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Dynamics of the Neo-MABIMS Criteria in Determining the Beginning of the Hijri Month in Indonesia (1443–1446 H)

Yuniar Wahyuningsih[1*], Ahmad Roihan Firdiansyah[2]

[1] Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Ampel Surabaya, Indonesia
[2] Kırklareli Universitesi, Turkiye
* Corresponding Author, Email: yuniarwhyu06@gmail.com

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Abstract

This study explores the ongoing variations in determining the beginning of the Hijri month in Indonesia, despite the official adoption of the Neo-MABIMS criteria by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach, the research outlines and deductively analyzes data related to formulating and implementing these criteria. The findings reveal two key points: first, discrepancies persist in determining the beginning of the Hijri month. Since implementing the Neo-MABIMS criteria up to Jumada al-Awwal 1446 H, two months, Jumada al-Akhirah 1445 H, and Muharram 1446 H, have produced different outcomes. Second, even when identical criteria are applied, differences in methodological approaches may lead to either divergent or convergent results. This study recommends future research involving expert interviews to strengthen analytical depth and include updated observational data on Hijri month determination to enhance the comprehensiveness and accuracy of the findings.

Keywords: neo-citeria MABIMS, Islamic calendar, Indonesia

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Penelitian ini mengkaji berlanjutnya variasi dalam penentuan awal bulan Hijriah di Indonesia, meskipun Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia telah secara resmi menerapkan kriteria Neo-MABIMS secara nasional. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif, penelitian ini memaparkan serta menganalisis secara deduktif data terkait perumusan dan penerapan kriteria tersebut. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan dua temuan utama. Pertama, perbedaan dalam penetapan awal bulan Hijriah masih terjadi. Sejak diterapkannya kriteria Neo-MABIMS hingga bulan Jumadil Awwal 1446 H, terdapat dua bulan yang menghasilkan keputusan berbeda, yaitu Jumadil Akhir 1445 H dan Muharam 1446 H. Kedua, meskipun kriteria yang digunakan sama, perbedaan dalam metode penerapannya dapat menimbulkan hasil yang berbeda maupun serupa. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan agar kajian berikutnya melibatkan wawancara dengan para ahli untuk memperkuat kedalaman analisis serta memperbarui data observasi penentuan awal bulan Hijriah guna meningkatkan ketepatan dan keluasan hasil penelitian.

Kata Kunci: neo-kriteria MABIMS, kalender Islam, Indonesia

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A. Introduction

Fundamentally, the determination of the beginning of the Hijri month is conducted through three primary methods: *rukyat al-hilāl* (crescent observation), *ḥisāb* (astronomical calculation), and *istikmāl* (month completion). These methods differ according to the criteria and approaches employed.[1] *Rukyat al-hilāl* refers to the observation of the new crescent Moon (*hilāl*), which marks the beginning of a new lunar month and appears after the conjunction (*ijtimā'*), when the Moon is located on the western horizon and sets after the Sun. This observation may be performed with the naked eye or assisted by optical instruments. It is generally classified into two forms: *rukyat* bi *al-fi'li* (direct visual observation) and *rukyat* bi *al-'ilmi* (observation based on scientific analysis).[2] *Ḥisāb* involves the use of astronomical calculations to determine the position and visibility of the *hilāl*, and it is commonly divided into three categories: *ḥisāb 'urfī* (traditional), *ḥisāb haqīqī* (precise), and contemporary *ḥisāb*. Meanwhile, *istikmāl* refers to completing the lunar month to thirty days when the crescent is not sighted.

The method for determining the beginning of the Hijri month, which was initially limited to *rukyat al-hilāl* during the era of the Prophet Muhammad, has evolved into several distinct approaches. Multiple factors influence the emergence of these methods. First, the visibility of the *hilāl* (crescent Moon) itself, which is central to the formulation of *hilāl* visibility criteria. Second, the diversity of interpretations and understandings of religious texts (*nash*), both from the Qur'an and Hadith, discusses the determination of the beginning of the Hijri month. Third, the role of governmental politicization in standardizing or endorsing specific methods. Fourth, the technical aspects and challenges encountered during the *rukyat al-hilāl* observation process. These factors have contributed to the plurality of opinions regarding the determination of the beginning of the Hijri month among Islamic organizations in Indonesia. The three major organizations in the country adopt distinct approaches. Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) employs *rukyat al-hilāl* combined with the *imkān al-rukyat* (possibility of sighting) criterion. Muhammadiyah applies the *ḥisāb* (astronomical calculation) method based on the *wujūd al-hilāl* (existence of the crescent above the horizon) criterion. Meanwhile, Persatuan Islam (Persis) follows the Government's official decision for Ramadan, Shawwal, and Dhu al-Hijjah, while applying *ḥisāb* with the *imkān al-rukyat* criterion for other months.[3]

The diversity in determining the beginning of the Hijri month reflects the existence of various underlying perspectives that require further examination, particularly from the standpoints of Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), astronomical calculation (*ḥisāb*), and the social implications arising from these differences. Each method employed has strengths and limitations, contributing to the ongoing discourse on the most appropriate approach. In this context, the role of the Government as the central authority becomes crucial in harmonizing these differing practices. In collaboration with

[1] Ria Agustin, "Studi Analisis Metode Penentuan Awal Bulan Qamariah Dalam Kitab Al-Dūrr Al-Anīq Karya Ahmad Ghozali Muhammad Fathullah" (Skripsi, Institut Agama Islam Negeri Walisongo, 2014), 3, https://eprints.walisongo.ac.id/id/eprint/2765/.

[2] Watni Marpaung, *Pengantar Ilmu Falak*, 1st ed. (Jakarta: Prenadamedia Group, 2015), 35–40.

[3] Hariyono Hariyono dan Nursodik Nursodik, "Problematika Penerapan Neo Mabims Dalam Penentuan Awal Bulan Ramadan, Syawal Dan Zulhijah 1443 H Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Al-Fatih* 4, no. 2 (2021): 365–66.

scholars from Islamic organizations and astronomy experts, the Government has undertaken numerous initiatives to achieve unification in the determination of the beginning of the Hijri month. One significant milestone was the adoption of the Jakarta Recommendation in 2017, following the 2016 Congress in Turkey, which introduced the revised MABIMS criteria, later known as the Neo-MABIMS criteria. These criteria were officially endorsed on November 30, 2017, marking an important step toward greater standardization in determining the Islamic lunar calendar in Indonesia. [4]

Several previous studies have examined the application of the Neo-MABIMS criteria, providing an essential foundation for understanding its implementation in Indonesia. At least four notable works have discussed this topic. *First*, Nur Aini and Youla Afifah Azkarrula.[5] This paper explored expert perspectives on the role of elongation in determining the lunar month. Second, Windi Rezani A., Fatmawati, and Sippah Chotban[6] This study analyzed the practical application of the criteria in Indonesia. *Third*, Hariyono and Nursodik[7] In their work, they discussed challenges in applying the criteria during the early stages of its implementation. *Lastly*, Ahmad Fadholi[8] examined expert acceptance toward the proposed criteria before their official adoption. These studies have contributed valuable insights; most have concentrated on the initial application of the Neo-MABIMS criteria in 1443 H and the perspectives of astronomy experts on its implementation. To address this gap, the present study focuses on the broader dynamics surrounding establishing and implementing the Neo-MABIMS criteria in Indonesia, covering the period from its official adoption to the present (Ramadan 1443 H to Jumada al-Awwal 1446 H). This approach aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the policy's development and practical implications.

B. Method

This study employs a descriptive qualitative method to analyze and explain data related to establishing and implementing the Neo-MABIMS criteria in Indonesia. The research utilizes two data types from physical and digital literature that discuss the dynamics surrounding the formulation and adoption of the Neo-MABIMS criteria. Primary data include books, government documents, and official research publications. Secondary data include scholarly articles and other relevant writings that provide supporting perspectives and contextual information. All collected

[4] M. Zainul Ma'arif, "Rekomendasi Jakarta 2017 Tentang Implementasi Kalender Global Hijriah Tunggal Berdasarkan Perspektif Lembaga Falakiyah PWNU Jawa Timur Dan Majelis Tarjih Dan Tajdid PW Muhammadiyah Jawa Timur" (Skripsi, Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Ampel, 2019), 53–55, http://digilib.uinsa.ac.id/34773/.

[5] Nur Aini and Youla Afifah Azkarrula, "Pandangan Tokoh Falak Tentang Elongasi Pada Penentuan Awal Syawal 1443 H Dalam Kriteria Neo MABIMS Di Indonesia," *Astroislamica: Journal of Islamic Astronomy* 3, no. 1 (June 2024): 1, https://doi.org/10.47766/astroislamica.v3i1.2762.

[6] Windi Rezani Anas, Fatmawati Fatmawati, and Sippah Chotban, "Implementasi Kriteria Visibilitas Neo-MABIMS dalam Penentuan Awal Bulan Hijriah," *HISABUNA: Jurnal Ilmu Falak* 4, no. 2 (July 2023): 2, https://doi.org/10.24252/hisabuna.v4i2.36962.

[7] Hariyono dan Nursodik, "Problematika Penerapan Neo Mabims Dalam Penentuan Awal Bulan Ramadan, Syawal Dan Zulhijah 1443 H Di Indonesia."

[8] Ahmad Fadholi, "Akseptabilitas Draf Kriteria Baru Penentuan Kalender Hijriah Menurut Ahli Falak Di Indonesia," *Edugama: Jurnal Kependidikan Dan Sosial Keagamaan* 5, no. 1 (July 2019): 1, https://doi.org/10.32923/edugama.v5i1.961.

data were analyzed deductively, enabling the identification of patterns and relationships concerning the development and implementation of the Neo-MABIMS criteria. The analysis was subsequently synthesized and interpreted in accordance with the objectives of the study, thereby providing a comprehensive understanding of the institutional and practical dynamics underlying the application of the Neo-MABIMS criteria in Indonesia.

C. Result and Discussion

1. The Establishment and Development of the Neo-MABIMS Criteria

The determination of the beginning of the Hijri month continues to invite scholarly discussion from the perspectives of *fiqh*, astronomical computation, and social impact. Each method, whether based on *rukyat* (observation) or *ḥisāb* (calculation), offers certain advantages and limitations. Given these differences, the Government's role as the unifying authority becomes essential. The Indonesian Government has undertaken numerous initiatives to harmonize differences in lunar month determination through collaboration with Islamic scholars and astronomy experts. One significant milestone was the Jakarta Recommendation 2017, formulated after the Turkey Congress 2016, which laid the foundation for the new *imkān al-rukyat* standard known as the Neo-MABIMS criteria, officially adopted on November 30, 2017.[9] The Jakarta Recommendation 2017 was produced during the International Seminar on Fiqh and Astronomy held in Jakarta (28–30 November 2017 / 9–11 Rabi' al-Awwal 1439 H), organized by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Indonesia. The event gathered Islamic astronomer experts, academics, representatives from major Islamic organizations, MABIMS member countries (Brunei, Malaysia, and Singapore), and delegates from Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Jordan.[10] This recommendation continued the discussions initiated at the Turkey Congress 2016, where scholars proposed a unified Hijri calendar based on *hilāl* visibility. The 2017 recommendation refined the criteria and formalized them within the MABIMS framework. The initiative to revise the previous MABIMS *imkān al-rukyat* criteria began in 2014, as the earlier model was considered regionally inconsistent and scientifically outdated. According to Djamaluddin,[11] the earlier criteria could not accommodate visibility differences between the western and eastern hemispheres, as the Moon's altitude varied by an average of seven degrees. This limitation prompted the development of more globally applicable parameters, aligning astronomical precision with *fiqh*-based legitimacy.

Establishing the Neo-MABIMS criteria evolved through several phases (2014–2021), involving theoretical and institutional deliberations. Initially, discussions focused on identifying a universal standard for *hilāl* visibility that could be applied regionally within MABIMS countries. Later, consensus was achieved to adopt new minimum parameters: 3° Moon's altitude and 6.4°

[9] Ma'arif, "Rekomendasi Jakarta 2017 Tentang Implementasi Kalender Global Hijriah Tunggal Berdasarkan Perspektif Lembaga Falakiyah PWNU Jawa Timur Dan Majelis Tarjih Dan Tajdid PW Muhammadiyah Jawa Timur," 53–55.

[10] Ahmad Ridwan Khanafi, "Kriteria Rekomendasi Jakarta 2017 Dalam Upaya Penyatuan Kalender Global Hijriah Tunggal Perspektif LP2IF Rukyatul Hilal Indonesia (RHI)" (Skripsi, Universitas Islam Negeri Walisongo, 2018), 51, https://eprints.walisongo.ac.id/id/eprint/8944/.

[11] Thomas Djamaluddin, "1. T. Djamaluddin (Thomas Djamaluddin)," *Dokumentasi T. Djamaluddin: Berbagi Ilmu Untuk Pencerahan dan Inspirasi*, April 12, 2010, https://tdjamaluddin.com/1-t-djamaluddin-thomas-djamaluddin/.

elongation, derived from empirical visibility data and observational modeling. These values were later incorporated into national calendar systems across the MABIMS region.

Indonesia officially implemented the Neo-MABIMS criteria for the beginning of Ramadan 1443 H, following a government decree issued on December 08, 2021 CE / 3 Jumada al-Akhirah 1443 H. The criteria were formally announced at the Meeting of Islamic astronomer experts of MABIMS Countries in Yogyakarta (February 22–23, 2022).[12] At that meeting, two perspectives emerged: one favored immediate implementation, while the other proposed a transitional period to ensure adequate dissemination. Ultimately, Indonesia gradually applied the criteria while continuing educational outreach to relevant institutions and communities.

Although officially adopted, the Neo-MABIMS criteria have faced technical and interpretative challenges, particularly concerning the definition of elongation and the reference model (*markaz*) used in calculation.[13] The official decree did not clarify whether elongation should be measured topocentric (from the observer's location) or geocentric (from Earth's center). This ambiguity led to differing practices among Islamic astronomy institutions and observers.[14] The original model, developed by Mohammad Shawkat Odeh (2006) in Experimental Astronomy, defined elongation in topocentric terms.[15] However, national institutions historically used geocentric calculations, creating inconsistency in application.[16]

To resolve these inconsistencies, the Ministry of Religious Affairs organized the "Synchronization of the Indonesian Standard Calendar" meeting in Bali (March 14–16, 2023). The meeting brought together astronomers and representatives of major Islamic organizations. After technical and jurisprudential evaluation, the participants agreed to adopt geocentric elongation as the national standard. This decision was based on the model's greater computational consistency and its conformity with the *maṣlaḥaḥ* (public benefit) principle, ensuring national uniformity in both *ḥisāb* and *rukyat* practices.[17]

Following the Government's official implementation, several Islamic organizations adjusted their methods accordingly. Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) adopted the Neo-MABIMS criteria comprehensively for all Hijri months. At the same time, Persatuan Islam (PERSIS) implemented them specifically for Ramadan, Shawwal, and Dhu al-Hijjah, aligning its calendar with government *iṣbāt* sessions. PERSIS continued using its own *ḥisāb* system based on LAPAN data for other months.

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[12] Azhari, "Neo-Visibilitas Hilal MABIMS," February 25, 2022.

[13] Susiknan Azhari, "Neo-Visibilitas Hilal MABIMS: antara Idealita dan Realita," Fikih, *IBTimes.ID*, October 02, 2022, https://ibtimes.id/neo-visibilitas-hilal-mabims-antara-idealita-dan-realita/.

[14] Thomas Djamaluddin, "Elongasi Kriteria Baru MABIMS: Toposentrik atau Geosentrik?," *Dokumentasi T. Djamaluddin: Berbagi Ilmu Untuk Pencerahan dan Inspirasi*, January 24, 2023, https://tdjamaluddin.com/2023/01/24/elongasi-kriteria-baru-mabims-toposentrik-atau-geosentrik/.

[15] Mohammad Shawkat Odeh, "New Criterion for Lunar Crescent Visibility," *Experimental Astronomy* 18, no. 1 (December 2004): 62, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10686-005-9002-5.

[16] Thomas Djamaluddin, "Naskah Akademik Usulan Kriteria Astronomis Penentuan Awal Bulan Hijriyah," *Dokumentasi T. Djamaluddin: Berbagi Ilmu Untuk Pencerahan dan Inspirasi*, April 19, 2016, https://tdjamaluddin.com/2016/04/19/naskah-akademik-usulan-kriteria-astronomis-penentuan-awal-bulan-hijriyah/.

[17] Djamaluddin, "Alhamdulillah, Sepakat Demi Titik Temu Untuk Kemaslahatan Ummat."

[18] Meanwhile, Muhammadiyah maintained its use of the Single Global Hijri Calendar (KHGT),[19] Reflecting its commitment to a global lunar calculation framework.

Interestingly, NU was the first institution to explicitly formalize the geocentric elongation model through Decree No. 001/SK/LF PBNU/III/2022 (March 2022), issued even before the Government's official decision in March 2023.[20] This proactive stance highlights NU's role as a mediating force between traditional *rukyat* approaches and modern astronomical methods, reinforcing its influence in Indonesia's Islamic astronomy discourse.

Overall, the formulation and adoption of the Neo-MABIMS criteria signify a significant advancement in Indonesia's effort to develop a Hijri calendar system that is both scientifically robust and socially legitimate. This process highlights the dynamic interaction between religious authority, scientific reasoning, and political agreement. Although complete regional alignment has yet to be achieved, the Neo-MABIMS framework represents an essential move toward greater standardization within Southeast Asia. Ultimately, these criteria embody a continuing endeavor to harmonize empirical precision with *fiqh*-based validity, illustrating the evolving character of Islamic astronomy and the broader pursuit of unity in the Muslim world's calendrical practices.

2. Implementation of the Neo-MABIMS Criteria in Indonesia (1443–1446 H)

The implementation of the Neo-MABIMS criteria in Indonesia has resulted in a division among Islamic organizations into two main groups. The first group consists of those adhering to the Government's official determination and applying the criteria, such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Persatuan Islam (PERSIS). The second group comprises those who do not follow the Government's determination and, consequently, do not apply the criteria, most notably Muhammadiyah. As a result, adopting the Neo-MABIMS criteria has not yet eliminated differences in determining the beginning of the Hijri months in Indonesia. These discrepancies persist primarily due to the absence of unified criteria among major Islamic organizations, whose influence plays a pivotal role in regulating religious observances nationwide.

Moreover, variations in methodology further contribute to these differences, even among institutions that employ the same criteria, as exemplified by the Government and Nahdlatul Ulama. Although both apply the Neo-MABIMS criteria to all Hijri months, their practical approaches differ. The Government utilizes the *rukyat al-hilāl* (crescent observation) method only for three key months, Ramadan, Shawwal, and Dhu al-Hijjah, while relying on *ḥisāb* (astronomical calculation) for the remaining months. In contrast, Nahdlatul Ulama consistently employs the *rukyat al-hilāl* method for determining the start of all twelve months. Despite this, discrepancies in the determination of the

[18] Mohammad Iqbal Santoso, *Hisab Imkanur-Rukyat: Kriteria Awal Bulan Hijriyyah Persatuan Islam*, July 14, 2013, https://pemudapersisjabar.wordpress.com/artikel/mohammad-iqbal-santoso/hisab-imkanur-rukyat-kriteria-awal-bulan-hijriyyah-persatuan-islam/.

[19] The Kalender Hijriah Global Tunggal (KHGT) criteria officially replaced the *wujudul hilal* criteria and came into effect at the beginning of Muharram 1446 H.

[20] Lembaga Falakiyah Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, "Surat Keputusan Lembaga Falakiyah Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama No. 001/SK/LF–PBNU/III/2022 Tentang 'Kriteria Imkan Rukyah Nahdlatul Ulama,'" Lembaga Falakiyah Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, March 31, 2022.

beginning of the Hijri months between Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and the Indonesian Government have remained evident in the past three years, as shown in the table below.

Table 1. Comparison of Hijri Month Commencements Between Government and NU

Month	Conjunction	*Hilal* Altitude and Elongation	Government	NU
Ramadan 1443 H	13:24:00 GMT+7 April 01, 2022	02° 10,02' 03° 27,38'	April 03, 2022	April 03, 2022
Jumada al-Thani 1445 H	06:31:54 GMT+7 December 13, 2023	04° 50,36' 07° 14,31'	December 14, 2023	December 15, 2023
Muharram 1446 H	05:57:16 GMT+7 July 06, 2024	05° 50,45' 08° 10,35'	July 07, 2024	July 08, 2024

Based on the data presented above, determining the beginning of the Hijri month generally produced consistent results between the Government (MoRA) and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). Nevertheless, despite both institutions applying the Neo-MABIMS criteria to all months, discrepancies in the outcomes still occurred. Since implementing the criteria in Indonesia, three instances of differing determinations have been recorded: Ramadan 1443 H, Jumada al-Thani 1445 H, and Muharram 1446 H.

These differences arose because the Government, through the Ministry of Religious Affairs (KEMENAG), relies solely on the *ḥisāb* (astronomical calculation) method for months other than Ramadan, Shawwal, and Dhu al-Hijjah, without corroborating the results through *rukyat al-hilāl* (crescent observation). For example, according to *ḥisāb* data for the position of the *hilāl* preceding Shawwal 1443 H, the visibility parameters had already satisfied the Neo-MABIMS criteria, with a predicted *hilāl* altitude ranging from 4°0.59′ to 5°33.57′ and an elongation angle between 4.89° and 6.4°. Based on the calculation alone, this implies that the new month of Shawwal 1443 H had begun and met the required visibility criteria. However, in practice, several observation stations reported visual sightings of the *hilāl* of Shawwal 1443 H at elongation values below 6.4°—for instance, the Balai Rukyat Bukit Condrodipo in Gresik reported a sighting at an elongation of 6.3°. This finding contradicts the Neo-MABIMS criteria officially adopted in Indonesia, highlighting the ongoing challenges in harmonizing theoretical models with empirical observation.

For Jumada al-Akhirah 1445 H, data from the Ephemeris Hisab Rukyat (2023) indicate that the *ijtimā'* (conjunction) occurred on December 13, 2023, at 06:31:54 GMT+7, with a *hilāl* altitude of 4°50.36′ and an elongation of 7°14.31′—thus fulfilling the Neo-MABIMS visibility criteria. Based on *ḥisāb* method, the Ministry of Religious Affairs consequently determined that the first day of Jumada al-Akhirah 1445 H would fall on the following day, December 14, 2023. In contrast, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) failed in observing the *hilāl* on December 13, 2023. They therefore declared the beginning of Jumada al-Akhirah 1445 H on December 15, 2023, applying the principle of *istikmāl* (completing the previous month to 30 days).

A similar situation occurred for Muharram 1446 H. According to the Ephemeris Hisab Rukyat (2024), the *ijtimā* took place on July 06, 2024, at 05:57:16 GMT+7, with a *hilāl* altitude of 5°50.45′ and an elongation of 8°10.35′, also meeting the Neo-MABIMS criteria. Based on these *ḥisāb*, the Government declared the first day of Muharram 1446 H to be July 07, 2024. However, as Nahdlatul

Ulama (NU) reported no successful sighting of the *ḥisāb* on July 06, 2024, it determined the beginning of Muharram 1446 H through *istikmāl*, placing it on July 8, 2024.

The aforementioned differences illustrate that even when identical criteria are applied to determine the beginning of the Hijri month, variations in methodological approaches can produce divergent outcomes, although convergence may also occur. Within the three years since the Neo-MABIMS criteria were implemented in Indonesia, only three notable instances have emerged that merit critical re-evaluation. These cases offer valuable material for further study by the Ministry of Religious Affairs (KEMENAG), scholars of astronomy, and relevant Islamic organizations, thereby reinforcing the need for ongoing refinement and validation of the Neo-MABIMS criteria.

3. Dynamics and Implications of the Neo-MABIMS Criteria

Implementing the Neo-MABIMS criteria in Indonesia illustrates a dynamic intersection between scientific reasoning, methodological interpretation, and institutional authority. Although these criteria were intended to unify the determination of the Hijri month's beginning, their formulation and application continue to present technical and organizational challenges. The following discussion synthesizes this study's main findings, focusing on three central issues: inconsistencies in establishing the criteria, diversity in their application among Islamic organizations, and the persistence of differing results despite identical parameters.

The first significant finding concerns the inconsistency in the early formulation of the criteria, particularly regarding the use of either topocentric or geocentric elongation models. During the initial stage, there was no consensus among the formulating experts, which later required a revision and an eventual agreement to adopt the geocentric elongation model. This lack of clarity demonstrates that even within the scientific framework of Islamic astronomy, differences in the interpretation of astronomical data can affect the legitimacy and acceptance of criteria. According to Khafid (2024), both models are scientifically valid for determining the beginning of the lunar month. This may explain why this issue was not thoroughly debated during the early phase of Neo-MABIMS formulation.[21] Nevertheless, this unresolved detail underscores the need for continuous academic discussion to ensure methodological coherence and shared understanding among experts.

The second finding highlights the diversity of implementation across major Islamic organizations in Indonesia. Broadly, these organizations can be classified into three groups: those that fully adopt the Neo-MABIMS criteria (the Government, represented by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, and Nahdlatul Ulama); those that partially apply them (Persatuan Islam/PERSIS); and those that reject them entirely (Muhammadiyah). This categorization reveals that scientific consensus alone does not guarantee uniformity in religious practice. As Thomas Djamaluddin (2023) suggests, institutional identity and methodological loyalty remain decisive factors in each organization's approach to lunar calendar determination.[22] Such diversity demonstrates that the debate over time reckoning in Indonesia is not merely technical but also sociological, reflecting deeply embedded theological and organizational orientations.

[21] Delivered during the 'Contemporary *Hisab Rukyat*' lecture on November 16, 2024.
[22] Djamaluddin, "Alhamdulillah, Sepakat Demi Titik Temu Untuk Kemaslahatan Ummat."

The third finding concerns the persistence of differing results even when the same criteria are applied. Since the introduction of the Neo-MABIMS criteria in Indonesia, from Ramadan 1443 H to Jumada al-Awwal 1446 H, three differences have continued to occur. These discrepancies primarily arise from differences in method: while the Ministry of Religious Affairs uses *ḥisāb* (astronomical calculation) for all months except Ramadan, Shawwal, and Dhu al-Hijjah, Nahdlatul Ulama consistently employs *rukyat al-hilāl* (empirical observation) for all months. This variation exemplifies how different epistemological approaches, empirical versus computational, can produce diverging yet legitimate outcomes within the same scientific-religious framework.

From these findings, four implications can be drawn. *First*, the inconsistency in the formulation of the elongation model points to the need for continuous refinement and dialogue among astronomy scholars and religious authorities to strengthen the epistemological foundation of the criteria. *Second*, the diversity of implementation across organizations highlights that the adoption of any unified standard must engage scientific agreement, institutional negotiation, and theological acceptance. *Third*, organizational ego and identity remain significant barriers to achieving unity, as institutions are inclined to defend their long-standing methods rather than compromise. Finally, the persistence of differing outcomes underscores the complexity of integrating empirical astronomy with normative *fiqh* considerations, suggesting that scientific accuracy alone cannot resolve all aspects of religious timekeeping.

Previous studies have primarily examined the early implementation of the Neo-MABIMS criteria, focusing on expert opinions during 1443 H. In contrast, this study contributes a broader perspective by analyzing the scientific and organizational aspects and the epistemological tensions inherent in establishing and using the criteria. For instance, the discussion on the elongation model's dynamics was addressed only briefly in the work of Nur Aini and Youla Afifah Azkarrula (2024).[23] By extending the analysis to cover the period from Ramadan 1443 H to Jumada al-Awwal 1446 H, this study provides a more comprehensive understanding of how the Neo-MABIMS criteria have evolved in concept and practice.

Despite its contributions, this research acknowledges certain limitations. The analysis is based primarily on publicly available online sources, which may not capture the full range of expert perspectives or institutional deliberations. Future studies should therefore include direct interviews with key figures involved in formulating and implementing the Neo-MABIMS criteria. Such empirical engagement would enrich the findings, validate the conclusions, and provide a more holistic view of how scientific, religious, and political factors influence the ongoing pursuit of a unified Hijri calendar in Indonesia.

D. Conclusion

The findings of this study reveal that implementing the Neo-MABIMS criteria in Indonesia has not yet achieved complete uniformity in determining the beginning of the Hijri month. Although the criteria were designed to harmonize methods and outcomes, discrepancies persist due to methodological differences between *ḥisāb* (calculation) and *rukyat* (observation). The clarification

[23] Aini and Azkarrula, "Pandangan Tokoh Falak Tentang Elongasi Pada Penentuan Awal Syawal 1443 H Dalam Kriteria Neo MABIMS Di Indonesia."

made at the 2023 Bali meeting, confirming the use of geocentric elongation, marked a significant step toward standardization, yet challenges remain in ensuring consistent application across institutions. Moreover, the varied responses from Islamic organizations demonstrate the complexity of achieving national consensus. While the Government and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) fully adopt the criteria, others, such as Persis, apply them selectively, and Muhammadiyah continues to use an independent method. These dynamics highlight the ongoing need for dialogue, refinement, and collaboration among stakeholders to strengthen the epistemological and practical foundations of the Neo-MABIMS framework in Indonesia.

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