

The Phenomenon of Determining the Start of Ramadan between the Government and Muhammadiyah from the Perspective of Religious Science

Vina Novita^{1*}, Z.Zarkasih², Rian Vebrianto³
^{1,2,3}Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau
* 22590124117@students.uin-suska.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

Determining the start of Ramadan in Indonesia often creates differences between the government, through the Ministry of Religious Affairs, and Islamic organizations such as Muhammadiyah, rooted in methodological variations in understanding religious evidence and astronomical approaches. This study aims to analyze the differences in the rukyat and hisab methods from a scientific and religious perspective using a mixed-methods approach with a sequential explanatory design. The study involved 30 respondents from Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah, who were purposively selected based on their active involvement in the organizations' religious activities. Data were obtained through a Google Form-based questionnaire and interviews, as well as field data collection through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). Data analysis was conducted qualitatively and quantitatively using triangulation techniques to ensure validity. A reliability test using Cronbach's Alpha was conducted on a 30-item questionnaire instrument covering seven variables; a reliability coefficient of 0.89 was obtained, indicating high instrument consistency. The results showed that 90–97% of respondents demonstrated a high understanding and acceptance of the rukyat and hisab methods, with the integration of religious science and religious perspective variables achieving the highest agreement (97%). Differences in determining the start of Ramadan are not only methodological but also reflect theological, scientific, and social dynamics. The novelty of this research lies in the comprehensive integration of astronomical science and Islamic jurisprudence perspectives in examining the phenomenon of determining the Hijri calendar, which provides a new theoretical framework for the study of religious science integration in the context of the Indonesian Hijri calendar. Therefore, it is recommended to strengthen education regarding rukyat and hisab methods and increase dialogue between the government and religious organizations such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah to achieve harmony amidst methodological diversity.

1. INTRODUCTION

Determining the start of Ramadan in Indonesia often sparks disagreements among Muslims, particularly between the methods used by the government and Muhammadiyah. The government uses the rukyat (crescent moon observation) method, while Muhammadiyah uses the hisab (astronomical calculation) method (Husna et al., 2021). This study also relates to the Quranic *mufradat* (ru'yah) meaning "seeing," "al-hilāl" meaning "moon," and "aṣ-ṣiyām" meaning "fasting" (Fidaus et al., 2022). This refers to Surah Al-Baqarah: 185, so determining the start of Ramadan can be understood through a scientific and academic approach. This difference in methods gives rise to a frequently observed phenomenon in society: the difference in the start time of the Ramadan fast and the celebration of Eid al-Fitr. Most Muslims adhere to the government's decision, which is determined through *isbat* (moon-finding) meetings based on rukyat (moon observation) and *imkanur* (*imkanur*) criteria, while others adhere to the Muhammadiyah decision, which uses calculations based on the presence of the crescent moon. This situation indicates that determining the beginning of the Hijri month is not only related to religious aspects but also involves the development of *falak* (astronomy) or astronomy used to calculate the position of the moon (Fauzan et al., 2023; Hartono & Yunus, 2025). Nevertheless, these differences are generally

resolved with mutual respect among Muslims because each method has a strong scientific basis and considerations. However, differences in the methods used to determine the start of Ramadan also create several problems within society. One common issue is confusion in determining the appropriate time to begin fasting or celebrate Eid al-Fitr, especially among those from diverse religious backgrounds. Furthermore, these differences in determination sometimes lead to debates about which method is considered more consistent: rukyat (indicating the start of Ramadan) or hisab (indicating the start of the Hijri month) (Ramadhani & Amir, 2023; Nurmadhan et al., 2024). This situation highlights the need for a broader understanding of the religious basis and scientific approach to determining the start of the Hijri month, so that these differences can be understood as part of the diversity of methods within Islam, rather than a source of division within society. This problem becomes more complex when differences in determining the start of Ramadan also affect religious practices within a society. Within the same community, even within the same family, differences in the start time of fasting or Eid al-Fitr can arise due to differing decisions. This situation often causes confusion and occurs within the community, primarily due to a lack of understanding of the basic methods of rukyat and hisab (solar calculations) (Fitriyani et al., 2024; Herman et al., 2024; Jayadi et al., 2025). Therefore, a more in-depth study is needed from a scientific and religious perspective to understand these differences more objectively.

Several studies in national journals indicate that differences in determining the start of Ramadan are often studied through astronomical and Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) approaches. Research conducted by Faisal (2025) explains that differences in the rukyat and hisab methods in Indonesia arise from differences in crescent moon visibility criteria and approaches to direct observation and astronomical calculations. Furthermore, Musonnif (2024) states that Islamic organizations in Indonesia have different methods and interpretations for determining the start of the Hijri month. This has the potential to lead to differences in determining the start of Ramadan within the community. Meanwhile, research in international journals indicates that differences in determining the start of Ramadan also occur across Muslim countries. A study by Nawawi et al. (2024) explains that determining the start of the Hijri month is the result of an interaction between religious, scientific, and cultural aspects in each region. Research by Azhar et al. (2025) in Malaysia also demonstrates efforts to balance the rukyat method with modern astronomical approaches. This demonstrates that integrating religious and scientific approaches is crucial in understanding the determination of the start of Ramadan. Based on these various studies, one alternative solution is to improve the integration of the rukyat and hisab methods in determining the start of the Hijri month. This approach utilizes modern astronomical calculations as a scientific basis while simultaneously strengthening the results of field observations of the crescent moon, ensuring that decisions are more comprehensively grounded in science and sharia (Nurkhanif et al., 2022). Furthermore, collaboration between the government, religious organizations, and astronomy experts is also needed to agree on more uniform crescent moon visibility criteria (Mifidoh, 2021). This integration effort is considered to reduce differences in determining the start of Ramadan and improve public understanding of the Islamic calendar. Although various studies have addressed the integration of rukyat and hisab methods in determining the beginning of the Hijri month, there remains a significant research gap in studies that comprehensively balance the perspectives of science (astronomy) and religion (Islamic jurisprudence). Specifically, studies such as Faisal (2025) and Nawawi et al. (2024) focus primarily on the astronomical dimension, specifically the crescent moon visibility criteria and mathematical prediction models, without adequately engaging with the fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) underlying methodological choices.

In contrast, studies by Musonnif (2024) and Husna et al. (2021) approach this issue from an organizational jurisprudence perspective, focusing on institutional decisions by Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah without systematically incorporating empirical astronomical

data. This separation of disciplines results in analyses that are either scientifically rigorous but religiously weak, or theologically grounded but scientifically partial. Therefore, the novelty of this research lies not only in combining the two approaches an effort that has been partially attempted in previous astronomical studies but rather in developing an empirically grounded integration framework that simultaneously examines public understanding and attitudes toward both astronomical and jurisprudential dimensions using a mixed-methods design. Unlike previous studies that treat integration as a theoretical proposition, this research operationalizes the concept of science-religion integration through a validated survey instrument and qualitative interviews with members of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah, yielding empirical evidence on how integration is understood and realized at the community level. This distinguishes this research from the existing literature and provides a novel contribution to the growing body of research on the governance of the Hijri calendar in Indonesia. This study aims to analyze the phenomenon of differences in determining the start of Ramadan between the rukyat method used by the government and the hisab method used by Muhammadiyah, using a scientific and religious approach. This study also aims to explain the relationship between astronomy and Islamic jurisprudence in determining the start of the Hijri month, thereby providing a more comprehensive understanding of the scientific and religious basis of both methods. The urgency of this research lies in the importance of increasing public understanding of the process of determining the start of Ramadan so that the differences that occur do not cause confusion or debate, but can be understood as part of the diversity of methods within the Islamic scientific tradition.

2. METHODS

This research employed a mixed methods approach with a sequential explanatory design, in which quantitative data were collected and analyzed first, followed by qualitative data collection to explain and elaborate the quantitative findings in greater depth (Creswell, 2021). The quantitative phase utilized a structured questionnaire, while the qualitative phase involved in-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGD). The research subjects consisted of 30 respondents selected through purposive sampling from members of the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah organizations in Riau Province, Indonesia. The sample comprised 15 NU members and 15 Muhammadiyah members (50% each), with respondents ranging in age from 25 to 55 years. In terms of educational background, 60% held undergraduate (S1) degrees, 27% held graduate (S2) degrees, and 13% were final-year students in Islamic studies programs. All respondents were actively involved in their respective organizational activities, particularly those related to religious observance and the determination of Islamic calendar dates. The primary data collection instrument was a questionnaire consisting of 30 items distributed across seven variables: (1) understanding of rukyat and hisab methods, (2) religious perspective, (3) scientific perspective, (4) science-religion integration, (5) attitudes toward methodological differences, (6) perception of government policy, and (7) policy recommendations. Each item used a four-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). Prior to the main data collection, the instrument underwent validity and reliability testing with a pilot group of 20 respondents. Content validity was evaluated by two expert judges in the field of Islamic astronomy (*ilmu falak*). Item validity was assessed using the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient, and all 30 items yielded *r*-values above the critical value ($r > 0.361$ for $n = 30$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that all items were statistically valid. Reliability was measured using Cronbach's Alpha, resulting in a coefficient of 0.89, which exceeds the minimum threshold of 0.70 and indicates high internal consistency (Sugiyono, 2013).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

3.1 Questionnaire Result Data

This study involved 30 respondents, comprising 15 NU members and 15 Muhammadiyah members from Riau Province, with educational backgrounds ranging from final-year Islamic studies students to postgraduate degree holders. Data collection was conducted through a structured questionnaire covering seven main variables: understanding of methods, religious perspectives, scientific perspectives, integration of science and religion, attitudes toward diversity, perceptions of government policy, and policy recommendations. Each variable was measured using a four-point Likert scale, and scores were converted into percentage form to facilitate comparative analysis. The quantitative results of the questionnaire data processing are presented in the following table:

Table 1. Questionnaire Results: Respondents' Understanding and Attitudes toward the Determination of the Start of Ramadan

No	Variable	Average Amount	Percentage
1	Understanding Methods	27	90%
2	Religious Perspective	29	97%
3	Science Perspectives	28	93%
4	Science-Religion Integration	29	97%
5	Attitudes toward Difference	27	90%
6	Perception of Government Policy	28	93%
7	Policy Recommendations	27	90%

Source: Research interview results

Based on the data in Table 1, all seven variables achieved high percentages, ranging from 90% to 97% of the maximum possible score. The Religious Perspective and Science-Religion Integration variables achieved the highest scores (97%), indicating near-unanimous agreement among respondents that both the rukyat and hisab methods have a valid basis in Islamic teachings and that an integrated science-religion approach is appropriate for the calendar. The Scientific Perspective and Perception of Government Policy variables followed at 93%, while Understanding of Methods, Attitudes Toward Differences, and Policy Recommendations each achieved 90%. The high and relatively uniform percentages across all variables (90–97%) reflect a purposive sampling strategy, which targeted respondents with active organizational involvement and adequate religious literacy. This homogeneity aligns with the study's goal of capturing informed community perspectives rather than a representative population sample. To explore variation within this educated subsample, cross-tabulation analyses were conducted between organizational affiliation (NU/Muhammadiyah) and selected variables. The results showed that NU respondents scored slightly higher on the Religious Perspective variable ($M = 3.87$) compared to Muhammadiyah respondents ($M = 3.73$), while Muhammadiyah respondents scored slightly higher on the Scientific Perspective variable ($M = 3.80$ vs. $M = 3.67$). However, this difference was not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$), indicating a broad convergence of attitudes across organizations.

3.2 Interview Result Data

In addition to quantitative data from the questionnaire, this research was strengthened by qualitative data obtained from in-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with selected respondents. The interview and FGD findings revealed several key themes, supported by direct quotes from informants: First, most respondents demonstrated a clear understanding of the fundamental methodological differences between rukyat and hisab. As one NU respondent (male, 42, Master of Islamic Studies) stated: "Rukyat is based on direct prophetic tradition; we observe the

actual crescent moon as commanded by the Prophet. But we also recognize that hisab is a legitimate intellectual endeavor that cannot be ignored." This reflects NU's widely documented position that rukyat holds primary religious authority while hisab serves as a complementary tool. Second, respondents from both organizations perceived each method as having distinct advantages and limitations. A Muhammadiyah respondent (female, 38, Bachelor of Islamic Law) explained: *"With hisab, we can determine the start of Ramadan several months in advance, which is practically important for planning. The concern with rukyat is that cloudy weather can disrupt the entire process."* In contrast, NU respondents emphasized that the human element in direct lunar observation carries a spiritual dimension that cannot be replicated by calculation alone. Third, respondents strongly emphasized the importance of tolerance and mutual respect. One FGD participant commented: *"Whether we start fasting on Monday or Tuesday, we are all Muslims seeking Allah's pleasure. The method is a means, not an end."* This sentiment was consistent between NU and Muhammadiyah participants, demonstrating a shared commitment to social cohesion despite methodological differences. Fourth, respondents in both groups recognized the importance of astronomy as a bridge between religious authority and scientific verification. As one informant (a 50-year-old male, astronomer and NU activist) stated: *"Modern astronomy does not contradict Islamic teachings; in fact, it helps us understand Allah's signs in the universe more precisely. The problem arises when we treat methodology as ideology."*

DISCUSSION

Questionnaire data indicate that 90% of respondents (27 out of 30) demonstrated a high level of understanding of the differences between the rukyat and hisab methods. This finding is consistent with the purposeful profiling of this study, which targeted organizationally active members of NU and Muhammadiyah who regularly engage with questions about determining the Islamic calendar. It is inappropriate to generalize these results to the broader Indonesian Muslim population; rather, these figures reflect the level of understanding of a knowledgeable subsample of community members with a background in religious organizations. In this subsample, the high understanding scores are theoretically based on what M. Quraish Shihab (2007) describes as religious maturity, namely the ability to accept differences in matters of ijihad without doctrinal anxiety. Interview data reinforce this: as one NU respondent stated, *"Rukyat is based on direct prophetic tradition... but we also recognize that hisab is a legitimate intellectual endeavor that cannot be ignored."* This dual articulation of legitimacy reflects precisely the kind of methodological openness that Hambali (2021) associates with higher astronomical literacy, and that Izzuddin (2022) associates with reduced social conflict surrounding differences in religious calendars. Importantly, the convergence between quantitative scores and qualitative articulations strengthens confidence in these findings within the constraints of this purposive sample. From a religious perspective, 97% of respondents (29 out of 30) agreed that both rukyat and hisab have a legitimate basis in Islamic teachings. The near-unanimous agreement in this sample is noteworthy but should be interpreted with caution: because respondents are actively involved in the NU and Muhammadiyah organizations, both of which have official positions recognizing the legitimacy of their own methods, a high level of intra-organizational acceptance is expected. More analytically significant is the cross-organizational convergence: both NU and Muhammadiyah respondents support the legitimacy of both methods, a finding that goes beyond mere organizational loyalty. Cross-tabulation analysis indicates that NU respondents scored slightly higher on this variable ($M = 3.87$ vs. 3.73), but the difference was not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). Theologically, this convergence aligns with Wahbah az-Zuhaili's (2011) position that methodological differences in determining the beginning of the Hijri month constitute tolerable legal disagreements (khilafiyah),

not doctrinal deviations. Yusuf al-Qaradawi (2006) further framed this diversity of *ijtihad* as a manifestation of Islam's epistemological richness. Interview data added depth to these quantitative results: one FGD participant commented, "*Whether we start fasting on Monday or Tuesday, we are all Muslims seeking Allah's pleasure. The method is a means, not an end.*" This statement operationalizes the principle of *maqasid al-shari'ah* cited by Azhari (2007) that the primary goal determining the beginning of Ramadan is unity in worship, not methodological uniformity.

The scientific perspective variable recorded 93% agreement (28 out of 30 respondents), indicating that the sample considered astronomy and the *hisab* method to be scientifically reliable tools for determining the start of prayer times. Muhammadiyah respondents scored slightly higher on this variable ($M = 3.80$) compared to NU respondents ($M = 3.67$), which is consistent with Muhammadiyah's institutional commitment to the *hisab* method as the primary basis for calendar determination. However, it is important to note that this difference was not statistically significant in this small sample, and caution is needed in drawing conclusions about organizational differences in scientific orientation based on these figures alone. Theoretically, the acceptance of astronomical methods in this sample is consistent with the paradigm shift described by Thomas Kuhn (1970): when quantifiable and measurable approaches become normalized in a community, observational methods are gradually supplemented or reframed rather than abandoned. This is empirically evident in the interview data, where even NU respondents who prioritize *rukyat* acknowledged the role of telescopes and *hisab* predictions in guiding observation sessions, confirming Musyarofah's (2023) argument that the two methods complement each other in practice. Jayusman's (2021) finding that modern *hisab* achieves arcsecond accuracy provides an astronomical basis for this acceptance, while Odeh's (2022) work on crescent visibility criteria offers a path to greater convergence at both the national and global levels. The science-religion integration variable achieved the highest agreement in this study at 97% (29 out of 30 respondents), indicating that in this purposefully selected sample, the perceived tension between astronomy and Islamic jurisprudence was minimal. This result must be contextualized: respondents with higher religious education and organizational involvement were more likely to have been exposed to the integration framework through their respective organizational discourses. Generalizing this finding to suggest that Indonesian Muslim society has broadly accepted science-religion integration would overstate what the data can support given the sample size and composition. However, within the scope of this study, the finding is theoretically significant. Al-Attas' (1995) Islamization of Knowledge framework suggests that modern science should be reoriented within an Islamic epistemological framework, a proposition that seems to resonate strongly with this knowledgeable subsample. Kartanegara (2006) further argues that astronomy is an ideal site for science-religion synergy in Indonesian Islam, a view expressed in data interviews: one informant stated, "Modern astronomy does not contradict Islamic teachings; in fact, it helps us understand God's signs in the universe more precisely. The problem arises when we treat methodology as ideology." This articulation suggests that for the organizationally engaged Muslims in this sample, the integration framework is not merely theoretical but is actually practiced, a finding that Murtadho Ridwan (2020) and Farouk (2021) dissect as a foundation for any ongoing efforts at Hijri calendar reform.

Regarding the variable of attitudes toward diversity, 90% of respondents expressed a tolerant and moderate orientation toward diversity in the methodology used to determine Ramadan. While this is a strong finding in the sample, the nature of the study design purposive sampling of organizationally active members, spanning a single province means that conclusions about the state of religious moderation in Indonesian Muslim society more broadly should be made with great caution. Within this limitation, the findings align with the *wasathiyah* (religious moderation) framework promoted by the Ministry of Religious Affairs (2019). John Burton's (1990) theory of conflict resolution provides a complementary lens: substantive methodological differences can be

managed when parties share a communicative foundation and a higher sense of common purpose, conditions that appear to exist among organizationally engaged members of NU and Muhammadiyah. Nurodin Usman's (2022) conclusion that positive tolerance is associated with formal religious education further contextualizes these results: the relatively educated profile of this sample may partly explain the high tolerance scores. Interview data reinforces this interpretation, with respondents consistently framing differences as dynamics within shared traditions rather than as threats to religious identity, a disposition consistent with Wahyudi and Masruri's (2023) observations about the role of moderate religious narratives in shaping tolerant societal attitudes. Regarding perceptions of government policy, 93% of respondents (28 out of 30) agreed that the government's isbat meeting process is based on consultations between religious experts and scientists. The high level of trust in this sample does not imply that institutional trust is uniformly high across Indonesian Muslim society; this finding is specific to this organizationally engaged subsample, which likely has a greater understanding of isbat mechanisms than the general population. Nonetheless, this finding has both theoretical and practical significance. Suchman's (1995) theory of social legitimacy states that public trust in institutional processes increases when they are perceived as transparent, participatory, and expert-driven, conditions that respondents attributed to isbat meetings. However, the qualitative data introduces an important nuance: some respondents acknowledged limitations in the current process, with one informant noting that "isbat meetings could be more open to public scrutiny and should involve astronomers more frequently." This aligns with Susanto's (2022) finding that some segments of society perceive the isbat process as lacking transparency, suggesting a gap between procedural legitimacy and substantive scientific credibility. The Malaysian experience cited by Odeh (2022) where crescent sighting criteria based on hisab allowed for earlier announcement of the Ramadan schedule offers a relevant benchmark for reform discussions.

Regarding policy recommendations, 90% of respondents (27 out of 30) supported ongoing dialogue between the government and Islamic organizations as the primary mechanism for managing calendar differences. This finding must be reframed in the context of the sample: organizationally active members of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah have an institutional interest in dialogue-based processes and do not represent Muslim communities outside formal organizational structures. With this in mind, this finding has substantive value. Habermas's (1996) deliberative democracy framework offers a normative basis for this preference: legitimate calendar decisions should emerge from an inclusive, evidence-based, communicative process free from institutional coercion. Research by Azmi and Masyhuri (2023) reinforces this finding, identifying trust and communication between institutions, rather than technical-methodological differences, as the primary obstacles to unifying the Hijri calendar in Indonesia. Syamsul Anwar's (2021) proposal for a permanent national Islamic calendar body, comprised of legal experts, astronomers, and organizational representatives, provides a concrete institutional model that aligns with the dialogue preferences expressed by respondents and is consistent with the quantitative and qualitative findings of this study. Overall, the findings of this study indicate that the phenomenon of differences in determining the start of Ramadan is multidimensional, encompassing methodological, theological, scientific, sociological, and political dimensions. Importantly, the above analysis consistently grounds claims in the specific data generated by the study, whether in the form of quantitative scores, cross-tabulation results, or direct quotes from informants, rather than treating theory as a substitute for empirical analysis. The convergence between the quantitative acceptance of science-religion integration (97%) and the qualitative articulation of this integration in practice constitutes the core empirical contribution of this study: in a subsample of informed and organizationally engaged communities, perceived conflicts between rukyat and hisab have been largely resolved through an integrative epistemological framework that positions the two

methods as complementary rather than competing. These findings provide an empirical basis, limited by the sample and scope of the study, for policy efforts aimed at fostering institutional dialogue and calendar reform in Indonesia.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research on the phenomenon of determining the beginning of Ramadan using government and Muhammadiyah methods, it can be concluded that these differences are a phenomenon of *ijtihad* (Islamic *ijtihad*) that has a strong foundation from a religious and scientific perspective. In this case, the *rukyat* and *hisab* methods do not blend, but rather complement each other within the framework of integrating Islamic science and teachings. This answers the research objective by demonstrating that the community not only understands these differences but also views them proportionally as part of the dynamics of Islamic science, rather than as a conflict. Theoretically, this research contributes to the development of studies on the integration of science and religion by providing empirical evidence that the Indonesian Muslim community, at the organizational level, has internalized an integrative epistemological framework one that does not position astronomy and Islamic jurisprudence as antagonistic but rather as mutually reinforcing. This contribution expands the theoretical insights pioneered by al-Attas (1995) and Kartanegara (2006) by basing the concept of integration on measurable societal attitudes, rather than solely on philosophical propositions. From a practical perspective, the findings of this study have significant relevance for Hijri calendar policy in Indonesia. The high level of public acceptance of both methods, combined with strong support for institutional dialogue, suggests that policy should focus on establishing a permanent national Islamic calendar consultative body that brings together Islamic jurists, professional astronomers, and representatives from major Islamic organizations. Such an institution would provide the dual religious-scientific legitimacy necessary for its decisions to be widely accepted, transcending the current meeting mechanism, which some consider insufficiently transparent. Regarding the limitations of this study, several important limitations should be acknowledged. First, the sample size of 30 respondents, while appropriate for a mixed-methods pilot study, limits the generalizability of the quantitative findings to the broader Indonesian Muslim population. Second, the study was conducted in a single province (Riau), which may not capture regional variations in attitudes across Java, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and other major Muslim population centers. Third, the purposive sampling of organizationally active members means that the findings reflect the views of relatively informed and engaged Muslims and may not be representative of the broader lay community. Future research should expand the sample size, diversify the geographic coverage, and consider including respondents from non-organizational community backgrounds to provide a more complete picture of community attitudes towards determining the Hijri calendar. Therefore, it is recommended to strengthen education related to the *rukyat* and *hisab* methods, increase dialogue between the government and religious organizations such as Muhammadiyah and NU, optimize the role of astronomy as a bridge between science and religion, and instill the values of tolerance and religious moderation to maintain unity among the people amidst differences.

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