

The Thoughts of *Kiai* Hasyim Asy'ari on the Concept of Women's Education

Dias Maulana^{1*}, Vita Nurwulan²

^{1,2} Universitas Islam Negeri Prof. KH. Saifuddin Zuhri, Purwokerto, Indonesia

¹maulanadias967@gmail.com, ²vitanurwulan3@gmail.com

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*) Corresponding Author

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Abstract

Women's education remains a significant issue in Islamic educational discourse, particularly in relation to gender equity and access to knowledge. This study examines the concept of women's education in the thought of *Kiai* Hasyim Asy'ari, a prominent Indonesian Muslim scholar and educational reformer. Employing a qualitative literature-based approach, the research analyzes primary sources from *Kiai* Hasyim Asy'ari's writings alongside relevant secondary literature to explore the normative foundations, educational orientation, and practical implications of his views on women's education. The findings indicate that *Kiai* Hasyim conceptualized education as a religious obligation applicable to both men and women, emphasizing the integration of moral character, religious knowledge, and intellectual development. His perspective positions women as active moral agents whose education plays a strategic role in family formation and social continuity. Moreover, his educational thought is characterized by consistency between theory and practice, as reflected in his support for women's literacy and his endorsement of educational institutions for female students. This study contributes to the discourse on Islamic education by highlighting *Kiai* Hasyim Asy'ari's comprehensive and inclusive approach to women's education and by demonstrating its relevance to contemporary discussions on educational inclusivity within Muslim societies, particularly in the Indonesian context.

Keywords: Women's Education, *Kiai* Hasyim Asy'ari, Islamic Education, Gender Equity, Inclusive Education

Abstrak

Pendidikan perempuan masih menjadi isu penting dalam diskursus pendidikan Islam, khususnya terkait dengan kesetaraan gender dan akses terhadap pengetahuan. Penelitian ini mengkaji konsep pendidikan perempuan dalam pemikiran *Kiai* Hasyim Asy'ari, seorang ulama dan pembaharu pendidikan Islam di Indonesia. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif berbasis studi pustaka dengan menganalisis karya-karya *Kiai* Hasyim Asy'ari serta literatur sekunder yang relevan untuk mengungkap landasan normatif, orientasi pendidikan, dan implikasi praktis pemikirannya tentang pendidikan perempuan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa *Kiai* Hasyim Asy'ari memandang pendidikan sebagai kewajiban religius yang berlaku bagi laki-laki dan perempuan. Konsep pendidikan yang ia tawarkan menekankan integrasi antara pembentukan akhlak, penguasaan pengetahuan keagamaan, dan pengembangan kapasitas intelektual. Dalam perspektif ini, perempuan diposisikan sebagai subjek moral yang aktif, di mana pendidikan memiliki peran strategis dalam pembentukan keluarga dan keberlanjutan sosial. Selain itu, pemikiran pendidikan *Kiai* Hasyim ditandai oleh

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konsistensi antara gagasan dan praktik, yang tercermin dalam dukungannya terhadap literasi perempuan serta pengembangan lembaga pendidikan bagi santri perempuan. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada kajian pendidikan Islam dengan menegaskan pendekatan Kiai Hasyim Asy'ari yang komprehensif dan inklusif terhadap pendidikan perempuan serta menunjukkan relevansinya dalam diskursus pendidikan kontemporer, khususnya dalam konteks masyarakat Muslim di Indonesia.

Kata Kunci: Pendidikan Perempuan, Kiai Hasyim Asy'ari, Pendidikan Islam, Kesetaraan Gender, Pendidikan Inklusif

Introduction

Women's education remains a significant issue within Islamic educational discourse, particularly in relation to gender equality and access to knowledge. Islam does not prohibit women from pursuing education; rather, it affirms the right of all individuals, both men and women, to seek knowledge without discrimination.¹ The Islamic worldview emphasizes that human dignity and social status are determined by piety and moral responsibility rather than by gender. Historically, the emergence of Islam brought transformative changes to women's social position, rejecting pre-Islamic practices that marginalized women and affirming their moral and intellectual capacities. This transformation is reflected in the active participation of women in early Islamic intellectual traditions, including prominent female figures in hadith transmission such as Aisyah, Ummu Salamah, and Asma binti Abu Bakar.²

Despite these normative foundations, women in many Muslim societies continue to experience various forms of discrimination, including marginalization, stereotyping, and limited access to education.³ Such conditions are often shaped by socio-cultural and political structures that position women in subordinate roles and restrict their opportunities for intellectual and social development.⁴ Nurhayati identifies several factors contributing to this inequality, including unequal access to education, limited social support, and persistent cultural barriers that hinder women's participation in educational spaces. These realities highlight the ongoing gap between Islamic educational ideals and their practical implementation.⁵

Within the Indonesian context, the issue of women's education has long attracted the attention of reformers and Muslim intellectuals. Figures such as Kartini, Poetri Mardika, KH. Ahmad Dahlan, Siti Walidah, and Syaikhah Fathimah al-Palimbani articulated educational visions that emphasized equal access to education for men and women.⁶ Their perspectives align with broader Islamic ethical and legal principles that recognize women as

¹ Mohamed Sulthan Ismiya Begum et al., "Gender Equity in Muslim Family Law: Modern and Contemporary 'Ulamā's View," *Al-Ahkam* 34, no. 2 (2024): 221–56, <https://doi.org/10.21580/ahkam.2024.34.2.20773>.

² Arif Friyadi et al., "Exploring Female Hadith Transmitters: A Gender Perspective as a Modern Women's History Lesson through Intelligent Ṣaḥābiyyāt," *Sawwa: Jurnal Studi Gender* 19, no. 1 (2024): 145–68, <https://doi.org/10.21580/sa.v19i1.20264>.

³ M. Ilham Zidal Haq and Rofiatul Hosna, "Konsep Pendidikan Perempuan Dari Perspektif KH. Hasyim Asy'ari," *Al-Hasanah : Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 9, no. 1 (2024): 1–23, <https://doi.org/10.51729/91254>.

⁴ Ahmad Ibrahim Hasibuan, "Rahmah El Yunusiyah: Transformation of Islamic Education and Its Role in Women's Education in Padang Panjang," *Edukasi Islami: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 12, no. 4 (2023): 3275.

⁵ Eti Nurhayati, *Psikologi Perempuan Dalam Berbagai Perspektif* (Pustaka Pelajar, 2018).

⁶ Elfia Elfia et al., "Gender Equality in Imamate Shia and Sunni Inheritance Jurisprudence: A Comparative Analysis of Legal Doctrines and Familial Relationships," *Mazahib* 23, no. 2 (2024): 555–94, <https://doi.org/10.21093/mj.v23i2.8381>.

moral agents and legal subjects with the capacity to acquire knowledge and participate actively in social life. Education, in this regard, is understood as a strategic means for empowering women to fulfill their rights and responsibilities in accordance with their abilities and social roles.⁷

Although women's education has been widely discussed by various scholars and reformers, the educational thought of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari—particularly regarding women's education—has received comparatively limited scholarly attention. However, his specific views on women's education are often treated as secondary or discussed only partially, leaving a significant gap in the literature, such as those by Handayani et al.,⁸ Bagaskara,⁹ Sugari,¹⁰ Haq and Hosna,¹¹ Lbs,¹² Azizah,¹³ and Hasan.¹⁴ However, his specific views on women's education are often treated as secondary or discussed only partially, leaving a significant gap in the literature. However, *Kiai* Hasyim's thoughts on women's education remain underexplored or inadequately analyzed. In fact, *Kiai* Hasyim has made significant contributions to the field of education with ideas manifesting through practical actions and writings.

In fact, *Kiai* Hasyim Asy'ari articulated educational ideas that emphasized moral formation, intellectual responsibility, and social welfare for all Muslims, including women. His contributions were expressed not only through theoretical writings but also through practical educational initiatives. Based on this context, this study aims to examine *Kiai* Hasyim Asy'ari's concept of women's education by analyzing its normative foundations, educational orientation, and practical contributions. By situating his thought within Islamic ethical principles and the socio-cultural context of Indonesia, this research seeks to contribute to contemporary discussions on women's education and to enrich the study of Islamic educational figures who advanced inclusive educational ideals in Indonesian Muslim society.

Method

In this study, the researcher employs a qualitative method with a literature study approach. This research is entirely based on library studies or literature reviews aimed at delving into *Kiai* Hasyim Asy'ari's thoughts on the concept of women's education.

⁷ Abdul Manaf, "Right of Women In The Family Law; Zakir Naik Perspective," *Jurnal Hukum Islam* 20, no. 2 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.28918/jhi.v20i2.5638>.

⁸ Nuri Sri Handayani et al., "Akhlak Peserta Didik Dalam Menuntut Ilmu: Sebuah Pemikiran Reflektif KH. Hasyim Asy'ari Dalam Pendidikan Islam," *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam Al-Thariqah* 6, no. 2 (2021): 395–411, [https://doi.org/10.25299/al-thariqah.2021.vol6\(2\).8105](https://doi.org/10.25299/al-thariqah.2021.vol6(2).8105).

⁹ Roy Bagaskara, "Reorientasi Pemikiran Pendidikan KH. M. Hasyim Asy'ari: Etika dalam Pendidikan Islam," *Islamuna: Jurnal Studi Islam* 6, no. 2 (2019): 2, <https://doi.org/10.19105/islamuna.v6i2.2545>.

¹⁰ Dedi Sugari, "Pemikiran K.H. Hasyim Asy'ari Dalam Pendidikan Islam Indonesia," *Populer: Jurnal Penelitian Mahasiswa* 3, no. 3 (2024): 3, <https://doi.org/10.58192/populer.v3i3.2332>.

¹¹ Haq and Hosna, "Konsep Pendidikan Perempuan Dari Perspektif KH. Hasyim Asy'ari."

¹² Mukhlis Lbs, "Konsep Pendidikan Menurut Pemikiran Kh. Hasyim Asy'ari," *Jurnal As-Salam* 4, no. 1 (2020): 1, <https://doi.org/10.37249/as-salam.v4i1.170>.

¹³ Nurul Azizah, "Pemikiran KH Hasyim Asy'ari Tentang Konsep Pendidikan," *Ta Lim Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam Dan Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 2, no. 1 (2023): 1, <https://doi.org/10.59098/talim.v2i1.805>.

¹⁴ Mohammad Hasan, "Al-Wasāṭiyah al-Intiqā'iyah al-Taqlīdīyah: Dirāsāt Haula Harakātī Wa Afkārī Kiāi Hāṣim Hāsyim Asy'arī Fī Fiqh al-Siyāsah al-Ijtīmā'iyah Bi Indūnisiā," *AL-IHKAM: Jurnal Hukum & Pranata Sosial* 16, no. 2 (2021): 2, <https://doi.org/10.19105/al-lhkam.v16i2.5309>.

Therefore, this research is categorized as library research, focusing on the collection and analysis of data from various relevant literature sources.¹⁵ The data collection process involves searching, identifying, and gathering various references related to *Kiai Hasyim Asy'ari's* thoughts. The collected data include books, journal articles, magazines, and other documents that can provide in-depth information regarding his ideas and contributions to education, particularly concerning women. The researcher also includes primary sources, such as *Kiai Hasyim Asy'ari's* own works, as well as secondary sources that discuss the thoughts and interpretations others have regarding his works.

Data analysis is conducted systematically by reading and examining the gathered literature. The researcher categorizes information based on important themes that emerge from *Kiai Hasyim Asy'ari's* thoughts, including the values of education he advocated, the role of women in society, and the appropriate learning methods for women. The researcher also considers the social and cultural context during *Kiai Hasyim Asy'ari's* time in analyzing his ideas and views on women's education.¹⁶ In addition, to ensure the validity and credibility of the data, the researcher performs source triangulation by comparing information from various different literatures. This approach allows the researcher to confirm that the findings obtained are valid and accountable.

The entire methodology is designed to provide a comprehensive depiction of *Kiai Hasyim Asy'ari's* thoughts in the context of women's education, thereby contributing meaningfully to the study of Islamic education and gender. This research is expected to make his thoughts a reference in efforts to enhance education for women in various aspects, especially in the modern era today.

Results and Discussion

Biography of Kyai Hasyim Asy'Ari

KH Hasyim Asy'ari was born on 14 February 1871 in Gedang Village, Jombang, East Java, into a devout religious family. He was the son of Kiai Asy'ari and Nyai Halimah, both of whom played an important role in shaping his early religious and moral formation. KH Hasyim Asy'ari is widely recognized as a prominent Muslim scholar, thinker, and educator, whose intellectual and educational contributions significantly influenced the development of Islam in Indonesia. He later founded Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the largest Islamic organization in Indonesia, which was officially established on 31 January 1926.¹⁷

His early education was acquired through traditional Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) in Java, where he developed a strong foundation in classical Islamic sciences. Seeking to deepen his religious knowledge, he subsequently pursued advanced studies in Mecca, which exposed him to broader networks of Islamic scholarship. Upon his return to Indonesia, KH Hasyim Asy'ari assumed a central role in the advancement of Islamic education, particularly

¹⁵ John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (SAGE Publications, 2022).

¹⁶ Hardani Hardani et al., *Buku Metode Penelitian Kualitatif & Kuantitatif* (CV Pustaka Ilmu, 2020).

¹⁷ Zuhairi Misrawi, *Hadratussyaikh Hasyim Asy'ari: Moderasi, Keumatan, Dan Kebangsaan* (Penerbit Buku Kompas, 2010).

through the establishment and development of pesantren-based learning, marking the beginning of his enduring influence on Islamic intellectual and educational life in Indonesia.¹⁸

The Urgency of Women's Education in Kiai Hasyim Asy'ari's Thought

Islam places education as a fundamental pillar in the development of human civilization. This emphasis is clearly reflected in the first revelation received by the Prophet Muhammad (Q.S. al-'Alaq [96]: 1–5), which contains three core educational commands: iqra' (to read), 'allama bi al-qalam (to write), and 'allama al-insān (to learn and teach).¹⁹ These directives signify that knowledge acquisition, literacy, and continuous learning are essential foundations for building an advanced and prosperous society. Allah further affirms that those who possess knowledge will be elevated in rank (Q.S. al-Mujādilah [58]: 11), underscoring the central position of education in Islam.²⁰

This Qur'anic worldview strongly influenced the educational thought of Kiai Hasyim Asy'ari. In his seminal work *Adab al-'Ālim wa al-Muta'allim*, Kiai Hasyim emphasizes that knowledge is the primary means of safeguarding human dignity and moral order, while ignorance (jahil) is identified as a major cause of social and civilizational decline.²¹ He argues that education is not solely aimed at intellectual attainment but also at the formation of ethical character (akhlāq) and spiritual maturity, which are essential for both individual and societal well-being.²²

Building upon this understanding, Kiai Hasyim Asy'ari views education as a universal obligation that applies equally to both men and women. The obligation to seek knowledge, as emphasized in Islamic teachings, is not limited by gender but is grounded in the shared moral and spiritual responsibility of all believers. This position is consistent with Kiai Hasyim's educational philosophy, which conceptualizes knowledge as a moral and spiritual necessity for all Muslims, aimed at preserving human dignity and social order.²³ In support of this perspective, studies on Islamic education emphasize that ensuring women's access to education is crucial for social development, as it promotes equality in knowledge acquisition and strengthens women's participation in religious and social life.²⁴ Within this framework, women's education becomes not only an individual right but also a collective

¹⁸ Arief Hidayat Afendi et al., "Reviving the Legacy of KH Hasyim Asy'ari: Embracing Techno-Islamic Pedagogy for Contemporary Education," *At-Ta'dib* 19, no. 1 (2024): 1–16, <https://doi.org/10.21111/attadib.v19i1.12247>.

¹⁹ Kementerian Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an Dan Terjemahannya: Dilengkapi Dengan Materi Pendidikan Agama Islam* (Kalami Qur'an, 2017).

²⁰ Kementerian Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an Dan Terjemahannya: Dilengkapi Dengan Materi Pendidikan Agama Islam*.

²¹ Rosidin, *Pendidikan Karakter Khas Pesantren (Adabul Alim Wal Muta'allim)* (Genius Media, 2014), <https://books.google.co.id/books?id=n6iYzwEACAAJ>.

²² Muhammad Abror Rosyidin et al., "The Absorption of Islamic Education Thought of KH. M. Hasyim Asy'ari through Teaching of Adab al-'Ālim Wa al-Muta'Allim among the Santri at the Pesantren Tebuireng," *Millah: Journal of Religious Studies*, August 31, 2023, 611–40, <https://doi.org/10.20885/millah.vol22.iss2.art12>.

²³ Ahmad Ainuri and Mirza Wijaya, "Epistemology of Islamic Education According to Hasyim Asy'ari Thought," *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Literature and Muslim Society* 6, no. 2 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.22515/islimus.v6i2.4020>.

²⁴ Muhammad Rasyidil Fikri Alhijr et al., "Islamic Education for Women Based On Buya Hamka and Murtadha Muthahhari's Thoughts," *Edukasi Islami: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 12, no. 3 (2023).

investment in societal well-being, as educated women play a vital role in family nurturing, moral transmission, and the resilience of Muslim communities.

Furthermore, studies on women's education in Islamic contexts underscore that educational equity for women enhances their capabilities, leadership potential, and societal roles, particularly within Islamic educational institutions.²⁵ Such findings resonate with Kiai Hasyim's emphasis that education should build both intellectual capacity and ethical character. Therefore, women's education serves both personal and communal purposes: it supports women in actualizing their spiritual and moral potentials and strengthens the moral resilience of society at large. This aligns with broader Islamic educational principles that regard knowledge as a source of human dignity and social advancement, further reinforcing the urgency of educating women within a comprehensive Islamic educational vision.

Islam places a fundamental emphasis on the dignity, moral status, and social position of women as equal moral agents within the Islamic worldview.²⁶ Women are recognized as 'abdullāh (servants of God) and are entrusted with multiple interconnected roles, including those of wives, mothers, and active members of society. These roles are accompanied by fundamental rights, most notably the right to education and knowledge transmission.²⁷ In Islamic epistemology, knowledge ('ilm) constitutes a central ethical and spiritual obligation that applies equally to both men and women, thereby rejecting gender-based discrimination in educational access and participation.²⁸

Historically, Islam emerged as a reformative force that restored women's dignity and social value, challenging pre-Islamic practices that marginalized and excluded women from intellectual and moral development. This normative commitment is consistently reflected in Qur'anic principles and prophetic traditions that emphasize moral equality and intellectual responsibility for all believers.²⁹ Within the Indonesian Islamic intellectual tradition, Kiai Hasyim Asy'ari articulated a parallel view by asserting that seeking knowledge is an obligatory duty (farḍ 'ayn) for every Muslim, including women. His educational thought underscores that access to education is not merely a social right but a religious imperative essential to the cultivation of ethical character and communal well-being.³⁰

From an Islamic theological perspective, all human beings—men and women alike—are regarded as equal before Allah, regardless of gender, social class, ethnicity, or

²⁵ Syahdara Anisa Makruf et al., "Islamic Education for Women in Madrasah Muallimat," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 8, no. 2 (2022): 191–206, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v8i2.19452>.

²⁶ Habiba Elahi, "Women's Rights in Islam: A Comprehensive Analysis of Quranic and Sunnah Teachings," *International Journal For Multidisciplinary Research* 7, no. 2 (2025): 38850, <https://doi.org/10.36948/ijfmr.2025.v07i02.38850>.

²⁷ Januar Januar and Alfi Rahmi, "Exploration of Spirituality in Islamic Education: Perspectives on Gender Equality and Minority Rights," *HUMANISMA: Journal of Gender Studies* 8, no. 1 (2024): 38–52, <https://doi.org/10.30983/humanisma.v8i1.8286>.

²⁸ Aksin Wijaya et al., "Rethinking Gender Justice in the Quran: A Critical Exploration of Muslim Feminist Perspectives," *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis* 26, no. 1 (2025): 77–98, <https://doi.org/10.14421/qh.v26i1.5704>.

²⁹ Margot Badran, *Feminism in Islam: Secular and Religious Convergences* (Oneworld Publications, 2013), <https://books.google.co.id/books?id=IBy9DwAAQBAJ>.

³⁰ Masruri Masruri, "K.H. Hasyim Asy'ari's Thoughts and Its Relevance in Modern Islamic Education," *EDU-RELIGIA: Jurnal Keagamaan Dan Pembelajarannya* 7, no. 1 (2024): 1–10, <https://doi.org/10.52166/edu-religia.v7i1.5829>.

nationality. The sole criterion for distinction is taqwā (piety), as explicitly stated in the Qur'an (49:13).³¹ Contemporary scholarship in Islamic education affirms that this principle provides a robust normative foundation for gender-inclusive educational frameworks that integrate spiritual, intellectual, and social development.³² Consequently, women's education in Islam should be understood not as a modern concession, but as an intrinsic component of Islamic ethical and educational philosophy.

Within this normative and theological framework, Kiai Hasyim Asy'ari's views on women's education must also be understood in relation to the socio-cultural context in which he lived. Javanese society in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was largely patriarchal, where men were commonly perceived as primary authority holders, while women were often confined to domestic roles and regarded as *konco wingking* subordinate companions whose primary function was to serve their husbands and household needs. In such a context, women's access to formal education was frequently considered unnecessary or even inappropriate.³³

Against this backdrop, Kiai Hasyim sought to challenge entrenched cultural assumptions by articulating an educational vision rooted in Islamic ethical principles rather than patriarchal custom. He emphasized that parents bear shared moral and religious obligations toward their children, obligations that apply equally to both fathers and mothers. These obligations include giving children a good and dignified name, ensuring proper care and nurturing, instilling moral character (*akhlāq*), facilitating marriage upon maturity, and, crucially, providing education in literacy and basic knowledge. Importantly, Kiai Hasyim asserted that these educational rights apply equally to both boys and girls, thereby rejecting gender-based distinctions in access to early moral and intellectual formation.³⁴

Furthermore, Kiai Hasyim emphasized that the cultivation of character and literacy should begin at an early stage of life, reflecting his belief that early education plays a decisive role in shaping moral consciousness and intellectual capacity.³⁵ By urging parents to prioritize education for all children regardless of gender, he reframed women's education not as a deviation from religious norms, but as an integral component of Islamic parental responsibility. This view aligns with his broader educational philosophy, which conceptualizes education as a means of achieving well-being in both worldly life and the hereafter, while simultaneously strengthening the moral resilience of Muslim society.

Kiai Hasyim also critically addressed prevailing misconceptions that regarded literacy for women as religiously prohibited. He viewed such assumptions as contributing to high levels of female illiteracy and, consequently, to broader patterns of social and civilizational stagnation. Rather than adopting a rigid legal stance, Kiai Hasyim employed a

³¹ Kementerian Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an Dan Terjemahannya: Dilengkapi Dengan Materi Pendidikan Agama Islam*.

³² Nur Annisa Fitria et al., "Integration of Gender Equality in Islamic Education Curriculum: A Content Study on Elementary School Textbooks," *Scaffolding: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam Dan Multikulturalisme* 7, no. 1 (2025): 841–59, <https://doi.org/10.37680/scaffolding.v7i1.7294>.

³³ Eka Srimulyani, *Women from Traditional Islamic Educational Institutions in Indonesia: Negotiating Public Spaces*, IAS Publications Series (Amsterdam University Press, 2012).

³⁴ Muhammad Rijal Fadli and Efilina Kissiya, "Character Education Perspective KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's and Its Relevance in the Digital Age," *SWARNADWIPA* 8, no. 1 (2024): 17, <https://doi.org/10.24127/sd.v8i1.3266>.

³⁵ Fadli and Kissiya, "Character Education Perspective KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's and Its Relevance in the Digital Age."

contextual juridical approach, arguing that the permissibility of writing for women depends on intention and purpose. As elaborated in *Ziyādah al-Ta'liqāt*, he classified literacy activities within a flexible legal framework ranging from obligatory to prohibited thereby challenging simplistic and restrictive interpretations of religious texts.³⁶

Importantly, Kiai Hasyim's commitment to women's education was not limited to theoretical argumentation but was also reflected in his educational practice. His emphasis on literacy, religious instruction, and moral cultivation within the family demonstrates a pedagogical vision in which women are positioned as central agents in shaping morally grounded and intellectually capable generations.³⁷ Moreover, Kiai Hasyim's articulation of education as a lifelong obligation reflects a broader Islamic educational ethos that transcends formal schooling. His insistence that married women retain the right and obligation to pursue religious knowledge underscores an educational framework grounded in ethical responsibility and social reform³⁸

Educational Orientation for Women in Kiai Hasyim's Perspective

In Kiai Hasyim's view, education has the primary purpose of applying knowledge in daily life. The implementation of this knowledge is likened to harvesting the fruits of what has been sown and acts as a provision for life after facing Allah in the Hereafter.³⁹ Furthermore, education aims to nurture a sense of fear (*khosyah*) of Allah by fulfilling His commands and avoiding His prohibitions. It is also hoped that education can establish balance and justice on earth, promote good deeds that are beneficial, ultimately leading to happiness in this world and the Hereafter, and elevate an individual to a noble status compared to other beings.⁴⁰

A person who possesses true and comprehensive knowledge and understanding of Islamic teachings and is able to actualize and implement this knowledge in daily life will show harmony among cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects within themselves. All their words, actions, and behaviors are based on the knowledge they have acquired, which impacts their environment, including themselves, their families, friends, and the broader community, by exhibiting good manners (*akhlaqul karimah*) and strong character. This happens because sound reasoning is the best gift from God to humanity, while ignorance is the worst calamity one can face. Therefore, knowledge serves as a guide for the mind,

³⁶ Jamal Ma'ruf Asmuni, *Pemikiran Kiai Hasyim Asy'ari Tentang Agama, Perempuan, Dan Kemasyarakatan*, 2nd ed. (Aswaja Pressindo, 2018).

³⁷ Aba Agil Aziz et al., "Freedom to Learn Curriculum from Kiai Haji Hasyim Asy'ari's Perspective (A Study of Book Adab Al-'Alim Wa Al-Muta'allim)," *Edukasia : Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Islam* 17, no. 1 (2022): 15, <https://doi.org/10.21043/edukasia.v17i1.13459>.

³⁸ Charisma Jalil Indranata and Dzulkifli Hadi Imawan, "Kitab Adabul 'Alim Wal Mut'allim The Work Of K.H. Hasyim Asy'ari In The Development Of Modern Islamic Education," *Profetika: Jurnal Studi Islam*, August 2, 2022, 272–80, <https://doi.org/10.23917/profetika.v23i2.19661>.

³⁹ Firdausy Aulia et al., "Relevansi Pemikiran KH. Hasyim Asy'ari Tentang Pendidikan Karakter Di Era Modern," *Bhinneka: Jurnal Bintang Pendidikan Dan Bahasa* 2, no. 1 (2024): 1, <https://doi.org/10.59024/bhinneka.v2i1.636>.

⁴⁰ Yuyun Sasmita and Khoirotul Idawati, "Kontribusi Hadrastussyeikh Kh. M. Hasyim Asy'ari Terhadap Eksistensi Pendidikan Agama Islam Bagi Kaum Perempuan," *At-Tajdid : Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pemikiran Islam* 9, no. 1 (2025): 278, <https://doi.org/10.24127/att.v9i1.3940>.

protection, and shield against the deception of Satan, as well as a fortress against the tricks of the envious.⁴¹

Essentially, *Kiai* Hasyim emphasizes that education must focus on the heart (qolb). The goals of education can be achieved if a person has sincere intentions and purposes, solely hoping for the pleasure of Allah and constantly drawing closer (muraqabah) to Him. *Kiai* Hasyim also stresses that in education, the intention and main purpose of learning must be considered, starting with rectifying intentions without merely seeking material gains. Education should be free from elements of materialism and worldly pursuits, such as wealth, rank, position, and popularity, and should not demean or belittle others. Intentions are the central axis and foundation underlying all activities in life.⁴²

However, if the pursuit of knowledge deviates, then the intention becomes corrupted as well. This is due to the intention of seeking knowledge being used as a means to chase temporary worldly luxury and glory, such as accumulating wealth, seeking positions, or pursuing reputation and popularity. Consequently, the rewards for seeking knowledge can be completely lost, and one's deeds may become futile, ultimately leading to great misfortune. Indeed, they are threatened with hellfire.⁴³

Kiai Hasyim explains that to acquire beneficial knowledge in accordance with Islamic educational orientation, one must pay attention to the ethics of seeking knowledge. Suggested steps include purifying the heart from vices and despicable traits, not postponing learning opportunities, being patient and content in facing various blessings and trials, managing time wisely, eating and drinking moderately, avoiding foods and drinks that lead to laziness and ignorance, maintaining piety in all actions, reducing sleep time for study, and steering clear of activities that are unproductive.⁴⁴

According to *Kiai* Hasyim, the main objective of women's education is to shape individuals who possess good character, personalities, and manners, as well as women who are always pious towards Allah. This education helps women carry out their roles as servants of God, wives, mothers, and members of society effectively. Women with a strong commitment to religion are the ones expected by Prophet Muhammad to become prospective mothers. Therefore, in choosing a future mother, *Kiai* Hasyim emphasizes that religious quality should be prioritized since religion serves as the benchmark for the woman's character.⁴⁵

As religious and educated women, they are aware and capable of fulfilling their duties across various aspects of life. This enables them to become good mothers, wise educators, and household managers who understand their rights, responsibilities, and

⁴¹ Sasmita and Idawati, "Kontribusi Hadrastussyeikh Kh. M. Hasyim Asy'ari Terhadap Eksistensi Pendidikan Agama Islam Bagi Kaum Perempuan."

⁴² Refi Fadhilah Oktavia et al., "Implementasi Kitab Akhlak Lil Banat Dalam Membentuk Adab Dan Budi Pakerti Santri Dikelas I Isti'dadiyyah Madrasah Islamiyyah Darul Falah," *AL-MANAR : Jurnal Komunikasi Dan Pendidikan Islam* 14, no. 1 (2025): 110–29, <https://doi.org/10.36668/jal.v14i1.1260>.

⁴³ Sasmita and Idawati, "Kontribusi Hadrastussyeikh Kh. M. Hasyim Asy'ari Terhadap Eksistensi Pendidikan Agama Islam Bagi Kaum Perempuan."

⁴⁴ M. Ilham Zidal Haq and Rofiatul Hosna, "Konsep Pendidikan Perempuan Dari Perspektif Kh. Hasyim Asy'ari," *Al-Hasanah : Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 9, no. 1 (2024): 1–23, <https://doi.org/10.51729/91254>.

⁴⁵ Muh Barid Nizarudin Wajdi et al., "Integrating Hadratussyaikh Hasyim Asy'ari's Moral Values in Contemporary Education: Addressing the Challenges of the Digital Age," *Tribakti: Jurnal Pemikiran Keislaman* 36, no. 1 (2025): 69–84, <https://doi.org/10.33367/tribakti.v36i1.6177>.

obligations. Without education, women would struggle to understand and fulfill their responsibilities and rights. Thus, education is the primary key to shaping a woman's character and spirit.

Kiai Hasyim views the principal aim of women's education as advancing the nation's life and paving the way for women's happiness while enabling them to be individuals of character. As the first teachers for their children, women have the obligation and primary role in guiding and nurturing their offspring. Every child should be given a good name, education, training, and proper nutrition, especially from their mothers. A mother has a primary influence on a child's development and character. Therefore, women who are to become mothers must be educated, as the fundamental task of educating children cannot be carried out well without the opportunity for them to learn and develop.⁴⁶

Kiai Hasyim asserts that choosing an educated wife is key to achieving harmony in the household. According to *Kiai Hasyim*, women are referred to by Prophet Muhammad as *imad al-bilad* (the pillars of the nation).⁴⁷ Therefore, educating the nation's children becomes a necessity, considering that intelligent and well-characterized children arise from a mother's nurturing. These children will eventually become the nation's successors. Women who play the role of mothers have a crucial task in educating their children, creating future leaders who will become the main pillars of the nation. *Kiai Hasyim* endeavors to raise awareness in society about the importance of women's status and their roles in various aspects of life.⁴⁸

Kiai Hasyim Asy'ari's Practical Contribution to Women's Education

Kiai Hasyim played a significant role in promoting education for women. In an era when society often viewed women as "*konco wingking*" (subservient companions), *Kiai Hasyim* championed women's rights. At that time, attention to women's education was minimal or nearly nonexistent. Women were frequently not allowed to leave the house and were expected to manage household chores and remain indoors. *Kiai Hasyim* sought to dismantle the feudal-patriarchal traditions that hindered national progress. He believed that education for women was essential for elevating their status, protecting them from oppression, and empowering them to be more knowledgeable, wise, active, and independent. Education would also enable women to contribute to the dignity of the Indonesian nation. Recognizing the social conditions that were highly discriminatory towards women, *Kiai Hasyim* was motivated to develop education for women progressively. Since the establishment of the Tebuireng Islamic boarding school (Pesantren Tebuireng) in 1899, *Kiai Hasyim* dedicated time and space (Musolla) at his home (ndalem kesepuhan) for Quranic study classes for Muslim women, which he led and taught personally.

Kiai Hasyim undertook various efforts to advance and develop education for women. He was optimistic about his mission, firmly believing that the world could not develop if women were confined to the kitchen. Thanks to *Kiai Hasyim's* perseverance in educating women, Pesantren Tebuireng successfully produced female activists who were committed

⁴⁶ Wajdi et al., "Integrating Hadratussyaikh Hasyim Asy'ari's Moral Values in Contemporary Education."

⁴⁷ Sasmita and Idawati, "Kontribusi Hadratussyaikh Kh. M. Hasyim Asy'ari Terhadap Eksistensi Pendidikan Agama Islam Bagi Kaum Perempuan."

⁴⁸ Yusutria Yusutria et al., "The Works and Thoughts of Rahmah El-Yunusiyah as 'Bundo Kandung': Towards Modernity in Women Education Within an Islamic Education Perspective," *ESENSIA: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin* 22, no. 2 (2021): 155–67, <https://doi.org/10.14421/esensia.v22i2.2508>.

to Islam and well-informed, such as his eldest daughter, Nyai Khoiriyyah. Alongside her father, Nyai Khoiriyyah worked to enhance education for women, becoming a role model and recognized as a “Srikandi” (female warrior) who tirelessly fought for women’s advancement and elevation.

Kiai Hasyim’s desire to establish education specifically for women was later realized by *Kiai* Bisri Syansuri, one of his students, and Nyai Khoiriyyah Hasyim, his eldest daughter. Both were keenly aware of the importance of education for women. In 1919, *Kiai* Bisri Syansuri made a groundbreaking move by establishing a classroom or pesantren specifically for female students at his pesantren. Meanwhile, in 1928, Nyai Khoiriyyah Hasyim, along with her husband *Kiai* Ma’shum Ali, was directed by *Kiai* Hasyim to establish a pesantren in Seblak. By 1937, the Seblak pesantren began offering education for girls by establishing the Madrasah Banat (a school for girls). With the blessing and support of *Kiai* Hasyim, Nyai Khoiriyyah founded a women’s school called Madrasah Kuttatul Banaat in Makkah in 1942, in response to the low education levels among Arab women and the lack of educational institutions specifically for them.⁴⁹

This innovative step in providing education for women through the pesantren and madrasah system was unprecedented in the pesantren environment. The concept may have seemed “strange” to many ulama at the time. However, *Kiai* Hasyim successfully convinced religious leaders about the importance of education for women. He argued that if women remain uneducated and ignorant, many of them would lack understanding and knowledge and a broad perspective. This would negatively impact the education and character of their children, as they would be unable to teach them Islamic principles and high values.

The necessity of establishing schools and madrasahs is to ensure that the younger generation, who will become the nation’s successors, receive proper education and develop good character. The goal is to create a prosperous and advanced nation that achieves *baladatul thoyyibatun wa robbun ghofur* (a good land and a forgiving Lord). A nation cannot progress without educated human resources. Building quality human resources is accomplished through quality education and the establishment of schools and pesantren. *Kiai* Hasyim emphasized this in his perspective:

“To achieve happiness in life and eternal glory, the way is to provide adequate education for your children and establish schools. O, honorable and courageous scholars! Spend the wealth that Allah has granted you to educate your children, and prepare them to be able to open schools in their own homes.”

Kiai Hasyim often encouraged the establishment of madrasahs, particularly for women. On one occasion, he even assisted in funding the construction of Madrasah Al-Banat, a school specifically for women. To this day, that school remains active, has many female students, and has graduated numerous alumni who are beneficial to the nation, community, and religion. *Kiai* Hasyim underscored the importance of education for women, stating:

“Use these funds to build madrasahs so that you can educate your daughters to become exemplary women who are beneficial to the nation, community, and religion.”

⁴⁹ Amirul Ulum, loc, cit.

*Without knowledge, they will not be able to do anything useful. Knowledge is the only weapon.*⁵⁰

Kiai Hasyim held great hopes for the development of educational institutions that prioritize education for women. He believed that the advancement of the nation and its religion heavily depended on the quality of education received by women, as they would serve as the primary educators for their children. Kiai Hasyim did not only teach knowledge to his daughters but also to other women, establishing specific pesantren for women and promoting the development of female madrasahs.

Through his efforts, Kiai Hasyim helped shape a more inclusive educational landscape that recognized the importance of women's roles in both family and society. His advocacy for women's education was a pivotal contribution to countering longstanding societal norms that restricted women's opportunities. By empowering women through education, he aimed to enhance their capacity to contribute to the broader community and nation.

Relevance of Kiai Hasyim Asy'ari's Thought to Contemporary National Education

Kiai Hasyim Asy'ari's educational thinking remains highly relevant to contemporary national education, particularly in relation to the principles of inclusive and non-discriminatory education. His emphasis on equal access to education for both men and women reflects a normative commitment to justice and human dignity, aligned with the fundamental values later institutionalized in the National Education System Law Number 20 of 2003. Although articulated in a different historical context, Kiai Hasyim's educational vision provides an ethical framework aligned with modern educational ideals that emphasize equality, moral responsibility, and social welfare. As Yunus Abu Bakar explains, his approach to education is deeply rooted in Islamic ethical principles, which view knowledge as a moral obligation and a means of maintaining social harmony.⁵¹

Kiai Hasyim's holistic educational philosophy, which integrates faith (aqidah), religious practice (sharia), moral character (akhlāq), and intellectual development, further strengthens the relevance of his thinking to contemporary educational goals. This integrative orientation aligns with current national education goals, which seek to balance intellectual competence with character development and civic responsibility. His rejection of the dichotomy between religious and general knowledge supports ongoing efforts in Islamic educational institutions to promote interdisciplinary learning. This perspective is also emphasized by Saca Suhendi et al., who highlight the role of Islamic boarding schools

⁵⁰ Nurul Ulmi Mansur, "Tarjamah Ahmad Mustofa Bisri Al Indonesia Kitab Al Allamah Muhammad Hasyim Asy'ari Wadi'u Lubnah Istiqlal Indonesia Li Muhammad Asad Shihab (dirasah Fi Zahirat al hadhf wa al ziyadah)" (Undergraduate Thesis, Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga, 2019), <https://digilib.uin-suka.ac.id/id/eprint/36395/>.

⁵¹ M. Yunus Abu Bakar, "Traces of KH. M. Hasyim Asy'ari Thought: Relevance for the Development of Islamic Education in Indonesia," *Al-Hayat: Journal of Islamic Education* 7, no. 2 (2023): 654, <https://doi.org/10.35723/ajie.v7i2.483>.

(pesantren) as institutions that foster intellectual capacity and ethical awareness in responding to modern social challenges.⁵²

Furthermore, Kiai Hasyim's emphasis on the formation of ethics and moral discipline in education strengthens the relevance of his thinking to contemporary educational practices. His views on morality and educator responsibility underscore the importance of ethical integrity in the educational process. These dimensions are elaborated by Siswono Aris Munandar, who shows how his ideas on ethical education continue to inform discussions about professional behavior, character education, and moral accountability in Indonesia's modern education system. This ethical foundation remains crucial in addressing contemporary concerns about moral decline and the erosion of educational values.⁵³

Furthermore, Kiai Hasyim's concern for women's education anticipates contemporary discussions about gender equality and access to inclusive education. His support for women's rights to acquire religious and general knowledge underscores the importance of educational spaces that recognize women as moral agents and active contributors to social development. The continued growth of Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) and madrasahs (Islamic schools) for female students across Indonesia reflects the enduring relevance of this vision, as explained by Saca Suhendi, who documents the institutional legacy of his educational ideals of expanding women's participation while preserving religious and cultural values.⁵⁴

Recent research also demonstrates that Kiai Hasyim Asy'ari's educational thinking is not static but adaptable to contemporary developments. As outlined by Arief Hidayat Afendi et al., his educational philosophy can be contextualized within modern pedagogical frameworks, including the integration of technology, without compromising its ethical and spiritual foundations. This adaptability further confirms the relevance of his thinking to today's educational challenges, particularly in response to globalization, technological change, and shifting social dynamics.⁵⁵

Overall, Kiai Hasyim Asy'ari's educational ideas offer normative guidance and practical insights for strengthening contemporary national education. Its emphasis on inclusivity, ethical formation, and intellectual integration provides a valuable reference for ongoing efforts to increase women's participation in education and to cultivate a generation equipped with intellectual competence, moral integrity, and social responsibility in the modern era.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that Kiai Hasyim Asy'ari's concept of women's education is grounded in an Islamic educational philosophy that emphasizes moral responsibility, intellectual development, and social welfare without gender-based discrimination. His view

⁵² Saca Suhendi et al., "Hasyim Asy'ari's Dimensions of Multicultural Spiritual Leadership: Harmony in Education and Society in Indonesia," *Al-Hayat: Journal of Islamic Education* 9, no. 1 (2025): 1–27, <https://doi.org/10.35723/ajie.v9i1.50>.

⁵³ Siswoyo Aris Munandar and Rinda Khoirunnisfa, "KH Hasyim Asy'ari and the Teacher Code of Ethics: Thought Study KH. Hasyim Asy'ari on Ethics Education and Its Relevance to Modern Education in Indonesia," *Journal EVALUASI* 4, no. 1 (2020): 114, <https://doi.org/10.32478/evaluasi.v4i1.359>.

⁵⁴ Suhendi et al., "Hasyim Asy'ari's Dimensions of Multicultural Spiritual Leadership."

⁵⁵ Afendi et al., "Reviving the Legacy of KH Hasyim Asy'ari."

that seeking knowledge constitutes a religious obligation for all Muslims positions women's education not as a supplementary concern, but as an essential component of Islamic educational thought.

The findings reveal that Kiai Hasyim conceptualized women's education through a holistic framework that integrates religious knowledge, moral character, and practical competencies. Women are viewed not only as recipients of education but also as active moral agents whose educational development contributes to family formation, social continuity, and the cultivation of future generations. This conceptualization challenges patriarchal cultural assumptions while remaining firmly rooted in Islamic ethical principles.

Furthermore, Kiai Hasyim's educational thought is distinguished by the coherence between theory and practice. His support for women's literacy, encouragement of religious learning for women across different life stages, and endorsement of educational institutions for female students reflect a concrete commitment to inclusive education. These practices underscore the applicability of his ideas beyond abstract discourse and highlight their relevance within the historical context of Islamic education in Indonesia.

Despite its contributions, this study is limited to a textual and conceptual analysis of Kiai Hasyim Asy'ari's writings and related literature. It does not examine the empirical implementation of his ideas in contemporary educational settings. Future research may therefore explore how his educational principles are operationalized in pesantren, madrasahs, and other Islamic educational institutions, as well as their potential role in addressing current challenges in women's education across diverse socio-cultural contexts.

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