



The role of *kiai* and *nyai* in grounding the values of al-Qur'an education in rural communities

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ABSTRACT

*Qur'an education has a fundamental role in shaping the character of rural communities. In Indonesia, this central role is carried out collaboratively by *kiai* and *nyai*. This article aims to analyze their dual role in grounding the values of the Qur'an, that is, transforming it into a practical guideline for life. The background of this research departs from the lack of literature that comprehensively examines the role of *nyai*, which is often overlooked, despite its very vital contribution to the education of women and children. The research method used is qualitative with a case study approach. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and documentation studies in Godog village, Laren District, Lamongan Regency. The results of the study show (1) the collaborative role of *Kiai* and *Nyai*. They carry out complementary roles. The *kiai*, as a formal leader, is responsible for the teaching of theoretical sciences such as *tafsir* and *fiqh*. Meanwhile, *Nyai* focuses on informal education, teaching the reading and writing of the Qur'an. The collaboration creates a holistic education system. (2) Customary teaching methods in Qur'an Education: Qur'an education carried out by *kiai* and *nyai* in rural *taklim* assemblies has a prominent characteristic. (3) The impact of *kiai* and *nyai* on the morality and character of the community. The impact can be seen from the formation of an honest, tolerant, and simple community character. This study concludes that the synergy of *kiai* and *nyai* is the key to the success of Qur'an education in rural areas.*

Keywords: Rural Communities; The Role of *Kiai* and *Nyai*; Qur'an Education.

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ABSTRAK

Pendidikan Al-Qur'an memiliki peran fundamental dalam membentuk karakter masyarakat pedesaan. Di Indonesia, peran sentral ini diemban secara kolaboratif oleh kiai dan nyai. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis peran ganda mereka dalam membumikan nilai-nilai Al-Qur'an, yaitu mentransformasikannya menjadi pedoman hidup yang praktis. Latar belakang penelitian ini berangkat dari minimnya literatur yang secara komprehensif mengkaji peran nyai, yang seringkali terabaikan, meskipun kontribusinya sangat vital dalam pendidikan perempuan dan anak-anak. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kasus. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi partisipatif, dan studi dokumentasi di desa Godog Kec.Laren Kab.Lamongan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa (1) peran kolaboratif Kiai dan Nyai. Mereka menjalankan peran yang saling melengkapi. Kiai, sebagai pemimpin formal, bertanggung jawab atas pengajaran ilmu teoretis seperti tafsir dan fikih. Sementara itu, nyai berfokus pada pendidikan informal dan pengasuhan, mengajarkan baca-tulis Al-Qur'an dan adab Islami, khususnya kepada perempuan. Kolaborasi tersebut menciptakan sistem pendidikan yang holistik. (2) Metode pengajaran yang adaptif dalam Pendidikan Al-Qur'an, pendidikan Al-Qur'an yang dilaksanakan oleh kiai dan nyai di majelis taklim area pedesaan memiliki ciri khas yang menonjol, yaitu penerapan metode pengajaran yang sederhana namun sangat efisien. (3) Dampak kiai dan nyai terhadap moralitas dan karakter Masyarakat. Dampaknya terlihat dari terbentuknya karakter masyarakat yang jujur, toleran, dan sederhana, serta partisipasi aktif dalam kegiatan keagamaan yang meminimalisir konflik sosial. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa sinergi kiai dan nyai adalah kunci keberhasilan pendidikan Al-Qur'an di pedesaan. Kiai dan nyai tidak hanya dipandang sebagai guru, tetapi juga sebagai pemimpin, panutan, dan bahkan konselor dalam sistem pendidikan.

Kata Kunci: Masyarakat Pedesaan; Peran Kiai dan Nyai; Pendidikan Al-Qur'an.

1. INTRODUCTION

Qur'an education has an important function in building the spiritual and moral foundation of Indonesian society, especially in rural areas that are still strong with traditional values. Some of the methods of Qur'an education consist of discussion methods, lecture methods, question and answer methods, demonstration methods, exemplary methods (*uswat hasanat*), and parable methods (*amtsal*) (Karo, 2020). In conditions of limited access to modern formal education, religious institutions such as Islamic boarding schools, *taklim* assemblies, and home studies have long served as centers for the dissemination of Islamic knowledge and values. In the context of this traditional education, the role of Kiai and Nyai is very crucial and irreplaceable. They are more than just teachers; they are also spiritual leaders, moral role models, and the main foundation that ensures that Islamic traditions live on in their hometowns (Rohani, Ernita, & Salmiah, 2022).

The role of Kiai and Nyai is very important in the history of the spread of Islam in the archipelago. Over the centuries, in a way that is in accordance with the local culture, they have succeeded in making the teachings of the Qur'an an appropriate and practical guide of life for the village community (Makruf & Jahroni, 2024). This process, known as "grounding" the

values of the Qur'an, is to transform abstract sacred texts into everyday social norms and ethics that are easily understood and implemented by society (Mul Khan, 2021). In the village, a strong community pattern and high respect for religious authority figures made Kiai and Nyai the center of social and spiritual life. Their authority comes not only from extensive religious knowledge but also from positive example, personal appeal, and close relationships with society.

In Godog Village, Laren District, Lamongan Regency, East Java, there was a first pioneer of the Islamic and Muhammadiyah movements, namely Kiai Showab and his wife Nyai Ning Mairoh. Through in-depth interviews with her son, the researcher obtained a lot of information about Kiai Showab's struggle and Nyai Ning Maisaroh's patience in accompanying him throughout her life. Kiai Showab struggled to get out of the area for a short time, while Nyai Ning Maisaroh patiently waited and participated in the struggle to prosper the *langgar* that was erected in front of the house to teach religious knowledge to children and women in her village. Thus, the roles of Kiai and Nyai complement each other in the mission of da'wah in rural communities.

In more detail, the positions of Kiai and Nyai complement each other with their respective specialties. Kiai usually functions as an official leader, the main caretaker of the Islamic boarding school, as well as a teacher of the main books (yellow books) such as the interpretation of the Qur'an, fiqh, and tauhid. He plays the role of the main source of authority of knowledge that becomes a reference for students and the community (Jufri et al. 2023). Meanwhile, Nyai plays an important role in domestic and non-formal environments. As Kiai's partner, she has full responsibility for the education of students and women in the village. Nyai teaches the skills of reading and writing the Qur'an (*tajweed*) and memorizing Juz 'Amma, as well as *adab* and *akhlakul karimah* related to women's lives. Nyai's role is very significant because it creates a safe place for women to learn religion in depth, as well as ensuring that the values of the Qur'an are internalized in the family and in the way children are educated (Asofik, 2023).

Although the roles of Kiai and Nyai are so central, academic literature often highlights the role of the kiai as a single figure (Arif, 2023). Nyai's contribution, although vital, is often overlooked or only considered as a supporting role. This loneliness creates a partial and incomplete understanding of how this traditional Islamic education system operates effectively (Samsul & Supriyadi, 2022). This research is here to fill this gap by comprehensively examining the dynamics of collaboration between kiai and nyai. By analyzing their dual roles, we can gain a more complete picture of the holistic and adaptive educational mechanisms of the Qur'an, as well as appreciate their monumental contribution in maintaining the moral and spiritual sustainability of the nation in the modern era.

Although Kiai's and Nyai's positions are crucial, many academic writings tend to emphasize Kiai's role as the main figure. Nyai's contributions, while very significant, are often overlooked or seen only as a supporting role. This inequality results in a less complete and incomplete understanding of how traditional Islamic education systems function well. This research aims to overcome these shortcomings by analyzing in depth the dynamics of cooperation between Kiai and Nyai. By examining their dual roles, we can gain a more thorough understanding of how Qur'anic education works more inclusively and flexibly, as well as

appreciate their immense contribution in defending the moral and spiritual values of the nation in modern times.

The gap in this study creates important research opportunities that this study seeks to address. The main problem raised is that our perception of the Qur'an education system in rural areas so far tends to be incomplete, because it ignores the important collaborative relationship between Kiai and Nyai. This shortcoming raises fundamental questions about how this education system functions comprehensively and effectively. Without knowing the role of Nyai, we will never get a comprehensive picture of how the values of the Qur'an are successfully disseminated and lived equally at all levels of society, both men and women, from one generation to another.

To address these gaps, this study formulates its main problems into the following series of research questions: (1) How do Kiai and Nyai collaboratively define and divide their roles in organizing Qur'anic education for rural communities? (2) What are the pedagogical methods and cultural approaches they use to translate the values of the Qur'an so that they can be easily understood and implemented in the daily lives of the rural communities? (3) How does the synergy between the role of the kiai, which focuses on the scientific aspect, and the role of the nyai which focuses on the aspects of parenting and manners contribute to the formation of the religious and social character of the community as a whole? Therefore, we titled the research "The Role of Kiai and Nyai in Grounding the Values of Qur'an Education in Rural Communities".

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Several previous studies have emphasized the function and role of the Kiai in the community. For example, Geertz's (1960) research in "The Religion of Java" presents the kiai as the main figure in the tradition of the students (Clifford, 1960). In the tradition of students, the kiai is an important figure and the center of attention that becomes the axis of life in the *pesantren*. He not only functions as a teacher who conveys religious knowledge in depth but also as a spiritual guide and moral example that guides the students. The presence of the kiai is a source of scientific authority and charisma that is highly respected, as well as instilling the noble values of the Qur'an and virtuous morals. The connection between kiai and *santri* is built strongly through *ta'zim* (respect) and *khidmah* (devotion), making kiai a central figure who is likened to a spiritual parent who shapes the character of the students as a whole (Muwaffiqillah, 2023).

A study by Arif (2023) in "The Role of Village Kiai in Overcoming Religious Radicalism in Sumenep, Madura" specifically discusses the role of a Kiai in the countryside in the midst of upheaval over the issue of radicalization; the Village Kiai in Sumenep, Madura, plays an important role as a protector. With an inclusive approach and based on local wisdom, these kiai routinely teach Islamic teachings that are moderate, tolerant, and peaceful. They not only teach at *pesantren* or *taklim* councils but also actively communicate with the community through the tradition of deliberation and friendship, instilling the values of togetherness and rejecting intolerant teachings. Kiai *Kampung* became the main figure who was trusted, so their directives and fatwas were effective in preventing the spread of radical ideas among the community, keeping Sumenep calm and harmonious (Arif, 2023).

A study by Nawafi (2021) in "The Role of Mrs. Nyai in Improving the Quality of Al-Qur'an Memorization for Putri Students of Al-Hikmah Pedurungan Lor Semarang Islamic Boarding School" provides an explanation that in addition to the strategy provided by Kiai, Mrs. Nyai also has a strategy that is applied to improve the quality of Qur'an memorization, including several steps. He asked the students to increase the number of memorizations deposited and pay attention to the quality of the recitation of the verses they read in accordance with *tajweed*, *makharijul-huruf*, *sifatul-huruf*, and fluency in memorization. In addition, he encouraged students to increase *amaliyah* activities that can help them in the memorization process. The importance of discipline is also emphasized through the arrangement of deposit schedules and *muraja'ah*. Then, students are expected to follow the repetition or *takrir* method and carry out regular memorization evaluations. From this, it can also be concluded that Kiai and Nyai have the same role (Nawafi, Uhbiyati, & Sholihah, 2021; Setyawati & Nasihin, 2023).

On the other hand, a study by Efendi (2020) in "Gender Perspectives on Islamic Boarding School Ethics (Study on Kiai and Nyai Leadership on Gender Socialization in the Social Environment of the Wahid Hasyim Sleman Yogyakarta Islamic Boarding School)" provides an explanation of gender issues or equal partnerships between men and women, which were previously known for increasing the status of women's roles in Islam, increasingly attracting a lot of progress and success. There are two approaches to socializing gender in Islamic boarding schools, namely, first, strengthening gender role norms. This role is carried out by most of the kyai, nyai, and teachers. The second emphasizes texts related to gender roles (Efendi, 2020).

However, there are still very few studies specifically examining the cooperation between kiai and nyai in the aspect of Qur'an education in the village environment. The majority of writings focus more on the kiai, while the role of nyai is often overlooked. Meanwhile, Nyai has a critical role, especially in supporting the work of husbands and educating students and women in the community. This article seeks to answer this shortcoming by offering a more in-depth analysis.

3. METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. This approach was chosen because it is able to delve deeply into the complex and contextual social realities related to the strategic role of kiai in grounding the values of the Qur'an in the lives of rural communities. Qualitative research allows researchers to understand the meaning, values, and processes that take place in the practice of kiai da'wah naturally and deeply, especially in social environments that have distinctive cultural and religious dimensions (Creswell 2020).

The research location was chosen purposively, namely in Godog Village, Laren District, Lamongan Regency, East Java. The village was chosen to be used as an object of research because it has a strong level of religious characteristics. The existence of Kiai Showab as a religious figure as well as a pioneer of Muhammadiyah in the area became central in the process of religious and social dynamics.

The subjects of this study are Kiai Showab and Nyai Ning Mairoh as the main characters. The data collection technique was carried out through an in-depth interview with Kiai Showab and Nyai Ning Mairoh's child, namely Sukuliyah, as the main informant; FGD (Focus Group Discussion) with community leaders and their neighbors to capture the collective

perception of the surrounding community; and documentation such as photos during their lives, photos of activities, and archives of religious activities in Godog village.

Data analysis is carried out interactively through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing, as developed by Miles and Huberman (1994). The validity of the data is maintained through source and technique triangulation techniques, as well as member checks with key informants. With this approach, it is hoped that the results of the research will be able to provide a comprehensive picture of Kiai and Nyai's da'wah strategies for grounding the values of the Qur'an in the lives of rural communities in a real and applicable manner.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Biography of Kiai Showab Mabror

HM Shawab Mabror was born in Godog Village, Laren District, in 1924. From a father named Sa'al and Sarui's mother. He was the youngest of four children. M. Shawab Mabror is married to Ning Mairoh, a local village girl. From his marriage he was blessed with ten children. They are Toyibah, Umulkhoir, Zainul Muttaqin, Kholidah, Nasyyatul Baroro, Sukuliah, Muhammad Arqom, and two twins who died while still in the process of childbirth. In his teenage years, M. Shawab Mabror studied religious studies at the Al-Amin Tunggal Paciran Islamic Boarding School under the care of KH Amin Musthofa. His fellow villagers who queued together were Sampuri and Thoha Abdullah. He changed the bad habits of the community by prohibiting earthly alms events that were common to the community at that time. He also prohibits the marking and *holding of artistic gongs* that are synonymous with drinking and gambling.

Apart from being a teacher, M. Shawab Mabror once served as the Head of MI Al-Islam 1 (now MI Muhammadiyah 1 Godog) and the Head of PGA Muhammadiyah Godog Village (now MA Muhammadiyah 3 Godog). His organizational experience began as Chairman of the Muhammadiyah Branch Godog Executive (1970-1975), Chairman of the Laren Branch of Muhammadiyah (1973-1980), and Chairman of the Tarjih Council of The Muhammadiyah Regional Executive of Lamongan Regency (1976-1985) (Fathurrahim Syuhadi, 2025).

According to Sukuliah, the sixth child, his father was very disciplined in educating his sons and daughters.

"Father is very disciplined but flexible. For family education, he implements pesantren education and never scolds his children," he said.

He added,

"Every time we finish Maghrib, Isha, and Fajr, we have to recite first. Listen to the radio if there is qiraah; if there is no qiraah, it should not be listened to. Likewise, when watching television, if not during Nuzulul Qur'an, you are not allowed to watch TV," he said.

4.2. Biography of Nyai Ning Maisaroh

Nyai Ning Mairoh, a woman whose name is fragrant in the village, is a real portrait of determination and devotion. From a young age, her life path has been carved by a special

destiny. She was married at a very young age, specifically when she was nine years old. In the midst of a tradition that demands obedience, her marriage to a *kiai* is the beginning of a long and tortuous journey. Her husband, a charismatic *kiai*, took a leading role in educating her. The long nights were filled with the teachings of reciting, ensuring that Nyai Ning Mairoh understood the Qur'an and religious knowledge, a process that lasted until she reached puberty. This personal and compassionate teaching formed her solid spiritual foundation, making her a woman who was not only obedient but also knowledgeable.

Nyai Ning Mairoh's role does not stop at the domestic realm. Behind the shade of her house, she was the driving force for the women's movement in the village. She persistently supports every activity of Aisyiyah, a Muhammadiyah women's organization, making her home a center for meetings and deliberations. She believes that women must be empowered, not only in domestic affairs but also in da'wah and society. She inspires women in the village to be actively involved, learn, and organize.

Nyai Ning Mairoh's life is also colored by tireless struggle. Her husband, Kiai Showab, was a brave fighter against the PKI, a struggle that even led to his imprisonment. In those difficult times, Nyai Ning Mairoh was never afraid. She became her husband's main supporter, maintaining family stability and remaining strong in the face of all trials. Even though she was ill for nine months, she remained spirited and accompanied her husband in his struggles. Physical pain never extinguished her fighting spirit.

Her attitude in preaching is really admirable. Nyai Ning Mairoh teaches the recitation of mothers in the langgar (prayer room) with a unique and fun method. She uses songs to make it easier for mothers to understand the *tajweed* and rhythm of the Qur'an. Her gentle and non-coercive method makes her da'wah easily accepted. She never judges but embraces with love. She is always ready to provide and help anyone in need, indiscriminately. Her generosity is a characteristic that is remembered by the entire community.

Her life was an example of patience, sincerity, and obedience. Under any circumstances, whether healthy or sick, she never left prayer and recital. She believes that worship is a source of strength. Nyai Ning Mairoh breathed her last at the age of 85 after battling liver cancer. Her passing leaves deep sorrow, but the legacy of her zeal, her steadfastness, and her sincerity in preaching will live on and be an inspiration to generations to come (Syuhadi, 2025).

4.3. *The Collaborative Role of Kiai and Nyai in the Countryside*

Kiai and Nyai are two central figures in the tradition of Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia. Kiai is a title for scholars who become leaders as well as caregivers of Islamic boarding schools, acting as teachers, role models, and cultural brokers who filter social change in society. Meanwhile, Nyai is the wife of *kiai* who has a strategic and multi-interpretive role. Initially, the title of Nyai was attached due to the marital factor, but now her role has developed significantly. Nyai is not only tasked with accompanying her husband but also plays a central role in the management of the *pesantren*, student educators, and transformation agents who ensure that the *pesantren* is adaptive to the changing times. Both have scientific authority and charisma, which are the main pillars of the sustainability of Islamic education and moral resilience in society (Pratiwi, 2025).

Collaboration between *kiai* and *nyai* is the main element of comprehensive education, especially in supporting the community in the village. The two have different but

complementary functions, thus creating effective cooperation in spreading the teachings of Islam. Kiai usually plays the role of a leader both formally and spiritually; he emerges as an active figure in innovating to find a way out of various problems faced by both himself, the *pesantren*, and the community (Azharhany 2023a). They are considered the highest source of scientific authority in *pesantren* as well as in the community, with the responsibility to teach a wide range of profound and complex Islamic sciences. The teachings of the kiai include the interpretation of the Qur'an to reveal the meaning behind the holy verses; fiqh which serves to guide the *ummah* in carrying out worship and considering Islamic law in daily life; and tauhid to strengthen belief. Through the *bandongan* and *sorogan* methods, the kiai not only imparted knowledge but also instilled discipline in intellectual and spiritual aspects in his students (Azharhany 2023b; Bachtiar 2024).

On the other hand, the nyai position is usually in a more relaxed but very important area. As a *kiai* companion, Nyai has the main responsibility in educating students and women around the Islamic boarding school. Nyai's duties are oriented to practical matters and parenting. They were the first educators who taught how to read and write the Qur'an with correct *tajweed*, ensuring that every student had a solid foundation in reading the holy book. In addition, Nyai also teaches the memorization of juz 'amma and instills Islamic norms that include ethics, politeness, and noble moral values in daily life. The learning environment created by nyai, often in their homes, feels more familiar and loving, so that students can feel comfortable and open while learning (Chusniyah & Alimi, 2015).

The collaboration between kiai and nyai resulted in a comprehensive education system (Mo'tasim et al. 2020). Kiai provides a strong theoretical foundation and understanding of religion, while Nyai supplements it with a practical approach and very important personal attention. Kiai teaches in a mosque or madrasah with official authority, while Nyai educates in the home environment with the affection and tenderness of a mother. This cooperation ensures that Quran education is not only limited to theory but also part of social practice, individual ethics, and daily life. Through this collaboration, *pesantren* are able to produce graduates who are not only intelligent in science but also develop emotionally and spiritually. It is an effective educational model in internalizing Islamic values, making it an integral part of the identity of the village community. An example of this collaboration is the partnership between Kiai Dahlan and Nyai Walidah, which reflects the combination of Islamic values and an innovative spirit in building Muhammadiyah (Ummamah et al. 2023).

4.4. Adaptive Learning Methods in Qur'an Education

The Qur'an is a paradigmatic source for holistic educational values. The educational content not only transfers knowledge but also forms a balanced human character between spiritual, intellectual, and social aspects. Fundamental values such as monotheistic education are the main foundation, instilling divine awareness that straightens the orientation of life. In the contemporary context, the Qur'an also teaches the value of religious moderation (*wasathiyah*), which emphasizes balance, justice, and tolerance in multicultural life. Thus, the Qur'an offers a comprehensive and applicable value system to answer the challenges of the times while forming a generation that is knowledgeable, faithful, and noble (Ahd. Mujahid, 2025).

The Qur'an education carried out by *kiai* and *nyai* in the *taklim* council in rural areas has a prominent characteristic, namely the application of simple but very efficient teaching methods. This approach not only focuses on the delivery of knowledge but also on character building and instilling values in daily life. The flexibility of this method makes it relevant and readily accepted by society, which often has limited formal education (Anami & Fasya, 2024).

One of the traditional methods that still exists and is very effective is the *sorogan* method (Ngalimun, Rahman, & Latifah, 2020). In this method, students meet with *kiai* or *nyai* personally to read or memorize the Qur'an and certain books. This process facilitates deep personal interactions. A *kiai* or *nyai* can immediately correct reading errors (*tajwid*), improve understanding, and provide advice that is appropriate to the student's situation. This method builds a strong emotional connection between teacher and student, which is the basis for the absorption of knowledge and morals. Students feel cared for individually, while *kiai* or *nyai* can supervise the progress of each student directly.

In addition, there is a way of *bandongan*, where the *kiai* or *nyai* read the book (including the explanation of the Qur'an) or provide an explanation, and the students listen together. This method is very effective for delivering material to many students at once. Although personal interaction is not as active as *sorogan*, *bandongan* builds a spirit of togetherness and discipline among students. They are taught to concentrate, listen, and take notes, thus practicing the ability to focus and comprehend in groups. This method is also often equipped with a short question-and-answer session that allows students to explain important points.

Kiai and *Nyai* chose a culturally focused approach (Niswah, Nurbini, & Zainuri 2023). They realized that the teachings of the Qur'an would be easier to accept if they were connected to the cultural context and daily life of the people in the village. The sacred teachings are not presented in the form of rigorous theories but rather are delivered through relevant stories, touching counsel, and most importantly, examples from their lives. For example, the value of honesty is presented through the stories of the prophets or real experiences that occurred in the village. The value of mutual cooperation is not only taught but also applied in activities such as cleaning Islamic boarding schools or helping neighbors. This approach makes the values of the Qur'an not feel foreign, but rather an integral part of people's identity and lifestyle.

This collaboration between traditional methods and culture-based approaches shows the ability of *kiai* and *nyai* in spreading *da'wah*. They are able to take advantage of the heritage of Islamic education while connecting it to existing social realities. As a result, the Qur'an education they presented became comprehensive, reaching the cognitive, emotional, and skill aspects of students. This makes their role very important in rooting Islamic values and maintaining the continuity of morality in the midst of changing times.

4.5. *The Impact of Kiai and Nyai on Morality and Character of the Community*

The presence of *kiai* and *nyai* in the village community is not only an addition but has a very large and changing influence on morals and social character. The teaching of the Qur'an that they do is more than just learning about the contents of the holy book. They teach the Qur'an as a holistic guide to life, which can shape well-behaved individuals and societies. This influence is felt in various aspects of life, from daily behavior to broader social interactions (Razak & Mundzir 2019; Wahyuningsih & Wahyudi 2023).

Kiai and Nyai teach about gender education to the students. Gender education in the family is important because children acquire gender stereotypes at an early age, and they learn about gender equality from their families for the first time. Teaching gender equality to children is never too early, and they are never too young to learn it. In fact, they will go out and bring gender equality in the family and society at large because they will be pioneers of gender equality when they reach adulthood (Kiram, 2020).

The significant influence of kiai and nyai in the village community is the result of their accumulated roles as spiritual leaders, social leaders, educators, and community servants. Their legitimacy is born from a combination of traditional heritage, scientific capacity, and life example. Theories from the West such as Foucault and Weber as well as from the Islamic tradition such as *maslahah mursalah* can be used eclectically to understand this complex phenomenon, which remains relevant even in the midst of the currents of modernization and digitalization. According to Foucault, power is not always repressive but also productive. Weber distinguishes authority into three types: traditional, legal-rational, and charismatic. Kiai and nyai in the village are prime examples of leaders with charismatic authority (Kutsiyah & Tianah, 2025).

One of the most visible influences is the cultivation of basic values derived from the Qur'an. Kiai and nyai continuously teach the importance of honesty (*al-shidq*) in every word and action, both when interacting with others and in carrying out economic activities. This value becomes a solid moral fortress in the midst of the temptation to act dishonestly. In addition, they also instill a spirit of cooperation (*ta'awun*) (Haryanti & Fakhriyah 2021; Nisa', Risqiya, & Putri 2022). The education they provide teaches that everyone is part of a larger community, and true happiness lies in the ability to help each other. This can be seen from the active involvement of the community in mutual cooperation activities, the construction of public facilities, or helping neighbors who are in difficulty without expecting anything in return.

Another significant impact is the formation of tolerant and simple characters. Usually, kiai and nyai in the village teach moderate Islamic teachings, respect differences, and reject all forms of extremism. They emphasize the importance of building good relationships with everyone, regardless of ethnic, religious, or racial background. This attitude is a very valuable social capital to maintain harmony. At the same time, the example of simplicity they showed shaped the attitude of qana'ah (accepting as it is) in society. This simplicity teaches that happiness does not depend on material possessions but on peace of mind and submission to God.

Socially, the impact of the existence of kiai and nyai can be seen from the active participation of the community in various religious activities (Pambudi, Sujoko, & Safitri 2024). Taklim assemblies, routine recitations, tahlilan, and various other religious events are always crowded with visitors. This is not just a mere ritual, but a reflection of the collective consciousness to continue to deepen religious knowledge and strengthen the bond of friendship. This participation automatically results in healthy spaces for dialogue and reduces the potential for social conflict. Kiai and nyai often act as mediators in disputes between populations, resolving problems with a familial approach and deliberation based on Islamic values, so that social conflicts rooted in SARA can be minimized. Thus, the Qur'an education provided by kiai and nyai serves as a long-term investment to build a moral, characterful, and harmonious

society. They serve not only as teachers, but also as guardians of values, social bonders, and agents of peace.

5. CONCLUSION

This research emphasizes that *kiai* and *nyai* have an important position in spreading the values of Qur'an education in the village environment. They are more than just instructors; they are also moral and spiritual supporters who work together. *Kiai*, with his knowledge and charisma, provided a strong theoretical basis through the teaching of tafsir, fiqh, and monotheism. On the contrary, *Nyai* provides an addition with a more familiar and informal approach, focusing more on Qur'an education, manners, and guidance for students and women. This cooperation results in a comprehensive education system, where knowledge mastery and character development go hand in hand.

The teaching methods they applied, such as *sorogan* and *bandongan*, showed their success in transferring knowledge in depth and personally. In addition, cultural approaches that relate the teachings of the Qur'an to stories, advice, and everyday behavior make these values relevant and easy to implement. The results are also quite significant, reflected in the development of the character of an honest, generous, tolerant, and simple society. Active involvement in religious activities and low social conflicts are clear evidence of their success in maintaining village harmony.

Thus, this article states that the cooperation between *kiai* and *nyai* is the key to the success of traditional Islamic education. Their role is a very meaningful social resource in facing the challenges of modern times, ensuring that the values of the Qur'an continue to be relevant and become the main guideline in the lives of rural communities. Efforts to recognize and strengthen this dual role are an important step to maintain the moral and spiritual sustainability of the nation.

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