

LEADERSHIP STRATEGY OF KH. MUHAMMAD AMIN HALIM IN THE MANAGEMENT OF WOMEN'S EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AT THE MU'ALLIMAT ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL

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Abstract:

This study aims to analyze the leadership strategies of KH. Muhammad Amin Halim in managing the fulfillment of women's educational rights at Mu'allimat Islamic Boarding School, Babakan Ciwaringin, Cirebon. It focuses on the construction of leadership in advocating women's education, the institutionalization of leadership strategies through pesantren educational management, and their implementation in fulfilling women's educational rights. The study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design and a socio-legal perspective. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, observations, and relevant document analysis. Participants were selected through purposive sampling and included pesantren leaders and administrators, educators, family members involved in the educational institution, alumni, and students. Data were analyzed through data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification, supported by thematic analysis. The findings indicate that KH. Muhammad Amin Halim's leadership strategies contributed to translating religious and educational visions concerning women's education into institutional practices. These strategies were reflected in the expansion of educational access, the development of curricula that accommodate gender equality, increased opportunities for women to serve as educators, and the provision of educational facilities and resources. The study emphasizes that fulfilling women's educational rights requires more than access to learning opportunities. It also depends on institutional policies, resource management, and the sustained integration of educational values into organizational practices. This study contributes to the scholarship on pesantren leadership by conceptualizing leadership as an institutional mechanism for fulfilling women's educational rights within the context of Islamic educational traditions.

KATA KUNCI

Kepemimpinan Pesantren;
Hak Pendidikan Perempuan;
Manajemen Pendidikan;
Kesetaraan Gender; Studi
Socio-Legal.

Abstrak:

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis strategi kepemimpinan KH. Muhammad Amin Halim dalam mengelola pemenuhan hak pendidikan perempuan di Pesantren Mu'allimat Babakan Ciwaringin Cirebon. Penelitian ini berfokus pada konstruksi kepemimpinan dalam memperjuangkan pendidikan perempuan, proses pelebagaan strategi kepemimpinan melalui manajemen pendidikan pesantren, serta implementasinya dalam pemenuhan hak pendidikan perempuan. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus dan perspektif sosio-legal. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur, observasi, dan analisis dokumen yang relevan. Informan dipilih secara purposif dengan melibatkan pimpinan dan pengelola pesantren, pendidik, anggota keluarga yang terlibat dalam lembaga pendidikan, alumni, serta santri. Analisis data dilakukan melalui kondensasi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan serta verifikasi

kesimpulan dengan menggunakan analisis tematik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa strategi kepemimpinan KH. Muhammad Amin Halim berperan dalam menerjemahkan visi keagamaan dan pendidikan tentang pentingnya pendidikan perempuan ke dalam praktik kelembagaan pesantren. Strategi tersebut tercermin dalam pengembangan akses pendidikan, pengelolaan kurikulum yang memberikan ruang bagi kesetaraan, perluasan kesempatan perempuan untuk berperan sebagai pendidik, serta penyediaan fasilitas dan sumber daya pendidikan. Penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa pemenuhan hak pendidikan perempuan tidak cukup diwujudkan melalui pemberian akses belajar, tetapi memerlukan dukungan kebijakan, pengelolaan sumber daya, dan kelembagaan nilai-nilai pendidikan secara berkelanjutan. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada pengembangan kajian kepemimpinan pesantren dengan menempatkan kepemimpinan sebagai mekanisme institusional dalam pemenuhan hak pendidikan perempuan.

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INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the fundamental instruments for fulfilling human rights and developing individual capacities. For women, education is not merely related to the opportunity to acquire knowledge, but also to their ability to develop intellectual, social, economic, and cultural capacities that enable them to participate more broadly in family and community life. Therefore, the issue of women's education cannot be understood merely as a matter of participation in educational institutions. It also concerns how educational institutions create conditions that enable women to obtain learning opportunities, participate actively, develop their potential, and assume their roles as subjects of education. The framework of educational equality places gender equality as an integral component of the fulfillment of the right to education. It further emphasizes that equality does not stop at equal participation rates, but also encompasses learning experiences, curricula, educational environments, resources, learning outcomes, and women's opportunities to benefit from education sustainably (UNESCO, 2021). Thus, fulfilling women's right to education needs to be understood as an issue that involves not only access, but also the ways in which educational institutions manage opportunities, resources, participation, and the sustainability of women's education.

In the context of Muslim societies, women's education involves a more complex dimension because it is closely connected to the relationship between religious teachings, religious interpretations, social traditions, and structures of authority. Islam places significant importance on the pursuit of knowledge, yet the implementation of this principle in social life always takes place within particular cultural and institutional contexts. Studies on gender and Islam in Southeast Asia indicate that the position and rights of Muslim women are shaped through processes of negotiation involving religious norms, local traditions, modernization, state policies, and women's movements (Schröter, 2013). In Indonesia, changes in the position of Muslim women cannot be understood simply through the dichotomy between the “traditional” and the “modern.” Rather, they emerge through continuous processes of negotiation within religious institutions and society. Islamic education is therefore an important arena for examining how religious interpretations concerning women are translated into social and institutional practices.

Pesantren provides a strategic context for examining these issues. As an Islamic educational institution with a long history in Indonesia, pesantren is not merely a place

for transmitting religious knowledge. It is also a social institution that shapes worldviews, character, social relations, and religious authority within society. Anita et al. explains that the kyai occupies a central position in the structure of pesantren, particularly in maintaining traditions, developing institutions, and transmitting Islamic knowledge (Anita, Hasan, Warisno, Anshori, & Andari, 2023; Nurmasari, Purwanto, Sardjono, & Wijayanti, 2024).positions pesantren as an important component of the Indonesian Islamic intellectual tradition, which has developed through the transmission of classical Islamic texts (*kitab kuning*), networks of religious scholars, and the relationship between religious authority and social life (Humaidi, Fadhliyah, & Sufirmansyah, 2024). These characteristics make the decisions and orientations of a kyai significant in determining the direction of educational development within pesantren. Therefore, when women's education becomes an institutional agenda, it cannot be separated from how religious authority and pesantren leadership understand and manage women's education.

Historically, women's involvement in pesantren education has undergone significant development. Mubarak demonstrates that the acceptance of female students within the pesantren system represented an important development in the history of Islamic education in Indonesia (Mubarak, Nuryadin, Mr, Radiyah, & Mukmin, 2026; Nasrullah, Hasan, Syarif, Solichin, & Hasan, 2026). However, the presence of women as students does not automatically eliminate various forms of inequality. Women's education in pesantren continues to face several challenges, including limited access to public spaces, constructions of women's social roles, potential gender bias in educational materials, and authority structures that have historically been more male-centered (Safitri, Albab, Khobir, Solehuddin, & Khimmataliev, 2026). This finding is important because it demonstrates that educational access and educational equality are related but distinct issues. Women may gain access to pesantren, yet institutional strategies are still required to ensure that the education they receive provides equal opportunities to develop as subjects of knowledge and social actors.

These issues draw attention to the importance of pesantren leadership. Within the structure of pesantren, the kyai possesses religious and social authority that can influence educational orientation, organizational arrangements, curriculum development, resource management, and the relationship between pesantren and the wider community (Harnadi, Siahaan, & Hilmy, 2021; Nauval, 2024). At the same time, women's leadership through the figure of the *nyai* also constitutes an important dimension of pesantren institutional dynamics. (Usman, 2025) demonstrates that *nyai* possess significant authority in managing women's pesantren and teaching female students, although their formal position within management structures is often subordinate to that of the kyai. This finding indicates that pesantren leadership cannot be understood solely through formal organizational structures because educational authority is also constructed through relationships among the kyai, *nyai*, administrators, educators, and the pesantren community.

Studies on women's leadership in pesantren further demonstrate that women can become important actors in transforming Islamic education. Muntoha, through a study of local women's leadership in pesantren, shows that *nyai* leadership takes place through negotiations involving constructions of women's nature and social roles, social power, democracy, and feminist ideas (Muntoha, Kholid, Subandi, & Sagala, 2025). Research on women's leadership in the development of pesantren educational institutions also indicates that women can serve as educators, administrators, mentors, and leaders, although they continue to face barriers in the form of gender stereotypes and patriarchal culture. Furthermore, studies on *nyai* leadership indicate that women's leadership in pesantren can contribute to the development of educational ecosystems and student

literacy through visionary and participatory leadership (Aisyah, Ilmi, Rosyid, Wulandari, & Akhmad, 2022). Thus, leadership in pesantren needs to be understood as a process through which religious values are translated into educational practices and institutional governance.

At the same time, gender equality in pesantren education has increasingly developed into a distinct academic agenda. Masruroh demonstrates that gender mainstreaming in pesantren education requires changes not only in understandings of women's position but also in curricula and educational practices (Masruroh, Tamyiz, Shodiq, & Muzahid, 2025). Azfa & Maulida show that pesantren has the potential to develop as an institution based on women's empowerment and gender equality, while also demonstrating that these issues have received relatively less attention compared with the traditional role of pesantren as an institution of religious education (Azfa & Maulida, 2026). Similarly demonstrate that women possess agency and play important roles in pesantren life, yet their contributions often remain invisible because institutional structures and cultural practices place male authority at the center. Therefore, the central issue is not simply whether pesantren accepts women as students, but how pesantren's institutional structure creates conditions that enable women to develop as learners, educators, and social actors.

More recent studies indicate that the development of gender-responsive education in pesantren can take place without abandoning the Islamic identity and traditions of pesantren. For example, the development of a gender-responsive Islamic Religious Education curriculum in pesantren can integrate the national curriculum, *diniyah* education, and *kitab kuning*, while simultaneously addressing educational equality, student protection, and the provision of a safe and supportive learning environment (Masruroh et al., 2025). This finding demonstrates that gender equality in pesantren does not necessarily have to be positioned as contradictory to Islamic traditions. Instead, institutional transformation can take place through the reinterpretation of religious values and institutional management capable of bringing pesantren traditions into dialogue with contemporary educational needs. However, a systematic study of gender mainstreaming in pesantren education policy shows that challenges remain, including male dominance, weak gender indicators in policy, limited gender literacy, and inadequate monitoring mechanisms (Fitria, 2025). These conditions indicate that normative commitments to equality do not automatically produce a gender-responsive educational system.

Although research on women, gender equality, and pesantren leadership has continued to develop, an important gap remains in the literature. Some studies focus on women as leaders, while others examine gender equality in pesantren education. Meanwhile, research on kyai leadership generally focuses more on authority, leadership styles, or the sustainability of pesantren traditions (Herlina, Munawara, & Gurel, 2025; Muafiah, Mayasari, Imtihanah, & Yuliani, 2024; Rozikan, 2022). What remains relatively underexplored is the mechanism that connects a kyai's vision of women's education with leadership strategies and the institutionalization of women's educational rights. In other words, the existing literature has not fully explained how an idea of educational equality is translated into institutional decisions, resource organization, curriculum development, provision of facilities, creation of opportunities for women, and mechanisms for sustaining women's education. This relationship is important for understanding how pesantren can function not only as an institution for reproducing tradition but also as a space for social transformation.

This research gap becomes particularly significant when examined in the context of Pesantren Mu'allimat Babakan Ciwaringin, Cirebon, and the leadership of KH.

Muhammad Amin Halim. Previous research on the thought of KH. Muhammad Amin Halim has identified ideas concerning equal access to education for women, including opportunities to receive instruction and opportunities for women to serve as educators. The implementation of these ideas has been associated with the development of education that provides space for gender equality perspectives and with support for women's educational facilities. These findings provide an empirical foundation for understanding women's education at Mu'allimat Babakan Ciwaringin as an issue with both intellectual and institutional dimensions. However, whereas previous studies have primarily positioned KH. Muhammad Amin Halim's ideas regarding equal access to education as their central focus, this study extends that focus by examining his leadership strategies in managing the fulfillment of women's educational rights.

This shift in focus is conceptually important. Women's educational rights are not realized merely through decisions to accept women as students. They require a series of institutional mechanisms that enable these rights to be effectively exercised. In this study, the fulfillment of women's educational rights is understood through several interconnected dimensions, namely access to education, opportunities to participate in the learning process, curriculum development, availability of educators, educational facilities, women's participation in educational life, and the sustainability of education. This perspective is consistent with the view that educational equality is a systemic issue encompassing access, educational content, teaching practices, educational environments, resources, management, and educational outcomes. Within the pesantren context, these dimensions need to be examined alongside the characteristics of kyai authority, Islamic intellectual traditions, caregiving and mentoring structures, and the social relations that develop within pesantren.

Accordingly, the leadership of KH. Muhammad Amin Halim in this study is not understood merely as a personal leadership style. Rather, it is understood as a leadership capacity to translate a religious vision concerning women's education into institutional mechanisms. This perspective enables an analysis of the process from . It also contributes to the study of Islamic Family Law because women's education has broader implications for the development of women's capacities within family and community life. Education can strengthen women's capacity to understand rights and responsibilities, make decisions, participate in social life, and develop more equitable family relationships. This position is consistent with the scholarly orientation of research that places the protection of women's rights, equality, justice, and socio-legal approaches at the center of the development of Islamic Family Law studies.

Based on this argument, this study aims to analyze the leadership strategies of KH. Muhammad Amin Halim in managing the fulfillment of women's educational rights at Pesantren Mu'allimat Babakan Ciwaringin, Cirebon. The study addresses three research questions: first, how is the leadership of KH. Muhammad Amin Halim constructed in advancing women's education? Second, how are these strategies institutionalized through the educational management of the pesantren? Third, how do these strategies shape the practices through which women's educational rights are fulfilled at Pesantren Mu'allimat Babakan Ciwaringin, Cirebon? The study is expected to make a theoretical contribution by extending the study of pesantren leadership from approaches centered on leadership characteristics and styles toward an understanding of leadership as a mechanism for institutionalizing women's educational rights. Empirically, the study seeks to provide an understanding of how a kyai's religious authority can be translated into strategies for managing women's education within a pesantren institution while maintaining its foundation in Islamic traditions.

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative case study design to examine the leadership strategy of KH. Muhammad Amin Halim in managing the fulfillment of women's right to education at Mu'allimat Islamic Boarding School, Babakan Ciwaringin, Cirebon. A qualitative approach was selected because the study aimed to understand meanings, experiences, institutional processes, and leadership practices within their natural social context rather than to measure relationships statistically (Suryani & Dewi, 2024). The case study design was considered appropriate because the research focused on a bounded institutional case in which leadership, educational management, religious values, and women's educational rights interact within a specific historical and socio-cultural setting (Yin, 2023).

The study was further informed by a socio-legal perspective. This perspective was employed to examine the interaction between normative principles concerning women's educational rights and their implementation within the social and institutional practices of the pesantren. Rather than treating legal and religious norms as isolated textual provisions, the socio-legal approach allows the study to investigate how norms are interpreted, negotiated, and implemented by institutional actors in everyday educational practices. This orientation is particularly relevant to the present study because the fulfillment of women's educational rights is situated at the intersection of Islamic values, pesantren traditions, institutional authority, and educational management.

Research Setting and Participants

The research was conducted at Mu'allimat Islamic Boarding School, Babakan Ciwaringin, Cirebon. The site was purposively selected because of its historical and institutional relevance to women's Islamic education and its association with the educational leadership of KH. Muhammad Amin Halim. The bounded nature of the research setting enabled an in-depth examination of how leadership ideas concerning women's education were translated into institutional practices and educational management.

Participants were selected through purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is appropriate in qualitative inquiry when participants are deliberately selected because they possess particular knowledge, experience, or involvement relevant to the phenomenon under investigation (Sugiono, 2020). The participants included pesantren leaders and administrators, educators, members of KH. Muhammad Amin Halim's family who were directly involved in the educational institution, alumni, and students. The inclusion of participants occupying different institutional positions was intended to capture diverse perspectives concerning the formulation, implementation, and continuity of women's education.

Participant selection was based on three criteria: (1) direct or indirect involvement in the management or development of women's education at the pesantren; (2) knowledge of the leadership and educational policies associated with KH. Muhammad Amin Halim; and (3) willingness and ability to provide relevant information. The number of participants was determined based on the adequacy and richness of information obtained during the fieldwork rather than according to a predetermined statistical sample size. This approach is consistent with qualitative research, in which sampling is primarily concerned with the relevance and information richness of participants to the research questions.

Data Sources and Data Collection

The study utilized primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through semi-structured interviews with participants who possessed direct knowledge of the leadership, management, and implementation of women's education at the pesantren. Semi-structured interviews were employed because they provide a balance between consistency across participants and flexibility to explore emerging issues in greater depth (Hairul Ulum, 2022). The interview protocol covered several analytical domains, including the educational vision of KH. Muhammad Amin Halim, his understanding of women's education, the rationale underlying the development of women's educational institutions, leadership decision-making, curriculum development, the involvement of women as educators, educational facilities, institutional management, and the continuity of women's education.

In addition to interviews, observations were conducted to obtain contextual information concerning educational activities and institutional practices. Observation enabled the researchers to examine the physical and social environment in which educational processes occurred and to compare observed practices with participants' accounts. Observation is particularly important in qualitative research because it enables researchers to understand phenomena within their natural context and to identify practices that may not be fully articulated during interviews (Tharaba & Wahyudin, 2024).

Document analysis was also conducted using relevant institutional and historical materials. These included available curriculum documents, educational records, institutional documents, historical materials, photographs, and other archival sources relevant to the development of women's education. Documentary analysis was used not merely as supplementary evidence but as an independent source for reconstructing institutional processes and verifying information obtained through interviews. The combination of interviews, observation, and documentary analysis allowed the researchers to examine the phenomenon from multiple evidentiary perspectives.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted interactively throughout the research process. The analytical procedure followed the framework developed by Abdullah et al, which consists of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification (Abdullah Md Zain, F. A., Tajuddin, S. A. F. S. A., Mohammed Foziah, N. H., & Ishak, 2025). Data condensation involved selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming raw interview transcripts, observation notes, and documentary materials into analytically meaningful units.

The researchers subsequently employed thematic coding to identify recurring patterns and relationships within the data. Thematic analysis was used because the research sought to identify and interpret patterned meanings across participants' accounts and institutional documents (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The coding process proceeded through several stages. First, initial codes were generated from statements and empirical materials relating to leadership vision, religious authority, educational decision-making, access, curriculum, educators, facilities, participation, institutional management, and educational continuity. Second, related codes were grouped into broader categories. Third, categories were compared and refined to generate higher-order themes representing the leadership strategies used in the management of women's education.

The analytical process was guided by the following conceptual sequence:



This analytical sequence allowed the research to move beyond a descriptive account of KH. Muhammad Amin Halim's ideas and examine how those ideas were translated into institutional mechanisms. The analysis therefore distinguished between what the leader believed, what strategic actions were undertaken, how those actions were institutionalized, and what forms of educational rights fulfillment could be identified empirically.

Data display was conducted through thematic matrices that connected participants, codes, categories, themes, and supporting documentary evidence. Conclusions were subsequently developed by examining patterns and relationships across data sources. The conclusions were continuously verified against the original empirical materials to ensure that interpretations remained grounded in the data rather than being derived solely from the researchers' assumptions (Wijayanti & Wicaksana, 2023).

Trustworthiness of the Data

The trustworthiness of the research was established through credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability, four widely recognized criteria for evaluating qualitative research quality (Abdullah Md Zain, F. A., Tajuddin, S. A. F. S. A., Mohammed Foziah, N. H., & Ishak, 2025; Hasbi Hasbi, n.d.). Contemporary methodological literature continues to emphasize these four dimensions as important indicators of rigor in qualitative inquiry, while also highlighting the role of reflexivity and transparency throughout the research process (Kristiani & Pahlevi, 2021; Meyer, Richter, & Hartung-Beck, 2020).

Credibility was strengthened through triangulation of data sources and data collection techniques. Information obtained from pesantren leaders, educators, family members, alumni, and students was compared with observations and documentary evidence. Triangulation was used to examine whether different sources provided convergent, complementary, or divergent accounts of the same phenomenon. Such triangulation can strengthen qualitative credibility by reducing dependence on a single source or method of interpretation (Rismawati, Pradiani, & Fathorrahman, 2023).

Transferability was addressed through detailed contextual description of the pesantren, its educational setting, participants, institutional structures, and the processes through which women's education was managed. Rather than claiming statistical generalizability, the study provides sufficient contextual information to allow readers and future researchers to assess the applicability of the findings to other pesantren or Islamic educational institutions with comparable characteristics. Thick contextual description is an important strategy for enabling readers to assess the potential transferability of qualitative findings (Stenfors et al., 2020).

Dependability was supported through systematic documentation of the research process, including interview procedures, observation records, coding decisions, category development, and analytical revisions. An audit trail was maintained to establish a transparent connection between raw data, coding, interpretation, and final conclusions. Such documentation enables readers to assess

the consistency and transparency of the research process.

Confirmability was addressed through reflexivity and continuous comparison between interpretations and empirical evidence. The researchers critically examined their own assumptions concerning Islamic education, gender, pesantren leadership, and women's rights during data collection and analysis. Interpretations were retained only when they could be traced to empirical evidence from interviews, observations, or documents. Reflexivity is particularly important in qualitative research because researchers are themselves part of the process through which data are interpreted (Muzayanah & Anggraeni, 2023; Norlaila, Nuryadin, & Yaqin, 2025).

Ethical Considerations

The study followed fundamental ethical principles for qualitative research. Participants were informed about the purpose of the research and the nature of their participation. Participation was voluntary, and participants were given appropriate information concerning the use of their statements and other information obtained during the research. Confidentiality and privacy were maintained where necessary, particularly when participants provided personal perspectives concerning institutional leadership or historical developments.

Because the study involved a religious educational institution and examined the leadership of a respected religious figure, particular attention was given to accurate and contextual representation. The researchers distinguished between participants' statements, documentary evidence, and the researchers' analytical interpretations. This distinction was maintained to avoid presenting interpretive conclusions as direct institutional facts.

Overall, the methodological design positioned KH. Muhammad Amin Halim's leadership not merely as an individual leadership style but as an institutional process through which religious and educational values concerning women were translated into organizational decisions, educational practices, resource allocation, and opportunities for women to participate in and benefit from education.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. From Religious Vision to Leadership Strategy for Women's Education

The findings indicate that the leadership of KH. Muhammad Amin Halim in women's education was rooted in a religious and educational vision that positioned women as legitimate subjects of knowledge. Women's education was not constructed merely as an additional educational service, but as an essential component of the development of Islamic education. This orientation was reflected in the effort to provide women with equal opportunities to receive instruction and to participate in the educational process. In this sense, the leadership strategy developed at Mu'allimat Babakan Ciwaringin can be understood as a process of translating religious and educational values into institutional practices.

This finding is important because the position of women in pesantren cannot be adequately understood solely through the availability of educational access. Access represents the initial condition for the fulfillment of educational rights, whereas meaningful equality requires opportunities for women to participate, develop competencies, and assume educational roles. demonstrated that the development of women's education in Indonesian pesantren created important opportunities for Muslim women, while simultaneously revealing continuing tensions concerning gender roles, public participation, and institutional

authority(Rizkiyani & Rohman, 2025). The experience of Mu'allimat Babakan Ciwaringin therefore illustrates an important dimension of this historical transformation: the expansion of women's education was connected to the leadership decisions of religious authorities who were able to legitimize women's educational participation within the pesantren tradition.

From a leadership perspective, the findings suggest that KH. Muhammad Amin Halim's role should not be reduced to a personal leadership style. His significance lies in the capacity to connect religious legitimacy with educational development. In a pesantren, where the kyai occupies an important position in defining institutional orientation, leadership decisions can become an important mechanism for determining which educational values are institutionalized. (Istiadah, 2024)explains that the kyai occupies a central position in the traditional pesantren structure, particularly in maintaining religious traditions and directing the development of the institution. The leadership of KH. Muhammad Amin Halim can therefore be understood as a form of religiously grounded educational leadership in which the legitimacy of Islamic authority was mobilized to strengthen women's access to education.

The finding also contributes to the discussion of Islamic educational transformation. Rather than presenting women's educational rights as an external concept imposed upon pesantren traditions, the case of Mu'allimat Babakan Ciwaringin demonstrates that educational change can emerge through an internal interpretation of Islamic educational values. This is consistent with (Maulidina, Mubarak, Hamidah, & Rofiq, 2025) argument that gender relations among Muslim communities in Southeast Asia develop through negotiations between religious norms, local traditions, social structures, and changing understandings of women's roles. Women's education in this case can therefore be interpreted as an institutional negotiation between the preservation of Islamic educational traditions and the expansion of women's educational opportunities.

2. Institutionalizing Equal Access to Women's Education

The findings further demonstrate that the educational vision associated with KH. Muhammad Amin Halim was not confined to normative statements concerning the importance of women's education. The vision was translated into institutional arrangements that provided women with opportunities to receive formal and religious instruction. One important manifestation was the development of an educational environment specifically designed to facilitate women's participation in Islamic education.

The significance of this finding lies in the distinction between access as a principle and access as an institutional practice. A commitment to women's education becomes meaningful only when it is supported by organizational structures, educational programs, educators, learning resources, and facilities. emphasizes that gender equality in education involves more than parity in enrollment. It encompasses the educational environment, curriculum, teaching practices, resources, management, and educational outcomes. Accordingly, the institutional development of Mu'allimat can be interpreted as part of a broader process of converting women's educational rights from an abstract principle into an organizational reality.

This process also demonstrates the importance of institutionalization. Institutionalization occurs when an idea is repeatedly translated into organizational

arrangements, practices, and norms that can continue beyond the individual who initially promoted the idea. In the context of this study, the educational vision associated with KH. Muhammad Amin Halim acquired institutional significance through its connection with curriculum development, educational provision, human resources, and educational facilities. Consequently, women's education was not dependent solely on an individual's personal commitment but became embedded within the educational structure of the pesantren.

This finding extends previous studies concerning women in pesantren. demonstrated that women, particularly nyai, have historically played important roles in the operation of women's pesantren and the education of female students (Munawiroh & al Asy Ari, 2021). similarly showed that women's leadership in pesantren involves negotiations with religious authority, social structures, and gender constructions (Ayu, Felayati, Fuaddah, & Herutomo, 2024). The Mu'allimat case adds another dimension by demonstrating how the leadership of a male religious authority can also become a mechanism for expanding women's educational space. Thus, gender transformation in pesantren should not be analyzed exclusively through the presence of women leaders; it should also consider how male religious authorities construct institutional opportunities for women.

The institutionalization of access also has implications for the sustainability of women's education. When access is supported by institutional structures, it becomes less vulnerable to changes in individual preference. This is particularly important in pesantren because educational continuity depends not only on formal educational policy but also on the reproduction of institutional values through organizational practices and religious traditions. The case therefore suggests that leadership has a strategic role in transforming an educational commitment into a durable institutional norm.

3. Curriculum as an Instrument for Fulfilling Women's Educational Rights

One of the important findings concerns the role of curriculum in translating the principle of educational equality into educational practice. The development of curriculum that provides space for gender equality demonstrates that the fulfillment of women's educational rights cannot be separated from the content and orientation of education itself. Women do not merely require access to an educational institution; they also require educational content and learning processes that recognize them as capable subjects of knowledge.

The curriculum therefore functions as more than a technical instrument for organizing subjects and learning activities. In a pesantren, curriculum also represents a mechanism for transmitting religious interpretation, social values, and expectations concerning the roles of men and women. When educational content provides greater recognition of women's intellectual and social capacities, the curriculum can become an instrument of institutional transformation. Conversely, a curriculum that reproduces restrictive gender assumptions may preserve inequality even when women have formal access to education.

This finding is consistent with (Khoiriyah & Riyadi, 2026), who argues that gender mainstreaming in pesantren education requires attention to educational content and curriculum, rather than relying solely on increasing women's participation. More recent research similarly demonstrates the possibility of developing gender-responsive Islamic education while maintaining the religious

identity of pesantren. Gender-responsive curriculum can be integrated with national education, diniyah education, and the *kitab kuning* tradition ("Characteristics and Typology of Kyai Leadership Within Pesantren," 2022). This is particularly relevant to Mu'allimat Babakan Ciwaringin because it indicates that the pursuit of educational equality does not necessarily require abandoning pesantren traditions.

From this perspective, the leadership strategy of KH. Muhammad Amin Halim can be interpreted as a process of curricular institutionalization. The principle of women's educational equality acquired practical meaning when it was reflected in the educational curriculum and learning environment. The curriculum thus became a bridge between religious interpretation and educational management. It translated the normative idea that women should have equal opportunities to learn into an educational structure through which such opportunities could be realized.

The finding also has a broader implication for Islamic education. The debate over gender equality in Islamic educational institutions should not be reduced to the opposition between religious tradition and modern gender discourse. The experience of Mu'allimat suggests that transformation can occur through reinterpretation and institutional development from within the Islamic educational tradition itself. This supports the broader argument of van Doorn-Harder (2006) that Muslim women's agency in Indonesia needs to be understood within the interaction between religious knowledge, institutional authority, and women's participation in Islamic life.

4. Women as Recipients and Producers of Educational Knowledge

Another significant dimension of the findings is the recognition of women not only as recipients of education but also as potential producers and transmitters of knowledge. The opportunity for women to participate as educators represents an important shift in the position of women within the educational structure. Women are no longer positioned solely as students who receive knowledge from male religious authorities; they can also become educators who transmit knowledge to subsequent generations.

This dimension is particularly significant because the distribution of educational authority is closely related to the distribution of social power. When women are provided with opportunities to become educators, education creates a mechanism through which women's intellectual agency can be reproduced institutionally. The significance of this process goes beyond employment or organizational participation. It contributes to the creation of a cycle in which women receive education, develop expertise, become educators, and subsequently contribute to the education of other women.

The finding complements research on female leadership in pesantren. (Malicha, Nugraini, Fadhil, & Azis, 2026)

demonstrates that women in pesantren can exercise leadership and authority through educational and social roles, while highlights the significant role of nyai in women's pesantren (Azhari, 2024). further demonstrate that women possess agency in contemporary pesantren institutions, although their contributions may remain less visible because of institutional structures and gendered cultural practices (Bosra, Umiarso, & Jamil, 2020).

In the context of Mu'allimat Babakan Ciwaringin, the provision of educational opportunities for women as educators therefore represents an important dimension

of rights fulfillment. Educational equality is not fully achieved when women merely have equal access to classrooms; it becomes more substantive when women can occupy different positions within the educational system. The opportunity to become educators indicates the expansion of women's educational agency and their recognition as legitimate actors within Islamic educational institutions.

This finding also demonstrates why the concept of educational empowerment is important in interpreting the leadership strategy of KH. Muhammad Amin Halim. The outcome of women's education should not be measured solely by the number of women who complete education. It should also be considered in terms of the capacity generated through education, including the capacity to teach, transmit knowledge, participate in institutional life, and contribute to society. Education thus operates simultaneously as a right and as a mechanism of empowerment.

5. Educational Facilities as a Material Dimension of Women's Rights

The findings indicate that the fulfillment of women's educational rights was also associated with the provision of educational facilities and learning resources. This dimension is significant because rights cannot be realized through normative commitments alone. Educational access requires material conditions that enable students to participate meaningfully in the educational process.

The provision of educational facilities represents what can be described as the material dimension of educational rights. Whereas curriculum represents the substantive dimension and access represents the institutional dimension, facilities provide the material conditions through which educational participation becomes possible. This includes the availability of learning spaces, educational resources, and other supporting infrastructure necessary for the continuity of educational activities.

This finding corresponds with the broader framework of educational equality developed by (UNESCO, 2021), which places educational resources and the learning environment within the monitoring of gender equality. It also strengthens the argument that women's educational rights must be analyzed through a multidimensional framework. Formal recognition of women's access is insufficient if institutional resources are not available to support meaningful participation.

From a management perspective, the provision of facilities indicates that leadership operates through resource allocation. A leader's educational vision acquires institutional meaning when resources are directed toward achieving that vision. Therefore, the leadership strategy associated with KH. Muhammad Amin Halim can be understood not only in terms of ideological commitment but also in terms of the management of institutional resources.

This dimension provides an important distinction from studies that discuss gender equality primarily in terms of ideology or curriculum. A gender-equitable educational institution requires alignment between values, curriculum, human resources, organizational arrangements, and material resources. The case of Mu'allimat illustrates the importance of this alignment in transforming women's educational rights into institutional practice.

6. The Leadership Management Nexus in the Fulfillment of Women's Educational Rights

Taken together, the findings demonstrate that the leadership strategy associated with KH. Muhammad Amin Halim can be understood through a sequence

linking religious vision, institutional decision-making, educational management, and women's educational opportunities. The central process can be represented as:



This sequence constitutes the central analytical contribution of the study. It demonstrates that leadership and educational rights should not be examined as separate domains. Leadership provides direction and legitimacy, while management provides the organizational mechanisms through which that direction becomes operational. Educational rights, in turn, become observable through institutional arrangements that provide access, participation, educational resources, and opportunities for women to develop their capacities.

The model extends conventional approaches to pesantren leadership. Previous studies have frequently examined leadership through the characteristics, authority, or style of kyai and nyai (Azhari, 2024). While such approaches are important, they do not fully explain how leadership produces institutional consequences for women's education. The present study instead emphasizes leadership as an institutional mechanism for rights fulfillment.

This perspective also responds to recent findings concerning gender mainstreaming in pesantren. (Bosra et al., 2020) identify structural challenges such as male dominance, insufficient gender indicators in policy, limited gender literacy, and weak monitoring mechanisms. The Mu'allimat case suggests that institutional transformation can be initiated when gender-related educational commitments receive support from legitimate religious leadership and are subsequently embedded within educational management. However, this should not be interpreted as evidence that all dimensions of gender equality have been completely resolved. Rather, it demonstrates a pathway through which educational opportunities for women can be institutionally developed.

7. Discussion: Women's Education, Islamic Values, and Family Empowerment

The findings have particular relevance for Islamic Family Law because women's education has implications extending beyond the educational institution

itself. Education contributes to women's intellectual and social capacity, which subsequently influences their ability to participate in family decision-making, understand rights and responsibilities, and engage with wider social institutions. From the perspective of Islamic family studies, therefore, women's education can be understood as part of the broader effort to develop human capacity within the family.

The significance of this finding lies in moving beyond an understanding of women's education as an isolated educational issue. When women are educated, they acquire knowledge and competencies that can affect their roles as daughters, wives, mothers, educators, and community members. The educational empowerment of women therefore has potential implications for family resilience and the development of more equitable family relationships. This interpretation is compatible with the broader orientation of Islamic Family Law scholarship toward the protection of family members, justice, and the realization of human welfare.

The case of Mu'allimat Babakan Ciwaringin is therefore relevant to discussions of *maqāṣid al-usrah* because education can be understood as one of the conditions supporting the achievement of family welfare. The institutional provision of education for women expands women's capacity to understand religious, social, and familial responsibilities. However, the findings should not be interpreted as establishing a direct causal relationship between the leadership strategy of KH. Muhammad Amin Halim and particular family outcomes, because such causal outcomes were not directly measured in this study. Rather, the findings demonstrate an institutional pathway through which women's educational capacity was developed.

This distinction is methodologically important. The empirical contribution of the study lies in explaining the relationship between leadership and educational institutionalization, while the implications for Islamic Family Law constitute a broader interpretive contribution. The latter should therefore be presented as an implication of the findings rather than as a directly measured outcome.

8. A Model of Pesantren Leadership for Women's Educational Rights

Based on the findings and discussion, the study proposes a conceptual model of pesantren leadership for the fulfillment of women's educational rights. The model consists of five interconnected dimensions.

Dimension	Leadership Function	Institutional Manifestation	Educational Rights Implication
Religious vision	Establishing legitimacy for women's education	Educational orientation	Recognition of women's right to education
Institutional strategy	Translating vision into organizational decisions	Educational institutions and policies	Equal educational access
Curriculum strategy	Directing educational content	Gender-inclusive educational curriculum	Equal learning opportunities

Human-resource strategy	Expanding women's educational roles	Women's participation as educators	Intellectual agency
Resource strategy	Directing institutional resources	Facilities and learning infrastructure	Meaningful educational participation

The model demonstrates that the fulfillment of women's educational rights is a multilevel process. At the first level, leadership provides normative and religious legitimacy. At the second level, institutional management translates that legitimacy into organizational structures. At the third level, educational practices provide concrete opportunities for women. The final outcome is not merely educational participation but the development of women's agency within the educational institution and, potentially, within the wider social and family environment.

The principal contribution of this model is therefore the integration of pesantren leadership, educational management, and women's educational rights into a single analytical framework. Instead of treating women's education solely as an issue of access or gender equality, the study demonstrates that the realization of educational rights is also a question of leadership and institutional capacity.

Nevertheless, the model should be interpreted within the boundaries of the case. It represents an analytical model derived from the experience of Mu'allimat Babakan Ciwaringin and should not automatically be generalized to all pesantren. Its broader applicability requires comparative research involving pesantren with different organizational structures, leadership traditions, geographical contexts, and approaches to women's education.

9. Overall Interpretation

Overall, the findings demonstrate that the leadership strategy of KH. Muhammad Amin Halim was significant in creating an institutional environment in which women's education could develop through expanded educational access, curricular opportunities, women's participation as educators, and supporting educational facilities. The significance of his leadership lies not merely in advocating women's education at the level of ideas but in connecting educational ideals with institutional arrangements.

The study consequently proposes that the development of women's education in pesantren should be analyzed through the interaction of religious authority, leadership strategy, institutional management, and educational rights. Such an approach provides a more comprehensive understanding of how gender-related educational transformation can emerge within Islamic educational traditions (Bella, Syaifuddin, & Jamilah, 2026).

In this sense, Mu'allimat Babakan Ciwaringin represents an important case of the institutionalization of women's educational opportunities through pesantren leadership. The case demonstrates that religious authority can function not only as a mechanism for preserving tradition but also as an institutional resource for expanding educational opportunities for women. The transformation is particularly meaningful when educational equality is embedded in curriculum, human resources, institutional structures, and material resources. Thus, the leadership

strategy associated with KH. Muhammad Amin Halim can be understood as a process through which an Islamic educational vision was translated into institutional practices that supported the fulfillment of women's right to education.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the management of contextual Social Studies (IPS) learning at SMPN 1 Kertasemaya involves an integrated process consisting of planning, implementation, assessment, and reflection. The integration of teacher competence can be seen throughout these stages, particularly in the teacher's ability to understand students' characteristics, determine appropriate learning objectives and materials, select relevant social contexts, and organize learning activities according to students' needs. In the planning stage, teachers are required to connect the learning material with situations that are familiar and meaningful to students so that Social Studies concepts can be understood not only theoretically but also through their relationship with everyday life. In the implementation stage, teachers facilitate students to participate actively through discussion, interaction, inquiry, and other contextual learning activities that connect classroom material with social phenomena in the surrounding environment. This shows that teacher competence is an important element in ensuring that contextual learning can be implemented systematically and remains consistent with the objectives of Social Studies learning.

The study also shows that assessment and reflection are important components of contextual learning management and should not be separated from the learning process. Assessment provides information about students' understanding, participation, and ability to relate Social Studies concepts to relevant situations, while reflection allows teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of the learning strategies and activities that have been implemented. Through reflection, teachers can identify learning difficulties, evaluate student responses, and consider adjustments for subsequent learning activities. The utilization of the surrounding social environment as a learning resource also strengthens the contextual character of Social Studies learning because students are provided with opportunities to understand concepts through phenomena that they can recognize and experience in their daily lives. However, the use of contextual situations requires appropriate teacher guidance so that students are not only able to observe or describe social phenomena but can also relate those phenomena to the Social Studies concepts being studied.

Overall, the findings indicate that contextual learning should not be understood merely as a teaching technique but as an instructional management approach that requires the continuous integration of teacher competence. Pedagogical competence supports teachers in understanding students, managing classroom interaction, designing learning activities, conducting assessment, and carrying out reflection, while professional competence supports teachers in mastering Social Studies content and connecting it with relevant social realities. The integration of these competencies enables teachers to create learning experiences that are more relevant to students' lives and potentially more meaningful. Therefore, improving the quality of contextual Social Studies learning requires not only the selection of appropriate learning methods but also the strengthening of teachers' capacity to plan, implement, assess, and reflect on learning systematically. The findings suggest that strengthening teacher competence, developing contextual learning resources, and maintaining continuous assessment and reflection are

important for supporting the implementation of meaningful Social Studies learning at the junior secondary school level.

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