

## Habitus and Cultural Capital Among Muslim Women: The Case of Women's Empowerment in Nasyiatul Aisyiyah Gamping, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

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### Abstract

*This article examines the Muslim women's empowerment movement initiated by Nasyiatul Aisyiyah Gamping in Yogyakarta, focusing on gender justice and various issues affecting women, including the role of female scholars, women's participation in public spaces, and cultural roles within society. In this study, the capital and habituation of Muslim women are understood as both theoretical and practical implications of the women's empowerment movement. This research employs a qualitative approach, utilizing a case study method centered on the Nasyiatul Aisyiyah Gamping women's organization. The results indicate that the women's empowerment movement within this organization is implemented through three primary aspects: structural, cultural, and knowledge-based individual dimensions. In the structural dimension, empowerment is demonstrated by the active participation of women in organizational activities. Culturally, women contribute to various religious events within the Gamping community. Meanwhile, in the individual dimension, empowerment is reflected in the increased access of Muslim women to knowledge related to gender justice. Although this movement has become an integral part of social transformation, numerous challenges persist, both structurally and culturally. The deeply entrenched patriarchal epistemology presents in several elements of leadership and within the Gamping community poses significant obstacles that complicate the pursuit of gender justice, even at the local level. The efforts to empower and habituate Muslim women through Nasyiatul Aisyiyah Gamping remain a long-term endeavor that necessitates sustainable strategies.*

### Abstrak

Artikel ini membahas gerakan pemberdayaan perempuan Muslim yang dilakukan oleh Nasyiatul Aisyiyah Gamping, Yogyakarta, dalam konteks keadilan gender dan berbagai isu yang mengitari perempuan, seperti ulama perempuan, keterlibatan perempuan di ruang publik, serta peran kultural perempuan dalam masyarakat. Modal dan habituasi perempuan Muslim dalam penelitian ini dipahami sebagai implikasi teoretis dan praktis dari gerakan pemberdayaan perempuan. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus terhadap organisasi perempuan Nasyiatul Aisyiyah Gamping. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa gerakan pemberdayaan perempuan dalam organisasi ini dilakukan melalui tiga aspek utama: struktural, kultural, dan berbasis pengetahuan individu. Pada aspek struktural, pemberdayaan tercermin dalam keterlibatan aktif perempuan dalam kegiatan organisasi. Pada aspek kultural, perempuan berperan dalam berbagai aktivitas keagamaan di masyarakat Gamping. Sementara itu, pada aspek individu, pemberdayaan terlihat dari peningkatan akses perempuan Muslim terhadap pengetahuan terkait keadilan gender. Meskipun gerakan ini telah menjadi bagian dari transformasi sosial, masih terdapat berbagai tantangan yang harus dihadapi, baik secara struktural maupun kultural. Epistem patriarki yang masih mengakar dalam beberapa elemen kepemimpinan dan masyarakat Gamping menjadi hambatan yang memperumit perjuangan mewujudkan keadilan gender, bahkan di tingkat lokal. Upaya pemberdayaan dan habituasi perempuan Muslim melalui Nasyiatul Aisyiyah Gamping tetap menjadi pekerjaan jangka panjang yang membutuhkan strategi berkelanjutan.

### Keywords:

Women's  
Empowerment;  
Cultural  
Capital;  
Habitus; Gender  
Justice;  
Nasyiatul  
Aisyiyah

### Kata kunci:

Pemberdayaan  
perempuan;  
Modal  
kultural;  
Habitus;  
Keadilan  
gender;  
Nasyiatul  
Aisyiyah

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## Introduction

The study of women in politics, society, and culture has been insufficient in examining the role of women in the public sphere. While there are numerous studies focused on women's lives and organizations, there remains a scarcity of research that explores the relationship between women's roles in public domains—such as organizations, political groups, and social networks—and their religious experiences. Additionally, many studies on women tend to concentrate on (macro) perspectives, often overlooking the nuances of women's movements at the micro level (locality)<sup>1</sup>. This oversight has significant implications for understanding the dynamics of the Muslim women's movement. To gain a comprehensive understanding of the women's movement, it is essential to consider grassroots perspectives.

Jenner presents an in-depth analysis of what she terms a “gendered space.” The title of her article is quite provocative: “The Masjid is For Men: Aisiyah Women's Musholla in Yogyakarta.” Departing from the concept of as the notion of “canceling gender with gender,”<sup>2</sup> Jenner argues that in certain contexts, such as the Islamic community in Indonesia, this idea becomes irrelevant. Consequently, the conception of gendered space, as articulated by Aisiyah, represents a negation of the concept of degendering. Jenner asserts that a safe space for women to worship is essential amidst established religious texts.<sup>3</sup> Her article illustrates that the issue of gender justice within the Muslim community in Indonesia is far more complex than the way Western scholarship typically defines gender equality. As the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, Indonesia's Muslim community is deeply intertwined with intricate religious orthodox texts (Islam) and specific cultural practices. Furthermore, the conservative interpretation of these religious texts complicates the relationship between Muslim women's rights and their religious teachings.<sup>4</sup>

However, instead of making radical interpretations of religious texts, Muhammadiyah modernist women's movements such as Aisiyah and Nasyiatul Aisiyah chose to stick to the Qur'an and hadith texts. This is in line with Syamsiyatun's thesis, which states that, in the midst of the onslaught of

<sup>1</sup> Ganda Febri Kurniawan, Warto Warto, and Leo Agung Sutimin, “Dominasi Orang-Orang Besar Dalam Sejarah Indonesia: Kritik Politik Historiografi Dan Politik Ingatan,” *Jurnal Sejarah Citra Lekha* 4, no. 1 (2019): 36–52.

<sup>2</sup> Harriet Bjerrum Nielsen and Harriet Bjerrum Nielsen, “Gendering, Degendering, Regendering,” *Feeling Gender: A Generational and Psychosocial Approach*, 2017, 281–300; Judith Lorber, “Using Gender to Undo Gender: A Feminist Degendering Movement,” *Feminist Theory* 1, no. 1 (2000): 79–95; Nancy Berns, “Degendering the Problem and Gendering the Blame: Political Discourse on Women and Violence,” *Gender & Society* 15, no. 2 (2001): 262–81; Gillian Rose, “Engendering and Degendering,” *Progress in Human Geography* 18, no. 4 (1994): 507–15.

<sup>3</sup> Bethany Elias Jenner, “‘The Masjid Is for Men’: Aisiyah Women's Mushollas in Yogyakarta,” *Contemporary Islam* 18, no. 1 (2024): 133–51.

<sup>4</sup> Fatima Seedat, “Beyond the Text: Between Islam and Feminism,” *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 32, no. 2 (2016): 138–42.

authoritarianism-politics of the new order against Islam, Nasyiatul Aisyiyah still maintains the identity of “Al-Qur’an and Hadith”, without separating itself from the issue of Islamic reform characteristic of the modernist movement of Muhammadiyah, including the empowerment of women in it.<sup>5</sup> It becomes interesting to ask the question then, does Nasyiatul Aisyiyah ignore the discourse of women’s justice? The same author's thesis, Syamsiyatun answers that doubt in his book “*Pergolakan Putri Islam: “Perkembangan Wacana Gender dalam Nasyiatul Aisyiyah, 1965-2005”*” (2016) that although the 'orthodox' religious identity of Nasyiatul Aisyiyah is still maintained as a characteristic of the Islamic women’s movement, there is a kind of change and shift in gender discourse in the body of Nasyiatul Aisyiyah herself.<sup>6</sup>

Several previous studies on Nasyiatul Aisyiyah have discussed various dimensions of this organization’s empowerment movement, such as research on the importance of religious moderation in the empowerment of young women in DKI Jakarta,<sup>7</sup> and research on the role of this organization in gender discourse and prophetic education for women in Bima.<sup>8</sup> Another study focuses on local programs aimed at strengthening members capacity through civic education and family health.<sup>9</sup> In addition, research on the role of Nasyiatul Aisyiyah in efforts to counter hoaxes and negative campaigns shows Nasyiatul Aisyiyah's efforts in responding to contemporary issues, including political education.<sup>10</sup> Research on healthy family education in the Nasyiatul Aisyiyah Gamping Branch Leadership strengthens the dimension of women’s community-based empowerment.<sup>11</sup> Research on healthy family education in the Nasyiatul Aisyiyah Gamping Branch Leadership strengthens the dimension of women’s community-based empowerment.

This study aims to explain the role of Nasyiatul Aisyiyah in the women’s empowerment movement on a completely different spectrum from previous studies on the women’s movement. The empowerment movement must be placed

<sup>5</sup> Siti Syamsiyatun, “Muslim Women’s Politics in Advancing Their Gender Interests: A Case-Study of Nasyiatul Aisyiyah in Indonesian New Order Era,” *Aljamiah Vol 45, No 1* (2007), 2007.

<sup>6</sup> Siti Syamsiyatun, *Pergolakan Putri Islam: Perkembangan Wacana Gender Dalam Nasyiatul Aisyiyah 1965–2005* (Suara Muhammadiyah, 2016).

<sup>7</sup> Ai Fatimah Nur Fuad and Rafa Basyirah, “Pelatihan Islam Wasathiyah Berkemajuan: Pemberdayaan Perempuan Muda Nasyiatul Aisyiyah DKI Jakarta,” *Transformatif: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat* 4, no. 2 (2023): 139–50.

<sup>8</sup> Umar Umar, Husnatul Mahmudah, and Mei Indra Jayanti, “Peran Nasyiatul Aisyiyah Dalam Wacana Gender Dan Pendidikan Profetik Bagi Perempuan Di Bima,” *Kafaah: Journal of Gender Studies* 11, no. 1 (2021): 15–26.

<sup>9</sup> Sundari Kawaru, Andi Nilwana, and Juana Juana, “Pemberdayaan Perempuan Terhadap Pemanfaatan Ekonomi Digital: Peran Nasyiatul Aisyiyah Dalam Merangsang Kewirausahaan Wanita Di Kabupaten Sidenreng Rappang,” *Jurnal Kreativitas Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat (PKM)* 7, no. 7 (2024): 3160–71.

<sup>10</sup> Tanto Lailam and Awang Darumurti, “Pemberdayaan Pimpinan Cabang Nasyiatul Aisyiyah Ngampilan Dan Komite Independen Sadar Pemilu Dalam Melawan Hoax Dan Negative Campaign Pada Pemilu Tahun 2019,” *Panrita Abdi-Jurnal Pengabdian Pada Masyarakat* 5, no. 1 (2021): 100–109.

<sup>11</sup> Fisnandya Meita Astari et al., “Healthy Family Education for Members of the Nasyiatul Aisyiyah Branch of Gamping,” *Community Empowerment* 8, no. 8 (2023): 1184–89.

within the framework and efforts to provide “capital” and the formation of “habitus” to individual women themselves.<sup>12</sup> This research focuses on the Nasyiatul Aisyiyah women’s empowerment movement in Gamping, Yogyakarta. The selection of Gamping is based on academic reasons that this area is one of the areas that represents the base of the Nasyiatul Aisyiyah movement, several religious activities and women’s empowerment occur intensely both at the structural and cultural levels. Moreover, administratively, Gamping is one of the regions of Yogyakarta, which is the base and “origin” of the birth of the parent of this organization, Muhammadiyah.

The research data was obtained through *field research* from March-December 2023. The research data was obtained based on *in-depth interviews* with the management of Nasyiatul Aisyiyah Gamping Branch Yogyakarta. Relevant documents and archives are also analyzed in depth to support the theses formulated. The author uses the theory of capital and habitus proposed by Bourdieu to analyze what we later call the “*Habituation of Empowered Women*” through a series of women’s empowerment programs carried out institutionally by Nasyiatul Aisyiyah. We also use Mansoor Fatih’s theoretical conception of the concept of social transformation and gender analysis as a research knife to understand the women’s movement based on socio-religious institutions.<sup>13</sup>

## Results and Discussion

### *History of the Formation of Nasyiatul Aisyiyah Gamping Yogyakarta*

The existence of Nasyiatul Aisyiyah in the Kapanewon Gamping area was first marked by the formation of the Nasyiatul Aisyiyah (PCNA) Gamping Branch Leadership, which is an integral part of the expansion of this organization nationally. The establishment of PCNA Gamping was supported by the Certificate of Organization (SKO) issued by the Central Executive of Nasyiatul Aisyiyah (PPNA) on December 6, 1990, which officially recorded the existence of management in the region. As such, PCNA Gamping has been operating and growing significantly since 1990, demonstrating the sustainability and consistency of the Nasyiah movement at the local level.<sup>14</sup>

The establishment of Nasyiatul Aisyiyah in Kapanewon Gamping was based on the announcement of the results of the Muhammadiyah Congress, which required each branch of Muhammadiyah to establish Nasyiatul Aisyiyah as part of an Islamic women’s organization.<sup>15</sup> However, the pioneering process of Nasyiatul Aisyiyah in Gamping initially did not go well enough. This organization faced

<sup>12</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, “Habitus,” in *Habitus: A Sense of Place* (Routledge, 2017), 59–66.

<sup>13</sup> RONI Saputra dan SADANP ISLAM, “Teologi Transformatif (Studi Pemikiran Mansour Fakih),” *Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta*, 2011; Mansour Fakih, “Analisis Gender Dan Transformasi Sosial,” (No Title), 2008.

<sup>14</sup> Nasyiatul ‘Aisyiyah Gamping, “Dokumen Nasyiatul Aisyiyah Cabang Gamping, Yogyakarta,” n.d.

<sup>15</sup> “Sejarah Lembaga Pengembangan Cabang Dan Ranting,” Muhammadiyah.or.id, n.d.

various obstacles and challenges, one of which was the lack of recognition from the local community for the existence of Nasyyatul Aisyiyah as an Islamic daughter organization. This condition is influenced by the viewpoint of the public, who tend to be sceptical of religion-based organizations. In addition, the level of public awareness about the importance of organizational experience was still low at that time. This has resulted in a low interest among girls who have met the age requirements to join Nasyyatul Aisyiyah, where most feel less interested because of rules that are considered to limit their freedom. This phenomenon is reflected in the various responses that appear among girls before they join Nasyyatul Aisyiyah.

The obstacles faced not only come from the lack of social support but also from internal resistance that arises due to the unpreparedness of the community to accept new ideas about the role of women in faith-based organizations, especially with the term “women”. One of the main challenges faced by Nasyyatul Aisyiyah is the social stigma related to religious-based organizations dominated by women, especially among people who have not fully understood or accepted the importance of inclusive religious education for women. This is related to the orthodox perspective and *status quo* that develops in the midst of society, that women should not be involved, let alone participate in the public space.

However, over time, the influence of Muhammadiyah and Aisyiyah, which had been established provided an important foundation for Nasyyatul Aisyiyah to survive and develop in Kapanewon Gamping. The support of these two major organizations, both in terms of resources and socio-moral legitimacy, is a key factor in strengthening the position of Nasyyatul Aisyiyah in the midst of complex social dynamics. Thus, the existence of Nasyyatul Aisyiyah in Gamping not only expands the network of Islamic women’s organizations, but also serves as an example of how women’s organizations can survive and grow despite facing social resistance. In a certain context, the approach used by Nasyyatul Aisyiyah to overcome this resistance can be seen as part of a broader process of social transformation; there is a kind of movement orientation change from Nasyyatul Aisyiyah, where traditional values are beginning to be replaced by a more inclusive understanding of the role of women in society.

### **Forms of the Women’s Empowerment Movement**

Women’s empowerment is actually accessibility. It is necessary to emphasize that poverty is basically caused by what he calls *capability deprivation*, a condition of freedom to achieve something in one's life.<sup>16</sup> Simply put, poverty is basically caused by limited access. It can be concluded that when humans (women) have limitations in developing their lives, as a result of which humans (in this case, women who are

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<sup>16</sup> Sukawarsini Djelantik, “Gender Dan Pembangunan Di Dunia Ketiga,” *Jurnal Administrasi Publik* 5, no. 2 (2008).

limited by patriarchal culture) can only carry out what can be (forced) to be done, not what should be done.<sup>17</sup>

Table 1 : Forms of Women's Empowerment

Structure	Culture	Gender Knowledge Base
<i>Muballighah</i>	Cultural Capacity	Muslim Studies
<i>Kunsiroh</i>	"Female Ulama"	Women's Authority
<i>Baitul Arqom</i>	Women's Leadership	Islamic Value

### Structure

As part of Muhammadiyah, Nasyiatul Aisyiyah has made an important contribution to the importance of women's education in Gamping. The various trainings held by Nasyiatul Aisyiyah, especially the Gamping branch, can be translated as a cultural education movement that has led young people in this organization to awareness of the importance of education. Some of the organization's activities, such as routine reviews of the management, *Kajian Kemuslimahan "Teman Sejiwa"*, *KanTeen AMMGa*, *Kunsiroh*, *Baitul Arqom*, and *Pelatihan Mubalighah* basically is Nasyiatul Aisyiyah's way of developing and empowering women in Gamping. These educational and religious activities can be understood as an activity of the collective-structural movement of women in their efforts to break free from the confines of patriarchal tradition and culture.

The activities carried out by Nasyiatul Aisyiyah, although within the religious framework, play an important role in raising Muslim women's awareness of their role in the public sphere. *Muballighah*, for example, is an effort by Nasyiatul Aisyiyah to encourage women's involvement in the realm of da'wah, which men have dominated. Through this training, Nasyiatul Aisyiyah not only strengthens women's capacity in preaching but also emphasizes that women have an important role in voicing Islamic teachings in the public space. Through women's empowerment programs, Nasyiatul Aisyiyah implicitly conveys an important message: rejecting the domestication of women who are limited to private spaces.

Although Nasyiatul Aisyiyah encourages women to be active in the public sphere, the organization does not ignore the religious identity that is the main foundation of this movement. This approach is in line with Syamsiyatun's thesis, which states that Nasyiatul Aisyiyah still maintains Islamic values in the midst of socio-political dynamics, even under the pressure of the New Order regime.<sup>18</sup> This attitude shows that Nasyiatul Aisyiyah is able to maintain the identity of the "qurani" in the midst of an increasingly open and pluralistic Indonesian society.

<sup>17</sup> Ikhlasih Dalimoenthe, *Pengantar Ilmu Pembangunan* (Bumi Aksara, 2023).

<sup>18</sup> Syamsiyatun, "Muslim Women's Politics in Advancing Their Gender Interests: A Case-Study of Nasyiatul Aisyiyah in Indonesian New Order Era."

This identity is not an obstacle, but a foundation for Nasyyatul Aisyiyah in carrying out its activities. After the various activities scheduled by Nasyyatul Aisyiyah, women's awareness of the importance of expanding knowledge through organizations increased.

### **Culture**

Through specially designed activities, Nasyyatul Aisyiyah emphasized that Muslim women have great potential that needs to be optimized, both in the private and public spheres. The missionary training held by Nasyyatul Aisyiyah, for example, is a strategic step that aims to increase women's capacity to voice Islamic teachings. This training not only serves as a means of increasing religious knowledge but also as a medium to strengthen the role of women in the public space. The tradition of da'wah that men have dominated has begun to be broken by the presence of women who have equal abilities. This can be understood as an important step in efforts to change the social structure that tends to be patriarchal, where the role of women in da'wah is often marginalized. The involvement of women in public da'wah also emphasizes the importance of inclusivity in the spread of Islamic teachings. With the representation of women, religious discourse has become richer and more diverse, reflecting a broader perspective in understanding Islamic teachings. This initiative ultimately fosters confidence among Muslim women to not only be active in the private space but also play a significant role in religious discourse in the Islamic public space.<sup>19</sup>

Nasyyatul Aisyiyah programs basically provide space for women to develop themselves, expand their knowledge, and build networks that can support them in playing an active role in society. Resistance to such patriarchal norms reflects a complex social transformation in which women begin to see themselves as key actors who have an important role to play in social development. By encouraging women to be actively involved in the public sphere, Nasyyatul Aisyiyah not only advocates for women's rights but also changes the social structure that has placed women in a subordinate position.<sup>20</sup>

### **Gender Knowledge Base**

One of the main strengths of Nasyyatul Aisyiyah is its ability to maintain its Islamic identity while still encouraging women's involvement in the public sphere. Programs such as *Kajian Kemuslimahan* and *Kajian Rutin Pengurus* show that Nasyyatul Aisyiyah still adheres to the values of the Quran and Hadith. This confirms that despite the push to expand the role of women, Nasyyatul Aisyiyah has not abandoned its religious roots. This approach is also in line with the concept explained by Syamsiyatun, which states that in the midst of socio-political changes,

<sup>19</sup> Umdatul Hasanah, "Majelis Taklim Perempuan Dan Pergeseran Peran Publik Keagamaan Pada Masyarakat Perkotaan Kontemporer," 2016.

<sup>20</sup> Very Wahyudi, "Peran Politik Perempuan Dalam Perspektif Gender," *Politea: Jurnal Politik Islam* 1, no. 1 (2018): 63–83.

Nasyiatul Aisyiyah has succeeded in maintaining Islamic values. The identity of the “Qurani” maintained by Nasyiatul Aisyiyah is not an obstacle to women’s empowerment but rather the basis of the movement to continue to develop the role of women in society.<sup>21</sup> This shows that religious identity and social openness can go hand in hand, creating a movement that is inclusive and responsive to the needs of the times.

Nasyiatul Aisyiyah’s knowledge base which tends to be dynamic and follows contemporary women’s issues, shows their electoral movement. Islam is understood not in a mere dogmatic framework, but Islam is a religion of civilization that wants empowerment and justice for the role of women. To borrow Robert W. Hefner’s term, Islam as understood by women’s organizations such as Nasyiatul Aisyiyah can be categorized as a type of “Islamic-electicism”, or specifically, Hefner calls it the term “*systematic-electicism*.” Islam is not a single rigid entity, but its teachings are always dependent on the local specific social and cultural context. A type of progressive Islamic group that offers a dynamic perspective on interpreting religious texts (Islam) with modern issues such as human rights, democracy, poverty, and economic growth.<sup>22</sup>

### **Implications of the Women’s Empowerment Movement**

Religious da’wah that actively involves women has implications for a more inclusive and fair religious discourse. When women become part of religious dialogue, they bring different perspectives and experiences, which can enrich religious discourse. For example, issues such as gender justice, women’s rights, and equality in the family can be brought to the surface and discussed within relevant theological frameworks.

Women’s involvement in da’wah can influence people’s perspectives on the role of gender in religion. For example, if women can be seen as “authoritative” religious leaders. In contemporary studies, of course, terms such as “Ulama Perempuan” are dominant enough to illustrate the shift in religious discourse that is gender-friendly.<sup>23</sup> This can of course inspire broader social change, where women are valued as important actors in all aspects of life, including in decision-making related to aspects of religion and morality. The following will explain some of the

<sup>21</sup> Syamsiyatun, “Muslim Women’s Politics in Advancing Their Gender Interests: A Case-Study of Nasyiatul Aisyiyah in Indonesian New Order Era.”

<sup>22</sup> Robert W Hefner, *Islam and Citizenship in Indonesia: Democracy and the Quest for an Inclusive Public Ethics* (Taylor & Francis, 2023).

<sup>23</sup> Hasanatul Jannah, *Ulama Perempuan Madura: Otoritas Dan Relasi Gender* (IRCiSoD, 2020); Jajat Burhanuddin, *Ulama Perempuan Indonesia* (Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2002); Yayuk Fauziyah, “Ulama Perempuan Dan Dekonstruksi Fiqih Patriarkis,” *ISLAMICA: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 5, no. 1 (2010): 161–74; Fikriyah Istiqbalayani, “Ulama Perempuan Di Pesantren: Studi Tentang Kepemimpinan Nyai Hj. Masriyah Amva,” *Jurnal Educatio Fkip UNMA* 8, no. 1 (2022): 104–9; Nur Hasan, *Khazanah Ulama Perempuan Nusantara* (IRCiSoD, 2023); K H Husein Muhammad, *Perempuan Ulama Di Atas Panggung Sejarah* (IRCiSoD, 2020); Rohmatun Lukluk Isnaini, “Ulama Perempuan Dan Dedikasinya Dalam Pendidikan Islam (Telaah Pemikiran Rahmah El-Yunusiyah),” *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 4, no. 1 (2016): 2–16.

implications of the Women's Empowerment Movement carried out by Nasyyatul Aisyiyah Gamping:

Table 2: *Movement Implications*

Realm/Terrain	Forms of Activities	Implication	Indicator
Struktural	<i>Pelatihan Muballighat</i> <i>Kunsiroh</i> <i>Baitul Arqom</i>	Access to Education for Nasyyatul Aisyiyah Women Nasyyatul Aisyiyah Women's Health Access	Increasing Access and Awareness of Education;
Kultural	<i>Pashmina</i> Women's Social Networks <i>Kajian Rutin Pengurus</i>	Justice Discourse Increasing Awareness of Management Increasing Cultural Awareness	Increasing women's understanding of reproductive health; Increasing Women's Understanding of Reproductive Health.

### **Access to Women's Education**

As part of Muhammadiyah, Nasyyatul Aisyiyah has made an important contribution to women's access to education in Gamping. The various trainings held by Nasyyatul Aisyiyah, especially the Gamping branch, can be translated as a cultural education movement that has led young people in this organization to awareness of the importance of education. Some of the organization's activities such as routine studies of administrators, comrades, KanTeen AMMGa, Kunsiroh, Baitul Arqom, and Missionary Training are basically Nasyyatul Aisyiyah's way of developing and empowering women in Gamping. These educational and religious activities can be understood as a collective movement activity of women in their efforts regardless of the constraints of patriarchal tradition and culture.

### **Women's Access and Health**

Muhammadiyah as one of the largest organizations with a network of health institutions also makes a great contribution to access to health services. Aisyiah is also the same; as part of the Muhammadiyah women's organization, it has a network of various health institutions such as hospitals, clinics, and other health service centers.<sup>24</sup>

The same thing can also be seen at the local level. Nasyyatul Aisyiyah Gamping, for example, has made a positive contribution to the people's access to

<sup>24</sup> Asep Saepudin Jahar, "Filantropi Dan Keberlangsungan Ormas Islam," in *Al-Risalah: Forum Kajian Hukum Dan Sosial Kemasyarakatan*, vol. 16, 2016, 71-93.

health services. Nasyiatul Aisyiyah Gamping's involvement in access and awareness of women's health, for example, can be seen in one of the organization's flagship programs, *Pashmina* (Nasyiatul Aisyiyah's Healthy Youth Service). Established in 2017, this program has contributed to providing women with an understanding of reproductive health, counseling, and mentoring. This women's empowerment program has shown various important achievements. In the aspect of understanding reproductive health, for example, the success of the program can be seen from the number of participants who take part in the training, with a significant percentage of being able to re-explain the material provided, as well as an increase in the number of women who routinely carry out reproductive health checks after training. In counselling services, success is measured through the number of counselling sessions conducted, the percentage of participants who report increased understanding, and the number of cases successfully resolved through referral or direct intervention.

Meanwhile, in the mentoring aspect, the success indicators include the number of women who are assisted in making important decisions related to health or social, as well as the success of resolving cases with positive results accompanied by participant testimonials about the impact of mentoring on their lives. Overall, the program also has an impact on reducing reproductive health problems and increasing the number of women who are active as agents of change in the community. Increased public perception of women's roles and recognition from local communities or governments also reflect the program's success in creating sustainable change.<sup>25</sup>

### **Gender Discourse and Women's Awareness**

Islam has basically provided quite clear guidelines regarding the responsibilities and roles of women in society. In Islamic teachings, women have rights that include aspects of education, ownership, participation in social and political life, and economic rights.<sup>26</sup> Islam is a religion that encourages women to pursue knowledge, make positive contributions to society, and play the role of mothers, wives, or empowered members of society. Gender equality in Islam is also reflected in examples from the life of the Prophet Muhammad. The Prophet, for example, appreciated the role and contribution of women in society, such as Khadijah bint Khuwailid who was a successful businessman, and Aisyah bint Abu Bakr who was not only a scholar but was actively involved in politics.<sup>27</sup>

Islam, as a religion that provides guidelines on the responsibilities and roles of women in society, has provided a theological foundation for women's

<sup>25</sup> Nasyiatul 'Aisyiyah Gamping, "Dokumen Nasyiatul 'Aisyiyah Cabang Gamping, Yogyakarta."

<sup>26</sup> Siti Muslikhati, *Feminisme Dan Pemberdayaan Perempuan Dalam Timbangan Islam* (Gema Insani, 2004).

<sup>27</sup> Nurcahya Nurcahya and Akbarizan Akbarizan, "Perempuan Dalam Perdebatan: Memahami Peran Dan Tantangan Berpolitik Dalam Perspektif Hukum Islam," *JAWI: Journal of Ahkam Wa Iqtishad* 1, no. 3 (2023): 108-16.

empowerment movements, including those carried out by Nasyiatul Aisyiyah Gamping. In the context of this movement, the management of Nasyiatul Aisyiyah is not only inspired by Islamic teachings that encourage women to pursue knowledge and contribute to society, but also implement these values through concrete programs. Their empowerment programs, such as skills training, reproductive health education, and social assistance, reflect how Islamic teachings translate into concrete actions to increase women's capacity and equality.

The implication for the management of Nasyiatul Aisyiyah is that they not only become role models for the community but also gain opportunities to hone leadership skills, expand social networks, and strengthen contextual religious understanding. For the surrounding environment, the existence of Nasyiatul Aisyiyah has a positive impact in the form of increasing public awareness of the importance of the role of women in various sectors of life. Their programs are able to encourage women in local communities to be more confident, empowered, and dare to take an active role in social, economic, and political life, as well as strengthen solidarity and networks between women at the local level. In this way, Islamic values of equality and empowerment are not only a discourse but also reflected in real social practices.

### **Challenges of the Nasyiatul Aisyiyah Women's Movement**

We witness that there are at least two challenges faced by Nasyiatul Aisyiyah Gamping so that the women's empowerment carried out can produce changes to *and (unlimitedly) the paradigm and awareness of women, as well as so that the women's movement continues to have continuity movement*. The two challenges are in the area of management and access to women's resources (structural challenges) and also in the area of culture and tradition (cultural challenges). The following will explain the two challenges:

Table 3: *Challenges of the Empowerment Movement*

<b>Structural Challenges</b>	<b>Cultural Challenges</b>
Women's Resources	Traditional Views
Women's Structural Engagement	Tradition and Culture

### **Structural Challenges**

One of the challenges faced by Nasyiatul Aisyiyah Gamping is the limited resources they use to carry out their programs. The limited budget and facilities owned by Nasyiyah Gamping limit the scale and reach of empowerment. Thus, Nasyiatul Aisyiyah Gamping needs its formulation so that its empowerment reach can be wider. Researchers have witnessed that this effort has been carried out by the

management of *Nasyiatul Aisyiyah* through various collaborations with external parties.

Other challenges, for example, can also be seen from the empowerment of *Nasyiatul Aisyiyah* in the health sector; of course, the network of *Muhammadiyah* health institutions as the parent of this organization is not in doubt. However, *Nasyiatul Aisyiyah* certainly has challenges to their involvement, not only in the realm of health empowerment for women in the field. *Nasyiatul Aisyiyah* women need to be involved and provide input on the health system and health policies for women in the broader landscape.

### **Cultural Challenges**

The women's movement in Indonesia in its history has always been confronted not only with religious texts but also with the presence of the state, which always places women as a second-class society, but the challenges of tradition and culture are also an important part of the journey of the women's movement. The presence of modern women's groups such as *Nasyiatul Aisyiyah* is basically a breath of fresh air for the women's empowerment movement. These locality-based grassroots movements brought the women's empowerment movement to begin to touch the root of the problem of women's confinement to patriarchal traditions and culture.

In contrast to the secular women's movement or the feminist movement in Western countries, the *Nasyiatul Aisyiyah* movement still maintains its identity or the identity of Muslim women but also allows her to not only be fixated on domestic activities. With various empowerment programs, women are expected to at least not only sit on their hands against men. *Nasyiatul Aisyiyah* women can be more "empowered" in the sense of having values and abilities that will be their provision as Muslim women themselves.

### **Habitus and Cultural Capital of *Nasyiatul Aisyiyah* Women**

Women's habitus is formed from life experiences influenced by patriarchal norms, then "transformed" through educational and empowerment programs carried out by *Nasyiatul Aisyiyah*. This program functions to build cultural capital in the form of knowledge, skills, and education, which allows women to increase social mobility and affirm their role in the public sphere. Social capital is also created through a network of solidarity built among women, both at the local, regional, and international levels, which is the foundation for collaboration and collective support in carrying out various religious and social agendas. In addition, economic capital increased through skills training also provides financial independence, which is an important prerequisite for gender equality.

This transformation resulted in practices that not only opposed the dominance of men in religious practice but also had a significant impact in encouraging structural change. In religious traditions that tend to be hierarchical, the involvement of women in *da'wah* pioneered by *Nasyiatul Aisyiyah* contributed to the creation of an alternative discourse that rejected patriarchal domination. By

providing equal access to religious education, women not only gain legitimacy in interpreting religious teachings but also become effective agents of change in creating a more egalitarian religious structure. In line with Mansoor Fakhri's view, the gender transformation carried out by Nasr al-Islamiyyah in Gamping not only focuses on individual empowerment but also on changes in social, legal, and institutional norms that have perpetuated gender inequality.

Social capital, as described by Bourdieu, involves a network of relationships between individuals in a society that allows the society to function effectively.<sup>28</sup> For women involved in Nasr al-Islamiyyah, building social capital means creating a network of support and solidarity among them both at the international, regional and local levels. Meanwhile, economic capital refers to the financial resources that a person can use to achieve their goals. The empowerment program aims to increase women's economic capital by providing skills and opportunities that can increase their economic independence, which is an important step towards the women's equality agenda.<sup>29</sup>

In patriarchal religious traditions, women's involvement in da'wah and religious interpretation not only challenges male dominance but also brings significant social transformation potential. According to Mansoor Fakhri, for example, gender transformation focuses not only on individual empowerment but also on structural changes that include changes in social, legal, and institutional norms that support gender inequality. Women's involvement in religious da'wah, as explained earlier, is part of an effort to shift long-entrenched patriarchal norms. Through this engagement, women not only seek to expand their role in religion but also challenge traditional and unfair power structures. Movements such as Nasr al-Islamiyyah in Gamping can be seen as a form of implementation of Mansoor Fakhri's gender transformation concept. The changes driven by this movement are not limited to the role of women in da'wah but also include efforts to create a fairer and more equal social environment. For example, by encouraging women to actively participate in da'wah, the movement directly challenges the idea that religious leadership is the exclusive domain of men. This sets an important precedent for the role of women in other spaces that were previously dominated by men.

The role of women in religious discourse is often limited by patriarchal norms that direct women to focus more on the domestic sphere than the public sphere.<sup>30</sup> Da'wah, as a public religious activity, is usually dominated by men who are

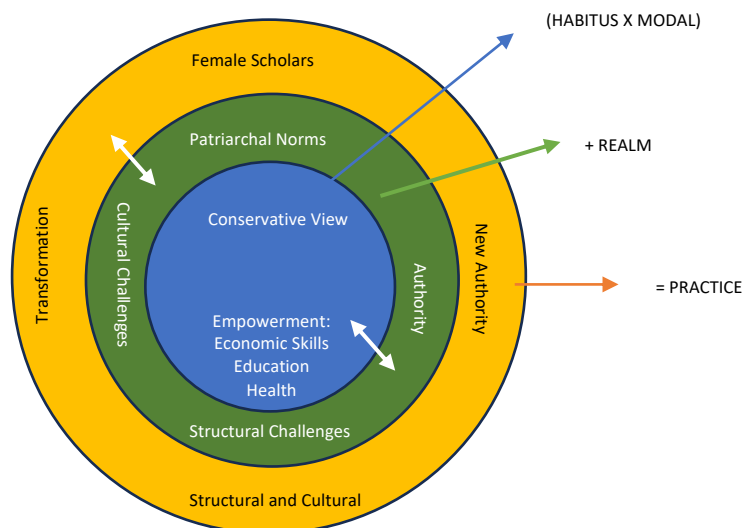
<sup>28</sup> Azaki Khoirudin, "Muhammadiyah Dan Pemberdayaan Masyarakat: Habitus, Modal, Dan Arena," *Dialog* 42, no. 2 (2019): 165–84.

<sup>29</sup> Lathiefah Widuri Retyaningtyas, "The Role of the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law, and Development (APWLD) Feminist Network in Representing Women's Rights," *Journal of International Relations* 11, no. 1 (2018): 73–90.

<sup>30</sup> Hendri Hermawan Adinugraha, Asep Suraya Maulana, and Mila Sartika, "Kewenangan Dan Kedudukan Perempuan Dalam Perspektif Gender: Suatu Analisis Tinjauan Historis," *Marwah: Jurnal Perempuan, Agama Dan Jender* 17, no. 1 (2018): 42–62.

considered more 'authoritative' in interpreting religious teachings.<sup>31</sup> However, the involvement of women in religious da'wah through the Nasyiatul Aisyiyah movement in Gamping challenges this view. By being actively involved in da'wah, women not only add variety to their voices in religious interpretation but also break down traditional boundaries that have constrained them. In this context, women's involvement in da'wah can be seen as a *counter-discourse* to religious interpretations that tend to oppress women.

**Chart 1: (Habitus x Capital) + Realm = Practice**



Women's involvement in religious da'wah is also closely related to efforts to build women's legitimacy and religious authority.<sup>32</sup> In hierarchical religious traditions, authority is often associated with formal religious knowledge possessed by male clerics. However, through the education and training provided by Nasyiatul Aisyiyah, women acquire cultural capital that allows them to assert their own religious authority. The affirmation of this authority is important in two aspects. First, women can offer a more inclusive and contextual perspective on religious interpretation, which is often more responsive to the needs of diverse communities. Second, the legitimacy of women's religious authority can also serve as a tool to collapse the gender hierarchy in religious institutions, thus allowing the creation of a more egalitarian religious structure.

Although gender transformation has great potential to change the cultural perspective of society, Mansoor Fakhri himself admitted that there are structural obstacles that seem hegemonic. Women's involvement in religious da'wah is often

<sup>31</sup> Siti Masykuroh, "Analisis Materi Kajian Keagamaan Dalam Perspektif Kesenjangan Gender (Studi Pada Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia Di Propinsi Lampung)," *Al Huwiyah: Journal of Woman and Children Studies* 1, no. 1 (2021).

<sup>32</sup> Alimatul Qibtiyah, "Keterlibatan Ulama Perempuan Di Munas Tarjih Ke-30," *Majalah Suara' Aisyiyah*, 2018, 40–41.

faced with resistance from groups that have an interest in maintaining the *patriarchal* status quo.<sup>33</sup> These obstacles can be resistance from traditional religious authorities, criticism from a society that adheres to patriarchal norms, and limited women's access to education and the resources needed to support their involvement in *da'wah*. However, as Fakhri suggests, structural change cannot be achieved without struggle and resistance to these obstacles. The progressive elements of Nasyyatul Aisyiyah's ideas in a certain context need also be affirmed through, for example, the attitude of this institution towards contemporary issues regarding women.<sup>34</sup>

## Conclusion

The women's empowerment movement led by Nasyyatul Aisyiyah Gamping employs a variety of approaches, including structural, cultural, and knowledge-based strategies, to enhance women's access to education and healthcare while promoting gender awareness within the context of Islam. Through training programs, religious initiatives, and advocacy for women's rights grounded in Islamic values, Nasyyatul Aisyiyah Gamping has successfully empowered women to actively engage in public spaces and challenge the constraints imposed by patriarchal culture. Despite encountering structural and cultural obstacles, the organization continues to broaden its reach and impact while upholding an inclusive Islamic identity.

The habituation and cultural capital of Nasyyatul Aisyiyah are evident in their utilization of social, economic, and educational resources. Through their active engagement in *da'wah*, the women of Nasyyatul Aisyiyah contribute to the formation of a more inclusive and gender-responsive religious discourse. However, the movement faces significant obstacles. Structural barriers and societal resistance to altering the patriarchal status quo present considerable challenges. Nevertheless, Nasyyatul Aisyiyah continues to affirm women's religious authority, create opportunities for female scholars in *da'wah*, and enhance their legitimacy within religious discourse. The movement underscores the importance of habitus-based approaches and cultural capital in analyzing religion-based social movements. Further research is essential, particularly regarding women's leadership, religion-based advocacy strategies, and transformations within the communities involved. Comparative studies with other Muslim women's organizations could also yield valuable insights into resistance patterns against patriarchy and the development of more inclusive religious discourses across diverse socio-cultural contexts.

<sup>33</sup> Jamalul Muttaqin, "Ulama Perempuan Dalam Dakwah Digital: Studi Kebangkitan Dan Perlawanan Atas Wacana Tafsir Patriarkis," *Living Sufism: Journal of Sufism and Psychotherapy* 1, no. 1 (2022): 92-104.

<sup>34</sup> Afifur Rochman Sya'rani, "Muslim Women Against Feminism: The Family Love Alliance (Aliansi Cinta Keluarga) and Its Impact on Women's and Sexual Rights in Contemporary Indonesia," *TRaNS: Trans-Regional and National Studies of Southeast Asia*, 2023, 1-17.

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