



Unveiling the Legacy of Siti Walidah (1872-1946): Exploring the Education, Life, and Works of Indonesian Female Ulama

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ABSTRACT

This study delves into the da'wah contributions of the Indonesian female ulama, Siti Walidah (1872-1946). Employing qualitative methods, the research entails creating and observing various works, books, academic research, videos, internet sources, and historical documents. The gathered data undergoes analysis using the explanatory analysis method, where the logic of social phenomena aligns with common sense through historical, anthropological, and sociological approaches. The research aims to exemplify the role model provided by female ulama such as Siti Walidah, allowing contemporary women to learn from and emulate the activities and struggles of these female scholars, thereby yielding numerous benefits for the advancement of the ummah, particularly women. The study presents the concepts of women scholars, their contributions, and the strategies they employed. Additionally, it delves into the supporting and inhibiting factors faced by female ulama in their preaching endeavors, aiming for a comprehensive understanding of their experiences.

Keywords: *Da'wah Contributions, Indonesian Female, Siti Walidah*

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INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, both male and female ulama have played pivotal roles in shaping Islamic teachings and traditions, particularly in Indonesia. Despite the significant influence of female ulama, they have often been overlooked compared to their male counterparts, a trend that has persisted, especially post-Indonesian independence. Islam, as outlined in Surahs An-Nahl, An-Nisa, and Al-Ahzab, advocates

for gender equality, emphasizing virtue as the true measure of an individual's worth and encouraging women to actively pursue religious education and knowledge. During the time of Prophet Muhammad, women actively participated in various social and professional roles beyond household duties.

However, patriarchal norms have historically restricted women's roles, leading to gender disparities in various aspects of life. This gender gap has increasingly come under scrutiny from gender activists and feminists advocating for a more inclusive understanding of the role of ulama in Indonesia. The term "ulama" is now being reexamined as people seek authentic Islamic teachings amidst diverse perspectives and the rise of self-proclaimed scholars in cyberspace. The digital age has witnessed the emergence of the "Millennial Ustadzah" movement, utilizing online platforms for Islamic education, thereby empowering female clerics to gain influence and challenge traditional gender norms.

Historically, despite patriarchal barriers, many women have successfully established themselves as ulama, equal to their male counterparts. Quranic verses such as QS Ali Imran: 195, QS. an-Nisa:124, and QS an-Nahl:97 emphasize gender equality, highlighting that spiritual and professional achievements are not bound by gender. Men and women are viewed as complementary, each possessing unique strengths and striving for excellence in harmony and cooperation, driven by the collective goal of achieving greater righteousness. The Qur'an advocates mutual respect and fosters good individual relations, promoting harmonious coexistence.

Notable female figures in Indonesian history, such as Cut Nyak Din, Cut Meutia, Raden Ajeng Kartini, Dewi Sartika, and Rahmah El Yunusiah, have made significant contributions to society through their activism, education initiatives, and advocacy for women's rights and Islamic education. Despite their contributions, the understanding of female clerics preaching among women in the 18th to 19th centuries remains limited due to the lack of literature addressing this topic. Further research is needed to comprehensively understand and appreciate the contributions of these female ulama to Indonesian society and Islamic tradition.

Additionally, there is a scarcity of information regarding female clerics such as Siti Walidah, who preached from 1872 to 1946 AD. Her significant contributions deserve recognition and thorough discussion due to the impactful works she produced. This study aims to shed light on the life and achievements of Siti Walidah as a female scholar, emphasizing the crucial role of gender equality and women's participation in Islamic scholarship. Furthermore, it offers historical insights into the socio-political landscape of Indonesia during the period of 1872-1946, providing context to understand the challenges encountered by female scholars at that time.

The research delves into Siti Walidah's educational background and her contributions to Islamic scholarship, thereby enriching our comprehension of the intellectual history of Islam in Indonesia. In light of the aforementioned points, this article endeavors to explore and address the following inquiries: What factors

influenced Siti Walidah's preaching from 1872 to 1946 AD? What were her da'wah strategies, and what were the factors that supported or hindered her da'wah efforts?

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Ulama

The term ulama originates from the Arabic word *'alima-ya'lamu-'ilman*, denoting individuals with profound, extensive, and steadfast knowledge. It appears twice in the Quran, specifically in Surah Fatir verse 28 and Surah al-Shu'ara' verse 197. Ulama is the plural form of the Arabic noun *'alim*, derived from the verb *'alima*, meaning "to know" or "to be knowledgeable about." An *'alim* is someone distinguished by their possession of *'ilm*, representing a deeply rooted and extensive understanding of various sciences and disciplines. In essence, ulama are recognized as the bearers of *'ilm*.

'Alim is one of the attributes of Allah (*asmaul-husna*), means as All-Knowing. In the Qur'an there is a verse that is formulated with a question sentence: *فَلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ* "Is it the same between those who know and those who do not know?" (QS. Az-Zumar: 9). Sentences of questions like this are known in the science of interpretation as "questions that deny": it means "Those who know are not the same as those who do not know". The words of the ulama are stated in the letter Fatir verses 27-28. Ulama, in the context of the verse, are people who understand and study the laws of life in the universe. Ulama are an elite layer in the structure of Islamic society. He has a critical role in the socio-cultural setting of the Muslim community, both Sunni and Shia traditions. The position of the ulama in this society is strengthened by theological texts that confirm the ulama as heirs of the prophet.

In the Quran, several terms share similar meanings or connotations with ulama. These include *ulul 'ilmi* (those with knowledge), *ulil abshar* (those with insight), *ulin nuha* (those with wisdom), *ulul albab* (those with deep understanding), and *ahludz dhikr* (those who remember and mention God). These terms are often equated with scientists, scholars, intellectuals, and others.

In the context of Indonesian culture, the term ulama refers to individuals recognized for their understanding of Islamic religious sciences and their role as agents of social change. This recognition is typically demonstrated through their ability to recite the Quran and study religious texts extensively. Due to their expertise in religious scholarship, ulama are also perceived as religious leaders or prominent figures. In Indonesian society, particularly in Java, individuals knowledgeable in religious sciences are commonly referred to as *kiai*. However, the term *kiai* may carry different connotations, as in palace traditions, it is often associated with individuals possessing spiritual abilities. Ulama are also viewed as devout worshippers, frequently engaging in Quranic recitation, remembrance, and prayer. They serve as authorities on religious matters and are often consulted for issuing fatwas. Despite ongoing debates over terminology, ulama hold a significant position in society due to their expertise and religious leadership roles.

The strategic roles and functions of ulama can be summarized as: 1) Ulama are the Heirs of the Prophets, 2) The presence of ulamas is a blessing, 3) Ulamas are Guides, Builders, and Guardians of the Ummah, 4) the ulama is the Controller of the Rulers, 5) Ulama are the Source of Knowledge, 6) Ulamas have a fear of Allah, 7) Looking at the Ummah with a Compassionate View, 8) *Ulama as a thinker*, 9) *Ulama as organizers*, 10) *Mautul Alim, Mautul Alam*.

Islam prohibits discrimination based on human characteristics. The distinction between men and women is viewed as functional rather than essential. Therefore, loving God equates to loving equality because Islam fundamentally embodies rahmatul Lil Alamin, which entails showing mercy and compassion to all without discrimination.

Woman Ulama

In Arabic, there is no specific female counterpart for the term "Ulama." Therefore, the term "Ulama" can encompass both men and women. Thus, it is inaccurate to solely associate ulama with men; women can also be considered ulama. When referring to female ulama, it pertains to women who possess profound knowledge in religious, humanities, societal, and natural sciences. From the perspective of KUPI, female clerics are characterized by their extensive knowledge, piety, noble character, commitment to justice, and contributions to the betterment of society and the world.

The term "Women Ulama" refers to women who attain the status of ulama, similar to how "women entrepreneurs" or "women writers" are understood. However, Women's Ulama are distinguished by their focused study and perspective, particularly in advocating for justice for women and marginalized groups. This distinction highlights that being a Female Ulama does not necessarily entail being female, whereas Women Ulama may not always prioritize a comprehensive perspective on women's issues.

Recognizing and appreciating the contributions of female scholars worldwide is crucial, as it legitimizes their roles and allows for learning from diverse experiences in various Islamic countries. This encompasses issues related to women's rights, violence, radicalism, and global peace. However, the process of canonization, book transmission, and evolving definitions of "ulama" have marginalized the contributions of women to Islamic knowledge.

The necessity for female clerics arises from the limitations male scholars face in comprehensively understanding Islamic laws and other religious matters, particularly those specific to women's experiences. For instance, issues related to various types of menstrual blood require nuanced explanations that only women can provide. Historical records, such as those by Al-Sakhawi and Ibn Hajar, highlight the significant contributions of women, with many excelling in hadith and fiqh expertise.

The Kitab Al-Thabaqat-Kubra documents 4,250 early Islamic figures up to the third century Hijri, with 629 entries dedicated to female characters, signifying their significance despite their relative scarcity in historical records. Similarly, the Kitab Al-Dhaw 'al-Lami' fi A'yan al-Qarn at-Tasi' features 11,691 characters, including 1,075 females, among whom 411 are recognized for their extensive religious education. In

Indonesia, local traditions like Ambu, Nyi Pohaci, and pikukuh advocate for gender balance, countering patriarchal norms.

According to PPIM, female ulama are categorized into various groups, including campus scholars like Rahmah El-Yunusiyah and Zakiah Darajat, Islamic boarding school scholars such as Sholihah Wahid Hasyim and Hj. Chamamah, socio-religious organization leaders like Nyai Ahmad Dahlan and Aisyah Amini, and tabligh scholars like Lutfiyah Sungkar and Rafiqoh Darto Wahab. These definitions underscore that gender does not determine one's eligibility to become a scholar; rather, competence and qualification are the determining factors. Female ulama play a crucial role in society, particularly in connecting with other women and complementing the efforts of male ulama.

However, despite their contributions, women clerics often receive less recognition due to the lack of acknowledgment and insufficient dissemination of information about their work. Azyumardi Azra highlights the scarcity of studies on women clerics not only in Indonesia but also in other Muslim regions worldwide, including Arabia, West Asia, North Africa, Africa, and the Indian Subcontinent. Despite the growing momentum in gender studies, female ulama remain largely overlooked.

Indonesia's Woman Ulama

The contribution of female ulama in Indonesia is indispensable, especially considering Islam's multifaceted role in shaping various aspects of Indonesian society, from belief systems to governance structures. These women have played pivotal roles in spreading Islam and nurturing its development in Indonesia. Jajat Burhanudin et al. (2002) highlighted the significant involvement of thirteen female ulama across education, da'wah, politics, social affairs, and Sufism. These ulama can be categorized into various groups based on their expertise, although some overlap exists.

The first category comprises "campus scholars," including Rahmah El-Yunusiyah, Zakiah Darajat, and Tutty Alawiyah. The second category encompasses "pesantren ulama," such as Sholihah A. Wahid Hasyim, Hajah Chamnah, Hajah Nonoh Hasanah, and Suryani Thahir. "Ulama" associated with socio-religious organizations form the third category, which includes Nyai Ahmad Dahlan, Sholihah A. Wahid Hasyim, Tutty Alawiyah, Hadiyah Salim, and Suryani Thahir. "Social and political activist clerics" make up the fourth category, represented by figures like Hajjah Rangkayo Rasuna Said, Nyai Ahmad Dahlan, and Aisyah Amini. Lastly, "tabligh scholars" like Lutfiyah Sungkar and Rafiqah Darto Wahab constitute the fifth category.

These Indonesian female ulama, with their diverse expertise and qualities, have inspired the emergence of more female clerics, socio-religious activists, and even political figures. In addition to those mentioned, several other active female clerics contribute significantly to various women's gatherings in Jakarta, including figures like Yoyoh Yusroh, Nani Handayani, Herlini Amran, and Wirianingsih, who serve as lecturers, da'wah activists, Sharia preachers, consultants, and writers.

The contribution of women ulama in Indonesia is also evident through the establishment of women's organizations within the religious community. These Islamic women's organizations emerged as part of the broader rejuvenation movement within Islamic circles, recognizing the significance of women's participation in the Islamic struggle and da'wah. Examples of such organizations, founded both before and after early independence, include Aisyiyah, Syarikat Islam Women, Peristri, Muslimat NU, and Islamic Women. The underdevelopment in this aspect paints a negative picture, considering that women constitute an integral part of the nation's foundation. As the Arabic proverb states, "*Al mar'ah 'Imad al-Bilad. Idza shaluhat shaluha al-Bilad, wa idza Fasadat Fasada al-Bilad*" (Women are the pillars of the state; if they are good, the state will be good, but if they are damaged, the state will be destroyed). Hence, the role of women is crucial, as it shapes the foundation for all forms of positive or negative attitudes and behaviors.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs qualitative methods, including observation of works, books, academic research, videos, internet sources, and historical documents. The collected data is then analyzed using an explanatory analysis approach, utilizing historical, anthropological, and sociological perspectives to understand social phenomena logically. The research aims to showcase female scholars as role models, enabling contemporary women to learn from and emulate their activities and struggles for the betterment of the ummah, particularly women. It presents the concept of female scholars, their contributions, implemented strategies, and explores both supporting and inhibiting factors influencing their preaching, aiming for a comprehensive understanding.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Siti Walidah, also known as Nyai Dahlan, is one of the notable Muslim figures who has made history in the women's movement in Indonesia. Alongside her husband, Kyai H. Ahmad Dahlan, Siti Walidah played a significant role in educating women through her activities in Muhammadiyah and Aisyiyah. Her contributions as a female scholar can be seen through her involvement in Muhammadiyah.

Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Diniyah Islamiyah

As per the guidance of Kiai Fadlil, on December 1, 1911, Walidah began assisting her husband in opening the Islamic Elementary Religious School (Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Diniyah Islamiyah) at their residence in Kampung Kauman. In just six months, the school grew rapidly and had 62 students enrolled..

Sopo Tresno, Muhammadiyah dan Aisyiyah

In addition to Kiai Ahmad Dahlan, Kiai Fakhruddin, Muhammad Sudjak, Ki Bagus Hadikusuma, and Kiai Zaini, there was a woman who played a significant role in the establishment of the religious organization, Muhammadiyah. She was Siti Walidah, the wife of Kiai Ahmad Dahlan, hence affectionately referred to as Nyai Ahmad

Dahlan. While Ahmad Dahlan was busy developing Muhammadiyah at that time, Nyai accompanied her husband on his journey. Siti Walidah's behind-the-scenes leadership earned her the nickname "Mother of Muhammadiyah". However, because some of Ahmad Dahlan's views on Islam were considered radical, the couple often faced threats. For instance, before a scheduled trip to Banyuwangi, East Java, they received death threats from conservative factions there. Yet, Nyai Siti Walidah Dahlan's struggle did not end with just being the life partner of a founder of the Muhammadiyah organization. Walidah was deeply saddened by the condition of female batik workers in Kampung Kauman. Most of them lacked religious knowledge and could not read. Walidah then discussed with her husband and the desire to nurture them emerged. In the evenings, Siti Walidah gathered the female batik workers at her home. Diligently, she taught them to recite the Quran and to read. Not only did the batik workers join in learning from Walidah, but also the housemaids and wives of the masters, although their schedules varied. This movement, led by Siti Walidah, later became known as Sopo Tresno (who loves whom).

This study group is divided into two: a group of teenage girls called Wal Ashri or study after Asr, and the Maghribi School group held after working hours for batik workers to learn to write and read Arabic and Latin letters. It takes place after Maghrib prayer, hence called Maghribi School. The participants are mostly of similar age to Siti Walidah. They also established Pawiyatan Muhammadiyah for children who do not attend public government schools, while additional religious lessons are provided for children who do attend such schools.

In 1914, this association was named Sopo Tresno, the embryo of 'Aisyiyah. Since her husband founded Muhammadiyah in 1912, Walidah has been instrumental in organizing religious study groups, organizing women in Kauman, Karangkajen, and Pakualaman, from teenage girls, mothers, to batik workers. The effort made was by holding religious study sessions for women discussing verses of the Quran with issues surrounding women and families, learning to recite the Quran, read, write, and learn skills such as sewing, embroidery, and batik. The Sopo Tresno group was able to reach out to the lower strata of society, such as laborers and household helpers.

In the history of 'Aisyiyah, as documented by Suara Aisyiyah, Siti Walidah initiated this movement by teaching women in Kauman to read the Quran, particularly emphasizing the practice of the message in Surah Al-Ma'un, which teaches sensitivity to poverty among Muslims. Through Sopo Tresno, Siti Walidah successfully awakened women to their equality with men. She encouraged Sopo Tresno members to pursue knowledge so they could stand as equals with men. Siti Walidah's role in developing Muhammadiyah's da'wah, especially 'Aisyiyah, was significant, especially after her husband's passing. Nyai Dahlan became the conduit for Kiai Dahlan's spirit and ideas to the next generation, especially women through Sopo Tresno, the precursor to 'Aisyiyah. This autonomous organization for women within Muhammadiyah was founded on May 19, 1917. Nyai Ahmad Dahlan continued to lead 'Aisyiyah until 1934. At the 15th Muhammadiyah Congress in 1926 in Surabaya, a remarkable event occurred when Siti

Walidah, a woman, led the congress, a first at the time. This event garnered significant media coverage in newspapers like *Pewarta Soerabaia* and *Sin Tit Po*, inspiring many women to join 'Aisyiyah. Nyai Ahmad Dahlan continued to lead 'Aisyiyah until 1934. Recognizing the positive development of the association, a meeting was held at Nyai Ahmad Dahlan's house attended by several Muhammadiyah leaders. They agreed to develop Sopo Tresno into a well-established Islamic women's organization with its own constitution and regulations. After some debate over the name, 'Aisyiyah was chosen, inspired by the Prophet Muhammad's wife, Aisha. 'Aisyiyah was officially established on April 22, 1917.

Sopo Tresno, initially known as Wal'Ashri, began after the Asr prayer and was attended by batik workers in Kauman, a marginalized group with limited access to education. Besides religious studies, it taught them literacy skills. In 1923, Sopo Tresno and Wal'Ashri were transformed into the concept of "Aisyiyah," a specialized institution for women. Aisyiyah, established in Yogyakarta on 27 Rajab 1335 H, corresponding to May 19, 1917, by Nyai Ahmad Dahlan, served as one of the autonomous organizations for Muhammadiyah women. Siti Bariyah was appointed chairperson, with Nyai Walidah as her advisor. Approaching its centenary, Aisyiyah, a component of the Muhammadiyah Women's Association, has left a distinctive mark in social, educational, health, and religious realms, shaping its movement.

The name Aisyiyah was derived from the Prophet Muhammad SAW's wife. Under Nyai Ahmad Dahlan's guidance, Aisyiyah's influence grew steadily. Though she initiated the group, Walidah was not appointed as its initial leader. During a Muhammadiyah central leadership meeting in 1917, Siti Bariyah was named Aisyiyah's leader. Bariyah was one of K.H. Ahmad Dahlan's students who graduated from Neutraal Meisjes School.

Through Aisyiyah, Siti Walidah established girls' schools, boarding houses, literacy, and Islamic education programs for women. The educational framework comprised home, school, community, and religious education. Walidah began this movement by organizing religious studies for women in Kauman, including Quranic courses for girls attending neutral schools. The sessions also taught literacy skills, earning the name Maghribi School for being held after Maghrib prayers. Another avenue for religious outreach was Sopo Tresno and Wal Asri.

What's remarkable is how Siti Walidah aligned with her husband's modern Islamic education vision. She recognized her significant obligation in educating her community to alleviate ignorance. Thus, she established internaat (boarding) schools specifically for girls, grooming young national cadres. After five years, as more women joined the classes, Sopo Tresno transitioned into Aisyiyah. The movement retained its Quranic roots, marking the beginning of women's activism and service in the country.

Nyai Ahmad Dahlan, lacking formal education, was deemed inexperienced in modern thinking and organizational management. At that time, Walidah only mastered Malay and basic Latin script. Through this event, K.H. Ahmad Dahlan seemingly avoided nepotism in leadership structures, both within Muhammadiyah and Aisyiyah.

He envisioned Aisyiyah as a modern, professionally managed organization. Through Aisyiyah, she encouraged women to engage in activities beyond household chores, attend schools, and participate in male-dominated activities, including employment. It remains the oldest women's organization under Muhammadiyah's auspices. Starting as Sopa Tresna, it originated from KH. Ahmad Dahlan and Nyai Ahmad Dahlan's concern for nurturing female cadres. The first cadre members included Siti Bariyah, Siti Dawimah, Siti Dalalah, Siti Busyro, Siti Wadingah, and Siti Badilah Zubeir. The organization also prioritized healthcare and education sectors, evident through its numerous educational and healthcare institutions. Its vision was "The establishment of Islam and the realization of a truly Islamic society, achieved through Aisyiyah's efforts directing higher quality amar ma'ruf nahi munkar (enjoining good and forbidding evil) da'wah towards a civil society." One proof that Ahmad Dahlan did not see gender differences as a problem was the inclusion of female preachers in the Muhammadiyah preacher list, breaking new ground in the early 20th century when female preachers were scarce. Since founding Muhammadiyah in Yogyakarta on November 18, 1912, Ahmad Dahlan positioned women as vital pillars to support the organization. Thus, Ahmad Dahlan and his wife, Siti Walidah, established Aisyiyah in 1914 as a platform for Muhammadiyah's women's movement. Aisyiyah was not formed to segregate men and women; instead, Ahmad Dahlan recognized Muhammadiyah's dire need for female participation. Aisyiyah became Muhammadiyah's tool to address women's issues and empower them through education and social services.

Ahmad Dahlan was actively involved in various Aisyiyah activities, while many women were engaged in Muhammadiyah's work, even in areas traditionally considered unsuitable for women. Together with Aisyiyah, Ahmad Dahlan mobilized women to embrace modernity, paving the way for the emergence of female preachers, a rarity at the time. Aisyiyah stands as one of Ahmad Dahlan's most valuable legacies, with his wife, Siti Walidah or Nyai Ahmad Dahlan, playing a crucial role. By 1938, Aisyiyah had produced over 2,000 female preachers and managed numerous girls' schools. The efforts of the Aisyiyah organization are: Teaching and conducting Islamic da'wah Advancing teaching education Reviving the community helping Maintaining and prospering places of worship and endowments Educating and nurturing children and young women so that they will become meaningful daughters of Islam.

Dakwah

In 1921, Siti Walidah became the head of 'Aisyiyah, she was elected in the 5th congress of Aisyiyah in Yogyakarta, at the beginning of her leadership, It focused on preaching activities throughout the island of Java.

Women's Mosque

In her second year of leadership, Siti Walidah focused on establishing women's mosques. Then the following year Siti Walidah concentrated organizational activities towards religious education and mental health courses.

Formal and non-formal education

In 1924, Siti Walidah was elected for the fourth time, and she focused Aisyiyah's activities on both formal and non-formal education. Aisyiyah's commitment to education has been evident since its inception. It pioneered early childhood education through the establishment of Froebel School in 1919 in Yogyakarta, which later expanded nationwide and overseas under the name TK 'Aisyiyah Bustanul Athfal. Aisyiyah's tangible contribution to education lies in its role in developing the nation's human resources. Besides managing formal education initiatives, Aisyiyah also oversees informal and non-formal education programs.

Later on, Siti Walidah pioneered the establishment of boarding schools for girls, especially those studying to become religious teachers. She personally taught religious and general knowledge, as well as literacy skills. The boarding school for girls was integrated into Siti Walidah's residence. However, encouraging girls to pursue education faced challenges from the Kauman community, which was hesitant about the idea of girls leaving home to study. Nyai Walidah introduced the concept of "Catur Pusat" or the Four Centers, which included education within the family, at school, in the community, and in places of worship. She established boarding houses specifically for girls attending Muhammadiyah schools, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Diniyah Islamiyah, or Volk School Muhammadiyah. Since formal education for women already existed in Muhammadiyah, non-formal education or boarding schools were established for further enhancement. In 1919, a girls' boarding school was established at her home, serving as a place to educate women, particularly in religious education and all matters related to femininity. Here, she taught public speaking for preaching, religious practices, and more.

The students in the pesantren learn various fields, such as religion, femininity, etiquette, ethics, social interactions, and household affairs. Siti Walidah delivers the material clearly, instilling discipline and responsibility in the students. They must obey orders, pay fines (2,50 cents) if they break the rules, explain reasons for being late, seek permission when leaving the pesantren, and be punctual in prayer and study. She fosters responsibility by designing rules where students must clean their rooms every morning, take turns for duty according to schedule, and use the bathroom in line. She promotes camaraderie through communal meals and starts with collective prayers.

She paid special attention to the students' health. To maintain their nutrition, protein, green bean porridge, and fruits were served three times a week. Meanwhile, to preserve their stamina, they were required to take afternoon naps. Her contributions can be outlined as follows: First, the establishment of dormitories for girls (boarding school) from various regions in Indonesia, providing them with quality education. Their parents wholeheartedly entrusted their children to receive guidance from Nyai Ahmad Dahlan (Siti Walidah). Second, Nyai Ahmad Dahlan (Siti Walidah) actively assisted in the smooth running of girls' schools. Female education was provided through courses and Islamic religious studies. Third, she actively pioneered the eradication of illiteracy among the elderly. Fifth, Nyai Ahmad Dahlan (Siti Walidah) also established homes for

underprivileged children. Sixth, Nyai Ahmad Dahlan (Siti Walidah) showed great concern for the care of orphaned children.

And in general, Aisyiyah's educational institutions can be categorized as follows: The Primary and Secondary Education Council (Dikdasmen) 'Aisyiyah functions as a business organizer in the field of primary and secondary education according to the organization's policy.

The scope of 'Aisyiyah's Primary and Secondary Education is:

- a. Early Childhood Education (ECE) includes both formal ECE such as Kindergarten, Bustanul Athfal, Special Education Schools (SLB), and non-formal ECE including Playgroups, Daycare Centers, Similar ECE Units (TBA), and Quranic Education Centers (TPQ).
- b. Primary Education is the foundational level that underpins secondary education, including: Elementary Schools (SD), Islamic Elementary Schools (MI), Junior High Schools (SMP), Islamic Junior High Schools (MTS), Special Education Schools (SLB), Islamic Boarding Schools, and equivalent forms.
- c. Secondary Education is a continuation of primary education, comprising: Senior High Schools (SMA), Vocational High Schools (SMK), Islamic Senior High Schools (MA), Special Education Schools (SLB), Islamic Boarding Schools, and equivalent forms.
- d. Non-formal Education serves as a substitute, supplement, and/or complement to formal education, including: Diniyah Schools, life skills education, Adolescent Education, women's empowerment education, literacy education, equality education, skills education, job training, and similar forms.

Suara Aisyiyah Magazine

Then in 1925, 1926, and 1930 he was re-elected as chairman of Aisyiyah by making a new breakthrough, namely establishing *Suara Aisyiyah Magazine*. To support the literacy eradication program, 'Aisyiyah initially published Suara Aisyiyah, a monthly magazine, in 1926. It served as a counterpart to Suara Muhammadiyah, the "men's" version of the magazine. Furthermore, Suara Aisyiyah became a propaganda tool and media for communicating programs and activities to the public. Initially in Javanese, it later transitioned to Bahasa Indonesia, which contributed to its popularity.

Songket Kauman and Kudung Aisyiyah

Fashion is dynamic, always evolving with the times. In order to maintain their power in the Dutch East Indies, the Dutch introduced cultural elements to make the natives feel comfortable with their presence. One aspect of this cultural exchange was clothing, so by the 19th century, Dutch clothing styles were increasingly adopted by the natives. This cultural exchange also influenced the evolution of kebaya fashion, transitioning from long-sleeved to short-sleeved kebayas. During the Islamization of Java, the kebaya underwent changes with the neckline being raised, covering the hair and neck with a headscarf, and the adoption of long blouses.

From the Sopo Tresna gatherings, the introduction of Muslim women's attire, including the use of headscarves, was initiated as one of the programs, which was

launched in 1919. Starting from that year, there were subsequent changes in Muhammadiyah's Muslim women's attire in the following years. The first program conducted by 'Aisyiyah, alongside the study gatherings, was to ensure that every participant in the Sopo Tresna gatherings wore a headscarf (head covering) made of white sorban. This program was launched in 1919, where in practice, K.H. Ahmad Dahlan suggested creating good-quality headscarves, which later became popular among Muhammadiyah women as embroidered headscarves of good quality. Initially, K.H. Ahmad Dahlan provided an example of a headscarf that he brought from Mecca. Although it was only launched in 1919, Muhammadiyah women had been using these headscarves since 1917, as they were used to protect women from undesirable elements and to guard them from unrelated men.

From the study, the use of headscarves began to be adopted by 'Aisyiyah women, even though at that time headscarves were mainly worn by women who had performed the Hajj pilgrimage. Consequently, those who disagreed began to attach stigmas, such as "Lungo Kaji Nang Plengkungan Asem," because the headscarf style worn by 'Aisyiyah women resembled that of women with the title Hajj. Despite facing criticism from society, 'Aisyiyah women remained steadfast in their decision to wear headscarves as a modest cover. They believed that wearing a headscarf was a duty for every Muslim woman who had reached puberty, not just for those who had performed the Hajj. This belief was based on the Quranic verses, such as Surah An-Nur, verse 31, which instructs Muslim women to extend their headscarves to cover their chests.

The Muslim attire worn by Muhammadiyah women, like Nyai Walidah and her students, comprised kebaya (blouse) and sarong paired with a headscarf. At that time, most sarongs were made of silk with batik motifs and were worn with kemben (chest band) and kebaya without buttons. This attire was later modified by K.H. Ahmad Dahlan to include a direct fastening, while the kutubaru style resembled the attire worn in the royal court. Not all Muhammadiyah women wore headscarves that fully covered their hair; some wore long white cloths instead. Nyai Walidah wore a layered headscarf known as Igal, consisting of two rectangular pieces of cloth: one to cover the hair and the other to wrap around the head and neck, extending to cover the chest and back. Its usage was intricate and time-consuming, and the headscarf was expensive, limiting its accessibility to certain social classes. In contrast, those in the royal court wore kemben and kebaya without buttons. Women who wore Mudhowaroh, like some 'Aisyiyah leaders such as Badila Zuber and Fatimah Wasol, were committed to modesty. The introduction of the 'Aisyiyah headscarf led to the adoption of the Minangkabau style, but some women still used sarongs to cover their chests and backs for a more formal appearance. Sarongs, like Mudhowaroh, were considered luxurious attire, made from imported silk or fine batik, and were affordable only to certain social classes. The use of sarongs became popular from the 1920s to the early 1940s.

In 1931, during the 20th Congress of Muhammadiyah, it was decreed that the headscarf became a mandatory accessory for Muhammadiyah women. The implementation of headscarves and Muslim attire was initially applied to

Muhammadiyah women and the charitable institutions established by Muhammadiyah, such as Muhammadiyah schools ranging from kindergarten to college level.

Meanwhile, during the 21st Congress of Muhammadiyah in Semarang, the 'Aisyiyah division decided that female teachers in 'Aisyiyah schools must wear headscarves. It was also decreed that "Female teachers teaching in Muhammadiyah and 'Aisyiyah schools must all wear headscarves." Teachers continued to wear headscarves even when teaching male and female students. As teachers serve as examples to their students, wearing headscarves indicated to female students that it was a compulsory attire for women. At that time, the decision focused solely on headscarves, not on requiring kebaya (blouse) to be long and non-transparent, wearing sarongs, or using socks. This decision aimed to reinforce the obligation of women to wear headscarves and to maintain the discipline of newly recruited female teachers entering Muhammadiyah schools.

'Aisyiyah pioneered the use of clothing that covers the aurat (parts of the body that must be covered in Islam) in Yogyakarta, specifically clothing that includes a long headscarf as a head covering. The use of this long headscarf was accompanied by long attire. From the time of KH. Ahmad Dahlan until 1965, Muhammadiyah women wore white headscarves because they believed white was a virtuous color, leading to the stigma "White Getuk is Less Tasty, White Headscarf is 'Aisyiyah", as all 'Aisyiyah women wore white headscarves. The headscarf used in daily activities was a long headscarf draped over the head, which later became known as the 'Aisyiyah headscarf. The embroidery of the headscarf was dismantled at the initiative of Mrs. Daukhah, and then she replicated the embroidery of the flowers. She observed the embroidery pattern, which she then replicated to create the 'Aisyiyah headscarf. The motif created was not placed in the center of the headscarf but slightly to the side so that when worn, both sides were not of equal length, allowing the longer side to be draped over the shoulder and cover the neck. This headscarf was called the 'Aisyiyah headscarf because it was widely used by 'Aisyiyah women, although it was also worn by a wider audience in its development.

During the Japanese occupation and wartime conditions, sourcing materials for headscarves became increasingly difficult. Connections with Mecca and Europe were severed, resulting in no imports reaching Indonesia. This hindered headscarf production, making headscarves scarce and their prices soared due to limited materials. Consequently, during the war, Muhammadiyah women began to wear only long headscarves without the Igal because it was more practical. They utilized leftover materials for making them. To meet clothing needs, they used mosquito netting and bed sheets as substitutes for fabric. As for replacing bed sheets, they used woven pandanus leaves, which continued until 1949. During this time, the chest covering sarong was replaced by a shawl, marking a functional change.

Dutch culture influenced changes in the clothing worn by Indonesian women, especially those attending Dutch schools. Traditional attire like long kebayas and sarongs gradually shifted to shorter versions. This transition suggested that women were

no longer respecting themselves with their clothing choices. The prevalent use of kebayas that didn't fully cover the female body became a concern for Aisyiyah women. Thin, transparent fabrics were used, revealing undergarments, and the long headscarves worn didn't fully cover their heads, intentionally exposing their hair. This sparked discussions and protests against headscarves paired with insufficiently modest attire. Advocates promoted the use of proper headscarves covering the hair, modest clothing made of non-transparent fabric, loose-fitting, and sarongs covering the legs completely for a more appropriate appearance. Similar concerns arose among female Islamic students (Mu'allimat) whose tight-fitting kebayas didn't align with Islamic guidelines. To address this, a shift to baju kurung was initiated following a seminar on Islamic attire organized by the Indonesian Islamic Students Association (PII) in Yogyakarta in the 1950s, involving students from across the city.

Fighting for independence

Siti Walidah also stood out for her nationalism. Alongside her husband and other national leaders, she fought for the nation's independence. Even in her old age, she remained active in guiding her friends, including Soekarno, General Sudirman, Bung Tomo, and K.H Mas Mansyur.

About ten months before Siti Walidah's passing, Soekarno-Hatta proclaimed Indonesia's independence. Millions awaited eagerly for a day to liberate themselves from oppression. The preparations for Indonesia's independence stirred excitement in the morning, as assured by news broadcasts on the radio. At that time, Muhammadiyah held a Tanwir Conference in Yogyakarta, and dignitaries visited Siti Walidah's residence. Her heroic spirit remained evident despite her old age and illness. It was a moment of tranquility as the mother of Muhammadiyah conveyed her message. This message was the testament of the late K.H. Ahmad Dahlan, essentially stating: "Muhammadiyah, I entrust to you." It implied K.H. Ahmad Dahlan's hope for her to safeguard Muhammadiyah diligently. She also reiterated the six main principles of Muhammadiyah's mission, emphasizing its commitment and struggle. Furthermore, Siti Walidah concluded her address by giving a similar directive to her husband's testament as follows: "I entrust Muhammadiyah and 'Aisyiyah to you, as the late K.H. Ahmad Dahlan entrusted them to me. Entrusting means continuing the struggle of the Indonesian Muslim community towards a better national life based on noble ideals towards independence."

Nyai Dahlan passed away on May 13, 1946, at the age of 72. Her death did not extinguish her legacy. Her contributions are evident in the organization of 'Aisyiyah. Today, 'Aisyiyah stands as one of the largest Muslim women's organizations, with a work program deeply rooted in its mission: to elevate the status of women for the benefit of society at large. She entrusted her students to always safeguard and advance 'Aisyiyah. "I entrust Muhammadiyah and 'Aisyiyah to you, just as the late K.H. Ahmad Dahlan entrusted them to me. Entrusting means continuing the struggle of the Indonesian Muslim community towards improving the lives of the Indonesian nation, based on noble ideals towards independence."

Female position and harmonious partnership

Siti Walidah married Ahmad Dahlan in 1889. From their marriage, she had six children. She didn't just play the role of a wife and mother at home. She positioned herself as a companion in her husband's struggle by initiating women's gatherings to promote educational awareness. Recognizing her husband's significant task in propagating Islam, she endeavored to support his aspirations while also fulfilling her role as a mother. Siti Walidah continued to play a crucial role in educating and supervising the education of her sons and daughters. Ahmad Dahlan worked to establish gender equality, assigning women roles in Muhammadiyah's preaching efforts, a groundbreaking move in the early 20th century when female preachers were scarce. Although the Kauman area was familiar with various social movements, many believed that women were subordinate to men. Ahmad Dahlan realized the importance of involving all segments of society, both men and women, in nation-building and spreading religion. He instilled this awareness in his wife by teaching her about women's roles in Islam. He also provided equal opportunities for women to take care of themselves, believing that if women had their own platform for self-care, they could harness their potential. Therefore, the presence of a women's association was deemed necessary.

Through Sopo Tresnolah, Siti Walidah aimed to enlighten society that such views were unfounded. In her perspective, women were partners to men, responsible for their lives before Allah. She advocated for equal rights in education, opposing forced marriages. Despite facing opposition initially, her ideas gradually gained acceptance, grounded in arguments from the Quran, specifically Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 228, and Surah An-Nahl, verse 97.

And the women have a right that is balanced with their obligations in the manner of ma'ruf. (Q.S. Al Baqarah: 228)

Whoever does righteous deeds, both men and women, in a state of faith, we will reward them with more reward than what they have done. (Q.S. An Nahl: 97)

Siti Walidah's concept of women's education remains relevant today, aligning with contemporary values of gender equality and empowerment. Muhammadiyah supported her efforts, recognizing the importance of women in nation-building and religious propagation. Ahmad Dahlan's vision of inclusivity extended to women, acknowledging their strategic roles in society. Despite Western colonial biases against women, Muhammadiyah schools welcomed both genders, promoting equal access to education. Siti Walidah advocated for women's rights through teaching and organizing gatherings, aiming to empower them spiritually and intellectually. She believed in the importance of parental involvement and universal education, irrespective of social status. Through Muhammadiyah and 'Aisyiyah, she demonstrated how Islamic principles fostered women's advancement. Siti Walidah encouraged women to support men's struggles and prepared them for active participation in societal development. Lessons in women's gatherings covered religious teachings, literacy, and self-worth, aiming to cultivate awareness of their roles as individuals, wives, servants of Allah, and citizens. Amidst

prevailing gender biases, Sopo Tresno served as a beacon of enlightenment and empowerment, spearheaded by Siti Walidah and her close associates, including Siti Bariyah, Siti Dawimah, Siti Busjro, Siti Badingah, Siti Wadilah, Ahmad Dahlan, and Ki Bagus Hadikusumo.

Against forced mating

Siti Walidah's educational philosophy emphasized that Muslim women should not only understand their roles in household duties but also recognize their responsibilities in nation-building and community development. She established girls' schools, boarding houses, literacy programs, and Islamic education initiatives for women. Siti Walidah also opposed forced marriages, which were prevalent customs in Javanese society at the time. In 1921, she became the first Chairwoman of Aisyiyah during the 5th Aisyiyah Congress in Yogyakarta. In the early years of her leadership, she focused on preaching activities across Java Island.

Accept polygamy

History records that Siti Walidah, later known as Nyai Ahmad Dahlan, was a highly intelligent woman. As the daughter of an ulama, she experienced seclusion and did not receive formal education, reflecting the prevailing societal norms at the time that confined women to the home. However, her marriage to Ahmad Dahlan, a distant relative, proved to be a complementary union, where they supported each other's dreams. Ahmad Dahlan's decision to remarry was carefully considered and supported by Siti Walidah, his eldest wife, as well as being a response to the requests of respected individuals. Despite societal expectations, Siti Walidah's intelligence flourished after marriage, with Ahmad Dahlan providing her opportunities for personal development. She wholeheartedly supported Ahmad Dahlan in establishing and advancing Muhammadiyah.

Ahmad Dahlan's second wife, Raden Ayu Soetidjah Windyaningrum, was a young widow from the royal court, given to Ahmad Dahlan by Sultan Hamengkubuwana VII. This marriage symbolized the sultan's approval of Islamic reform initiated by Dahlan and Muhammadiyah. Soetidjah, also known as Nyai Abdullah, was married to Ahmad Dahlan for the sake of dakwah. However, their marriage was short-lived, ending in divorce after the birth of their son, R. Dhurie. Ahmad Dahlan's third marriage was again motivated by his mission of dakwah, following a request from his friend, Kiai Munawar, a prominent figure in Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). This union aimed to strengthen cooperation between NU and Muhammadiyah. However, like his second marriage, this one also ended prematurely, reportedly due to societal pressures and expectations.

The fourth marriage occurred during Ahmad Dahlan's missionary work in Cianjur, West Java, initiated by a local nobleman who wished to have descendants from Ahmad Dahlan. This marriage did not require Dahlan to live with his new wife after the wedding. From his third wife, Ahmad Dahlan had a daughter named Siti Dandanah.

Ahmad Dahlan understood that his practice of polygamy caused pain to Nyai Walidah. To alleviate her feelings, he ensured that his wives did not reside together, let

alone in the same house. Each wife lived separately, with Nyai Abdullah in Namburan, Nyai Rum in Krapyak, and Nyai Aisyah in Cianjur. Despite this, Ahmad Dahlan's generosity was evident as he sincerely cared for his stepchildren, considering their mother too young to raise them. From his polygamous marriages, Dahlan had two children, one each from Nyai Abdullah and Nyai Aisyah. As someone deeply involved in the movement, Nyai Ahmad Dahlan understood that the maturity of age in marriage would determine the quality of the children born. Therefore, both children from Kyai Dahlan's marriages with Raden Ayu Windyaningrum and Aisyah were ultimately raised by Nyai Ahmad Dahlan. As recounted by Siti Hadiroh, Kyai Dahlan's great-grandchild, Nyai Ahmad Dahlan cared for the children to such an extent that they were unaware she wasn't their biological mother. History records that KH Ahmad Dahlan's polygamous marriages with four wives resulted in descendants spread across Indonesia, Thailand, England, and other countries. Today, all his descendants, from children to great-great-grandchildren, continue to live harmoniously and maintain familial ties, despite distances and different nationalities.

Catur pusat

She proposed his educational philosophy known as the "four centers" concept. The "four centers" unite four components of education:

1. Education within the family environment
2. Education within the school environment
3. Education within the community environment
4. Education within the place of worship environment. This concept was later realized into a school.

Leadership talent

Siti Walidah's name is always associated with her husband's prominent name, Kiai Haji Ahmad Dahlan, the founder of Muhammadiyah. On more than one occasion, Siti Walidah was involved in the activities of the Islamic renewal organization based in Yogyakarta. Her behind-the-scenes leadership earned her the nickname "Mother of Muhammadiyah." Leadership Talent Despite not being allowed to leave the house and breathe fresh air in Kampung Kauman, Siti Walidah never lost heart. She always found ways to keep herself busy at home by studying the Quran or helping her mother with household chores. Home was a small school for Siti Walidah. She also never lacked friends, and she was skilled at socializing. Every day, her house was always crowded with children who wanted to learn the Quran from Kiai Fadlil. In addition to male students, there were also female students who were friends of Walidah. The girls attended religious lessons by sitting on the floor inside the house, while the boys were placed in front of the house. The facilities at Kiai Fadlil's residence were quite complete, with short benches, lamps, and mats donated by the parents of the students. Behind the house, there was also a well and a place for ablution. During the religious lessons, Kiai Fadlil noticed that his second daughter was very good at encouraging her friends to quickly complete the Quran. Wanting his daughter to grow even better, Kiai Fadlil immediately assigned Siti Walidah to teach younger children. Walidah accepted

the task with a sense of responsibility. Suratmin noted that to motivate the children to study the Quran, Walidah provided additional lessons to them. The condition was that the children had to finish their readings if they wanted to listen to Walidah's lessons. The children became very enthusiastic because, like Walidah, most of them had never received formal education, which fostered a great curiosity. As expected by her father, Siti Walidah grew up to be a good leader in the household. Kiai Fadlil then instructed his second daughter to help open a small mosque and start a study group.

Surpassing Kartini especially in the field of education

The role of women in building the civilization of a nation often goes unnoticed by the public, yet in the past, there were many women who played significant roles in building the civilization of nations, including Indonesia. One such woman was Siti Walidah. She was among the many female figures who made significant contributions to the field of education. In Siti Walidah's view, education is the most valuable investment in the future. The more educated a woman is, the easier it is to advance. And it is impossible to build the civilization of humanity if women are only confined to the kitchen and home. "The role of women practiced by Nyai Walidah is more progressive than that of Budi Utomo and even Kartini," said Siti Ruhaini Dzuhayatin, author of the book "Gender Regime of Muhammadiyah, Gender Contestation, Identity, and Existence" during the Saturday Night Study (Kamastu) event organized by AMM DIY on Friday (21/10). Ruhaini explained that the gender relations pattern of Budi Utomo was still bound by Javanese customs that required women to be more feminine. Meanwhile, Kartini advocated for gender relations in the form of complementarity or mutual fulfillment and complementation between men and women. Siti Walidah was a prominent female figure in Indonesia's education movement, advocating for education as a means of empowerment for women, both formally and informally. While some feminist perspectives view religion as a source of marginalization and subordination for women, Siti Walidah saw dignity, honor, greatness, and progress derived from religious activities.

Education for women during her time was rare, with women generally not allowed to attend school like men. Recognizing this, Nyai Ahmad Dahlan pioneered girls' schools. Her concept of education emphasized that Muslim women should not only know household affairs but also have duties and responsibilities in the nation and society. This education was supported by the establishment of girls' schools and boarding houses, as well as literacy and Islamic education for women. She also opposed forced marriages, asserting that women were partners to their husbands, contrary to the patriarchal Javanese customs and traditions. Nyai Siti Walidah, the wife of Kyai Ahmad Dahlan from Yogyakarta, along with her husband, initiated education for women through institutions like Sopo Tresno (1914), Wal-'Ashri, and Maghribi School, which laid the foundation for 'Aisyiyah. 'Aisyiyah embodied the understanding of Quranic verses (Q.S. an-Nahl [16]: 97 and at-Taubah [9]: 71). Her scholarly capacity led her to be invited by male scholars in Solo to present her efforts in women's education. Unlike the patriarchal Javanese tradition, Nyai Ahmad Dahlan believed that women were

intended to be partners to their husbands. 'Aisyiyah schools were influenced by Ahmad Dahlan's educational ideology known as Catur Pusat: education at home, in schools, in society, and in places of worship. The role of female scholars in Indonesia is also represented by the involvement of women's organizations within religious communities. Aligned with the spirit of reform within Islamic organizations, Islamic Women's Organizations were established, recognizing the importance of women's participation in the struggle and propagation of Islam. Among the women's organizations founded before and after independence were 'Aisyiyah, Women's Syarikat Islam, Peristeri, Muslimat NU, and Islamic Women.

'Aisyiyah, established in Yogyakarta on 27 Rajab 1335 H, corresponding to May 19, 1917, by Nyai Ahmad Dahlan, serves as an autonomous organization for women within Muhammadiyah. Approaching its centennial anniversary, 'Aisyiyah, as a women's component of Muhammadiyah, has significantly contributed to social, educational, health, and religious realms, serving as the cornerstone of its movement. Over time, the 'Aisyiyah movement has continued to evolve and benefit the advancement and dignity of Indonesian women. A tangible outcome is the extensive establishment of thousands of kindergartens, elementary schools, and even universities. In educating women, Siti Walidah always instilled discipline in her students, whether in performing prayers or dormitory duties. At least in educating women, she always taught two principles: First, rejecting the Javanese adage that "women's paradise is following men, and their hell is following them too." According to her, Islam asserts that women have equal rights and obligations alongside men. Women are accountable for their lives before Allah, not merely following men to paradise or hell. Women have the right to progress by managing themselves in a good manner. Second, domestic matters should not hinder women's roles in society. In other words, household affairs should not deter women from contributing to societal advancement. However, excessive involvement in society should not neglect household responsibilities and child-rearing.

According to Ruhaini, a more progressive relationship between men and women was practiced by Kyai Dahlan and Nyai Walidah. Both husband and wife, who led Muhammadiyah and Aisyiyah respectively, implemented a co-existence relationship in the form of a senior-junior partnership. "At that time, there was a social construction that regarded wives and children as their husband's property. So what Kyai Dahlan and Nyai Walidah did was not yet conceived at that time." Furthermore, she mentioned several examples of women's progressiveness advocated by Kyai Dahlan. For instance, establishing women's prayer spaces (*langgar estri*) was intended by Kyai Dahlan so that women could worship just like men. Thus, women were no longer confined to small corners separated by curtains in mosques. Kyai Dahlan, as stated by Ruhaini, also taught girls to wear sarongs and ride bicycles. Though simple, in that context, what Kyai Dahlan did was highly progressive in encouraging women to engage outside the home and participate in activities typically reserved for men at that time, including work. What Kyai Dahlan did was deemed to emulate Christianity, and many at that time referred to him as an infidel Kyai. However, according to Dahlan, this progressiveness

stems from Islamic teachings themselves. Nyai Walidah also had a background as a trader working outside the home, akin to what was practiced by the wife of Prophet Muhammad, Khadijah RA.

On November 10, 1971, Nyai Ahmad Dahlan was declared a National Hero of Indonesia by President Suharto, according to Presidential Decree Number 42/TK of 1971. Ahmad Dahlan had been appointed as a National Hero ten years earlier. The award was received by his grandson, M Wardan. He has been likened to women's rights advocate Kartini and guerrilla fighters Cut Nyak Dhien and Cut Nyak Meutia.

Resisting Mushreek

Siti Walidah's maternal charisma remains undiminished even in her twilight years. Suratmin further illustrates in Nyai Dahlan's biography that despite her ailing condition, Siti Walidah continued to provide support to all of Muhammadiyah's students in facing the Japanese occupation. She even dared to protect her children from idolatry by opposing the Japanese government's order to worship the sun. During the Japanese occupation, Aisyiyah was banned by the Japanese military in Java and Madura on September 10, 1943. She then worked in schools and fought to keep students from being forced to worship the sun and sing Japanese songs. During the Indonesian National Revolution, she cooked soup from her home for the soldiers and promoted military service among her former students. Her struggle through religious studies was not only about teaching religion but also about emphasizing the importance of education for the community, while avoiding schools built by the colonial government in Java as institutions for Christianization.

Dare to Advise Leaders

Being the consort of a prominent figure in the Islamic movement, Siti Walidah became acquainted with national figures who were friends of her husband. Through this, she grew and gained broad insights, accompanying her husband in leading Muhammadiyah into becoming one of Indonesia's major Islamic organizations. She also participated in discussions about the war with General Sudirman and President Sukarno. After Independence Proclamation, according to Suratmin, despite her weak condition, Siti Walidah also advised the country's leaders. They were President Sukarno, Bung Tomo, and Commander Sudirman. They had visited Siti Walidah in Kampung Kauman while she was ill. "Bung Karno considered Nyai Ahmad Dahlan as his own mother and grandmother. After he entered the house, he sat near the bed and their conversation was open. It was as if it was not between a state leader and an ordinary citizen," Suratmin wrote, citing testimonies from Siti Walidah's children and grandchildren.

Nasionalism

The struggles undertaken by Siti Walidah to advance education and women's rights, whether through Aisyiyah or Muhammadiyah, were not without challenges. Because the activities carried out by Muhammadiyah and Aisyiyah were deemed detrimental by the Dutch, especially in the field of education. This was because it contradicted the Dutch political goal of keeping the people ignorant to maintain control over them.

Against poverty and economic independence

Nyai Ahmad Dahlan began addressing women's issues by analyzing Quranic verses. She started by discussing the interpretation of Surah Al-Ma'un, intentionally teaching it to sharpen her students' awareness of the prevalent poverty among Muslims. These discussions expanded rapidly to Lempuyangan, Karangajen, and Pakualaman.

In the economic sector, Aisyiyah sought to advance the Family Economic Development Program (BUEKA) and Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). Currently, Aisyiyah owns and guides Economic Enterprises in various regions and branches, which include cooperative businesses, agriculture, household industries, and small shops.

Simplicity and independence

In one incident, when Nyai Dahlan was hospitalized at the Muhammadiyah PKU Hospital, she refused the offer from the hospital to waive her treatment costs. Her reason was that she remembered her husband's last message. She then went home to get money and pay the hospital bills. However, the collected money was not enough to cover the hospital expenses. Nyai Dahlan then instructed one of her children to sell a wardrobe to cover the shortfall in medical expenses. This story was recounted by Chayatul Khuriyah, Ahmad Dahlan's granddaughter.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors of Siti Walidah Da'wah (1872-1946 A.D.)

1. She was the wife of KH. Ahmad Dahlan, the founder of the Muhammadiyah organization.
2. Her father was an Islamic scholar in their village.
3. She was born and raised in Kauman Village, a settlement designated for religious officials in the native government, palace servants, devoted religious students serving in the government, and mostly comprising the priyayi class.
4. Women at that time were often relegated to second-class citizenship.

CONCLUSION

The da'wah efforts of Indonesian female ulama such as Siti Walidah (1872-1946 AD) encompass various dimensions. These scholars actively engage in teaching in taklim gatherings and contribute whatever they can for the sake of their da'wah mission. Apart from receiving support from their families, students, and communities, they establish da'wah facilities using their own assets, including goods, valuables, and finances. These scholars dedicate their energy and time to uplift the ummah, prioritizing communal benefit over personal interests. They demonstrate concern not only for religious matters but also for national, community, and educational affairs, including economic empowerment. They advocate for economic independence among women, aiming for self-reliance rather than dependency on spouses or parents. Their ultimate goal is to seek the pleasure of Allah, spread Islam, realize maqashid sharia, and serve the best interests of the ummah.

The diverse strategies employed by these female scholars in their da'wah activities highlight their presence as compassionate figures, aiding all sectors in need of

assistance and advocacy while adhering to Islamic principles, dignity, and unity. They exhibit diligence in worship, lead simple lives focused on spiritual pursuits, possess adequate religious knowledge, and prioritize societal welfare. They channel their expertise and intentions toward Allah, using their knowledge and resources for the greater good. In addition to establishing educational institutions and sharing their insights, they contribute to societal development, particularly in empowering women and fostering community advancement through writing and organizational efforts. Consequently, these endeavors contribute to social cohesion, alleviate societal deficiencies, stimulate innovation, and instill compassion among individuals.

Furthermore, the factors influencing the preaching activities of women clerics vary, reflecting shifts in societal attitudes towards women over different time periods. These shifts are heavily influenced by prevailing cultural norms and historical events, showcasing the evolving role of women within their respective societies.

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