



Educational Hybridity and Ideological Negotiation in Integrated Islamic Kindergartens in Indonesia

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Abstract

The rapid expansion of Integrated Islamic Kindergartens (TK IT) in Indonesia reflects broader transformations in the relationship between religion, education, and state governance in contemporary Muslim societies. However, existing studies on Sekolah Islam Terpadu (SIT) have largely focused on curriculum implementation and educational management, with limited attention to how these institutions negotiate hybridity between Islamic ideology and formal state education systems. This study aimed to examine the forms and practices of hybridity within TK IT in Padang City, Indonesia. Using a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis involving six TK IT affiliated with JSIT, ASESI, and non-affiliated institutions. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis based on the interactive model of Miles and Huberman. The findings revealed three dominant forms of hybridity: integrative hybridity in TK IT JSIT, selective-defensive hybridity in TK IT ASESI, and adaptive-pragmatic hybridity in non-affiliated TK IT. These forms of hybridity were reflected in curriculum integration, institutional governance, pedagogical practices, and moral regulation. This study contributes to hybridity scholarship by demonstrating that hybridity within Islamic education involves ideological negotiation, identity construction, and epistemological reconstruction. The findings also provide broader insights into contemporary debates on faith-based education, Islamic educational modernity, and state-religion relations in Muslim societies.

A. Introduction

The rapid expansion of religion-based educational institutions across many parts of the world reflects a growing global crisis concerning morality, identity, and public trust in secular education systems. In many contemporary societies, schools are no longer viewed merely as spaces for academic instruction but increasingly as arenas for moral protection, ideological formation, and cultural reproduction (Ball, 2009; Adriany, 2018; Fahmi et al., 2025; Wakano et al., 2025). This phenomenon is particularly visible in Muslim-majority countries, where concerns over moral decline, social vulnerability, and weakening religious values have intensified public demand for educational institutions capable of integrating formal education with Islamic morality (Hasan, 2012; Suyatno, 2015). In this context, the emergence of Integrated Islamic Schools (*Sekolah Islam Terpadu*, hereafter SIT) in Indonesia should not be understood simply as an educational trend, but as part of a broader socio-religious transformation in which education becomes a strategic site for negotiating religion, modernity, and state authority simultaneously.

Within Indonesia, SIT has become one of the most influential and rapidly growing models of Islamic education over the last two decades (Takunas et al., 2024; Fuadi, 2019; Moedjiono, 2002). Since their emergence in 2003, the number of SIT institutions has increased dramatically. Initially consisting of only 426 schools, by 2017 the number had expanded to 2,418 institutions employing approximately 80,000 teaching staff (Jamil, 2017). This rapid growth reflects the strengthening public perception that religion offers moral certainty and social protection amid increasing concerns regarding juvenile delinquency, sexual promiscuity, and the erosion of ethical values among young people (Hasan, 2012; Suyatno, 2015). Consequently, SIT has evolved into a distinctive and influential educational movement within Indonesian society (Hasan, 2012; Kurnaengsih, 2015; Sutarmin et al., 2014; Moedjiono, 2002).

Despite their growing significance, scholarly discussions on SIT remain largely fragmented and predominantly managerial. Existing studies have mainly focused on educational systems, curriculum implementation, institutional management, and the formal position of SIT within Indonesia's national education framework (Bakhtiar & Nuhasanah, 2008; Suyatno, 2015; Abidin, 2009; Ilyasin, 2008; Hasan, 2012; Mudawamah, 2013; Robingatin, 2015; Magdalena, 2017; Shalihin et al., 2021). Other studies have explored the ideological orientation of SIT, including the religious exclusivism associated with Jaringan Sekolah Islam Terpadu (JSIT) (Yusup, 2017), as well as conceptual discussions concerning

the meaning and ideology of SIT (Kurnaengsih, 2015; Moedjiono, 2002; Wahidi, 2014; Wiranata, 2019). However, these studies tend to describe SIT as educational institutions with Islamic characteristics rather than critically examining how ideology actively shapes curriculum structures, institutional governance, educational authority, and the production of knowledge within these schools.

This limitation becomes more visible when positioned within broader international discussions on religion and early childhood education. Previous studies have examined the role of mosques in supporting Islamic literacy in Afghanistan (Burde et al., 2015), spiritual development in Austrian early childhood education (Stockinger, 2019), religious identity formation in Israel (Achituv, 2013), and religious learning practices in Norway (Hovdelien & Sødal, 2022). Although these studies demonstrate the continuing importance of religion within educational settings, they primarily approach religiosity as a complementary moral resource. Far less attention has been given to how educational institutions strategically negotiate religious ideology and state educational structures in ways that fundamentally reshape institutional identity, curriculum design, and educational governance.

This gap is particularly significant in the context of SIT in Indonesia. Existing scholarship has insufficiently explored the macro-level processes through which Islamic ideology is translated into institutional structures, pedagogical systems, and educational practices. More importantly, previous studies have paid limited attention to how SIT negotiate competing institutional logics between state educational regulations and ideological commitments. As a result, SIT is often treated merely as an Islamic educational model rather than as a hybrid institutional formation actively reconstructing the relationship between religion, education, and state governance.

This study argues that SIT should be understood as hybrid educational institutions operating within continuous ideological negotiation. SIT simultaneously seek legitimacy from state educational authority and Islamic moral authority. This dual pressure compels schools to selectively integrate, reinterpret, and reorganize educational practices in ways that enable them to comply with national educational standards while preserving their ideological distinctiveness. In this sense, hybridity is not merely an administrative adaptation but an intentional institutional strategy through which SIT reconstruct competing educational logics into relatively stable organizational forms.

To analyze this process, this study employs the concept of hybridity as its primary analytical framework. Broadly, hybridity refers to the integration of multiple institutional

or cultural elements (Gittell & Douglass, 2012), although the concept remains theoretically contested due to its multidimensional nature (Skelcher, 2012). Initially developed within cultural and postcolonial studies to explain identity formation and cultural negotiation (Bhabha, 1994; Geremew, 2021; Kangas & Salmenniemi, 2016; Kyed, 2017), hybridity has increasingly been used in public administration and organizational studies to explain the interaction between state institutions, markets, civil society, and public service organizations (Skelcher, 2012). Within educational institutions, hybridity often emerges through institutional adaptation and the coexistence of competing governance systems (Adriany, 2018; Ball, 2009; van der Werf et al., 2021).

This study specifically adopts the identity perspective developed by Skelcher and Smith (2015), which emphasizes how hybridity reshapes organizational identities, institutional roles, and normative structures. This perspective is particularly relevant because ideology and culture play a central role in shaping early childhood education (Yang & Li, 2018). Hybridity not only transforms institutional governance but also reconstructs educational authority, teacher identity, and epistemological boundaries between religious and secular knowledge. Changes in institutional roles may generate new forms of authority and competencies (Kurunmäki, 2004), while also producing tensions among competing institutional logics (Dunn & Jones, 2010; Langley et al., 2012). In this context, SIT represents an important site where Islamic educational modernity is continuously negotiated and reproduced.

The novelty of this study lies in its attempt to reposition SIT not merely as Islamic educational institutions, but as hybrid organizational formations strategically negotiating state authority, Islamic ideology, curriculum structures, and educational professionalism. Unlike previous studies that primarily focus on curriculum implementation or institutional identity, this study foregrounds hybridity as an institutional process through which SIT reorganize educational knowledge, governance, and moral authority into new educational formations. By focusing specifically on Integrated Islamic Kindergartens (TK IT), this study also contributes empirically to the still limited scholarship on hybridity within early childhood Islamic education.

Based on this perspective, this study aims to analyze the hybridity practices implemented by TK IT in Indonesia, particularly how different Islamic ideological orientations shape curriculum structures, learning systems, and institutional governance while negotiating the demands of the state education system.



B. Method

This study employed a qualitative method with a case study approach to examine the hybridity practices of Integrated Islamic Kindergartens (TK IT) in Padang, the capital city of West Sumatra. The case study approach was selected because it enables an in-depth exploration of institutional practices, ideological orientations, and curriculum negotiations within their real-life social contexts (Yin, 2003). Padang was chosen as the research setting due to the significant growth of Integrated Islamic educational institutions in the region. Data from the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture indicate that there are 3,235 kindergartens in West Sumatra, of which 384 (11.8%) are located in Padang City. This condition makes Padang an important site for understanding the contemporary development of Islamic early childhood education in Indonesia.

The study initially selected twelve TK IT purposively based on their affiliations with major SIT organizations, namely *Jaringan Sekolah Islam Terpadu* (JSIT), *Asosiasi Sekolah Sunnah Indonesia* (ASESI), and non-affiliated institutions. Four schools were selected to represent each affiliation category. However, after field visits and consent procedures were conducted, only six schools agreed to participate in the research. The participating schools were coded as AN, SB, KS, RI, NQ, and AR, each representing either JSIT, ASESI, or non-affiliated TK IT categories. The use of institutional codes was intended to maintain the confidentiality of the research subjects.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and document studies. In-depth interviews were conducted with twelve informants consisting of school principals and foundation managers from each school. These informants were selected because they were directly involved in determining school policies, curriculum orientation, and educational management. The interviews explored issues related to learning systems, curriculum practices, institutional visions, educational orientations, and the transformation of Islamic values within the schools. Observations were conducted on classroom interactions, learning activities, students' uniforms, teachers' attire, educational symbols, teaching aids, and various school environments reflecting Islamic values and institutional identities. To strengthen the empirical findings, document studies were also conducted on brochures, books, pamphlets, magazines, and other institutional materials related to school affiliations and religious orientations.

Data analysis followed the interactive model developed by Miles and Huberman (1992), involving data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. All interview

recordings were transcribed and classified according to the main themes of the research, including school affiliation, curriculum structure, learning systems, and institutional ideology. Thematic analysis was employed to identify patterns of hybridity and examine how different Islamic orientations shaped institutional practices and educational governance.

This study adhered to research ethics principles throughout the research process. Prior to the interviews, all informants were informed about the objectives of the study and asked for their consent to participate and to allow audio recording during interviews. Informants were assured that their identities and institutional information would remain confidential and would only be used for academic purposes. To protect the privacy of participants and research institutions, all schools and informants were anonymized in this article.

C. Results and Discussion

This section presents the finding of study examining the hybridity practices of SIT in Indonesia. Based on the data research, the findings are organized into two main themes. The first explores the typology and ideological orientations of SIT in Indonesia in order to provide an overview of recent developments and trends. The second describes the typology and ideological foundations of SIT in Padang to illustrate contemporary practices of Islamic school management. Drawing on these findings, the study further discusses the hybridity practices within SIT and their implications for school vision, governance, and educational management.

1. Results

This study identified three major forms of hybridity among Integrated Islamic Kindergartens (TK IT) in Padang City, namely TK IT affiliated with *Jaringan Sekolah Islam Terpadu* (JSIT), TK IT affiliated with *Asosiasi Sekolah Sunnah Indonesia* (ASESI), and non-affiliated TK IT. The findings demonstrate that each institutional category develops distinct patterns of curriculum integration, learning systems, religious orientation, and educational governance. These differences are reflected not only in formal curriculum structures but also in classroom practices, teacher recruitment, learning resources, school symbols, and the regulation of everyday behavior within the school environment.

a. The hybridity typology of TK IT in Indonesia

Indonesia's national education system, based on Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System (Sisdiknas), provides opportunities for communities to establish and manage educational institutions at all levels. Consequently, two main categories of schools exist in Indonesia: public schools administered by the government and private schools managed by community organizations or private entities. Early childhood education, which is implemented prior to the primary education level, is similarly provided by both governmental and community. Structurally, Kindergarten (TK) schools fall under the authority of the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud), whereas Raudhatul Athfal (RA) schools are administered by the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Kemenag). Under the Kemendikbud, Kindergartens are grouped into two educational orientations: general orientation (the nation) and religious orientation (Islam). Religious-oriented kindergarten can be further classified into two educational models: schools that adopt the Integrated Islamic (IT) model and those that do not model. In addition to RA, several kindergartens operating under the Ministry of Religion also implement the IT educational system.

In general, TK IT are affiliated with specific early childhood education organizations. The two major organizations to which TK IT institutions are commonly affiliated are the JSIT and the Asosiasi Sekolah Sunnah Indonesia (ASESI; English: Indonesian Sunnah School Association). JSIT is a non-profit organization that positions itself as a center for the movement and empowerment of SIT in Indonesia. Established in 2003, JSIT aims to ensure the academic quality and effective management of educational institutions within its network. In line with these objectives, JSIT plays a significant role in improving both the educational quality and institutional management of SIT affiliated with the organization. Since its establishment in 2003, the number of schools affiliated with JSIT has continued to grow. By 2026, approximately 2,853 educational institutions—including early childhood education centers (PAUD), kindergartens (TK), elementary schools (SD), junior high schools (SLTP), and senior high/ vocational schools (SMA and SMK)—had become part of the JSIT network across Indonesia.

ASESI is also a non-profit organization operating in the field of education. Schools affiliated with ASESI are commonly referred to as Sunnah Schools. Established in 2011, ASESI had affiliated with approximately 228 Sunnah Schools by 2018. All Sunnah Schools operate under the authority of the Kemenag. Consequently, Sunnah schools adopt the

ministry's curriculum while also developing their own institutional curricula through the involvement of school principals and teaching staff.

Other schools are not affiliated with either organization (JSIT or ASESI). These institutions are hereafter referred to as TK IT non-affiliated. Structurally; TKI IT non-affiliated institutions are administered under the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture and operate independently without formal organizational affiliation. Most of TK IT non-affiliated are established by entrepreneurs or individuals who are concerned about education or dissatisfied with existing early childhood education practices, which they perceive as overly exploitative and commercially oriented. Unlike affiliated institutions, these founders generally do not maintain ideological ties with particular religious movements or sectarian groups.

The findings indicate that these three institutional affiliations significantly influence curriculum structures, educational orientations, learning systems, and the construction of Islamic values within schools.

b. Hybridity in curriculum and learning system of TK IT

The findings show that TK IT in Padang City are generally categorized into three institutional affiliations: JSIT, ASESI, and non-affiliated schools. Each category demonstrates distinct curriculum structures, learning systems, and institutional orientations.

1) TK-IT JSIT

The findings reveal that TK IT JSIT implement a hybrid curriculum model integrating three curriculum sources: the Ministry of Education curriculum (MoEC), the JSIT curriculum, and the school's own curriculum. The MoEC curriculum is primarily used for general subjects, while the JSIT curriculum focuses on religious learning. Meanwhile, the school curriculum functions as an enrichment program emphasizing Islamic values and institutional identity. These three curriculum components are systematically integrated into a unified educational framework that distinguishes TK IT JSIT from other TK IT models.

One school principal explained the curriculum integration process as follows:

"We cannot leave the government curriculum because we are registered with the Education Office. We also refer to the JSIT Education quality standard curriculum because we are members of the organization. In addition to the government curriculum and JSIT, we also use the typical curriculum of our school". (Interview with AR Principal, 2023)

The findings also indicate that TK IT JSIT predominantly employ a center-based learning model consisting of preparation centers, natural material centers, beam centers, *imtaq* (faith and piety) centers, role-playing centers, and art centers. Observational data show that general educational themes such as family, environment, animals, plants, vehicles, and the universe are consistently connected with Islamic teachings during classroom activities.

The integration of Islamic values is also reflected in the broader school environment. Observations conducted in the six schools show that Qur'anic recitations were broadcast through loudspeakers during classroom sessions, playtime, and recess periods. Islamic phrases such as "Area Berpakaian Muslim" (Mandatory Muslim Clothing Area) were displayed throughout the school environment. In addition, classrooms were decorated with Qur'anic verses and Hadiths, while school activities emphasized Sharia-oriented values and behavior.

The findings further show that school uniforms and teacher attire were regulated according to Islamic norms. Male students generally wore Islamic clothing and caps, while female students wore skirts, *baju kurung*, and hijabs. Seating arrangements between male and female students were separated during classroom activities. Female teachers were also required to wear Islamic dresses, hijabs, and socks, while the use of make-up was restricted. Observational data additionally indicate that replicas of living beings, such as dolls and pictures of humans or animals, were generally absent from classroom environments. The schools also utilized standardized instructional materials distributed by JSIT, including memorization workbooks, worksheets, digital magazines, and reference books designed for Integrated Islamic Schools.



Figure 1. Reference book of TK IT JSIT

2) TK IT ASESI (Sunnah school)

The findings show that TK IT ASESI combine the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Kemenag) curriculum with their own diniyyah curriculum emphasizing Sunnah-oriented Islamic teachings. Although the schools implement the national curriculum, religious instruction receives greater emphasis and instructional time allocation. Elements of the Kemenag curriculum are selectively adopted and reorganized according to Sunnah-based principles, while materials considered inconsistent with the school's doctrinal orientation are excluded. One school principal explained the curriculum arrangement as follows: *"We applied national and diniyyah curriculum. Although we applied K-13 as national curriculum, greater instructional emphasis and time allocation are given to the diniyyah curriculum"*. (Interview with RI Principal, 2023).

The findings further indicate that TK IT ASESI implement a highly selective learning system, particularly in teacher recruitment and the selection of instructional materials. Teachers are expected to demonstrate strong commitment to Sunnah teachings through the memorization of Qur'anic verses, Hadiths, and daily supplications, as well as through consistent engagement in obligatory and Sunnah worship practices. Observational data also show that teachers' personal conduct and classroom practices are closely aligned with the school's religious orientation.

Selectivity is also reflected in the use of learning resources. Schools carefully evaluate instructional materials to ensure conformity with Sunnah-based normative frameworks. Qur'anic interpretations and Hadith references considered inconsistent with the school's doctrinal orientation are excluded. Most schools use learning materials produced by the Anak Shalih Group, which are considered compatible with Sunnah values. One school principal explained the filtering of learning materials as follows: *"...if there were (book references) a picture without eyes..."*. (Interview with RI Principal, 2023).

This additional filtering process demonstrates that curriculum implementation in TK IT ASESI is not merely a matter of selecting educational resources but also reflects an effort to maintain doctrinal consistency within the learning environment. School administrators and teachers actively review textbooks, visual materials, stories, and religious references before they are introduced in the classroom. Materials that are considered inconsistent with the school's interpretation of Sunnah teachings are modified, omitted, or replaced with alternative resources that are perceived as more appropriate. Through this mechanism, the curriculum functions not only as an educational framework but also as an instrument for preserving and transmitting specific religious values and beliefs to young learners from an early age.

These materials are not adopted uncritically; instead, their content is further filtered to ensure coherence with the school's specific doctrinal orientation (see figure 2).



Figure 2. Reference book of TK IT ASESI

The figure shows that the learning resources used in TK IT ASESI emphasize religious instruction and doctrinal consistency within the Sunnah educational framework.

The findings also reveal that schools restrict activities considered inconsistent with Sunnah teachings. Students are prohibited from drawing living beings perfectly and from participating in singing activities during the learning process. One principal explained this practice as follows: *"We have taught children not to draw living things perfectly. Because later in the end of the world, [they] will ask for lives. When children see a perfect picture, they do not want to color [it]"*. (Interview with NQ Principal, 2023).

In addition, the schools limit students' participation in extracurricular and celebratory activities outside the religious framework endorsed by the institution, including dancing, gymnastics, birthday celebrations, and national holiday competitions. Observational data indicate that students are also discouraged from clapping, whistling, and participating in activities considered inconsistent with Sunnah teachings.

The implementation of Sunnah-oriented values is further reflected in school uniforms, classroom arrangements, and the broader school environment. Most female teachers wear *niqob*, gloves, Islamic dresses, and socks, while male students wear Islamic tops (*koko* clothes) and pants (*isbal*). Female students generally wear hijabs and long skirts, and some occasionally wear veils similar to those used by teachers. Seating arrangements between male and female students are separated during classroom activities and

playground interactions. Observations also show that classrooms and school walls are decorated with Hadiths, memorization charts, prayers, and *asmaul husna* as part of the school's religious learning environment.

3) TK IT Non-Affiliated

The findings show that non-affiliated TK IT operate independently under the Ministry of Education and Culture without formal affiliation to organizations such as JSIT or ASESI. This institutional independence provides schools with greater flexibility in designing curriculum structures, educational programs, and learning orientations. For general subjects, schools use the Ministry of Education curriculum, while religious subjects are either adapted from the JSIT curriculum or independently developed according to the vision and preferences of each school foundation.

The findings indicate that non-affiliated TK IT adopting the JSIT religious curriculum generally follow the curriculum structure and educational orientation commonly found in JSIT-affiliated schools. In contrast, schools developing their own religious curriculum tend to adapt the Ministry curriculum by incorporating additional Islamic content according to institutional needs. These modifications are generally technical rather than structural. For example, several schools replaced the term "reciting short prayers" in the Ministry curriculum with "special prayers" adjusted to the school's preferred religious teachings.

One school principal explained the curriculum integration process as follows: "*We use the Ministry of Education and Culture curriculum for the school curriculum. Using the official curriculum, we must combine it, and then we combine it with the curriculum at our school*". (Interview with NB Principal, 2023).

The findings further show that the educational vision of non-affiliated TK IT generally emphasizes the formation of smart, pious, independent, and Islamic students. To support this vision, schools prioritize moral education, Qur'anic learning, and tahfidz programs as flagship activities. Observational data indicate that several schools developed supporting facilities and programs such as tahfidz centers, memorization books for parents, tahfidz speakers, and memorization activities integrated with play-based learning approaches.

In contrast to ASESI schools, non-affiliated TK IT provide teachers with greater flexibility in designing instructional activities and selecting learning media. Teachers commonly use puppets, music, pictures, Islamic storytelling videos, and short films about the prophets obtained from YouTube channels. The findings also indicate that teachers

frequently use internet-based resources to search for Qur'anic verses, Hadiths, prayers, and Islamic educational content to support classroom instruction.

This flexibility is also reflected in the broader school environment and classroom practices. Students wear different uniforms depending on school activities and schedules, while teachers are allowed to wear skirts or trousers provided the clothing remains modest and loose-fitting. Male and female students participate together in classroom and playground activities without formal separation. Schools also encourage students to engage in creative and physical activities such as singing, drawing, coloring, and running during learning sessions.

The findings additionally show that non-affiliated TK IT use various instructional materials determined primarily by each school foundation. Schools commonly utilize textbooks such as *Anak Muslim Kreatif* and Ministry-issued educational books published by commercial publishers. Several schools also use textbooks depicting children wearing non-Muslim attire as part of general learning materials. Observational data further indicates that teachers are encouraged to develop instructional media independently according to classroom needs. One school principal explained this practice as follows: "Teachers are expected to design their own instructional materials by sourcing content from Google, which is then printed and laminated for classroom use" (Interview with NB Principal, 2023).



Figure 3. Reference book of TK IT Non-affiliated

The figure shows that the instructional materials used in non-affiliated TK IT combine Islamic educational content with broader and more adaptive learning representations compared to those used in JSIT and ASESI schools. These findings indicate that non-affiliated TK IT tend to adopt a more flexible learning system, particularly in the selection of teaching materials, classroom activities, and the integration of religious and general educational content.

2. Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that hybridity within Integrated Islamic Kindergartens (TK IT) in Indonesia is not merely a technical integration between religious and national curricula, but rather a dynamic process through which schools negotiate educational authority, ideological identity, and institutional legitimacy. Similar forms of hybridity in early childhood education have appeared in institutional governance, pedagogy, and cultural adaptation (Chen et al., 2017; Gupta, 2015; Romijn et al., 2023; van der Werf et al., 2021). However, the Indonesian case reveals a more complex phenomenon because hybridity is closely intertwined with ideological contestation and the reconstruction of Islamic educational modernity. In this context, TK IT functions not only as educational institutions but also as ideological spaces where religion, state regulation, and educational professionalism continuously intersect and are renegotiated (Arif et al., 2024; Adriany, 2018; Ball, 2009).

This study argues that hybridity should not be understood merely as institutional adaptation but as an active process of epistemological reconstruction. Curricular hybridity appears in the integration of national curricula with Islamic educational frameworks representing the schools' ideological orientation. Institutional hybridity emerges through the coexistence of state educational regulations and organizational affiliations, while identity hybridity is reflected in the simultaneous construction of Islamic religiosity and modern educational professionalism. These findings support Denis et al.'s (2015) argument that hybridity involves interactions among multiple institutional logics and governance systems. Nevertheless, this study extends the discussion by demonstrating that hybridity within Islamic educational institutions is not administratively neutral. Rather, it involves epistemological negotiation in which schools redefine the boundaries between religious knowledge, secular knowledge, morality, and institutional authority (Kangas & Salmenniemi, 2016; Kyed, 2017; Yang & Li, 2018).

The findings further reveal that hybridity within TK IT is not homogeneous. The three institutional categories examined in this study – TK IT JSIT, TK IT ASESI, and non-affiliated TK IT – demonstrate different strategies in negotiating the relationship between Islamic ideology and state educational systems. This indicates that hybridity should not be interpreted as a single institutional model but rather as a continuum of ideological adaptation and organizational negotiation (Fuadi, 2019; Ilyasin, 2008; Robingatin, 2015).

Among the three models, TK IT JSIT represents the most integrative form of hybridity. Emerging from the *Gerakan Dakwah Tarbiyah*, JSIT positions itself not merely as

an educational organization but also as a *da'wah* movement oriented toward Islamic social transformation (Hasan, 2012; Rahmat, 2008a; Suyatno, 2013; Sirojuddin et al., 2025). Its ideological orientation is closely associated with the *Ikhwanul Muslimin* movement, particularly through the concept of *Islam Kaffah* as a comprehensive system encompassing religion, society, and state (*Al-Islam Din wa Daulah*) (Syaharuddin et al., 2025; Basit, 2016; Hasan, 2012). Consequently, TK IT JSIT do not reject the national curriculum; instead, they selectively integrate and Islamize it through additional religious standards, pedagogical practices, and institutional regulations.

This integration reflects what Bhabha (1994) conceptualized as a “third space,” where competing traditions interact to produce new institutional formations. Rather than reproducing either purely secular schooling or traditional religious education, TK IT JSIT construct hybrid educational spaces combining state curriculum standards, Islamic moral authority, and modern educational professionalism. The significance of this finding lies in demonstrating that hybridity within Islamic education involves epistemological reconstruction rather than simple coexistence. General knowledge such as science, family, environment, and nationalism is systematically theologized within Islamic moral narratives. This finding strengthens Hasan’s (2012b) argument that SIT emerged partly as a response to the secular-religious dualism embedded within Indonesia’s educational system while also extending previous studies focusing primarily on curriculum implementation and institutional management (Bakhtiar & Nuhasanah, 2008; Magdalena, 2017; Suyatno, 2015; Wahidi, 2014).

The findings also demonstrate that hybridity within TK IT JSIT reshapes institutional identity and educational authority. Teachers function not only as educators but also as ideological actors responsible for reproducing Islamic morality and discipline. This finding aligns with Skelcher and Smith’s (2015) argument that hybridity transforms organizational identities and actor roles, while also supporting Kurunmäki’s (2004) discussion concerning professional transformation within hybrid institutions. In TK IT JSIT, professionalism becomes inseparable from religious commitment, illustrating how institutional legitimacy is reconstructed through ideological integration.

In contrast, TK IT ASESI demonstrates a more selective and defensive form of hybridity. As *Sunnah Schools*, these institutions adopt *Islam Sunnah* as their ideological foundation rooted in *Salafi* thought characterized by textual literalism, religious purification, and resistance toward cultural practices considered inconsistent with *Sunnah* teachings (Amin et al., 2019; Nurbaiti, 2020). The identity of *Islam Sunnah* is marked by revivalist

puritanism and formalistic religious interpretation (Saleh et al., 2020; Muhajir et al., 2025; Fahmi et al., 2025). Compared to *Islam Kaffah*, which tends to be more adaptive toward modernization, *Islam Sunnah* emphasizes doctrinal purity and social exclusivism (Rahmat, 2008b; Sarbaitinil & Firdaus, 2019).

This ideological orientation shapes how TK IT ASESI negotiate hybridity. Schools selectively adopt only those elements of the national curriculum considered compatible with *Sunnah*-based interpretations of Islam. Activities such as music, dancing, birthday celebrations, and drawing complete living creatures are restricted because they are viewed as inconsistent with religious purity. These findings indicate that hybridity within TK IT ASESI operates through ideological boundary maintenance rather than integrative synthesis. This finding supports Geremew's (2021) argument that hybridity may generate contestation and selective adaptation instead of harmonious integration. It also reinforces Doosje et al., (2016) argument that strong religious conservatism often produces exclusionary orientations toward modern social and cultural practices.

The strong emphasis on doctrinal consistency also produces new forms of institutional control. Teacher recruitment, curriculum content, dress regulations, and classroom interactions are carefully regulated to maintain ideological conformity. In this context, hybridity becomes closely associated with moral regulation and identity preservation. Nevertheless, despite their strong doctrinal orientation, TK IT ASESI remain structurally dependent on the national education system through curriculum recognition, formal administration, and institutional accreditation. Consequently, these schools illustrate how hybridity may take the form of selective accommodation rather than complete institutional separation.

Meanwhile, non-affiliated TK IT represent a more adaptive and pragmatic form of hybridity. Unlike JSIT and ASESI schools, non-affiliated TK IT are not strongly tied to centralized ideological organizations. This institutional flexibility enables schools to develop more adaptive curriculum structures, pedagogical practices, and institutional identities. Islamic values are integrated into learning activities without rigid restrictions on pedagogical media, student interaction, or cultural practices. Singing, storytelling, music, digital learning resources, and mixed-gender interaction are accommodated while schools continue emphasizing *tahfidz*, prayer memorization, and moral education.

This adaptive orientation reflects a pragmatic response to social demand for Islamic-based education compatible with contemporary educational expectations. Rather than

functioning primarily as ideological movements, non-affiliated TK IT position themselves as educational institutions responding to parental aspirations, market competition, and pedagogical innovation. Their openness toward digital resources, YouTube learning materials, and internet-based teaching aids illustrates how contemporary pedagogical approaches are selectively integrated into Islamic educational settings. This finding supports Ball's (2009) argument that hybrid educational institutions often emerge through interactions among market logic, managerial flexibility, and institutional adaptation. It also resonates with studies emphasizing pedagogical innovation within hybrid early childhood education systems (Chen et al., 2017; Gupta, 2015; Mutiarni et al., 2025; Romijn et al., 2023).

Compared to JSIT and ASESI schools, hybridity within non-affiliated TK IT appears less ideological and more pedagogically adaptive. Their primary concern is not doctrinal purification but the creation of attractive and socially acceptable Islamic educational environments. Nevertheless, Islamic morality remains central to institutional identity through *tahfidz* programs, Qur'anic learning, and moral education.

The comparison among these three forms of TK IT demonstrates that hybridity within Islamic educational institutions takes at least three forms: integrative hybridity in JSIT schools, selective-defensive hybridity in ASESI schools, and adaptive-pragmatic hybridity in non-affiliated TK IT. These typologies represent different institutional responses toward tensions among state educational requirements, Islamic ideology, organizational interests, and broader social expectations. This finding expands previous studies on SIT that largely focused on Islamization and curriculum management without examining the ideological diversity embedded within hybrid educational formations (Fuadi, 2019; Kurnaengsih, 2015; Moedjiono, 2002). This typology may also serve as a conceptual framework for understanding variations of hybridity in faith-based educational institutions beyond the Indonesian context.

More importantly, the three forms of hybridity identified in this study constitute a conceptual typology that extends existing discussions on hybridity within educational institutions. While previous studies have generally conceptualized hybridity as a broad process of institutional adaptation, identity negotiation, or the interaction of multiple institutional logics (Bhabha, 1994; Denis et al., 2015; Skelcher & Smith, 2015), the findings of this study demonstrate that hybridity within faith-based educational settings may take distinct forms depending on how institutions negotiate ideological commitments, state regulations, and organizational interests. The typology

of integrative hybridity, selective-defensive hybridity, and adaptive-pragmatic hybridity therefore provides a more nuanced analytical framework for understanding variations of hybridity in Islamic educational institutions and contributes to broader discussions concerning educational governance, institutional identity, and the negotiation of religious and secular knowledge (Ball, 2009; Kangas & Salmenniemi, 2016; Kyed, 2017; Yang & Li, 2018).

Theoretically, this study contributes to hybridity scholarship by demonstrating that hybridity within Islamic educational institutions involves active institutional strategies for reorganizing knowledge, identity, authority, and governance. Existing studies on SIT have predominantly emphasized curriculum implementation and institutional management (Bakhtiar & Nuhasanah, 2008; Suyatno, 2015; Nasar et al., 2025). This study extends the discussion by showing that hybridity within Islamic education also involves epistemological reconstruction and ideological negotiation. More broadly, these findings are significant for international discussions concerning religion and education in contemporary Muslim societies. Similar tensions between religious identity, educational modernity, and state governance have emerged in various contexts where faith-based educational institutions negotiate formal educational systems while attempting to preserve religious authenticity (Achituv, 2013; Burde et al., 2015; Hovdelien & Sødal, 2022; Stockinger, 2019). The Indonesian case therefore contributes important insights into how Islamic educational institutions negotiate globalization, educational modernization, and institutional legitimacy simultaneously.

Beyond its relevance to Muslim-majority societies, the three hybridity models identified in this study – integrative hybridity, selective-defensive hybridity, and adaptive-pragmatic hybridity – offer a broader analytical framework for understanding how faith-based educational institutions negotiate tensions between religious identity, state regulation, and educational modernization (Sahrul & Daulay, 2025; Skelcher & Smith, 2015). Similar dynamics have been observed in various religious educational contexts across different countries (Hakim et al., 2025; Hovdelien & Sødal, 2022; Stockinger, 2019). Therefore, the Indonesian experience contributes to global discussions on faith-based education by demonstrating that religious schools are not homogeneous institutions but diverse organizational forms that respond differently to contemporary social and educational transformations.

Finally, this study demonstrates that hybridity within TK IT is closely related to the production of moral order, institutional legitimacy, and ideological authority. TK IT

functions not only as educational providers but also as ideological spaces where religious values are institutionalized, negotiated, and reproduced through curriculum structures, pedagogical practices, school culture, and organizational governance. Through different forms of hybridity, these schools construct alternative models of Islamic educational modernity seeking to reconcile religious authenticity with the institutional demands of the modern nation-state.

This study is limited to TK IT institutions in Padang City and therefore does not fully capture the diversity of hybridity practices among Islamic early childhood education institutions across Indonesia. In addition, this study primarily reflects institutional perspectives represented by school principals and foundation managers, while the experiences and perspectives of teachers, parents, and students remain less explored. Furthermore, the analysis focuses mainly on curriculum structures, institutional governance, and ideological orientations, without examining in greater depth the long-term educational impacts of hybridity practices on students' social, cognitive, and religious development. Nevertheless, these limitations do not reduce the significance of the findings but rather indicate the contextual scope within which this study should be understood.

D. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that Integrated Islamic Kindergartens (TK IT) in Indonesia function as hybrid educational institutions that continuously negotiate the relationship between Islamic ideology and the formal state education system. Rather than merely adopting state educational standards or functioning solely as religious institutions, TK IT selectively integrates and reconstructs competing educational logics into distinctive institutional forms. Hybridity within TK IT is reflected not only in curriculum integration but also in institutional governance, school culture, pedagogical practices, teacher identity, and moral regulation.

The study identifies three dominant forms of hybridity among TK IT in Padang City. First, TK IT JSIT demonstrates an integrative form of hybridity through the Islamization of knowledge, institutional discipline, and Sharia-oriented school culture. Second, TK IT ASESI exhibits a selective-defensive form of hybridity characterized by doctrinal filtering and efforts to preserve Sunnah-based religious purity while remaining connected to the formal education system. Third, non-affiliated TK IT represent a more flexible and adaptive form of hybridity in which Islamic values are combined pragmatically with contemporary pedagogical approaches and market-oriented educational strategies.

These findings confirm that hybridity within SIT is not a passive institutional consequence but an active strategy for negotiating tensions among religious authenticity, state regulation, educational professionalism, and social expectations. Theoretically, this study contributes to hybridity scholarship by extending the discussion beyond organizational structure into the domains of ideology, identity, and knowledge production. More broadly, the Indonesian case demonstrates how Islamic educational institutions negotiate educational modernization, religious authority, and state governance simultaneously, making this study relevant to wider global discussions on faith-based education and educational hybridity in contemporary Muslim societies.

Future studies are expected to expand the geographical scope of research beyond Padang City in order to capture the broader diversity of TK IT across Indonesia. Comparative studies among regions and organizational affiliations are also important to examine how different ideological orientations shape curriculum practices, institutional governance, and educational identity. In addition, further research should explore more deeply how hybridity influences students' identity formation, parental expectations, teacher professionalism, and the long-term social and educational impacts of Islamic early childhood education.

Ultimately, this study demonstrates that hybridity within TK IT is not simply an educational adaptation strategy but a broader process of negotiating identity, authority, and Islamic educational modernity in contemporary Indonesia. Through different forms of hybridity, these schools continue to redefine the relationship between religion, education, and the modern nation-state in ways that are both institutionally strategic and socially significant.

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