



## The Labyrinth of Leadership: Ibu Nyai's Role in Islamic Psycho-Spiritual Pedagogy through Living Shalawat Nariyah

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 <https://doi.org/10.66931/jpai.v2i01.379>

### ABSTRACT

#### Keywords:

Ibu Nyai; Living Shalawat Nariyah; Islamic Psycho-Spiritual Pedagogy; Pesantren; Female Leadership.

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The dynamics of leadership in Indonesian pesantren continue to evolve amid modernization and patriarchal cultural structures that often limit women's authority in religious and educational spaces. In this context, Ibu Nyai plays a strategic role as a spiritual leader, educator, and social mediator within pesantren communities. However, existing studies on pesantren leadership have largely focused on male religious authority, while the psycho-spiritual pedagogical role of Ibu Nyai through local Islamic traditions remains underexplored. This study aims to analyze the labyrinth of leadership experienced by Ibu Nyai in implementing Islamic psycho-spiritual pedagogy through the tradition of Living Shalawat Nariyah in Indonesian pesantren. This study employs a qualitative literature-based approach by analyzing classical Islamic texts, contemporary books, and reputable journal articles related to female leadership, psycho-spiritual pedagogy, and pesantren traditions published between 2020 and 2025. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis and conceptual interpretation. The findings reveal that Living Shalawat Nariyah functions not only as a religious ritual but also as a psycho-spiritual pedagogical medium that strengthens emotional resilience, spiritual awareness, and social harmony within pesantren communities. The study contributes to Islamic education discourse by offering a contextual framework for understanding female spiritual leadership in Indonesian pesantren.

#### Article History:

Submitted: 12-04-2026, Revised :10-05-2026, Accepted: 15-06-2026

#### Please cite this article in APA style as:

Azizeh, N., Basid, A., Sabil, M. A., & Imam, K. (2026). *The Labyrinth of Leadership: Ibu Nyai's Role in Islamic Psycho-Spiritual Pedagogy through Living Shalawat Nariyah*. DAAR EL-MAKRIFAH: Journal of Islamic Religious Education, 2(1), 153-167. <https://jurnalstebibama.ac.id/index.php/jpai/>

## INTRODUCTION

The dynamics of female leadership within Indonesian pesantren have become increasingly complex amid social change, modernization, and the transformation of the religious culture of society. Pesantren are no longer understood merely as traditional Islamic educational institutions but also as social, spiritual, and cultural spaces that play a significant role in shaping moral resilience and social harmony within Muslim communities in Indonesia (Harford et al., 2026). In this context, the figure of the *Ibu Nyai* occupies a strategic position as a caregiver, educator, spiritual leader, and social mediator who contributes to maintaining religious values within both the pesantren and the surrounding

community (Kosim et al., 2023; Saha & Biswas, 2026). Nevertheless, the strong patriarchal structure embedded in pesantren traditions often places women's leadership in a complex and negotiated socio-cultural position. This condition aligns with Eagly and Carli's (2007) concept of the women and the labyrinth of leadership, which argues that female leaders face a winding path due to cultural barriers, gender stereotypes, and patriarchal social structures (Okur et al., 2025).

This phenomenon indicates that the leadership of *Ibu Nyai* cannot merely be understood as a domestic role or as a companion to the *Kiai*, but rather as a form of spiritual leadership that significantly influences character formation, spiritual development, and social harmonization within pesantren communities (Pangestu, 2025; Wasik & Islam, 2023). In many Indonesian pesantren, *Ibu Nyai* actively provide psychological and spiritual guidance to students through Islamic values, religious study circles, moral exemplification, and religious rituals such as the recitation of *shalawat*. These practices demonstrate that pesantren embody a distinctive educational model that extends beyond the transmission of religious knowledge to encompass the mental, emotional, and spiritual development of students through an Islamic psycho-spiritual pedagogical approach (Basit, 2022; Hidayatullah, 2024).

One of the spiritual traditions that remains vibrant within pesantren culture is the practice of *Living Shalawat Nariyah*. This tradition is not merely understood as the ritual recitation of blessings upon the Prophet Muhammad but has evolved into a medium of spiritual education, social solidarity, and collective consciousness formation within pesantren communities (Fauzi, 2021; Mubin, 2023). *Living Shalawat Nariyah* also functions as a form of "spiritual diplomacy" that fosters emotional connectedness, strengthens Islamic brotherhood (\*ukhuwah Islamiyah\*), and promotes social harmony amid the challenges of modernity, individualism, and moral degradation (Hakim & Ridwan, 2022; Yusuf, 2025). From the perspective of Living Islam, religious practices are understood as lived manifestations of Islamic teachings that are internalized within the social culture of Muslim communities. Consequently, \*shalawat\* possesses not only ritualistic dimensions but also psychological, pedagogical, and social significance (Nisa, 2020; Prasetiawati, 2024).

Previous studies have demonstrated that Islamic spiritual practices are significantly associated with mental well-being, spiritual coping mechanisms, and social resilience among Muslim communities (Rahman et al., 2022; Abdullah & Ismail, 2025). Research on spiritual pedagogy suggests that the internalization of spiritual values in education can enhance emotional tranquility, social empathy, and self-regulation (Sulaiman, 2021; Chotimah & Fikri, 2024). Furthermore, studies on female leadership in pesantren have highlighted the substantial contributions of *Ibu Nyai* to character education, women's empowerment, and the reinforcement of religious values (Anwar, 2022; Kholifah, 2025). However, most existing studies focus on formal leadership, Islamic education in general, or religious rituals as cultural practices. Consequently, limited research has integrated the concepts of *Ibu Nyai's* spiritual leadership,

Islamic psycho-spiritual pedagogy, and *Living Shalawat Nariyah* into a comprehensive conceptual framework (Safi'i, 2020).

Therefore, a significant research gap exists within the fields of pesantren studies and Islamic psychology, particularly regarding the limited exploration of how *Living Shalawat Nariyah* is utilized by *Ibu Nyai* as a medium of Islamic psycho-spiritual pedagogy to foster social harmony and emotional resilience within pesantren communities. Moreover, studies on women's leadership in pesantren have tended to portray *Ibu Nyai* primarily as supporting figures rather than as central actors in the construction of spiritual education and community social resilience (Latifah, 2023; Karimah, 2024). In fact, female spiritual leadership plays a crucial role in maintaining social stability, strengthening community solidarity, and transmitting moderate Islamic values amid contemporary social transformations (Hefner, 2021; Maulana, 2025).

This study identifies several key variables. First, the Leadership Labyrinth represents the complexity of *Ibu Nyai's* leadership in navigating patriarchal structures and social dynamics within pesantren (Ulani, 2022). Second, *Living Shalawat Nariyah* is conceptualized as a living spiritual practice that functions as a pedagogical medium, a source of collective emotional reinforcement, and a mechanism for social integration. Third, Islamic Psycho-Spiritual Pedagogy\* refers to an educational approach that integrates psychological and spiritual development to cultivate religious awareness, mental well-being, and social character among students. Indicators of leadership include spiritual authority, moral exemplarity, social mediation skills, and community development (Eagly & Carli, 2007). Indicators of *Living Shalawat Nariyah* encompass the intensity of spiritual practice, internalization of religious values, social solidarity, and collective emotional strengthening (Fauzi, 2021). Meanwhile, indicators of psycho-spiritual pedagogy include spiritual nurturing, emotional regulation, religious self-awareness, and social character formation (Basit, 2022; Hidayatullah, 2024).

Theoretically, this research employs the Living Islam Theory to understand *shalawat* as a lived religious culture within pesantren communities (Nisa, 2020), Spiritual Pedagogy Theory to explain educational processes grounded in spiritual values (Sulaiman, 2021), and Female Spiritual Leadership Theory to examine the role of *Ibu Nyai* in shaping social and spiritual influence within pesantren. These perspectives are further strengthened by Eagly and Carli's (2007) concept of Women and the Labyrinth of Leadership. The integration of these theoretical approaches is expected to provide a novel perspective within the fields of Islamic education, Islamic psychology, and contemporary pesantren studies.

Based on the foregoing discussion, this study aims to analyze how the leadership labyrinth of *Ibu Nyai* is manifested through the practice of *Living Shalawat Nariyah* as a form of Islamic psycho-spiritual pedagogy in fostering social harmony and strengthening the spiritual resilience of pesantren communities. This research is expected to contribute theoretically to the

development of studies on female spiritual leadership and Islamic psycho-spiritual pedagogy, while also offering practical contributions to character education and community resilience through pesantren-based spiritual traditions in Indonesia.

## METHOD

This study employs a library research method using a conceptual approach through an integrative literature review. This approach is utilized to systematically integrate and synthesize various literature sources in order to develop a conceptual framework concerning the spiritual leadership of Ibu Nyai, Islamic psycho-spiritual pedagogy, and the practice of Living Shalawat Nariyah within the context of Indonesian pesantren. The research process was conducted through several stages, namely literature identification, source selection based on relevance to the research theme, classification of key concepts, and conceptual analysis to identify relationships among the concepts under investigation. The data sources consist of primary and secondary literature. The primary literature includes Eagly and Carli's *Women and the Labyrinth of Leadership* (2007), which serves as the theoretical foundation for understanding the complexity of women's leadership within patriarchal social structures. In addition, this study utilizes classical Islamic literature, particularly Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din by Imam al-Ghazali (2005), to explore the dimensions of spirituality, character formation, and spiritual education in the Islamic tradition. These sources were selected because they represent two complementary scholarly perspectives: modern leadership theory and classical Islamic spirituality. Secondary literature was obtained from reputable national and international journal articles accessed through Scopus, Google Scholar, and Crossref databases (Habsi et al., 2026). The inclusion criteria were publications from 2020–2025 that are relevant to the themes of female leadership in pesantren, Islamic psycho-spiritual pedagogy, Living Islam, Living Shalawat Nariyah, and social harmony within pesantren communities .

Data collection was carried out through a systematic literature search using keywords such as female spiritual leadership, Ibu Nyai leadership, psycho-spiritual pedagogy, living shalawat, Islamic spirituality, and pesantren studies. The collected literature was subsequently screened based on content relevance, source credibility, and its relationship to the focus of the study. The data were then analyzed using thematic synthesis and conceptual mapping techniques. The analysis began with an in-depth reading of the literature to identify units of meaning related to the research variables, including the leadership labyrinth, psycho-spiritual pedagogy, spiritual practices of shalawat, and social harmony. This was followed by an open coding process to categorize the major concepts into thematic groups with theoretical connections.

The next stage involved conceptual mapping to examine the relationships among the spiritual leadership of Ibu Nyai, the internalization of spiritual values through Living Shalawat Nariyah, and the psycho-spiritual pedagogical processes that contribute to the development of social harmony within pesantren

communities. The results of this mapping process were used to construct the study's conceptual framework, explaining how spiritual practices rooted in pesantren traditions can function as a medium of psychological and spiritual education in fostering the social resilience of pesantren communities. To ensure data validity, source triangulation was conducted by comparing literature from the fields of leadership studies, Islamic psychology, Islamic education, and pesantren studies in order to verify conceptual consistency. In addition, the researcher employed reflective notes throughout the analytical process to minimize interpretive bias and maintain objectivity during the synthesis of theories and the formulation of research conclusions.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Result

The literature analysis reveals a consistent pattern indicating that the spiritual leadership of Ibu Nyai makes a significant contribution to the development of Islamic psycho-spiritual pedagogy through the practice of Living Shalawat Nariyah within pesantren communities. Various studies demonstrate that pesantren spiritual traditions function not only as religious rituals but also as instruments for character formation, mental well-being enhancement, social harmonization, and the strengthening of communal solidarity (Huda & Santoso, 2023; Fauzi, 2021). Furthermore, thematic synthesis indicates that the practice of Living Shalawat Nariyah is functionally related to the development of spiritual awareness, emotional stability, and moral leadership exercised by Ibu Nyai within the pesantren environment. Moreover, the conceptual mapping results show that the concept of the Leadership Labyrinth illustrates the complexity of Ibu Nyai's role in navigating patriarchal pesantren structures, while Islamic Psycho-Spiritual Pedagogy represents an educational approach integrating spiritual, psychological, and social dimensions in the process of student development. Meanwhile, Living Shalawat Nariyah functions as a medium for internalizing religious values and strengthening social cohesion within pesantren communities. These interconnected patterns form a conceptual framework explaining that female spiritual leadership in pesantren operates through a psycho-spiritual pedagogical approach rooted in local spiritual traditions. To clarify the literature synthesis, Table 1 presents the mapping of the main findings of this study.

**Table 1.** Literature Synthesis

Theme	Main Findings	Sources
Female Leadership in Pesantren	<i>Ibu Nyai</i> serves as a spiritual leader, social mediator, and character educator within the patriarchal culture of pesantren.	(Munir, 2021; Srimulyani, 2022; Fathurahman, 2024)
The Labyrinth of Leadership	Female leadership faces structural barriers, gender stereotypes, and socio-cultural negotiations.	(Eagly & Carli, 2007; Karimah, 2024)
Living Shalawat Nariyah	<i>Shalawat</i> functions as a medium for spirituality, social solidarity, and collective emotional reinforcement.	(Fauzi, 2021; Mubin, 2023; Yusuf, 2025)

Theme	Main Findings	Sources
Islamic Psycho-Spiritual Pedagogy	Spiritual education enhances religious awareness, emotional regulation, and students' mental well-being.	(Basit, 2022; Hidayatullah, 2024)
Social Harmony in Pesantren	Spiritual traditions strengthen <i>ukhuwah</i> , social stability, and moral resilience.	(Hakim & Ridwan, 2022; Hefner, 2021)

Table 1 demonstrates that female spiritual leadership, the practice of Living Shalawat Nariyah, and psycho-spiritual pedagogy are structurally interconnected in fostering social harmony within pesantren communities. These findings confirm that local spiritual traditions in pesantren possess not only ritualistic dimensions but also pedagogical, psychological, and social functions. Furthermore, the conceptual mapping of the research variables is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Conceptual Mapping of Research Variables

Variable	Indicators	Conceptual Function
Leadership Labyrinth	Spiritual authority, negotiation of patriarchal culture, moral exemplarity, social mediation	Explains the complexity of <i>Ibu Nyai's</i> leadership
Living Shalawat Nariyah	Collective spiritual practices, internalization of religious values, social solidarity, emotional reinforcement	Medium for spiritual pedagogy and social integration
Islamic Psycho-Spiritual Pedagogy	Spiritual formation, emotional regulation, religious awareness, social character development	Spirituality-based educational approach
Social Harmony	<i>Ukhuwah Islamiyah</i> , social stability, social empathy, community solidarity	Social outcome of spiritual pedagogy

Table 2 illustrates the structural relationship among the spiritual leadership of *Ibu Nyai*, the practice of Living Shalawat Nariyah, and Islamic psycho-spiritual pedagogy in fostering social harmony within pesantren communities. This integration indicates that local spiritual traditions in pesantren perform broader functions than merely serving as religious rituals.

### The Leadership Labyrinth of *Ibu Nyai* within Pesantren Structures

The findings indicate that the patriarchal social and cultural structure of pesantren constitutes the primary context shaping the complexity of *Ibu Nyai's* leadership. However, this discussion emphasizes that structural barriers alone are insufficient to explain the strategic position of women in pesantren leadership. The literature synthesis suggests that *Ibu Nyai's* leadership emerges through the interaction between socio-cultural limitations and spiritual-moral capacities cultivated within pesantren traditions. Therefore, female leadership in pesantren should be understood as a dynamic process of social negotiation enacted through moral authority, spirituality, and collective social relationships. Eagly and Carli's (2007) concept of the labyrinth of leadership explains that female leaders face not a single obstacle but rather a complex, multidimensional pathway shaped by gender stereotypes, patriarchal cultures, and limited access to formal authority. Within the pesantren context, this condition is reflected in the perception of *Ibu Nyai* as merely the companion of a *Kiai*, despite her

substantial influence on spiritual guidance, moral education, and social stability.

Furthermore, numerous studies demonstrate that Ibu Nyai serves as a social mediator, student caregiver, spiritual mentor, and guardian of pesantren religious culture (Munir, 2021; Huda & Santoso, 2023). Her leadership is established not through formal structural power but through moral influence, spiritual exemplarity, emotional closeness, and the ability to cultivate social trust. Consequently, the leadership authority of Ibu Nyai is simultaneously cultural and spiritual, enabling a more adaptive, persuasive, and harmonious leadership approach. Additionally, studies suggest that female leadership in pesantren tends to adopt relational and collective approaches rather than hierarchical leadership models (Karimah, 2024). This enables Ibu Nyai to build social influence through spiritual communication, emotional mentoring, and the internalization of religious values in students' daily lives. As a result, female spiritual leadership in pesantren functions not only as educational authority but also as a mechanism for fostering social solidarity and moral resilience.

The fragility of women's formal legitimacy within patriarchal pesantren structures is also linked to cultural constructions that position male leadership as the center of public authority. In response, Ibu Nyai often builds influence through informal pathways grounded in spirituality and moral exemplarity. Therefore, female leadership in pesantren cannot be fully understood through modern structural approaches alone but must be interpreted through the lens of spiritual relationships and religious-cultural traditions. Thus, the literature emphasizes that strengthening female leadership in pesantren requires not only expanding formal access but also reinforcing spiritual capacity, moral legitimacy, and socio-cultural influence, which constitute the primary sources of Ibu Nyai's authority in fostering social harmony.

#### Living Shalawat Nariyah as a Medium of Psycho-Spiritual Pedagogy

In response to the challenges of modernity, social pressures, and moral crises within Muslim communities, pesantren have developed educational approaches rooted in Islamic spirituality through collective religious traditions. One of the most significant spiritual practices within pesantren culture is Living Shalawat Nariyah. This tradition is not merely understood as the recitation of blessings upon the Prophet but also as a medium of psycho-spiritual pedagogy that nurtures inner peace, social solidarity, and religious character formation among students. Empirical studies indicate that collective spiritual practices within Islamic traditions significantly contribute to mental well-being, emotional stability, and spiritual coping mechanisms (Rahman et al., 2022; Hakim & Ridwan, 2022). Within pesantren, the collective recitation of Shalawat Nariyah creates a shared spiritual experience that strengthens brotherhood, social cohesion, and religious identity among students. Furthermore, this spiritual practice assists students in developing emotional regulation, psychological tranquility, and religious self-awareness amidst the pressures of modern life.

However, this discussion finds that previous studies have largely

examined shalawat from ritualistic and theological perspectives. Most research has treated shalawat as a form of individual worship or religious cultural tradition, paying limited attention to its pedagogical, psychological, and social functions within pesantren life. From the perspective of Living Islam, religious practices should not be viewed merely as ritual symbols but as lived expressions of Islamic teachings embedded within Muslim social culture (Nisa, 2020). Therefore, understanding Living Shalawat Nariyah as a medium of psycho-spiritual pedagogy is crucial for explaining how pesantren spiritual practices contribute to mental well-being, religious character formation, and social harmony. Without such a psycho-spiritual perspective, spiritual traditions risk being reduced to formal rituals devoid of transformative significance. In the face of social pressures, identity crises, and cultural change, students require not only cognitive religious education but also spiritual experiences that foster inner peace, meaningfulness, and social connectedness. Consequently, an integrative approach is necessary to position Living Shalawat Nariyah as both a ritual practice and a psycho-spiritual educational instrument.

#### Islamic Psycho-Spiritual Pedagogy in Fostering Social Harmony

The limitations of formal educational approaches that focus solely on cognitive dimensions create the need for educational models capable of integrating psychological, spiritual, and social aspects in character formation. Within pesantren, Islamic Psycho-Spiritual Pedagogy emerges as an educational approach that emphasizes not only the transmission of religious knowledge but also the internalization of spiritual values in cultivating religious awareness, emotional regulation, and social adaptability. This approach operates through the integration of spiritual education, psychological development, and socio-religious practices embedded within pesantren traditions. Conceptually, Islamic Psycho-Spiritual Pedagogy consists of four interrelated dimensions: spiritual formation, psychological strengthening, social character development, and the internalization of religious values through collective religious experiences. These dimensions interact dynamically in fostering social harmony through traditions such as Living Shalawat Nariyah.

Through spiritual formation, students develop transcendental awareness and deepen their relationship with Allah and the Prophet Muhammad. Through psychological strengthening, collective shalawat practices function as mechanisms for emotional regulation and spiritual coping. Through social character development, values such as ukhuwah Islamiyah, empathy, cooperation, and humility are internalized. Finally, through experiential spiritual learning, students directly experience religious values in authentic social contexts, transforming spiritual knowledge into lived character. Thus, Islamic Psycho-Spiritual Pedagogy evolves into a holistic educational model that simultaneously integrates spiritual, psychological, and social dimensions. Unlike modern formal education, which often prioritizes cognitive achievement and individual competencies, this model positions spirituality as the foundation of

meaning, self-regulation, and social harmony. Consequently, it contributes not only to intellectual development but also to mental well-being, emotional stability, and social solidarity grounded in Islamic values.

### **Mechanisms of Social Harmony Formation and Their Implications**

The formation of social harmony within pesantren operates through the interaction of spiritual, psychological, and social dimensions embedded in Living Shalawat Nariyah and facilitated through Islamic psycho-spiritual pedagogy led by Ibu Nyai. This integration not only shapes individual religiosity but also promotes social stability and communal solidarity through the internalization of spiritual values in daily life. First, spiritual meaning-making serves as the foundation of social harmony. Values such as humility, patience, sincerity, and Islamic brotherhood help students perceive social relationships as forms of worship and moral responsibility. Second, spiritual-based emotional regulation supports psychological stability and social resilience. Collective spiritual practices create emotional calmness, reduce social tensions, and strengthen social connectedness among community members. Third, religiously grounded social character development fosters stable and cooperative social relationships. Through moral exemplarity and spiritual mentoring, Ibu Nyai transmits values of empathy, cooperation, and mutual respect, thereby nurturing a harmonious community culture.

Through these mechanisms, Islamic Psycho-Spiritual Pedagogy functions as an integrative framework for cultivating social harmony, collective solidarity, and moral resilience amidst contemporary social transformations. Social harmony is thus achieved not primarily through formal institutional control but through the internalization of spiritual values embedded within pesantren culture and collective religious practices. Theoretically, these findings extend Eagly and Carli's (2007) *Women and the Labyrinth of Leadership* by incorporating spiritual and pedagogical dimensions within the Indonesian pesantren context. The study demonstrates that female leadership in pesantren operates not only through formal authority but also through moral influence, collective spiritual experiences, and psycho-spiritual educational processes. Furthermore, this study contributes a novel conceptual framework integrating female spiritual leadership, Living Islam, and Islamic psycho-spiritual pedagogy. This integration offers a new perspective in which local spiritual traditions such as Living Shalawat Nariyah function not only as religious rituals but also as mechanisms for psychological well-being, social solidarity, and the cultivation of social harmony within pesantren communities.

Practically, the model of Islamic Psycho-Spiritual Pedagogy has important implications for character education in pesantren and other Muslim educational institutions. Spiritual traditions such as Shalawat Nariyah can be integrated into educational programs that strengthen religiosity, mental health, emotional regulation, social cohesion, and moral resilience in the face of contemporary social disruptions. The model is also relevant for character development

programs, spiritual counseling initiatives, and community-based social cohesion efforts grounded in Islamic values.

## Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that the spiritual leadership of Ibu Nyai plays a significant role in shaping social harmony within pesantren through the integration of Living Shalawat Nariyah and Islamic psycho-spiritual pedagogy. This finding extends previous studies on female leadership in pesantren by highlighting that women's leadership is not limited to educational assistance or domestic support but functions as an influential mechanism for spiritual formation, emotional regulation, and social cohesion. In line with Eagly and Carli's (2007) concept of the Labyrinth of Leadership, the leadership journey of Ibu Nyai is characterized by continuous negotiation with patriarchal structures. However, rather than relying on formal authority, Ibu Nyai establishes legitimacy through spiritual authority, moral exemplarity, and relational leadership. This finding suggests that spiritual influence can become an alternative source of leadership legitimacy in religious communities where formal authority remains gendered.

Furthermore, the study reveals that Living Shalawat Nariyah serves as more than a ritualistic religious practice. Within the pesantren context, it functions as a psycho-spiritual educational medium that facilitates the internalization of Islamic values and strengthens collective identity. This finding supports the perspective of Living Islam Theory, which argues that Islamic teachings become meaningful when they are embodied and practiced within everyday social life. Through the collective recitation of Shalawat Nariyah, students experience a shared spiritual atmosphere that promotes emotional tranquility, social connectedness, and religious commitment. Consequently, spiritual practices become educational instruments that nurture not only religious devotion but also psychological well-being and communal solidarity.

The findings also highlight the importance of Islamic psycho-spiritual pedagogy as a holistic educational approach. Unlike conventional educational models that emphasize cognitive achievement, Islamic psycho-spiritual pedagogy integrates spiritual, psychological, and social dimensions in the learning process. The literature synthesis indicates that spiritual practices embedded within pesantren traditions contribute to emotional regulation, resilience, and moral development. This supports previous research suggesting that spirituality plays a crucial role in promoting mental health and adaptive coping mechanisms among individuals facing social and psychological challenges. In this regard, pesantren offer a unique educational model where spiritual traditions become an integral part of character formation and psychosocial development.

Another important finding concerns the mechanism through which social harmony is cultivated within pesantren communities. The study identifies three interrelated mechanisms: spiritual meaning-making, spiritual-based emotional

regulation, and social character formation. First, spiritual meaning-making enables students to interpret social relationships as part of their religious obligations, thereby encouraging mutual respect, empathy, and cooperation. Second, collective spiritual practices foster emotional stability and reduce social tensions by creating a sense of belonging and emotional support. Third, the continuous internalization of religious values contributes to the development of social character traits such as humility, solidarity, and responsibility. Together, these mechanisms create a socially cohesive environment that strengthens communal resilience and harmony.

The role of Ibu Nyai within this process is particularly significant because she acts as both a spiritual mentor and a social mediator. Her leadership exemplifies the concept of female spiritual leadership, which emphasizes influence through moral guidance, relational engagement, and spiritual nurturing rather than hierarchical control. This finding challenges traditional assumptions that leadership effectiveness depends primarily on formal organizational authority. Instead, it suggests that spiritual and cultural legitimacy can be equally powerful in shaping community behavior and sustaining social order. In the pesantren context, Ibu Nyai functions as a central agent in transmitting religious values and fostering collective consciousness among students and community members. Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of female spiritual leadership literature by integrating the concepts of the Labyrinth of Leadership, Living Islam, and Islamic psycho-spiritual pedagogy into a single analytical framework. Previous studies have generally examined these concepts separately. By connecting them, this research provides a more comprehensive understanding of how female leadership operates within religious educational institutions. It demonstrates that spiritual traditions are not merely cultural artifacts but also pedagogical resources that support leadership effectiveness, psychological development, and social harmony.

From a practical perspective, the findings suggest that pesantren and other Islamic educational institutions may benefit from strengthening psycho-spiritual educational practices grounded in local religious traditions. Programs such as Living Shalawat Nariyah can be utilized not only for spiritual development but also for character education, mental health promotion, and community-building initiatives. In an era characterized by social fragmentation, individualism, and psychological challenges, the integration of spirituality into educational practice offers a culturally relevant strategy for fostering social resilience and collective well-being. Overall, this study concludes that the integration of female spiritual leadership, Living Shalawat Nariyah, and Islamic psycho-spiritual pedagogy creates a transformative framework for nurturing social harmony within pesantren communities. The findings affirm that local Islamic spiritual traditions possess significant educational, psychological, and social value, making them relevant not only for religious development but also for addressing contemporary challenges in education, mental health, and community cohesion.

## CONCLUSION

This study confirms that the spiritual leadership of Ibu Nyai within the pesantren tradition functions not only as a form of religious authority but also as a psycho-spiritual pedagogical mechanism for fostering social harmony within pesantren communities. Based on the literature synthesis, the findings demonstrate that Living Shalawat Nariyah serves a multidimensional role as a medium for the internalization of spiritual values, emotional regulation, social character formation, and the strengthening of collective solidarity among students. Therefore, pesantren spiritual practices should not be understood merely as religious rituals but also as psycho-spiritual educational instruments that contribute to social stability and the moral resilience of Muslim communities.

The model of Islamic Psycho-Spiritual Pedagogy identified in this study operates through three primary mechanisms: spiritual meaning-making, spiritual-based emotional regulation, and the development of social character grounded in religious values. Through these mechanisms, the tradition of Living Shalawat Nariyah not only nurtures individual religiosity but also promotes social connectedness, collective empathy, and social harmony within pesantren communities. These findings indicate that educational approaches rooted in Islamic spirituality possess the capacity to foster mental well-being, emotional stability, and social solidarity in a more holistic manner. Theoretically, this study contributes to the advancement of scholarship on female spiritual leadership, Living Islam, and contemporary Islamic education by proposing an integrative model that connects women's leadership, psycho-spiritual pedagogy, and local pesantren spiritual traditions within a comprehensive conceptual framework. Furthermore, this research extends Eagly and Carli's (2007) *Women and the Labyrinth of Leadership* by incorporating the spiritual and pedagogical dimensions embedded in the cultural context of Indonesian pesantren.

Practically, the model of Islamic Psycho-Spiritual Pedagogy offers important implications for the development of character education based on Islamic spirituality in pesantren and other Muslim educational institutions. Spiritual traditions such as Living Shalawat Nariyah can be developed as educational approaches that not only strengthen religiosity but also support mental health, emotional regulation, social cohesion, and the moral resilience of Muslim communities in the face of modernity and contemporary social disruptions. Nevertheless, this study is limited by its conceptual and literature-based approach and has not empirically examined the relationships among the proposed variables. Therefore, future research is recommended to empirically develop and test the Islamic Psycho-Spiritual Pedagogy model using qualitative and quantitative approaches. Further studies may also focus on developing measurement instruments related to female spiritual leadership, psycho-spiritual pedagogy, social harmony, and the impact of Living Shalawat Nariyah on mental well-being and social solidarity within pesantren communities.

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