



Child Education in the Family: Perspectives of Modern and Traditional Pesantren Kiai on Gender Equality

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Abstract

This study examines the views of kiai from modern and traditional pesantren in South Kalimantan on gender roles in family education. Using a qualitative approach and field research method, six kiai were selected as the main informants, consisting of three kiai from the modern pesantren group and three kiai from the traditional pesantren group. Data were collected through interviews, which were then analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model. The findings show that both groups of kiai agree that children's education is a shared responsibility, but with different approaches. Modern pesantren kiai emphasize the importance of equal collaboration between fathers and mothers in child care and education, while traditional pesantren kiai emphasize the division of specific roles, with fathers as the primary educators and mothers as the primary caregivers. The views of modern pesantren kiai show higher responsiveness to gender equality, while traditional pesantren kiai still adhere to patriarchal norms, although they begin to accommodate equality values selectively. This study contributes to enriching the literature on gender responsiveness in pesantren and provides practical recommendations to make pesantren an agent of social change. The integration of gender equality values can improve the equal role of fathers and mothers, which ultimately supports the quality of family education and inclusive social transformation.

Keywords: gender equality, family education, modern pesantren, traditional pesantren.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji pandangan kiai dari pesantren modern dan tradisional di Kalimantan Selatan mengenai peran gender dalam pendidikan keluarga. Dengan pendekatan kualitatif dan metode penelitian lapangan, enam kiai terpilih menjadi informan utama, yang terdiri dari tiga kiai dari kelompok pesantren modern, dan tiga kiai dari kelompok pesantren tradisional. Data dikumpulkan dengan wawancara, yang kemudian dianalisis dengan model Miles dan Huberman. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa kedua kelompok kiai sepakat bahwa pendidikan anak merupakan tanggung jawab bersama, namun dengan pendekatan berbeda. Kiai pesantren modern menekankan pentingnya kolaborasi yang setara antara ayah dan ibu dalam pengasuhan dan pendidikan anak, sementara kiai pesantren tradisional lebih menonjolkan pembagian peran spesifik, dengan ayah sebagai pendidik utama dan ibu sebagai pengasuh utama. Pandangan kiai pesantren modern menunjukkan responsivitas yang lebih tinggi terhadap kesetaraan gender, sedangkan kiai pesantren tradisional masih berpegang pada norma patriarki, meskipun mulai mengakomodasi nilai-nilai kesetaraan secara selektif. Penelitian ini berkontribusi dalam memperkaya literatur tentang responsivitas gender di pesantren dan memberikan rekomendasi praktis untuk menjadikan pesantren sebagai agen perubahan sosial. Integrasi nilai-nilai kesetaraan gender dapat meningkatkan peran setara antara ayah dan ibu, yang pada akhirnya mendukung kualitas pendidikan keluarga dan transformasi sosial yang inklusif.

Kata kunci: kesetaraan gender, pendidikan keluarga, pesantren modern, pesantren tradisional.

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INTRODUCTION

Family education plays an important role in shaping *akhlakul karimah* (Huda et al., 2023). In the context of Indonesian society, pesantren, both modern and traditional, play a significant role in building family views, including in terms of gender roles (Pramono, 2018). As religious-based educational institutions, pesantren not only teach spiritual values but also influence social norms, including in terms of the division of the roles of men and women in the family.

Gender roles are social constructs that reflect the norms, values and expectations of men and women in a particular society (Zimmerman et al., 2021). Gender roles in family education refer to the division of duties, responsibilities and roles between men and women in educating children (Oláh et al., 2020). Overly rigid or stereotypical gender roles can reinforce inequalities, which is contrary to achieving gender equality. In contrast, gender equality seeks to provide equal opportunities and rights for all individuals, without restricting them based on traditional roles or established gender norms (Hudi, 2023). In this case, the principle of mubadalah offers a solution to overcome inequality by encouraging a more equal division of roles within the family (Werdiningsih, 2020).

Although global agendas such as the *Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs) promote gender equality, challenges remain, particularly in regions with strong patriarchal cultural norms (Leal Filho et al., 2023; Sitorus et al., 2024). Patriarchal norms are still dominant in Indonesia (Musa et al., 2021; Sitorus et al., 2024). Indeed, a more equal division of roles can improve the quality of children's education by actively involving both parents in educating and guiding children (Borràs et al., 2021). Traditional pesantren often maintain conservative values related to gender roles, while modern pesantren tend to be more open to change (Makniyah & Erliyanti, 2021). However, so far there has been no research that explicitly compares how these two types of pesantren. Research that explicitly compares the views of gender roles in modern and traditional pesantren, especially in the context of family education, is still very limited, especially in South Kalimantan which has unique social and cultural dynamics.

This study aims to fill this gap by exploring the differences in views between modern and traditional pesantren kiaiKiyai regarding gender roles in family education. The focus is on the division of responsibilities between fathers and mothers and the extent to which these views are responsive to gender equality. Thus, this study is expected to not only make an academic contribution by closing the gap in the existing literature, but also provide guidance for more progressive social change in society, leading to the achievement of gender equality in family education

METHODS

This study used a qualitative approach of field research type to explore the views of kiai of modern and traditional Islamic boarding schools on gender responsiveness in family education. The research location was in South Kalimantan, taking place from June to August 2023. The research subjects involved six kiai who were selected through *purposive sampling* technique, namely K.H. Husin Naparin (Pondok Pesantren Rasyidiyah Khalidiyah), K.H. Hasan Basuni (Pondok Pesantren Darul Istiqamah), K.H. Zarkasy Hasbi (Pondok Pesantren Darul Hijrah), K.H. Hamidehan (Pondok Pesantren Shalatiyah), K.H. Barmawi (Pondok Pesantren Ibnul Amin), and K.H. M. Hatim Salman (Darussalam Pondok Pesantren).

Data collected through in-depth interviews using a structured guide. The focus of the interviews was kiai's views on gender roles in the domestic and public spheres and the factors that influence these views. Data analysis used the Miles and Huberman model which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing.

Furthermore, the research results were organized thematically to identify patterns of different views between modern and traditional pesantren kiai. Source and method triangulation techniques were used to increase data validity and credibility. This research is expected to enrich gender studies in Islamic education, especially in the pesantren environment.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result_Research

The results of the research are presented in Tables 1 and 2. In Table 1, a summary of the results of the interviews on the views of the kiai of modern pesantren in South Kalimantan is presented, which come from Rasyidiyah Khalidiyah, Darul Hijrah, and Darul Istiqamah pesantren.

Table 1. Kiai's view of modern pesantren

Informant	Aspects	View
K.H. Husin Naparin	Gender roles	Family education is the main foundation that determines the future of children, so it requires collaboration between both parents. The father as the imam in the family is responsible for providing direction and upholding religious values. His role is more dominant in teaching the principles of <i>amar ma'ruf nahi munkar</i> . Fathers are also role models in discipline and enforcement of household rules. On the other hand, mothers serve as the primary educators and <i>madrasatul ula</i> for children. Mothers have an important role in nurturing, loving, and shaping children's morals from an early age. In her view, mothers should also support children's education by providing religious values, ethics, and daily independence.
	Parent Collaboration	Collaboration between husband and wife in children's education is very important. The division of roles in the family should not be understood rigidly. For example, if a mother has limitations in certain matters, the father should be able to fill the void, and vice versa. Cooperation between both parents not only includes aspects of religious education, but also in general education and life skills. Children will grow into more complete individuals if they feel the presence and involvement of both parents in every aspect of their lives.
	Challenges and Solutions	The challenges in family education today are quite complex, especially with the increasingly strong influence of technology and social media. Thus, parents must become role models who are able to balance these external influences by providing strong religious values and wise supervision.
K.H. Zarkasy	Gender roles	Fathers have the role of family leaders who uphold the principles of <i>amar ma'ruf nahi munkar</i> , provide direction, discipline, and ensure moral values are taught. Mothers, on the other hand, play an important role as <i>madrasatul ula</i> for children. As the primary educator in the household, mothers support children's education with their attention and affection. Although the responsibility of educating children is a shared obligation, reality shows that mothers are more often directly involved as fathers more focused on the task of earning a living. However, the father's role remains essential in providing moral influence and discipline to the children.
	Parent Collaboration	Cooperation is very important, the husband as the family priest is in charge of providing direction, reminding, and enforcing the rules in the household. The wife has the main role in educating children, as the <i>madrasatul ula</i> that shapes the character and basic values of children. Nevertheless, the responsibility of educating children is a shared obligation, with

		fathers and mothers supporting each other according to their respective abilities.
Challenges and Solutions		According to KH Zarkasy, the main challenge in children's education is the busyness of parents, especially fathers, who are often focused on earning a living and therefore less involved in parenting. This can lead to an imbalance in children's education if only the mother is actively educating. The solution is to create a good husband-wife partnership, based on each other's abilities, without rigidly limiting gender roles. Fathers and mothers need to share responsibilities, be role models for children, and prioritize religious value-based education to create a harmonious family.
K.H. Hasan Basuni	Gender roles	Educating children is a shared duty and responsibility between husband and wife. Although the husband has more of a role in earning a living, he is still required to be actively involved in childcare. Mothers are <i>madrasatul ula</i> who play a major role in educating children's character, but fathers as the head of the family must also support by providing direction and examples.
	Parent Collaboration	Collaboration between husband and wife in children's education is a must. Mutual agreement on parenting is essential to ensure children receive a balanced education. Both parties must work together and complement each other according to their respective abilities.
	Challenges and solutions	The main challenge in children's education is the father's time and involvement, which is often limited due to his busy schedule of earning a living. So, fathers still take the time to play an active role in educating children, especially in terms of religious and moral values. The solution is good communication between the two to divide roles fairly, so that children's education can take place optimally and harmoniously.

Source: primary data processed, 2023.

Table 2 summarizes the results of the interviews on the views of the kiai of traditional (*salafiyah*) Islamic boarding schools in South Kalimantan, who came from Darussalam, Ibnul Amin, and Salathiyah Islamic boarding schools.

Table 2: Views of traditional pesantren clerics

Informant	Aspects	View
K.H. Hatim Salmanan	Gender roles	The husband's role is not only to make a material living. Education, especially religious education, is indeed included in the nafkah that must be fulfilled by the husband or father. As the leader of the household, the husband or father is obliged to educate his wife and children, especially in the aspects of religion and worship. Even though the husband is busy earning a living, he still has the main obligation to educate and guide his wife and children, especially in terms of religious knowledge and correct worship practices. The purpose of education is not only to provide understanding, but also taufik, which is to guide children to be able to perform worship correctly. Religious education should start early, and if there is a lack of guidance, parents should seek out teachers who can help their children and wives understand religious knowledge, especially the

Parent Collaboration	<p>knowledge that is fardhu 'ain. This view is based on the Qur'an, such as Q.S Ash-Shu'ara (214) and At-Tahrim (6), which remind us to warn and protect our families from hell.</p> <p>Although husbands have the obligation to educate and guide children in terms of religion and worship, the wife's role is also very important, especially in daily care and education. Wives play a major role in accompanying children, providing attention, and instilling religious values at home. KH Hatim emphasizes that both husband and wife must cooperate with each other in educating children, because children's education is a joint obligation that will be accounted for before Allah SWT. The husband as the leader of the household has the primary responsibility to guide the family, but the wife also plays a very vital role in supporting and carrying out this education at home.</p>
Challenges and Solutions	<p>The main challenge in family education is the husband's busyness in earning a living that often neglects his obligation to educate his children and wife, especially in terms of religion. The solution is for the husband to realize that educating the family, especially in religion, is a primary obligation that should not be neglected. The husband must play an active role in guiding his family, and if necessary, find a teacher who can teach religious knowledge. In addition, the wife's role is also very important in accompanying children and being a role model in daily life. Cooperation between husband and wife is needed so that religious education becomes a top priority in the family.</p>
K.H. Barmawi	<p>In the education and upbringing of children, the contribution of both parents is required, although there is an emphasis on the mother's role, especially when the child is young. Mothers are considered as <i>madrasatul ula</i> or the first place of education for children. Although the father is primarily responsible, the mother's role in educating the child is vital in the early stages of their lives. However, don't overlook the role of the father. Although the mother spends more time at home, while the father works a lot outside the home, the father is still the main person responsible for educating and guiding the family, especially as the imam in the family. The role of fathers as educators and mentors is very important to shape the character and direction of children's lives.</p>
Parent Collaboration	<p>In the context of collaboration between fathers and mothers, although he emphasizes the importance of the mother's role, Guru Barmawi does not explicitly reject collaboration. Rather, he recognizes that both parents should support each other in the upbringing and education of children, with different roles according to the circumstances and age of the child. Collaboration is still necessary, especially in educating children in the context of religion and life values.</p>
Challenges and Solutions	<p>Nowadays, it is not only fathers who are busy working, but also mothers. Lack of understanding of the importance of the mother's role as the first educator and the father's lack of</p>

		involvement in the child's education are the main challenges. The solution is to make both parents aware of the importance of parental presence and cooperation in educating children, as well as providing a balanced worldly and <i>ukhrawi</i> education. Only with the cooperation of both parents can these challenges be overcome.
K.H. Hamidehan	Gender roles	The leader in the family is the husband. As the leader, the husband has an obligation to guide and protect his family from hellfire. Later, the husband will be held accountable for his obligations in the afterlife. Although in practice the mother plays more of a role, it does not abrogate or reduce the father's responsibility. Actually, the care and education of children can be done equally between husband and wife, regardless of who works outside the home. Childcare and education are joint obligations that cannot be dropped just because one or both of them are busy working. Mothers should not be the only ones to blame if there are problems with children's behavior because educating children is a father's obligation that is carried out together with his wife. Although there are now wives who work, it is fine if permitted by the husband. However, the division of roles should be carried out in accordance with religious obligations, namely the husband earns a living and the wife takes care of the household and takes care of the children. In household decision-making regarding childcare, it is mostly determined by the mother because she is more directly involved in care
	Parent Collaboration	Both parents should collaborate in educating children, although in some aspects, for example in children's affairs that are more known by the mother because of her role in the home, more decisions can be made by the mother. However, this does not mean that the husband does not play a role; the role of the father is still very important, and has been exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad, in educating his daughter Fatimah R.A..
	Challenges and solutions	A major challenge is the lack of involvement of fathers in childcare, due to the large amount of time spent working outside the home, which often makes mothers feel fully responsible, even though it is actually a shared responsibility. In addition, the division of roles in the family which is not always in accordance with religious obligations, is also a challenge. The solution is to raise mutual awareness that the care and education of children is a mandate from God and is a shared responsibility, where fathers remain actively involved in educating children

Source: primary data processed, 2023.

Discussion

This study reveals the dynamics of the views of modern and traditional pesantren kiai in South Kalimantan regarding gender roles in children's education. The findings show a fundamental difference between the two groups, where modern pesantren kiai emphasize equal collaboration between fathers and mothers. They argue that the responsibility for children's education should be shared, without being bound by rigid gender roles. In contrast, traditional pesantren kiai emphasize a specific and hierarchical division of roles, with the father as the

main leader and educator, and the mother as the daily caregiver. However, both groups agree that children's education is a shared responsibility, although their approaches differ.

Modern pesantren clerics show higher responsiveness to the principle of gender equality, namely the division of roles that is dynamic and not based on stereotypes. Gender equality views gender roles as dynamic social constructions that can change according to the needs of the family and the situation (Păuțu et al., 2023). This approach is in line with contemporary views in the gender equality literature, which emphasize the importance of husband-wife cooperation in childcare and education (Hasanah et al., 2023; Hudi, 2023). On the other hand, traditional kiai maintain a traditional value-based division of roles, where the father is considered the leader of the family, who is obliged to provide religious education to his wife and children as part of his livelihood, while the mother is responsible for the day-to-day aspects of parenting. This view reflects the strong influence of patriarchal culture in South Kalimantan, which has historically influenced the division of gender roles in society, which is in line with the findings of Susanti(2021). In patriarchal cultures, rigid gender roles often establish men as leaders or key decision-makers, while women tend to be considered inferior (Khanifah & Fajriyah, 2023). On the other hand, the views of traditional kyai also reflect the efforts of traditional pesantren to accommodate modern gender equality values within a limited framework of traditional values.

The challenges in realizing equality and ideal collaboration between fathers and mothers are also highlighted in this study. Both modern and traditional pesantren kiai noted that fathers' busyness in earning a living is a major obstacle to gender equality in children's education. Currently, government and company policies do not support the involvement of fathers in childcare, causing the role of fathers in education and family care to not be maximized (Rahadian et al., 2020; Shabrina & Indriati, 2023). As a solution, modern pesantren kiai propose a flexible and dynamic division of roles, where the responsibility of educating children can be adjusted to the needs of the family. Meanwhile, traditional kiai emphasize the importance of father's awareness of the obligation to educate children, especially in religious aspects. The father's busyness in earning a living does not abrogate the father's obligation to educate and guide family members, especially in the aspects of religion and worship. The solutions proposed by the two groups of kiai show differences in adaptation strategies to the contextual challenges faced by families.

This research emphasizes that gender equality in family education is not only an individual issue, but also relates to broader social structures, including religious norms, policies, and social practices (Haq, 2020). Modern pesantren approaches that are more responsive to gender equality values emphasize the importance of breaking down traditional role stereotypes, so that men and women can contribute equally in childcare. On the other hand, traditional pesantren, although adhering to conventional values, also show the potential to develop through the reinterpretation of religious teachings in a modern context. This opens up opportunities for pesantren, both modern and traditional, to become agents of social change that support more equal gender roles, especially in addressing challenges such as unequal access to education and awareness of gender roles in the family. Thus, the role of pesantren in supporting gender equality is not only important at the family level, but also in broader social transformation.

This research also highlights the importance of understanding the socio-cultural context as a foundation for harmonizing gender equality values with existing traditions. In this case, the modern pesantren approach that is more open to change reflects an adaptation to the needs of contemporary society, especially in the midst of changing family roles due to modernization and urbanization. In contrast, traditional pesantren face challenges in maintaining conventional values while remaining relevant to the demands of the times. Therefore, cross-generational dialog between kiai, santri, and the community is a strategic step to create an inclusive family education model. By strengthening a shared understanding of the importance of gender role

collaboration without forgetting cultural roots, pesantren can act as mediators that bridge tradition and modernity in shaping sustainable family education practices.

Pesantren as an influential social institution has a strategic role in shaping community perceptions and practices towards gender equality (Rosita, 2024). Kiai as the central figure of the pesantren, not only functions as the leader of the pesantren, but also as an advisor, guide, and role model for the Muslim community inside and outside the pesantren (Alfiandy & Wardhana, 2024; Jalal et al., 2021). Therefore, efforts to integrate gender equality values must start from within the pesantren itself, through parent training, gender-based curriculum development, and open dialog between stakeholders. With these steps, pesantren can become a catalyst for change that integrates modern values without ignoring local wisdom. This is important to create an environment that supports equal gender roles in family education.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This study shows the differences in views between modern and traditional pesantren kiai in South Kalimantan regarding gender roles in children's education. Modern pesantren kiai support equal collaboration between fathers and mothers with a more flexible approach, while traditional kiai maintain the division of roles based on patriarchal values. Despite the differences, both agree that children's education is a shared responsibility. This study also shows that modern pesantren kiai are more responsive to social change and seek to integrate gender equality values, while traditional kiai remain rooted in traditional values but begin to selectively accommodate modern perspectives

The findings of this study suggest further efforts to harmonize the views of modern and traditional pesantren kiaiKiyai regarding gender roles in children's education. Interactive dialogues, inclusive curriculum development, strengthening the role of families, and collaboration with various parties can be concrete steps. Through this comprehensive approach, it is hoped that a more equitable educational environment can be created that favors gender equality. For future research, it is recommended to explore more deeply the factors that influence the differences in views between modern and traditional pesantren kiaiKiyai regarding gender roles in children's education, such as cultural factors, education, and personal experience. The research can also be expanded to include pesantren in other parts of Indonesia to see if the findings are consistent beyond South Kalimantan.

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