectiveness of contextual pedagogy in bridging local cultural identities with normative Islamic values within the madrasah setting.

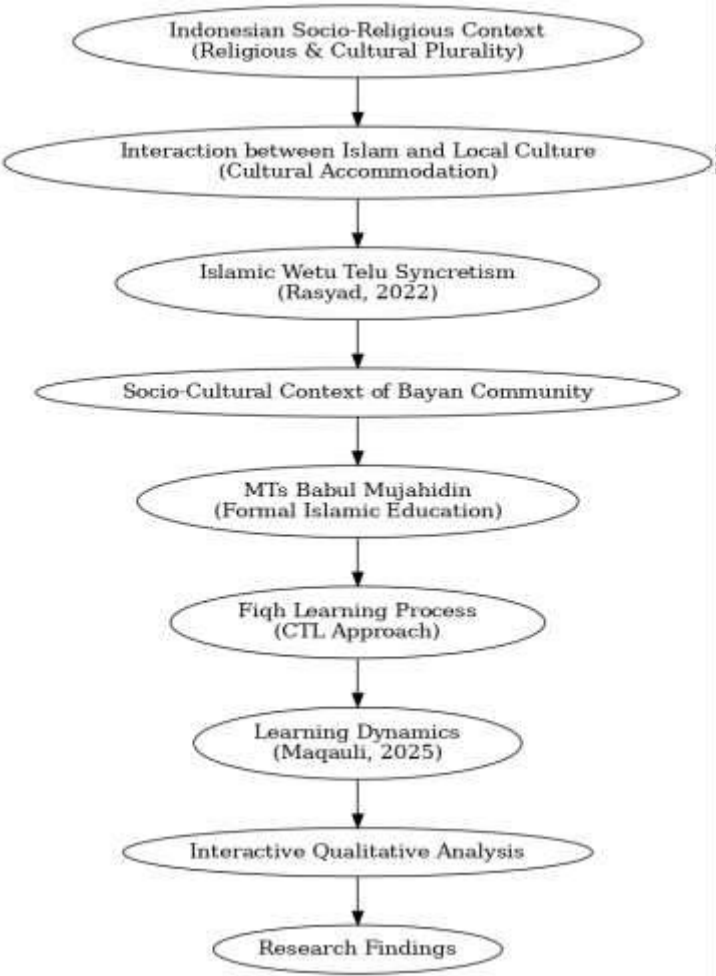


Figure 1. Research Flowchart of Islamic Wetu Telu Syncretism and Its Impact on Fiqh Learning

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Overview of Islamic Wetu Telu Syncretism in the Socio-Cultural Context of Bayan

The findings of this study indicate that the religious practice of Islam Wetu Telu continues to exert a significant influence on the daily lives of the people of Bayan Indigenous Village, North Lombok. Wetu Telu is not merely perceived as a series of religious rituals, but also represents a social and cultural identity that has been transmitted across generations. This tradition reflects the historical interaction between Islamic teachings and pre-Islamic local belief systems, which subsequently shaped a distinctive pattern of religiosity among the Sasak Bayan community. These findings are consistent with previous studies that emphasize the development of local Islamic practices through processes of cultural adaptation and negotiation between religious doctrines and indigenous traditions. (Rasyad, 2022)(Umam et al., 2024). which argues that local forms of Islam in Indonesia evolve through continuous negotiation and cultural adaptation, instead of enforcing uniform religious practices.

In this context, Wetu Telu functions as a social instrument for maintaining balance within the community, strengthening social cohesion, and preserving traditional values. This demonstrates that religious practices are deeply bound to the social and cultural contexts of the communities that sustain them. This perspective supports the anthropological approach to religion, which views religion as a dynamic and socially embedded phenomenon. (*Wetu Telu in Bayan Lombok: Dialectic of Islam and Local Culture* Muhammad Harfin Zuhdi 1, n.d.)

2. The Impact of Wetu Telu Islamic Syncretism on Fiqh Learning

The results of observations and interviews indicate that Wetu Telu Islamic syncretism has a significant impact on the process of learning fiqh at MTs Babul Mujahidin. Some students come from families who still practice Wetu Telu values in their daily lives, leading them to bring a religious understanding that combines normative Islamic teachings with local traditions. This situation creates particular challenges in fiqh instruction, which is normative, textual, and systematic in nature (Sumiadi, 2024).

Fiqh teachers stated that the differences between Wetu Telu practices and the school-taught madhhab-based fiqh often lead to conceptual confusion among students, particularly in relation to *ibadah mahdhah* such as prayer, fasting, and zakat. These findings are consistent with previous research (Maqauli, 2025) which emphasizes that the diversity of local religious practices can influence how students understand formal Islamic teachings if it is not managed through appropriate pedagogical approaches.

3. Teachers' Strategies in Bridging Fiqh Teachings and Local Culture

The findings revealed that fiqh instructors at MTs Babul Mujahidin applied a Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach to bridge the differences between normative fiqh rules and local religious practices. The instructors did not outright reject Wetu Telu practices; instead, they used them as a basis to explain fiqh concepts gradually and through dialogue. This method

proved effective in reducing student resistance and enhancing their understanding of fiqh teachings (Maghfiroh et al., n.d.) (Abidin & Nugraha, 2022).

The contextual approach allows teachers to relate fiqh material to the socio-cultural realities of students, making the learning process more meaningful and easier to understand. This supports the findings of previous studies (Gunawan & Daulay, 2024) which state that CTL is effective in religious education because it is able to integrate local values without diminishing the core substance of Islamic teachings.

4. Pedagogical Dynamics and Learning Challenges

Although the contextual method yields positive effects, this study also identifies significant pedagogical obstacles. Fiqh instructors are expected to possess deep knowledge not only of fiqh material but also of the Wetu Telu local culture (Maghfiroh et al., n.d.) The limited written sources on Wetu Telu and differences of opinion among community leaders present challenges in designing a balanced curriculum that integrates religious texts and local traditions (ISSN 1979-2794 e-ISSN: 2655-6634, 1979)

This situation underscores the importance of developing the cultural competence of fiqh teachers. As stated in the literature, religious teachers in regions with strong local religious traditions must possess cultural sensitivity so that the learning process does not become confrontational but rather transformative (Malang, 2021) (Guspani, n.d.)

5. Implications for Contextual Fiqh Education

The findings of this study reveal that integrating local cultural values into fiqh instruction is not a form of doctrinal relativism but rather a pedagogical approach to strengthen understanding of Islamic values. Contextualized fiqh teaching can serve as an effective means of fostering a moderate, inclusive religious understanding that aligns with the realities students face (Agama & Negeri, 2021). This aligns with the concept of religious moderation, which emphasizes a balance between text and context in Islamic practice (Hidayat et al., 2019) (Online, 2025)

Thus, fiqh education in the Wetu Telu community not only functions as the transmission of Islamic law but also as a space for dialogue between normative teachings and local cultural identity (Jamila, 2025) (Haluti, 2024)

6. Synthesis of Results and Discussion

Overall, the findings of this study indicate that Wetu Telu Islamic syncretism has a significant influence on fiqh learning at MTs Babul Mujahidin. Teaching methods that are sensitive to local culture have been shown to create more effective and meaningful learning experiences (Agama & Negeri, 2021). However, the success of this approach largely depends on the pedagogical and cultural competence of teachers, as well as institutional support from the madrasah in designing a flexible and context-appropriate curriculum (Arifin, 2024)

Table 1. Summary of Research Findings

Aspect	Findings	Educational Implication
Wetu Telu Culture	Still Strongly Practicet In Bayan	Influences Students' Religious Understanding
Fiqh Learning	Conceptual Confusion In Worship Topics	Need For Contextual Learning
Teaching Strategy	Use Of CTL Approach	Improves Comprehension And Engagement
Main Challenge	Limited Cultural Literature Integration	Need Teacher Cultural Competence

Analysis/Discussion

This study aims to examine the impact of Wetu Telu Islamic syncretism on the process of Fiqh learning at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Babul Mujahidin, located in Bayan Traditional Village, North Lombok. The primary focus of this research is to understand how local religious values that remain prevalent within the Bayan community contribute to students' understanding, attitudes, and religious practices within the context of formal Islamic education. The findings indicate that Wetu Telu Islamic syncretism no only functions as a socio-cultural background for students but also exerts a significant influence on how they comprehend and interpret Fiqh learning.

1. Relationship Between Research Findings and Research Objectives

The findings of this study directly address the objectives outlined in the introduction, namely to analyze the impact of Wetu Telu Islamic syncretism on the process of Fiqh learning. Field data indicate that a number of students come from families that continue to practice Wetu Telu values, such as respect for tradition, local religious rituals, and a collective mode of religiosity. This condition affects students' understanding of Fiqh materials, particularly in the area of *ibādah mahdhah*, which in normative Islamic teachings is governed by clearly defined legal provisions Fiqh learning does not take place in a socially neutral space; rather, it occurs within specific cultural contexts that shape students' ways of thinking and attitudes. This is consistent with research indicating that sociocultural contexts constitute an essential foundation for designing and developing religious education that is relevant and contextual for learners.(Islam et al., 2024). Consequently, the goal of Fiqh instruction extends beyond mere transmission of Islamic legal knowledge to include the internalization of religious values that resonate with students' lived social realities.

2. Scientific Interpretation of Research Findings

Wetu Telu Islamic syncretism emerged from a long historical process in which Islamic teachings did not entirely displace local beliefs, but instead interacted and negotiated with local cultural practices. This phenomenon is consistent with research findings indicating that local culture can influence the understanding and practice of religious education, thereby creating a form of harmony between tradition and Islamic teachings (Jabar & Salsabila, 2024).

As a result, students' religious perspectives are also shaped by religious practices transmitted across generations within their families and local communities, which in turn influence how they interpret normative teachings in Fiqh learning. This condition poses particular challenges for Fiqh teachers in madrasahs, as students often experience discrepancies between the religious practices encountered in their family environments and the standardized Fiqh teachings delivered through formal instruction (Muttaqo, 2025).

Nevertheless, this study also reveals that local cultural values such as togetherness, respect for traditional leaders, and social balance—which are integral to the local wisdom of the Sasak community in Lombok—can function as positive social capital in Fiqh learning. Research on the integration of local wisdom into religious education indicates that strategies incorporating cultural values into religious instruction help enhance students' understanding, participation, and appreciation of religious education materials that are relevant to their everyday lives (Negeri et al., 2023).

3. Fiqh Learning and the Contextual Approach

The Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach applied in Fiqh instruction has been shown to be effective in bridging the gap between normative Fiqh doctrine and the social realities faced by students. This method emphasizes the relationship between the material being taught and students' everyday experiences, thereby making the learning process more meaningful. Recent research in Islamic education demonstrates that the contextual approach can enhance students' understanding and participation in religious learning (Method et al., 2025).

The findings of this study indicate that the application of the CTL approach in teaching Fiqh within traditional communities is not only relevant but also strategically significant. Fiqh teachers can utilize local cultural contexts as instructional tools without diminishing the core teachings of Islam.

4. Consistency with Previous Studies

The findings of this study are consistent with several prior studies that affirm the role of local Islamic practices as normative systems that balance social relations and reinforce community solidarity. Research on the integration of local wisdom into Islamic religious education demonstrates that embedding cultural values within teaching can strengthen students' understanding, social engagement, and identity formation in religious learning contexts (Muthalib et al., 2025).

Furthermore, this study aligns with research in Islamic education that highlights the importance of contextual and dialogical approaches in teaching religion within multicultural societies. Such studies emphasize that incorporating local cultural norms into religious education enhances relevance and meaning for learners from diverse backgrounds (Jamila, 2025).

However, unlike some studies that view religious syncretism as an obstacle in formal Islamic education, the present research reveals that Wetu Telu Islamic syncretism does not always have a negative impact. In certain contexts, local cultural values can serve as pedagogical bridges that strengthen students' comprehension of Fiqh, especially when educators adopt culturally responsive teaching practices.

5. Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretically, this study enriches scholarly discussions on the relationship between religion, culture, and Islamic education by affirming that religious syncretism is a dynamic phenomenon that must be understood within its contextual framework. Practically, the findings provide important implications for Fiqh teachers and Islamic education administrators to be more sensitive to students' cultural backgrounds when designing and implementing instructional strategies.

6. Directions for Future Research

This study is limited to a single madrasah and a specific cultural context. Therefore, future research may expand the scope of investigation to multiple educational settings and cultural backgrounds, as well as develop empirically tested Fiqh learning models grounded in local wisdom.

CONCLUSION

This research examined the impact of Wetu Telu Islamic syncretism on the study of Fiqh at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Babul Mujahidin in the traditional village of Bayan, located in North Lombok. The results show that Wetu Telu syncretism plays a crucial role in shaping students' interpretations, views, and religious behaviors during their Fiqh education. The understanding of normative Fiqh teachings among students is affected by both the official Islamic education provided at the madrasah and the religious customs passed down through their families and community.

The research also shows that having local religious customs doesn't automatically limit the success of Fiqh teaching. Instead, the cultural principles found in the Wetu Telu practice, like community unity, reverence for local leaders, and robust social bonds, can serve as positive educational tools. These cultural factors assist learners in relating the theoretical aspects of Fiqh to their daily social experiences, especially when educators use teaching methods that are sensitive to culture and based on the surrounding context.

Additionally, the use of the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) method in Fiqh education has shown to be a successful teaching approach that

connects standard Islamic principles with the social and cultural contexts of learners. By utilizing CTL, educators can maintain the core tenets of Islamic jurisprudence while also involving students' cultural experiences in a conversational and flexible way. Consequently, learning Fiqh turns into a more significant, interactive, and applicable experience in relation to students' everyday lives.

In practical terms, this research emphasizes the necessity of enhancing cultural awareness and intercultural teaching skills among teachers of Fiqh and other Islamic education professionals. Regional religious customs ought not to be seen simply as barriers to understanding doctrine; instead, they should be recognized as valuable socio-cultural resources that can enhance the learning experience. As a result, Fiqh teaching based on Contextual Teaching and Learning principles must be bolstered by training programs for educators that prioritize cultural understanding, situational pedagogy, and inclusive approaches to religious education. Furthermore, madrasahs and Islamic educational entities are urged to weave local knowledge into curriculum design and educational practices while ensuring consistency with the fundamental principles of Islamic teachings.

This research focuses on one madrasah and a particular socio-cultural background, which means that the results cannot currently be applied to all Islamic education environments in Indonesia. It is suggested that future studies should encompass wider educational settings and make comparisons across areas with varying Islamic cultural practices. Additional investigations could also work on creating, applying, and assessing Fiqh learning models that are rooted in culture to enhance practices in Islamic education that are sensitive to context, inclusive, and responsive to cultural needs.

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Data availability: The data used and analyzed in this study are available from the author upon reasonable request, subject to research ethics principles and the privacy of respondents.

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