

Women's Leadership Management in Developing the Character of Al Munawwir Students Based on Religious Values

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Abstract

This study was conducted to analyze women's leadership management in the character development of students (santri) at Al-Munawwir Islamic Boarding School (Pondok Pesantren Al-Munawwir) in Krapyak, Yogyakarta, particularly those based on religious values. This research is a qualitative study using a case study approach. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews with the boarding school caretaker, Mrs. Nyai Idah, who leads the Fatimiyah and L dormitory, as well as through direct observation within the pesantren environment. Meanwhile, secondary data were collected from literature reviews related to women's leadership, character education, and religious values in Islamic boarding schools. The results show that the women's leadership applied here has strong characteristics in shaping the students' personalities through exemplary behavior, discipline, and both spiritual and emotional approaches. Furthermore, the findings indicate that religious values serve as the main foundation in the character-building process, such as sincerity, responsibility, manners, and independence, which are consistently instilled in the students' daily lives. The implications of this research suggest that women's leadership in Islamic boarding schools can make a significant contribution to the character formation of students, especially when managed with strong Islamic values. This also opens up opportunities to strengthen the role of women in faith-based educational institutions.

Keywords: Women's Leadership, Character Development, Santri, Religious Values, Al-Munawwir Islamic Boarding School

PENDAHULUAN

The management of women's leadership in the character development of Al-Munawwir students, based on religious values, has become an important issue that reflects a paradigm shift in leadership within Islamic educational environments. Until now, leadership has often been associated with male authority, as if only men are deemed worthy of leading (Rahman et al., 2020). During the time of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), most women had limited knowledge and experience and were even considered a weaker group in social life (Prof. Dr. H. Abuddin Nata, 2016). According to Nasaruddin Umar, this was caused by the deeply rooted patriarchal cultural construction in Arab society at that time. However, over time, many women have proven themselves capable of becoming successful leaders in various fields (Hamdi, 2017). Today, many women hold important positions such as university rector, vice rector, dean, school principal, manager, and even leader of Islamic boarding schools. This shows that leadership is no longer a male monopoly. Imam Khomeini even stated that women have their own roles and ways of participating in social and political life, including serving as leaders in educational institutions (Komariah, 2016).

various previous studies have examined the success of female leaders in educational institutions, such as at MTsN 9 Bantul, MTsN 4 Bantul, MIN 2 Kota Banjar, the library of UIN Sunan Kalijaga, as well as several Islamic boarding schools in West Lombok, Ngawi, and Semarang (Riastri, 2024). These studies academically demonstrate that women are capable of exercising leadership effectively (Ana Merdekawaty, 2025). However, most of these studies still focus on the general aspects of female leadership without delving deeply into managerial strategies for developing the religious character of santri, particularly within Islamic boarding schools, which have a distinct culture and a strong socio-religious structure.

This paper addresses that gap by exploring in greater depth how female leadership management in Islamic boarding schools contributes to the development of santri's religious character. The three specific objectives of this study serve as fundamental aspects in character development based on religious values (Riastri, 2024). First, to examine the importance of women's leadership management in developing the religious

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character of the students at Al-Munawwir Islamic Boarding School, Al-Fatimiyah Putri dormitory, Krapyak Yogyakarta. Second, to analyze the management strategies used in developing the students' religious character. Third, to explain the implications of women's leadership on the quality of the students' religious character within the boarding school environment. This study is based on the argument that women's leadership, with a distinctive managerial approach such as role modeling, discipline, and the habituation of religious values, can significantly contribute to the formation of the religious character of the students. The charismatic and democratic leadership style applied by Mrs. Nyai H. Ida Fatimah M.Si is a key factor in the successful development of the students' character, both spiritually and socially, at the Al-Munawwir Islamic Boarding School, Al-Fatimiyah Putri dormitory (Riastri, 2024). This study aims to examine how these aspects concretely influence the development of religious character within the context of a modern Islamic boarding school.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Leadership management is a process of influencing and directing individuals or groups to achieve specific goals through organizing available resources. According to Robbins and Coulter, leadership is the ability to influence a group in achieving a vision or goal (Baihaqi, 2015). In the context of Islamic education, leadership is viewed not only from a structural perspective but also from moral and spiritual aspects. Women's leadership in the pesantren environment reflects a shift in women's roles, from merely being supporters to becoming directors and drivers of change, particularly in the development of students' character (Nilna Imroatus, 2022).

Leadership management includes several important aspects that must be considered to run an organization effectively. First, the vision and mission must be established by the leader as a strategic direction for the institution, serving as a guideline for every policy. Second, decision-making should be carried out wisely by selecting the best course of action to resolve the issues faced. Third, effective communication must be used as the primary tool to convey information, build cooperation, and motivate team members. Fourth, empowerment should involve relevant parties to foster independence, a sense of responsibility, and active participation. Fifth, ethics and exemplary behavior

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must be demonstrated in every action as a reflection of integrity and upheld moral values. Additionally, regular evaluation and reflection are necessary to identify and correct weaknesses (Katkov, 1993). In the context of women's leadership in pesantren, an empathetic approach, warm communication, and spiritual role modeling often serve as unique strengths that create a meaningful and trusting nurturing environment (Syafe'i, 2017).

Character development is a continuous process of shaping a person's values, attitudes, and behaviors to create an individual with integrity. According to Lickona, character includes three main aspects: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action (Sudrajat, 2011). In Islamic education, character formation is an important part of educational goals, emphasizing not only cognitive aspects but also affective and psychomotor domains (Utami, 2020). Good leadership, including that by women, can be a strategic factor in shaping students who are religious and possess noble character (Nur Efendi & Muh Ibnu Sholeh, 2023).

Aspects of character development encompass various important dimensions that need to be consistently cultivated within the students. First, religiosity, which involves instilling the values of faith and devotion to Allah SWT as the primary foundation for action. Second, honesty, cultivated to build integrity in daily speech and behavior. Third, discipline, trained as a habit of obeying rules and fulfilling responsibilities. Fourth, responsibility, meaning the individual's awareness in carrying out duties with full commitment and sincerity. Fifth, cooperation, which is the ability to work together with others in a harmonious and supportive environment. Sixth, social care, nurtured so that students become empathetic individuals who are sensitive to their surroundings and ready to benefit others. All these aspects can be effectively instilled through a leadership style that is communicative, inspiring, and provides concrete role models characteristics often strongly associated with women's leadership in the pesantren environment (Armiyanti et al., 2023).

Religious values are a set of moral and spiritual principles derived from religious teachings that serve as guidelines for daily behavior. According to Zakiyah Darajat, religious values are life guidelines that underpin human behavior to align with divine, humanitarian, and social values (Yunus, 2017). Dalam konteks pesantren, nilai religius

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tidak hanya diajarkan secara teori, tetapi ditanamkan melalui pembiasaan, keteladanan, dan pengalaman hidup yang nyata (Baihaqi, 2015). In the context of pesantren, religious values are not only taught theoretically but are also instilled through habituation, role modeling, and real-life experiences.

Religious values have several key aspects that form the foundation for character development among students in the pesantren environment. First, tawhid or faith in Allah SWT, which serves as the spiritual foundation for every behavior and life decision. Second, worship, reflecting devotion to Allah while also fostering discipline and personal responsibility. Third, akhlaq, which refers to manners and ethics in relationships with Allah, fellow human beings, and the surrounding environment. Fourth, amar ma'ruf nahi munkar, the call to do good and prevent wrongdoing as a form of social care. Fifth, simplicity, reflecting a humble lifestyle and distancing oneself from arrogance. Sixth, submission or tawakal, the attitude of trusting and surrendering to Allah when facing life's trials. All these aspects form a strong foundation in the character-building process of the students, strategically guided through women's leadership management within the pesantren (Maesaroh, 2024).

METHODS

This study was conducted at the Al-Munawwir Islamic Boarding School in Krapyak, Yogyakarta, one of the largest and most influential pesantren in Indonesia. The selection of this site was not random but based on strategic considerations. Al-Munawwir is known as an Islamic educational institution that not only focuses on teaching classical texts but is also active in developing student leadership, including the significant role of women in the internal leadership of the pesantren (Afandi, 2019). The case studied is women's leadership management in developing students' character using an approach based on religious values (Suci Ramadani, 2025). The research focuses on how women in this pesantren environment carry out their strategic role in fostering the character, moral values, and spirituality of the students. The unit of analysis includes the structure of women's leadership, the character-building methods applied, and the perceptions of students and educators regarding the impact of that leadership.

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This research is qualitative with a case study approach. Qualitative research was chosen because it is suitable for exploring complex social and cultural phenomena, as well as understanding the deeper meanings of individuals' experiences and actions within a specific social context (Soesana et al., 2023). The data used is a combination of primary and secondary sources. Primary data was obtained directly from the field through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and documentation. Meanwhile, secondary data came from various supporting sources such as reference books, scientific journals, official pesantren documents, related articles, and leadership program activity reports. The use of both types of data aims to enhance the accuracy, depth, and richness of the analysis, while also strengthening triangulation in the data validation process (Ely Mulyati, 2024).

The primary data sources come from purposively selected informants, chosen based on their competence, experience, and direct involvement in the phenomenon under study. Key informants in this research include women leaders at the Al-Munawwir pesantren, such as Mrs. Nyai (the caretaker), female teachers or mentors, and dormitory administrators who play strategic roles in developing the students' character. Additionally, several senior students active in leadership activities and instructors are included as supplementary informants to provide broader perspectives. The selection of informants takes into account variations in age, experience, and responsibility to ensure that the data reflects diverse viewpoints (Ely Mulyati, 2024). The validity of the information is maintained by cross-checking between sources and conducting repeated interviews when necessary.

Several techniques were used to collect data thoroughly and in depth. First, participatory observation, where the researcher was directly present during leadership activities and character development at the pesantren, allowing for natural recording of interactions and communication patterns. Second, in-depth interviews, conducted in a structured manner to explore the understanding, experiences, and strategies employed by women leaders in developing students' character. Third, documentation study, which involved analyzing formal documents such as annual programs, regulations, daily activity logs of the pesantren, as well as written works by the female teachers and students. Each data collection technique was adapted to the field context and conducted flexibly to

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obtain comprehensive information (Seger Santoso, Eri Kusnanto, 2022). The data collection process spanned more than two months to obtain an accurate and comprehensive understanding of the social reality at the pesantren.

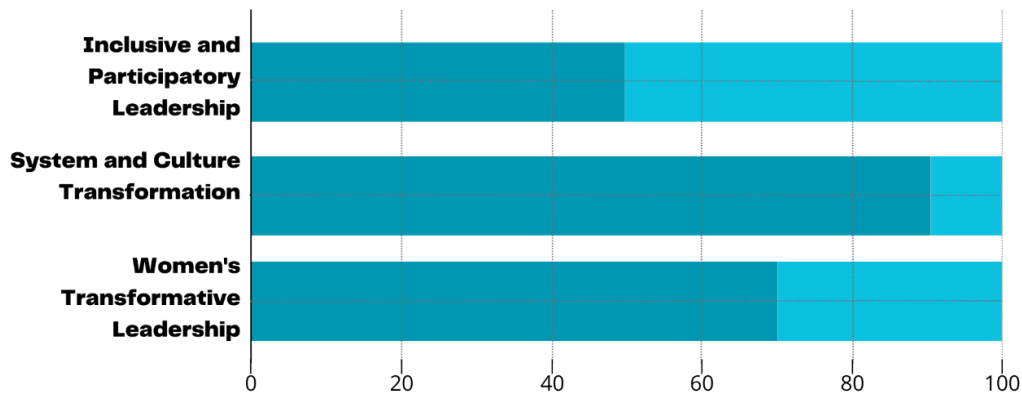
The data collected were analyzed using thematic analysis, a process of identifying, analyzing, and reporting key themes emerging from qualitative data. The analysis began with data reduction, filtering relevant information from interviews, observations, and documents. Next, the data were presented in the form of narratives and thematic matrices to facilitate the identification of emerging patterns (Rijali, 2018). The final stage involves drawing conclusions and verification, which includes interpreting the underlying meaning of the data and confirming it with the informants (Rijali, 2018). The validity of the analysis was strengthened through source and method triangulation techniques, ensuring that the research findings are credible and scientifically accountable (Khoirina Badriyah, 2025). With this approach, it is expected to gain a comprehensive understanding of the strategies in women's leadership management for shaping students' character in a religious and competitive manner

RESULTS

This study reveals that the leadership style of Ibu Nyai Hj. Ida Fatimah at the Al-Fatimiyah Putri Complex represents a pesantren leadership model that is not only spiritual but also transformative and empowering. Her leadership is not based on authoritarianism but rather emphasizes the principles of deliberation, openness, and strengthening the role of individuals within the pesantren structure (Riastri, 2024). She encourages active participation from administrators and students, creating an inclusive environment where every voice is valued and every contribution matters (Afandi, 2019). In daily life, Nyai Ida positions herself as a facilitator rather than an absolute controller. This becomes a crucial element in creating a dynamic and democratic learning culture.

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The most striking aspect of Ibu Nyai Hj. Ida Fatimah's leadership style is her ability to combine traditional pesantren values with a contemporary leadership approach based on principles of collectivity and humanization. In a pesantren environment that is historically and structurally known for its rigid hierarchy, she emerges as a leader who breaks down these rigid power barriers (Bali, 2017). One concrete example is the delegation of responsibilities to the administrators in managing various aspects of the pesantren, such as organizing daily activities, overseeing duty rosters, enforcing rules, and providing services to new students. While still conducting regular supervision, Ibu Nyai Ida places great trust in the administrators and accompanies them with a persuasive and reflective approach (Riastri, 2024).



Gambar 1. (Tingkat Pengaruh Terhadap Konteks Kepemimpinan)

These findings are conceptually significant because they challenge old stereotypes about women's leadership, especially within religious-based institutions like pesantrens. In traditional leadership studies, leaders are often identified as strong, firm, and dominant male figures (Ervienna, 2021). However, Ibu Nyai Ida introduces a new paradigm of leadership based on gentleness, wisdom, and profound spiritual and social depth (Riastri, 2024). This concept also demonstrates that the transformation of Islamic educational institutions can begin with a leadership approach that is more ethical, communicative, and reflective, without having to abandon the core values of the pesantren (Abdullah, 2014). This model aligns with Islamic values such as justice ('adl), consultation (shura), and compassion (rahmah), which serve as important foundations in holistic Islamic education (Masturah et al., 2024).

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The impact of this leadership is tangible in the daily lives of the students and administrators at the Al-Fatimiyah and L dormitories. The students feel more confident, are willing to express their opinions, and actively initiate academic and social programs. A particularly significant outcome is the strong sense of belonging that has developed toward the pesantren (Afandi, 2019). The administrators feel that their role is not merely as task executors but also as part of the decision-making system, albeit on a smaller scale. The students become more trained to think critically, act responsibly, and show empathy, as they directly observe Nyai Ida's exemplary treatment of each individual with fairness and dignity.

NO	KEY FINDINGS	%	SHORT DESCRIPTION
1	Inclusive and Participatory Leadership	60%	Emphasizing deliberation, openness, and active involvement of administrators and students in decision making.
2	Transformation of Islamic Boarding School Systems and Culture	90%	Implementing a modern curriculum, strengthening soft skills, and management changes based on collaboration and reflective moral values.
3	Women's Transformative Leadership in the Context of Islam	75%	Presenting women as agents of change based on spirituality, humanism, and Islamic ethics that prioritize mercy, justice, and justice.

Gambar 2. (Tingkat Pengaruh Masing-Masing Temuan)

The relationship built between Ibu Nyai Ida and the administrators and students is based on principles of family, openness, and empathy. There is no symbolic distance that makes the caretaker seem exclusive or untouchable. On the contrary, two-way communication is strongly emphasized in every form of interaction. Every issue that arises, whether personal or collective, is always discussed through deliberation. When rules are violated, the approach taken is restorative rather than purely punitive. This reflects that the value of adab (courtesy) in the pesantren is not only about symbolic respect toward the caretaker but also concerns the ethics of dialogue, honesty in expressing opinions, and willingness to understand one another (Husain, 2022).

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Ibu Nyai Ida actively implements various intervention strategies to improve the quality of education and management at the pesantren. One of her breakthrough initiatives is the restructuring of the pesantren curriculum by incorporating new materials relevant to contemporary needs, such as gender education, reproductive health, emotional management, digital literacy, and national awareness. In addition, regular thematic training sessions are held for the administrators and senior students to enhance their leadership capacities. Nyai Ida also provides mentoring opportunities where students can share experiences, confide, or directly discuss matters with her. These interventions are not only academic but also address the psychological and spiritual aspects of the students, making them feel fully supported (Fitriyani, 2019).

1	Category: Inclusive and Participatory Leadership	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Active involvement of students and administrators in decision making 2. Deliberation and two-way dialogue 3. Leaders as facilitators, not authoritarians
2	Transformation of Islamic Boarding School Systems and Culture	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Curriculum restructuring with contextual materials (gender, digital literacy, etc.) 2. Thematic training and mentoring 3. Integration of formal and non-formal education 4. 21st-century skills values: collaboration, communication, critical thinking
3	Women's Transformative Leadership	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Eliminating stereotypes of male leaders in Islamic boarding schools 2. Spiritual and social role models 3. Leadership based on mercy, syura, and adl 4. Strengthening women's leadership as agents of transformation

Gambar 2. (Kategorisasi Tematik Temuan Lapangan)

Ibu Nyai Ida's leadership has brought about a systemic transformation in the management of the pesantren. One significant change is the integration of formal and non-formal education systems, where the teaching of classical Islamic texts is complemented by the strengthening of 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, collaboration, and communication. Students are now more actively involved in program planning, activity implementation, and internal performance evaluation. Values such as independence, collective awareness, and diversity are applied in every aspect of daily life. This has transformed the pesantren into not just a place for memorizing religious knowledge, but also a space for shaping resilient, inclusive, and globally minded future leaders. These various innovations reflect the pesantren's ability to adapt to the demands

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of the times without losing its identity as an educational institution grounded in Islamic values (Fitriyani, 2019).

The pesantren culture, which was previously perceived as rigid and closed, has undergone a reorientation toward a more dialogical and reflective culture. This change does not eliminate the concept of *adab* (proper conduct), but rather deepens it in the form of more spiritual and mutually respectful relationships. *Adab* is no longer understood as blind obedience, but as respect rooted in understanding and inner awareness. Spiritually, Nyai Ida's successful leadership is founded on a deep conviction that every role and responsibility entrusted to her is a form of worship (Zulmy, 2021). The concept of *ridha* Allah (God's pleasure) becomes the essence in every decision made. This motivates the santri to pursue knowledge not merely for grades, but as a form of devotion to Allah and society.

Overall, the results of this study confirm that the leadership of Ibu Nyai Hj. Ida Fatimah reflects a form of Islamic leadership that is relevant, contextual, and multi-dimensional: both spiritual and social. Her leadership model asserts that women are not only capable of leading but also able to be the center of social and educational transformation (Riastri, 2024). Values such as trust, inclusivity, empowerment, and exemplary leadership serve as the main foundation for creating a pesantren system that is adaptive to changing times (Mohammad Bilutfikal Khofi, 2024). In a broader context, this model can serve as a reference for developing Islamic educational institutions based on transformative and humanistic values, both at the local and national levels.

DISCUSSION

The leadership style of Ibu Nyai Hj. Ida Fatimah at the Al-Fatimiyah dormitory can be categorized as collective and transformative. This model emphasizes the active participation of all pesantren management elements as well as clear and measurable division of responsibilities (Dr. Istiqomah, 2023). She does not position herself as the sole authority but rather as a facilitator and guide in the collective decision-making process. This approach differs from the traditional leadership pattern in pesantrens, which is generally centralized and hierarchical (Riastri, 2024). In practice, her leadership is able to cultivate an open and participative organizational culture. This culture promotes

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healthy institutional stability, adaptability, and creates ample space for both students and pesantren staff to develop their potential (Muslim Fidia, 2022). his collective leadership has also proven capable of accommodating rapid social changes without losing the Islamic traditional roots that serve as the main foundation of the pesantren system (Saifudin Asrori, 2020). Therefore, this model is considered a relevant and progressive social innovation in addressing the challenges of the times, especially in the field of Islamic education.

There has long been an assumption that women in the pesantren world are positioned only as structural complements or symbolic figures, rather than as decision-makers. However, this assumption does not apply in the context of the Al-Fatimiyah Complex. Empirical findings show that Ibu Nyai Hj. Ida Fatimah holds full authority in making strategic and operational decisions, whether in education, caregiving, or managing pesantren resources. She plays a vital role not merely as a female representative within the structure but as the primary leader who leads with firmness, integrity, and an inclusive approach. She creates a collaborative space for administrators to share ideas, criticisms, and proposals, which are then processed through deliberation. Leadership like this is not only effective but also more contextual because it responds to the actual needs of the students, especially female students who often face double challenges in religious-based educational environments (As'ad, 2008). Her role serves as concrete evidence that female leadership in pesantrens can be effective, ethical, and have a significant impact on institutional development.

The relationships between caregivers, administrators, and students at the Al-Fatimiyah dormitory are built on empathy, openness, and respect for equality. This contrasts with the vertical and distant relational patterns commonly found in traditional education systems. Under Nyai Ida's leadership, these relationships resemble a supportive network rather than a structure that oppresses or silences subordinate voices (Afandi, 2019). This approach successfully shapes students into individuals who are more confident, critical, and able to communicate their ideas effectively. Students are trained not only to be obedient and compliant with rules but also to become social actors who are sensitive to their surroundings and actively contribute to society. By placing human relationships as the main foundation of leadership, the process of character and moral

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development becomes more holistic. Students are equipped not only with cognitive religious knowledge but also trained in practicing moral values such as social responsibility, empathy, and the courage to speak up.

The pesantren system has long been known for its hierarchical structure and strict command culture. However, at the Al-Fatimiyah Complex and Complex L, this pattern has undergone significant shifts. Traditional pesantren values such as *ta'dbim* (respect) for teachers are maintained but contextualized with modern values like inclusivity and respect for diverse perspectives. Ibu Nyai Hj. Ida Fatimah introduced various dialogical mechanisms, such as deliberation forums and open discussion spaces, as ways to resolve issues. Even in addressing internal conflicts, she applies a restorative approach focused on repairing relationships rather than merely imposing sanctions. This transformation shows that pesantrens are not stagnant or rigid in tradition but can make contextual adjustments without sacrificing fundamental Islamic values (Muhajirin, 2013). With this approach, the pesantren is able to become a conducive and progressive learning space while remaining deeply rooted in spiritual values.

The management of the pesantren under Nyai Ida's leadership demonstrates an integrative systemic transformation. This integration is evident in the alignment between Islamic values and contemporary issues such as digital literacy, gender equality, and community-based leadership (Kemenag, 2023). For example, students are not only taught religious knowledge and classical Islamic texts (*kitab kuning*) but are also equipped with digital literacy skills to prepare them for global challenges. Personal development programs such as entrepreneurship training, public speaking classes, and literacy campaigns have become an integral part of the pesantren's cultural curriculum. This marks a shift from the pesantren being a closed institution resistant to change to becoming a highly adaptive alternative educational space (Dr. Hendri Widodo, 2020). While upholding the value of *adab* (proper manners and ethics), the pesantren is also able to produce a generation that is intellectually capable and emotionally mature. Reflective leadership like this is a key factor in making the pesantren an agent of social change without losing its identity.

The assumption that pesantrens are difficult to change due to being bound by conservative traditions is refuted through the case study at the Al-Fatimiyah Complex.

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The transformation under the leadership of Ibu Nyai Hj. Ida Fatimah demonstrates that pesantrens can innovate institutionally as long as they are led by a visionary, open-minded figure who has the courage to reinterpret tradition contextually. This transformation process occurs not only at the symbolic or structural level but also extends to the culture, mindset, and work ethic of the pesantren community (Syafi'i, 2022). Her success lies not only in her leadership capacity but also in her ethics, empathy, and social awareness. She has become a catalyst for change that inspires not only within the pesantren community but also in the broader field of Islamic education. This shows that resistance to change does not stem from the religious system itself but from how leaders manage it (Riastri, 2024). In this context, female leadership has proven capable of playing a central role in the sustainable process of socio-religious transformation.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals in depth the dynamics of female leadership in the pesantren context, which has rarely been fairly highlighted in Islamic and traditional education studies. One of the most important findings—impossible to know without this research is how the leadership of Ibu Nyai Hj. Ida Fatimah at the Al-Fatimiyah Complex is not merely symbolic but substantively plays a strategic role in the institutional transformation of the pesantren. This study successfully demonstrates that a female leadership style based on collective, participative, and humanistic principles is not only effective in managing organizational systems but also opens space for social innovation, character development of students, and the pesantren's adaptation to contemporary challenges such as digital literacy and gender equality. The fact that traditional Islamic values can coexist with progressive approaches reinforces the finding that female leadership is not only possible but also highly relevant and contextual in advancing pesantren-based Islamic education.

Theoretically, this study employs a gender approach and transformative leadership theory to analyze power relations, authority, and caregiving practices within the pesantren environment. These two approaches prove effective in addressing the main issues of the research, particularly in understanding the extent of women's authority within a socio-religious structure that tends to be patriarchal. In addition, the qualitative method using participatory observation and in-depth interviews provides ample space for

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rich and authentic empirical data to emerge. By approaching the research subject through the experiences and narratives of the subjects (Ibu Nyai, administrators, and students), this study captures dimensions that are not visible through normative or statistical approaches. This strengthens the validity of the analysis while offering new perspectives on an Islamic leadership model grounded in locality, spirituality, and social sensitivity.

However, this study certainly has its limitations. First, the research focuses on a single location and one female leadership figure, so generalizing to all female-led pesantrens in Indonesia is not yet possible. Second, time constraints and limited access prevented an in-depth exploration of all institutional dimensions, such as financial aspects, external networks, or alumni educational records. Therefore, further research is recommended to take a comparative approach across several female-led pesantrens to identify broader patterns while exploring other factors that support or hinder institutional transformation. Additionally, interdisciplinary studies involving organizational psychology, leadership communication, or even the digitalization of Islamic education would be very valuable in enriching the understanding of the dynamics of female leadership in pesantren environments as they face 21st-century challenges.

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