INTERNALIZING QAWLAN ETHICS THROUGH THE LIVING QUR'AN: A STUDY AMONG *SANTRIWATI* AT DAYAH AL-MUSLIMUN, ACEH

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ABSTRACT

Communication plays a vital role in shaping the ethical and spiritual character of *santriwati* (female students at Islamic boarding schools). This study explores the internalization of Qur'anic communication principles—*qawlan layyīna* (gentle speech), *qawlan karīmā* (noble speech), and *qawlan ma'rūfā* (appropriate speech)—within the lived experiences of *santriwati* at Dayah Terpadu Al-Muslimun in Aceh, Indonesia. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach grounded in phenomenology, data were collected through participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation, and analyzed thematically using Miles and Huberman's model. Findings indicate that *santriwati*'s understanding of *qawlan* is shaped more by social experience and role modeling than by textual memorization. These principles are practiced adaptively in both hierarchical and peer interactions and contribute to the formation of moral resilience, communicative empathy, and Islamic identity. The study affirms that *qawlan* functions as a form of living moral grammar—an embodied ethical structure that regulates speech, intention, and social behavior in and beyond the *dayah*. This research extends the framework of the *Living Qur'an* from normative interpretation to performative praxis and offers a theoretical and practical foundation for developing Qur'anic-based communication ethics curricula responsive to the challenges of the digital era.

Keywords: *Qur'anic communication, qawlan, santriwati, Dayah, Living Qur'an*

ABSTRAK

Komunikasi memainkan peran penting dalam pembentukan karakter etis dan spiritual santriwati (siswi pesantren) di lingkungan pendidikan Islam. Penelitian ini mengkaji proses internalisasi prinsip komunikasi Qur'ani—*qawlan layyīna* (perkataan lembut), *qawlan karīmā* (perkataan mulia), dan *qawlan ma'rūfā* (perkataan baik)—dalam kehidupan santriwati Dayah Terpadu Al-Muslimun di Aceh, Indonesia. Menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif berbasis fenomenologi, data dikumpulkan melalui observasi partisipatif, wawancara semi-terstruktur, dan dokumentasi, lalu dianalisis secara tematik dengan model Miles dan Huberman. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa pemahaman terhadap *qawlan* lebih banyak dibentuk oleh pengalaman sosial dan keteladanan, bukan melalui hafalan tekstual. Prinsip-prinsip ini dipraktikkan secara adaptif dalam interaksi vertikal dan horizontal, serta berkontribusi pada pembentukan ketahanan moral, empati komunikatif, dan identitas keislaman. Studi ini menegaskan bahwa *qawlan* berfungsi sebagai tata etika moral yang hidup (*living moral grammar*)—struktur nilai yang terinternalisasi dalam tutur kata, niat, dan perilaku sosial baik di dalam maupun di luar lingkungan *dayah*. Penelitian ini memperluas kerangka *Living Qur'an* dari pendekatan normatif menuju praksis performatif, serta menawarkan landasan teoretis dan praktis bagi pengembangan kurikulum etika komunikasi Qur'ani yang responsif terhadap tantangan era digital.

Kata Kunci: *Komunikasi Qur'ani, Qawlan, Santriwati, Dayah, Living Qur'an*

A. Introduction

The Qur'an serves not only as the primary theological reference in Islam but also as a comprehensive guide to social ethics, directing human interaction toward civility and moral conduct. Among its most essential ethical frameworks are its communication principles, encapsulated in the concept of *qawlan*—a term that signifies utterances characterized by gentleness (*qawlan layyīna*), nobility (*qawlan karīmā*), and appropriateness (*qawlan ma'rūfā*). These principles form the moral and spiritual foundation of Qur'anic communication ethics.[1]

In contemporary society, however, the communicative behaviors of Muslim youth are increasingly shaped by the dynamics of digital media and online culture.[2] Rapid, emotionally charged, and often ethically lax forms of expression are influencing everyday interactions, including those of *santri* (Islamic boarding school students) in *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools), where *adab* (etiquette) and verbal discipline have traditionally been foundational.[3] This cultural shift raises concern over the weakening of Qur'anic ethical values in both formal learning spaces and broader social engagement among *santri*.

As a traditional Islamic educational institution that combines *salafi* pedagogy with formalized curricula, Dayah Terpadu Al-Muslimun in North Aceh offers a compelling context to explore how Qur'anic communication principles are embodied and enacted in daily student interactions. A *dayah* is a form of traditional *pesantren* particular to Aceh, combining classical Islamic texts with structured discipline and spiritual supervision. Given its emphasis on lived religious practice, the Living Qur'an framework provides a particularly suitable lens for this study. This approach interprets the Qur'anic text through its manifestations in everyday Muslim behavior and social practice[4] Accordingly, this study treats *qawlan* not merely as a normative doctrine, but as a lived ethical grammar that informs and shapes the communicative habits of *santriwati*—female students in Indonesian Islamic boarding schools.

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[1] Wahbah Azh-Zuhaili, *Tafsir Al-Munir Aqidah,Syari'ah Dan Manhaj* (Gema Insani, 2016); Syaikh Imam al-Qurthubi, 'Al-Jâmi'li Ahkâm Al-Qur'ân, Tafsir Al Qurthubi. Terj', *Ahmad Khotib, Jakarta: Pustaka Azzam*, 2008.

[2] Lora Hilal Fikri, 'Pendidikan Agama Islam Dan Literasi Media Sosial Dalam Menghadapi Era Informasi Bagi Generasi Muda Indonesia', *Journal of Education and Religious Studies*, 3.03 (2023), pp. 103–11, doi:10.57060/jers.v3i03.123.

[3] Ahsanul Husna, 'Akhlak Santri Di Era Globalisasi', *Fakta: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 1.2 (2021), p. 61, doi:10.28944/fakta.v1i2.265; Ali Nurdin, 'Tradisi Komunikasi Di Pesantren', *KARSA: Jurnal Sosial Dan Budaya Keislaman*, 23.2 (2016), p. 276, doi:10.19105/karsa.v23i2.727; Zulfikar Zulfikar and Muslem Hamdani, 'The Ethics of Communication between Santri and the Dayah Jamiah Al-Aziziyah Samalanga Teacher Council Perspective of Islamic Communication Ethics', *Wasatha: Jurnal Studi Islam Dan Humaniora*, 1.2 (2023) <https://jurnal.pergunuaceh.or.id/index.php/wasatha/article/view/15>.

[4] Heddy Shri Ahimsa-Putra, 'The Living Al-Qur'an: Beberapa Perspektif Antropologi', *Walisongo: Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan*, 20.1 (2012), p. 235, doi:10.21580/ws.20.1.198; Didi Junaedi, 'Living Qur'an: Sebuah Pendekatan Baru Dalam Kajian Al-Qur'an (Studi Kasus Di Pondok Pesantren As-Siroj Al-Hasan Desa Kalimukti Kec. Pabedilan Kab. Cirebon)', *JOURNAL OF QUR'AN AND HADITH STUDIES*, 4.2 (2015), pp. 169–90, doi:10.15408/quhas.v4i2.2392; Mujib Aji, Muhammad Hilmi, and Mohammad Rahman, 'The Living Qur'an as a Research Object and Methodology in the Qur'anic Studies', *Jurnal Iman Dan Spiritualitas*, 1 (2021), pp. 78–84, doi:10.15575/jis.v1i1.11489.

Although studies on Islamic communication have discussed its normative foundations,[5] limited attention has been paid to the lived communicative experiences of *santriwati* as active moral agents. Likewise, existing research on the Living Qur'an within *pesantren* settings tends to focus on ritual practice, memorization, or literacy traditions,[6] while overlooking the micro-ethics of communication, such as verbal respect, correction, and dialogic behavior in teacher–student and peer interactions. This study seeks to address that gap by exploring how Qur'anic communication principles are understood and internalized at the level of daily praxis.

Theoretically, this research contributes to the expansion of Islamic communication ethics by embedding the concept of *qawlan* within the Living Qur'an paradigm, grounded in culturally specific social practices. Practically, it documents the internalization of Qur'anic ethics in the context of *dayah*-based education, offering insights into how students respond to ethical dilemmas in an age marked by rapid social and technological change. To maintain conceptual clarity, the focus is placed on face-to-face communication within the *dayah* environment, allowing for a close reading of the symbolic and institutional structures through which *qawlan* is enacted.

Within this framework, Islamic communication is understood not only as the delivery of messages, but as a transformative act anchored in spiritual intention and ethical awareness,[7] The three forms of *qawlan* are thus examined as performative, socially embedded practices among *santriwati*, situated within the semi-authoritative relational system typical of *dayah*—where teacher–student dynamics are governed by reverence, hierarchy, and symbolic order. Employing a phenomenological approach, this study explores how *santriwati* construct meaning from their communicative experiences, viewing *qawlan* as lived ethical knowledge that transcends textual memorization. This research aims to investigate how *santriwati* understand the meanings of *qawlan layyīna*, *karīmā*, and *maʿrūfā*; how these principles are reflected in their daily communication practices within the

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[5] Muhammad I. Ayish, 'Beyond Western-Oriented Communication Theories A Normative Arab-Islamic Perspective', *Javnost - The Public*, 10.2 (2014), pp. 79–92, doi:10.1080/13183222.2003.11008829; Mohd Faizal Kasmani and others, 'The Islamic Communication Paradigm: Challenges and Future Directions', *Advanced Science Letters*, 23.5 (2017), pp. 4787–91, doi:10.1166/asl.2017.8904; Zulkiple Abd. Ghani, 'Islamic Values and Ethics in the Life of Communication Scholar', *The Journal of Communication and Religion*, 27.1 (2004), pp. 58–62, doi:10.5840/jcr20042718.

[6] Muhammad Jamil, 'Exploring the Qur'anic Literacy Tradition: A Review of Traditional and Modern Pesantren in Tuban Indonesia', *Fikri : Jurnal Kajian Agama, Sosial Dan Budaya*, 9.1 (2024), pp. 1–25, doi:10.25217/jf.v9i1.4670; Widia Duwi Putri and Ilzam Hubby Dzikrillah Alfani, 'Kajian Living Qur'an: Pembacaan Ayat-Ayat Pilihan Sebagai Thematic Actual Curriculum Di Pondok Pesantren Al-Wafa Cibiru Bandung', *Madinah: Jurnal Studi Islam*, 10.2 (2023), pp. 225–38, doi:10.58518/madinah.v10i2.1881; Arvin Krisna Zamzami, 'Tradisi Membaca Al-Qur'an', *Journal of Islamic Education and Pesantren*, 2.2 (2022), pp. 121–30, doi:10.33752/jiep.v2i2.3787; Ahmad Jauhari Abbas and others, 'The Implementation of Religious Moderation in Pesantren Bayt Al-Qur'an, South Tangerang: A Living Qur'an Study', *Jurnal Ilmiah Al-Mu'ashirah*, 21.2 (2024), p. 153, doi:10.22373/jim.v21i2.23366; Samsul Bahri and others, 'The Symbolic Meaning of Seurumbek Recitation in The Keunduri Blang Tradition: Study of Living Qur'an in Pidie, Aceh, Indonesia', *Jurnal Ilmiah Al-Mu'ashirah*, 21.1 (2024), p. 1, doi:10.22373/jim.v21i1.13521; Ahmad Basith Salafudin, 'Studi Living Qur'an: Tradisi Pembacaan Surat Al-Waqi'ah Di Pondok Pesantren Darul-Falah Tulungagung', *Al-Dzikra: Jurnal Studi Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Al-Hadits*, 15.1 (2021), pp. 111–38, doi:10.24042/al-dzikra.v15i1.8378.

[7] Ghani; Kasmani and others; Ayish; Uncjana Onong Effendy, *Ilmu Komunikasi Teori Dan Praktek* (Remaja Rosdakarya, 2005).

dayah; and what factors support or hinder the internalization of Qur'anic communication ethics in their social lives beyond the religious institution.

To address these aims, this study employs a qualitative descriptive design within a phenomenological paradigm[8], allowing for an in-depth exploration of how *santriwati* experience and interpret Qur'anic communication values in everyday life. Data were collected through participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. Informants included eight *santriwati* and one female teacher (*ustazah*) selected purposively based on their length of stay, educational level, and active participation in institutional activities. The study site was chosen because Dayah Terpadu Al-Muslimun represents a balanced integration of classical and formal Islamic education, with a strong institutional commitment to embedding Qur'anic values in everyday student conduct. Data were analyzed thematically using the Miles and Huberman[9] model, which includes data reduction, display, and conclusion drawing. Triangulation and member checking were employed to ensure data validity, while the entire research process was documented to provide an audit trail.

B. Result and Discussion

1. *Santriwati*'s Understanding of Qur'anic Communication Principles

An understanding of Qur'anic communication principles serves as a foundational aspect in shaping ethical communication practices within the pesantren environment.[10] Principles such as *qawlan layyīna* (gentle speech), *qawlan karīmā* (noble speech), and *qawlan ma'rūfā* (appropriate speech) are not merely moral injunctions in the Qur'an but also function as normative frameworks for nurturing social relationships within Muslim communities.[11] In the context of an integrated *dayah* system, where Islamic values are instilled not only through textual teaching but also through cultural immersion, it is crucial to understand how *santriwati* (female students) interpret these principles based on their own social and experiential contexts.

Interview findings reveal a wide range of interpretations among the *santriwati*, both in terms of depth of understanding and sources of reference. Regarding *qawlan layyīna*, only two out of eight participants were able to cite a textual reference, and only one could identify the verse number, albeit without full contextual explanation. The remaining six described "speaking gently" through concrete experiences, such as correcting a friend or advising a younger peer. Syakira (Grade 9) explained, "If you get angry straight away, they won't accept it. You have to be gentle first so they don't feel embarrassed." Nasywa added, "When someone makes a mistake, we're taught to correct them nicely—not by yelling." These

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[8] J W Creswell and C N Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*, 4th edn (Sage Publications, 2018).

[9] *Qualitative Data Analysis Data: A Methods Sourcebook*, Edition 3 (Sage, 2014).

[10] Hery Purwosusanto, Nurdin, and Tjipto Djuhartono, 'Pengajaran Etika Komunikasi Islam Di Pesantren', *Darma Cendekia*, 3.1 (2024), pp. 107–20, doi:10.60012/dc.v3i1.75; Najmuddin Azhar, Irfan Nur Hidayat, and Ismail Mubarok, 'Penerapan Prinsip-Prinsip Etika Komunikasi Islam Dalam Manajemen Komunikasi Krisis Pada Lembaga Keagamaan', *Al-Tarbiyah : Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan Islam*, 2.1 (2023), pp. 145–52, doi:10.59059/al-tarbiyah.v2i1.742.

[11] M. Quraish Shihab, *Wawasan Al-Qur'an; Tafsir Maudhu'i Atas Pelbagai Persoalan Umat* (Mizan, 2000).

responses suggest that their understanding of *layyīna* is primarily associated with social ethics and conflict avoidance, rather than direct Qur'anic memorization. This pattern reflects a pedagogical emphasis in the *dayah* on habituating ethical conduct rather than focusing solely on the formal memorization of verse wording.

In contrast, their understanding of *qawlan karīmā* appeared to be stronger both textually and normatively. Four *santriwati* were able to identify Surah Al-Isra (17:23) as the source of the prohibition against speaking harshly to one's parents and linked the verse to their behavior toward teachers. Naila (Grade 10) noted, "When speaking to a teacher, we must not raise our voice or interrupt—just like with our parents." Cut added, "When answering the *ustazah*, we're taught to use soft language and not to argue." This indicates that *karīmā* is understood as a form of communication that expresses reverence for authority and is closely tied to verbal norms explicitly taught in class.

Sementara itu, pemahaman terhadap *qawlan ma'rūfā* cenderung lebih longgar dan Meanwhile, the understanding of *qawlan ma'rūfā* was more flexible and contextual. Only one *santriwati* could fully identify the verse, while others understood its meaning through daily behaviors. *Ma'rūfā* was interpreted as "speaking kindly and not hurting others," particularly in situations such as offering advice, joking, or correcting a peer. Siska (Grade 11) stated, "Speaking kindly means not offending others, especially those who are sensitive." Wita added, "In discussions or study circles (*halaqah*), we have to be careful not to embarrass our friends." Even in joking, Balqis explained, "Before making a joke, we check the mood. Don't use words that can hurt someone." These insights suggest that *ma'rūfā* is linked to social sensitivity and verbal discretion in peer-to-peer interactions, and it is seldom explicitly connected to textual evidence. Paradoxically, this lack of textual association may indicate that *ma'rūfā* is the most deeply internalized of the three, having become an organic element of dayah communication culture.

The table below summarizes the distribution of the *santriwati*'s knowledge levels regarding the three Qur'anic communication principles, based on textual familiarity and conceptual understanding.

Tabel 1. Santriwati's Knowledge of Qur'anic Verses on Communication Principles

Level of Understanding	*Qawlan Layyīna*	*Qawlan Karīmā*	*Qawlan Ma'rūfā*
Proficient	1 student knew verse number, content, and meaning	4 students knew verse number, content, and meaning	1 student knew verse number, content, and meaning
Partial	1 student knew the verse number but not content or meaning	1 student knew the content but not the explanation	1 student knew the content but not the explanation
Not familiar	6 students had no knowledge of the verse	3 students had no knowledge of the verse	6 students had no knowledge of the verse

Source: Processed from interviews with santriwati at Dayah Terpadu Al-Muslimun

These findings are consistent with Riskiyah & Muzammil,[12] who argued that Qur'anic values are often internalized among *santri* through social practices and institutional relationships, rather than through verbal mastery of scripture. Their notion of the *Living Qur'an* suggests that young Muslims often "live" the Qur'an through action, even before they can cite its verses. Similar observations were made by Intan Nur Aini et al.[13] who found that Qur'anic values such as politeness, gentleness, and respect are more effectively transmitted through local culture and informal education than rote memorization.

These results also align with Effendy, who emphasized that communication in Islam is not only about message transmission but is also a moral and spiritual process embedded in good intentions, compassion, and ethical awareness. When *santriwati* deliver criticism gently or adjust their tone when speaking to teachers, they are not merely following verbal instructions—they are embodying *qawlan* as a performative moral expression. In this light, communication ethics are seen as the outcome of repeated ethical practice rather than a product of cognitive instruction alone.

It is important to underscore that the inability to cite verses should not be viewed as a deficiency, but rather as evidence of value transformation into *tacit knowledge*—embodied knowledge expressed through action and disposition. This is supported by studies highlighting that effective Islamic preaching (*dakwah*) changes social behavior, not just cognition.[14]. In this sense, *layyīna*, *karīmā*, and *ma'rūfā* have been absorbed into the social fabric of *santriwati* lives, even if not always verbally articulated.

This is especially relevant as it challenges Islamic education models that overly prioritize memorization as a measure of success. In this context, *qawlan* functions more as a "moral grammar" than a mere normative narrative. As the literature suggests, in the era of globalization, *santri* ethics should be cultivated not only through prohibitions but through habituation and responsive internalization.[15]. The success of *dayah* education is therefore evident when students can sustain ethical communication reflectively, even in unsupervised or challenging situations.

Furthermore, this analysis contributes to the broader discourse on normative versus performative Islamic communication. While normative approaches rely on textual authority and explicit injunctions, performative approaches—exemplified by the *santriwati* at Al-

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[12] Ike Riskiyah and Muzammil, 'Internalisasi Nilai-Nilai Keislaman Dalam Pendidikan Pesantren Di Pondok Pesantren Nurul Qur'an Karanganyar Paiton Probolinggo', *EDISI : Jurnal Edukasi Dan Sains*, 2.1 (2020), pp. 25–39 <https://ejournal.stitpn.ac.id/index.php/edisi/article/view/780>.

[13] Intan Nur Aini, Robingun Suyud El-Syam, and Nur Farida, 'Internalisasi Nilai-Nilai Pendidikan Etika Sosial Bagi Santri Putri Di Asrama Sains SMP Takhassus Al-Qur'an Kalibeber Wonosobo', *Jurnal Manajemen Dan Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 2.4 (2024), pp. 262–82, doi:10.61132/jmpai.v2i4.406.

[14] Ahmad Atabik, 'Konsep Komunikasi Dakwah Persuasif Dalam Perspektif Al- Quran', *At-Tabsyir: Jurnal Komunikasi Penyiaran Islam*, 2.2 (2014), doi:10.21043/at-tabsyir.v2i2.499; Dafrizal Samsudin and Indah Mardini Putri, 'Etika Dan Strategi Komunikasi Dakwah Islam Berbasis Media Sosial Di Indonesia', *Ath-Thariq: Jurnal Dakwah Dan Komunikasi*, 7.2 (2023), p. 125, doi:10.32332/ath-thariq.v7i2.7474; Fauzi, 'Urgensi Komunikasi Persuasif Dalam Dakwah', *Liwaul Dakwah: Jurnal Kajian Dakwah Dan Masyarakat Islam*, 13.2 (2023), pp. 117–31, doi:10.47766/liwauldakwah.v13i2.2432.

[15] Husna; Zainab Alqudsi, Darsinah Darsinah, and Wafroturrahmah Wafroturrahmah, 'Internalisasi Nilai-Nilai Islami Dalam Penguatan Karakter Religius Dan Komunikatif BDI Pesantren Tahfizh Daarul Qur'an Surakarta', *Jurnal Tarbiyah Dan Ilmu Keguruan Borneo*, 4.3 (2023), pp. 355–65, doi:10.21093/jtikborneo.v4i3.6994; Umar Rosadi, *METODE PEMBELAJARAN AKHLAK: Internalisasi Nilai-Nilai Akhlak Dalam Pendidikan Pesantren*, 2025.

Muslimun—emphasize lived experience as the ground of value realization. This aligns with symbolic interactionism, in which meaning is created through social interaction and dynamic symbols.[16]. In this case, *ma'rūfā* is especially notable, as its performative prominence outweighs its textual invocation. This supports the views of Bustami et al. [17] who argued that Islamic communication in the digital era must be grounded in value consciousness rather than merely verbal regulation. In *pesantren*, the internalization of Qur'anic values occurs through modeling, repetition, social correction, and institutional structures that enable deep reflection on Islamic teachings. Within this system, *qawlan* emerges not as a fixed doctrine, but as a dynamic, embodied, and situated moral structure—opening new possibilities for a contextual, performative, and experiential study of Qur'anic communication.

2.   Application of *Qawlan* Principles in Daily Life

Having discussed how *santriwati* conceptualize the principles of *qawlan*, this section explores how these values are translated into actual communication practices. The principles of *qawlan layyīna*, *qawlan karīmā*, and *qawlan ma'rūfā* are not merely retained as normative knowledge but are actively embodied through speech, demeanor, and context-specific social choices. Observational and interview data reveal that these principles are consciously internalized and practiced by *santriwati* across various social relations—both vertical and horizontal.

In vertical communication, particularly between *santriwati* and their teachers, *qawlan karīmā* emerges as the most dominant principle. This is evident in how students modulate their tone, construct polite sentences, and avoid interrupting when speaking with an *ustazah*. Naila (Grade 10) remarked, "When speaking to a teacher, we're not allowed to speak loudly or interrupt. It's just like how we talk to our parents." This statement suggests that *karīmā* is not merely a matter of formal politeness but a reflection of symbolic respect for moral authority.

In horizontal interactions—especially among peers or with younger students— *qawlan layyīna* and *ma'rūfā* are more prominently enacted. *Layyīna* appears in situations involving social correction or minor conflicts. Syakira shared, "If you get angry right away, they won't take it well. You need to be gentle first so they don't feel humiliated." Meanwhile, *ma'rūfā* becomes evident in word choices during joking, discussions, or offering advice without offending others. Balqis explained, "If a friend is feeling sensitive, we don't joke using harsh words. That can cause trouble." In group discussions, Wita emphasized, "When giving suggestions in front of others, we're told to use kind words so we don't embarrass anyone." Some *santriwati* described combining the principles of *qawlan* in a single communicative act. A'yun stated, "If we start with a smile and greeting, friends are more open to what we want to say—even if it's a correction." This indicates that the *qawlan* values are not applied in isolation, but operate as an integrated ethical system of communication.

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[16] Herbert Blumer, 'Society as Symbolic Interaction; La Societe En Tant Qu'interaction Symbolique', *Societes*, 4 (1999), pp. 95–105.

[17] 'Etika Komunikasi Media Digital Di Era Post-Truth', *Jurnal Paradigma: Jurnal Multidisipliner Mahasiswa Pascasarjana Indonesia*, 5.1 (2024), pp. 39–53, doi:10.22146/JPMMPI.V5I1.91604.

The varied forms of *qawlan* application—across both vertical and horizontal relations—show that these values are not internalized in a rigid manner but are adapted contextually, in accordance with social position and interactional dynamics. The following table provides a systematic overview of how each principle corresponds with specific utterances and interactional contexts:

Table 2 Application of *Qawlan* Principles by Santriwati

Qawlan Principle	Utterance or Behavior	Interaction Context
Layyinā	Gentle tone; avoiding raised voice when correcting	Peer interactions
Karīmā	Thoughtfully constructed speech; reverent tone	Teacher-student relations
Ma'rūfā	Advising with neutral words	Group discussions
Combined Use	Greeting, smiling, showing concern	Everyday social encounters

Source: Processed from interviews with santriwati at Dayah Terpadu Al-Muslimun

These findings indicate that *qawlan* principles have shaped *santriwati*'s communication practices in nuanced, context-sensitive ways. They do not merely comprehend these teachings cognitively, but enact them in real social interactions—whether with authority figures or with peers. This illustrates that Qur'anic values can be internalized in a performative and adaptive manner, not simply as normative doctrines. This is consistent with Ahimsa-Putra's[18] assertion that the *Living Qur'an* refers to the performative function of the sacred text in daily life beyond its textual form. Such practices reflect the success of ethical education in the *dayah*, and highlight the role of *qawlan* as a social instrument regulating reflexive communication.

Moreover, the data suggest that pesantren-based education not only focuses on memorization or verbal decorum but also cultivates relational sensitivity and situational awareness in communication. *Santriwati* exhibit an ability to adapt their communicative style based on social hierarchy, emotional context, and communicative purpose. As shown in Mustakim's[19] study at Pondok Pesantren Al-Barokah, students from diverse cultural backgrounds develop interpersonal communication strategies that are responsive to the unique emotional and social dynamics of *pesantren* communities. This is further supported by Munir and Latifah,[20] who found that *santri* adapt their communication strategies in line with pesantren norms and values. Thus, *qawlan* should be understood not only as a normative utterance but as a living moral grammar embedded in everyday conduct—structuring how students perceive, negotiate, and enact ethical communication.

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[18] (2012)

[19] 'Komunikasi Interpersonal Santri Di Pondok Pesantren Al-Barokah Mangunsuman, Siman, Ponorogo' (IAIN Ponorogo, 2024).

[20] 'Komunikasi Interpersonal Santri', *KOMUNIKA: Jurnal Dakwah Dan Komunikasi*, 14.1 (2020), pp. 63–75, doi:10.24090/komunika.v14i1.2543.

However, this study also reveals certain challenges, especially when these values are carried outside the *dayah* environment. Cut stated, "Outside of *dayah*, my friends often tease me for speaking politely. They say I'm acting overly pious." Nayla added, "In casual hangouts, people often mock polite speech." This suggests a tension between *pesantren* habitus and the more permissive norms of popular youth culture. In Bourdieu'sterms, this represents a clash between habitus and field—a struggle between institutionally shaped communicative ethics and external social spaces that are more fluid and competitive. *Ustazah* Ida also expressed concern: "Social media language is having a big impact; many students start mimicking harsh terms after spending time outside." This aligns with Prasetyo's[21] findings that popular culture often constructs youth Muslim identity in ways that contradict Islamic norms—especially in speech and style. Pop culture, therefore, is not merely a form of entertainment but a domain for identity construction that resists traditional and Qur'anic values promoted within Islamic education. Hidayat[22] also noted that globalization and popular culture pose distinct challenges to Islamic education in preserving transcendental values amid an increasingly liberal and permissive world.

Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that some *santriwati* have succeeded in maintaining these values consistently. Syakira stated, "Personally, I still try to avoid using harsh words like 'anjay' or 'anjir', whether inside or outside the *dayah*." This reflects the success of pesantren education in shaping a communication habitus rooted in divine values—formed not merely through normative instruction, but through ethical awareness. Samar et al.[23] similarly emphasized that Islamic education plays a central role in shaping students' religious identities so they are able to filter external values, including language and behavior, even amid the pressures of popular culture.

Theoretically, these findings affirm that *qawlan*, as practiced by the students, constitutes a form of *embodied communication ethics*—an ethic not only taught, but lived through daily social interactions. This strengthens the *Living Qur'an* framework, wherein the Qur'an is understood as "alive" not because it is memorized, but because it is enacted in concrete relational contexts.(Effendy, 2003). Islamic communication, then, is not merely about delivering messages, but about intention, process, and the moral impact of interaction. These findings are further supported by Noorain Anas,[24] who highlighted the role of Islamic education in building value-based *resilience* through internalizing principles such as patience, gratitude, and trust in God (*tawakkul*). In a complex and pressurized social environment, these values form the foundation for moral resilience—enabling students to uphold Islamic ethics amid the forces of popular culture and social conformity. According

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[21] 'Islam Dan Transformasi Budaya Lokal Di Indonesia', *Batuthah: Jurnal Sejarah Padaban Islam*, 2.2 (2023), pp. 150–62, doi:10.38073/batuthah.v2i2.1107.

[22] 'Konsep Pendidikan Islam Di Era Globalisasi: Studi Pemikiran KH. Abdurrahman Wahid', *Nusantara: Jurnal Pendidikan Indonesia*, 3.2 (2023), pp. 231–66, doi:10.14421/njpi.2023.v3i2-5.

[23] 'Kenakalan Remaja Dan Penanganannya', *Prosiding Penelitian Dan Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat*, 4.2 (2017), doi:10.24198/jppm.v4i2.14393.

[24] Noorain Anas, 'Resilience through Knowledge : The Role of Islamic Education', in *Academic Resilience : Issues, Challenges and Strategies* (Nitya Publication, 2024), pp. 79–83.

to Anas, Islamic education is not merely a vehicle for knowledge transmission but a deeply formative process for cultivating spiritual and ethical strength.[25]

Still, the normative approach to *qawlan* is not without critique. Nasr Abu Zayd (1993) warned that literalist readings of religious values—when divorced from socio-cultural context—can lead to symbolic coercion that alienates the message of Islam from real human experiences.[26] Therefore, pesantren must teach *qawlan* not merely as verbal prescriptions, but as reflective processes open to dialogue and transformation. In this sense, *qawlan* becomes a moral grammar that guides how *santriwati* speak, feel, and act—especially in navigating authority, difference, and complex social realities. It is not merely a moral doctrine, but a social mechanism that bridges revelation and lived experience. Its scholarly contribution lies in presenting *qawlan* as a living ethical structure (*living moral grammar*) within young Muslim communities—beyond its textual roots.

3. Reflections and Social Impacts of Qawlan Internalization

After understanding and practicing Qur'anic communication principles in daily life, *santriwati* at Dayah Terpadu Al-Muslimun exhibited a range of personal reflections and experienced significant social impacts. The internalization of *qawlan layyīna*, *karīmā*, and *ma'rūfā* not only shaped their patterns of speech, but also contributed to the formation of identity, ethics, and self-image as Muslims who are courteous and wise in communication. Interview findings indicate that *santriwati* feel more respected in social relationships due to their gentle and polite manner of speaking. Balqis shared, "Because we speak politely, people enjoy being friends with us. If you're rude, they tend to stay away." A'yun added, "We feel more appreciated by others and more at ease when speaking." Several participants also noted an increased confidence when speaking in public and a greater ability to avoid social conflicts through verbal sensitivity. Reflecting on this, Syakira said, "Some hearts can't be reached by firmness, but can be softened through gentleness."

These findings highlight that *qawlan* values not only govern speech acts, but also help construct an affective-moral structure that fosters more humane, empathetic, and constructive communication. The following table classifies the types of impact based on the *santriwati*'s personal reflections:

Table 3 Reflections and Social Impacts of Qawlan Internalization

Impact Domain	Reflection/Outcome
Self-Image	Becoming more polite, respectful, and socially appreciated
Communication Ethics	Habit of thinking before speaking; choosing neutral language
Social Harmony	Avoiding conflict; fostering more harmonious interactions
Da'wah Capability	Messages are better received due to gentle approach
Islamic Identity	Developing a positive distinction—even if labeled "too polite"

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[25] Anas.

[26] Muhammad Saekul Mujahidin, 'Hermeneutika Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd Dalam Metode Perkembangan Tafsir Modern', *Jurnal Al-Mubarak: Jurnal Kajian Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir*, 8.1 (2023), pp. 25–42, doi:10.47435/al-mubarak.v8i1.1791; Sudarto Murtaufiq, 'Hermeneutika Al-Qurán: Kritik Atas Pemikiran Nasr Abu Zaid', *AKADEMIKA*, 9.1 (2015), pp. 1–16, doi:10.30736/akademika.v9i1.70.

Source: Processed from interviews with santriwati at Dayah Terpadu Al-Muslimun

This transformation demonstrates that Qur'anic values can shape a new communication habitus that not only functions internally, but also generates positive external social effects. Here, *santriwati* do not simply apply Islamic teachings as obligatory rules, but integrate them into their ways of thinking, feeling, and acting. From the perspective of Islamic communication theory, these reflections suggest the emergence of a strong communicative ethos—a moral character that inspires trust due to sincerity and propriety. Effendy(2003) emphasized that Islamic communication is not merely the transfer of information but the embodiment of moral intention embedded in both message and delivery. When *santriwati* find that their manner of speaking earns respect and attentiveness, it indicates that *qawlan* has become a source of social credibility—not just a religious norm.

Furthermore, the internalization of *qawlan* values underscores the role of pesantren as a powerful agent of socialization in shaping transformative Islamic identities. *Santriwati* do not simply understand Islamic teachings cognitively; they carry those values into broader social settings. As noted by Ahimsa-Putra(2019), the success of *Living Qur'an* lies in the continuity of its values in public life. This study expands on that notion by demonstrating that *qawlan* values not only endure, but also serve as a reflective structure that reinforces the religious identity of Muslim youth. However, this internalization does not go unchallenged. As *santriwati* enter more permissive social spaces, their values are tested. Some reported being mocked for their manner of speech, perceived as "old-fashioned" by peers outside the *dayah*.

This is where the concept of *ethical resilience* becomes essential—the moral capacity to withstand external pressures while maintaining integrity. Cynda Hylton Rushton,[27] defines moral resilience as an individual's capacity to uphold ethical integrity amid value conflicts and social complexity. According to Rushton, ethical education must go beyond normative instruction to develop affective and reflective structures that empower individuals to act ethically under conditions of uncertainty and moral ambiguity. Similarly, Bauer and Hermann[28] highlight the need for *technomoral resilience*—moral fortitude in the face of rapid technological and social change.

This study reveals that the *santriwati*'s reflections illustrate how *qawlan* internalization is not only a matter of personal piety but also an effective strategy for cross-boundary communication—within pesantren and in broader society. This concept is vital in today's global context, where communication is increasingly aggressive, instantaneous, and superficial. In this light, *qawlan* emerges not just as a moral guideline, but as a strategic framework for dignified and meaningful communication. It instills the awareness that to speak is not only to convey—but to care: to care for relationships, values, and humanity. Conceptually, these findings contribute to expanding the horizon of contemporary Qur'anic communication studies—from normative-textual approaches toward contextual and

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[27] 'Transforming Moral Suffering by Cultivating Moral Resilience and Ethical Practice', *American Journal of Critical Care*, 32.4 (2023), pp. 238–48, doi:10.4037/ajcc2023207.

[28] 'Technomoral Resilience as a Goal of Moral Education', *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*, 27.1 (2024), pp. 57–72, doi:10.1007/s10677-022-10353-1.

performative praxis. Through this study, *qawlan* is not merely understood as doctrine, but as an ethical habitus that can be transformed into a communicative strategy across contexts and generations.

C. Conclusion

This study reveals that the Qur'anic communication principles—*qawlan layyīna*, *karīmā*, and *ma'rūfā*—are not only understood cognitively by *santriwati* at Dayah Terpadu Al-Muslimun, but are also practiced contextually within their daily communication. These values are not confined to normative teachings but are embodied as a form of *moral grammar*, shaped through habituation, exemplary behavior, and the distinctive social structure of the *dayah*. In vertical relationships with teachers, *karīmā* reflects symbolic respect for authority. In horizontal interactions with peers, *layyīna* and *ma'rūfā* are applied flexibly to maintain harmony and prevent conflict. The internalization of these values underscores the important role of the *pesantren* as an agent of socialization capable of cultivating a religious communication habitus amid the pressures of permissive popular culture. The *santriwati*'s reflections on their practice of *qawlan* affirm that communication is not merely about technique or message structure, but about ethical awareness embedded in intention, demeanor, and emotional sensitivity.

Theoretically, this study extends the *Living Qur'an* framework by introducing *qawlan* as a living ethical structure—not merely as textual instruction—and affirms the relevance of performative approaches in the study of Islamic communication. Practically, the findings offer a conceptual foundation for developing Qur'anic-based communication curricula that are more attuned to the ethical challenges of the digital era. Ultimately, this research contributes to strengthening a Qur'anic narrative that is gracious, reflective, and transformative in the contemporary public sphere.

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