

# **The Role of Women in Islamic Propagation: A Case Study of Tablighi Jamaat's *Nyai* of Pesantren Al-Fatah, East Java, Indonesia**

*Journal of Asian  
Social Science Research*  
2020, Vol. 2, No. 2: 175-190  
<http://jassr.cassr.web.id>  
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**Yon Machmudi\***

Universitas Indonesia

**Putih Kusumah Ardhani**

Universitas Indonesia

## **Abstract**

This article studies the role of women of the Tablighi Jamaat, a transnational Islamic propagation movement, in the process of Islamic propagation (*da'wah*) in Indonesia. It aims to analyze the role played by female followers of Tablighi Jamaat in developing *da'wah* by focusing on the role of *nyai* (female family members of a religious leader of traditional Islamic learning institution [*pesantren*]) in developing *masturah da'wah* in Pesantren Al-Fatah and Temboro Village. This study uses a qualitative approach to understand how *nyai* of Pesantren Al-Fatah were involved in *da'wah* activities in Temboro. The required data were collected through observation and interviews. The findings show that like their spouses who were obliged to go for *da'wah* in the form of *khuruj*, female followers of Tablighi Jamaat of Pesantren Temboro were assigned to conduct *da'wah* through *masturah*, a form of Islamic propagation which was only targeted on, organized and attended by the women of Tablighi Jamaah in Temboro with strict rules such the obligation of wearing face veils for all participants. *Nyai* of Pesantren Al-Fatah initiated, led, and developed *masturah* so that Tablighi Jamaat has attracted more followers and religious students and Temboro has experienced significant changes in social, religious, and economic aspects.

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\*Corresponding author:

Yon Machmudi, Arab Studies, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Indonesia.

Email: [machmudi@ui.ac.id](mailto:machmudi@ui.ac.id)

## Key Words

Tablighi Jamaat, role of women, *da'wah*, *masturah*, Pesantren Al-Fatah, Temboro

## Introduction

Pesantren Al-Fatah is a traditional Islamic learning institution that was founded by Kiai Shidiq in 1930 and is located in Temboro, East Java, Indonesia. It experienced a significant change when it was led by Kiai Mahmud Kholid Umar (1956-1996). In 1983, a group of the Tablighi Jamaat followers from Pakistan visited the Pesantren and since then this visit has transformed it into the biggest center of Tablighi Jamaat in East Java (Az-Zahro 2018). The change from a local *pesantren* (traditional Islamic learning institution) with a strong local and traditional network into a part of the transnational Islamic movement of Tablighi Jamaat is an interesting aspect of Pesantren Al-Fatah.

The change within Pesantren Al-Fatah is closely related to the role played by its leader who is traditionally called *kiai* in Java. As Ziemek (1986) claims, the important role of *kiai* (male traditional religious leaders) contributes to the vast development of *pesantren* in Indonesia. Assisted by male and female teachers called *ustadz* and *ustadzah* respectively, a *kiai* in a *pesantren* carries out religious and educational activities. Normally, these teachers were *kiai*'s first students who spent their time helping him running and developing his *pesantren*.

However, the success of *pesantren* in expanding its role in Islamic education and propagation is not only the result of *kiai*'s efforts alone. The *kiai*'s wife, commonly called *nyai* in Java, helps with various jobs related to the survival and development of *pesantren*. The *pesantren* hosts not only male *santri* (religious students) but also female ones. A *nyai* not only runs managerial aspects of female *santri* boarding schools but also teaches female *santri* Islamic doctrines through the reading of classical Islamic books called *kitab kuning* (Faiqoh 1998).

Studies on women of Tablighi Jamaat have been conducted by many researchers. For example, Jaffrelot (2014) in an article entitled "Transnational Learning Networks Amongst Asian Muslims: An Introduction" provides insight into understanding *da'wah* (Islamic propagation) network conducted by Tablighi Jamaat in Southeast Asia.

Nisa (2014) in her article "Insights into the Lives of Indonesian Female Tablighi Jama'a" examines the role of *pesantren* in transmitting

religious knowledge carried by Tablighi Jamaah to its Indonesian followers, in particular to female followers. She analyses the life experiences of female Tablighis inside and outside *pesantren* as part of a global imagined Tablighi community. The existence of female guests and foreign students who are enrolled in *pesantren* plays a significant role in strengthening their belonging to the transnational network of the global Tablighi Jama'at.

Another study by Momotaj (2015) in his dissertation "Negotiation for Extended Gender Roles in Islam: Women in Tablighi Jamaat in Bangladesh", analyses the role of women in the Jamaah Tabligh organization, who are represented by *masturah jamaah*. Janson (2016) in an article entitled "Male Wives and Female Husbands: Reconfiguring Gender in the Tablighi Jama'at in The Gambia," describes the contribution of the Tablighi Jamaat in providing space for the wives of Tablighi men to carry out various activities outside their houses including doing *da'wah* activity. To support their wives' activities in public space, the Tablighi Jamaat men in Gambia are willing to do household chores.

In the context of the current Covid-19 pandemic, a recent report entitled "Religious "Super-Spreaders" in Indonesia: Managing the Risk of Stigmatization" by the Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (2020) found that Tablighi Jamaat in Indonesia contributes to the spread of Covid-19 due to its members' high mobility to do *da'wah* activity.

Those studies undoubtedly have contributed significantly to the understanding of Tablighi Jamaat women. However, what is missing from those studies is an analysis of the role of women in the Tablighi Jamaat movement within *pesantren* milieu. Many people assume that only male followers of Tablighi Jamaat, who are called *karkun*, engage in Islamic propagation through *khuruj*, leaving their homes to do *da'wah* for several days or months. But, our field observations, revealed that like their male counterpart, women of Tablighi Jamaat have played an important role in conducting *da'wah*. They are involved in *da'wah* activity through *masturah*, conducting Islamic propagation at certain places organized by the movement for Tablighi Jamaati women.

Therefore, this article analyses the role of women in Islamic *da'wah* with a special reference to the case of *nyai* and their role in developing Pesantren Al-Fatah and Temboro village, and in carrying out *da'wah* among the women of Tablighi Jamaat. For this purpose, this study uses a qualitative approach to understand the social phenomenon of Tablighi Jamaah movement at Pesantren Al-Fatah employing social change change because *da'wah* activity is a process of changing social, cultural, and religious values. In this case, *kyai* is an important and influential agent

of change in the *pesantren*. According to Karl D. Jackson (1990), *kyai* as a religious leader has traditional authority through his charisma so that he can easily influence his followers. But, as this study will show, the female family members of *kyai* also play a significant role in directing women's activities in the *pesantren* as well as *masturah* program of Tablighi Jamaat movement.

We conducted interviews and observations to obtain the required primary data for this study. Using in-depth interviews, we interviewed boarding school supervisors, managers and teachers at Pesantren Al-Fatah, and devotees of *masturah* as well as Temboro village chief. We also conducted field observations to clarify the collected interview data.

In what follows, this article, firstly, describes Temboro as a center of Tablighi Jamaat in Indonesia. This is then followed by the elaboration of the influence of the Tablighi Jamaat on the development of Pesantren Al-Fatah. Lastly, it discusses the role of women in Pesantren Al-Fatah as a center of Tablighi Jamaat movement.

### **Temboro Village, East Java**

Temboro is a village located 12 kilometers from Magetan district, 14 kilometers from Madiun city, and two kilometers from the capital of the closest sub-district. It is a sloped area with 517,320 hectares (Temboro Village Government 2016). The population of Temboro villagers in 2018 is 7,873 people with 4,080 male and 3,793 female, and 2,322 households. Most Temboro people are entrepreneurs and farmers, and the rest are civil servants, laborers, and so on.

According to the population data of Temboro village in 2018, 100% of Temboro villagers are Muslims. There are 29 mosques and four *mushala* (prayer rooms), which are used for daily prayers, congregation, Quranic recitation, religious lectures, community deliberation, and other activities (Temboro Village Government 2018). In Temboro village, there are four *pesantrens*, namely Al- Al-Fatah, Al-Qadir, Roudhotul Athfal, and Al-Muttaqin. These *pesantrens* attract local and foreign students as well as groups of travelers to study, visit and stay in Temboro.

Temboro has been known as a religious village as seen in the tradition that the male population wears sarongs and *peci* (Islamic head covering) wherever they go. Before the arrival of the Tablighi Jamaat to Temboro village, the residents of Temboro village had already strongly embraced Islamic teachings. The Temboro community acts as a social controller of

Pesantren Al-Fatah. For example, if a male and a female *santris* are caught by the residents because they meet in secret without being accompanied by a third person, their names will be written on a wall in the village aimed as a social punishment for violating the *pesantren* rules of good conduct (Syafi 2018). Therefore, the village of Temboro is widely known as Kampung Madinah (Madinah Village) as it resembles the life of people during the Prophet Muhammad in Madinah in the period of early Islam.

Pesantren Al-Fatah is located at a 60-hectare area on K. H. Shiddiq Street, Temboro village, Karas sub-district, Magetan district, East Java province. It is geographically located in the center of Temboro village and surrounded by a residential neighborhood, rice fields, and sugar cane farms. Because it is located in Temboro which has a tropical climate, the temperature at Pesantren Al-Fatah is hot and dry from morning to afternoon and cold at night. It is rich in water resources because it is adjacent to a river in Temboro, which is used as the main source of water supply for the *pesantren*.

Different from most *pesantrens* whose buildings are usually located in one restricted location, Pesantren Al-Fatah has some dormitories scattered in some areas in Temboro village. The dormitory area is divided into two parts, one for male *santri* and another one for female ones. Due to the increasing number of *santri* every year, the *pesantren* need more dorms to accommodate around 22,000 students. The location of Al-Fatah is divided into four areas, namely the Central Pondok located on Jalan Sunan Ampel, Pondok Saridin, Pondok Utara, and Pondok Trangkil. Pondok Trangkil is divided into two building areas: Pondok Putih (White Dormitory), known as such because it has a white mosque, which is specifically provided for male students who study formal-national school curriculum and *diniyyah* (Islamic) school, and Pondok Merah (Red Dormitory), known as such because it has a red mosque, which is allocated for female students who study *tahfidz al-quran* (Quranic memorization) and *diniyyah* school. The dormitories in Pesantren Al-Fatah serve not only as a residence for the students but also as a place of teaching and learning and as a mosque. In each area of Al-Fatah, there is a housing complex provided for *kiai*, *nyai*, *ustadz* or *ustadzah*.

### **Tablighi Jamaat Movement of Pesantren Al-Fatah**

A group of Tablighi Jamaat members came to Pesantren Al-Fatah in 1983 led by its *amir* (leader), Prof. Abdul Shobur from Pakistan. The group that consisted of 10 religious scholars was traveling from Banyuwangi to

Jakarta. They stopped by at Al-Fatah for journey supplies. Kiai Mahmud accepted their arrival happily. This was when the exchange of ideas and opinions on religious issues began to occur between Tablighi Jamaat and Al-Fatah (Yatini 2018).

In 1986, the second group of Tablighi Jamaat members came to Pesantren Al-Fatah. This group came from Malaysia. Two years later, the third group of Tablighi Jamaat members from Pakistan came to the *pesantren* led by its *amir*, Amin Ghul. Then, Kiai Mahmud ordered his first son, Kiai Uzairon, to follow the *khuruj* for three days and went to Nizamudin to learn the principle of *da'wah* activity of Tablighi Jama'at (Az-Zahro 2018). After Kiai Uzairon returned from *khuruj* in 1988, *santri*, administrators, and teachers of Al-Fatah were obliged to do *khuruj*. Kiai Mahmud and Kiai Uzairon applied that *dawah* strategy because they felt in line with the thoughts of the Tablighi Jamaat movement.

In 1991, a group of Tablighi Jamaat members from Thailand led by Abu Dhar Al-Ghifari came to Al-Fatah bringing the teaching of *masturah da'wah* into the *pesantren* (Nafisah 2018). At that time, they also began to oblige female *santri* and religious teachers to wear veils in Al-Fatah Pesantren. Female students were taught how to do *masturah da'wah* starting from the procedure of *masturah* to what subjects should be taught. These *da'wah* methods, *khuruj* and *masturah* offered by Tablighi Jamaat, were well received by the *pesantren* as well as the people of Temboro village (Yatini 2018).

In *pesantren*, there are two categories of women. First, women who are knowledgeable in religious teachings and carry out religious *da'wah* activities. Second, wives of *kiai*, either those who are involved in Islamic propagation or those who do not (Faiqoh 1998). In this article, the first category is discussed, namely women who have knowledge in the field of religion and carry out religious *da'wah* activities. Because of her expertise in religious knowledge, a *nyai* can be an agent of change in her *pesantren* and the surrounding community.

A *kiai* has a limited role when it comes to deal with problems of female *santri*. Moral ethics and religious principles discourage him to interact freely with female *santri* so that he needs mediators to overcome their problems. In this context, a *kyai* needs an actor, namely his wife called *nyai*, as a female cleric (Ahmadi 2002).

The function of *pesantren* has changed since its early emergence. In the early days, *pesantren* is as a center for Islamic education as well as Islamic propagation. The *pesantren*'s Islamic education is used as a

provision for its *da'wah* and *da'wah* is used as a means for building its Islamic educational system. So, it can be said that the educational function of *pesantrens* is to support the Islamic *da'wah* (Qomar 2002). This is in line with the function of *pesantrens* at the time of Wali Songo (Nine Muslim Saints) as a place to produce Islamic religious scholars (*ulama*) and preachers (*da'i*) (Saridjo 1982).

Pesantren Al-Fatah as an Islamic educational institution not only carries out its educational function in providing Islamic education but also its function of preaching Islam to the wider community. Al-Fatah as a center of Tablighi Jamaat movement believes that faith needs not only belief and saying in words, but also needs to be proven through deeds, one of which is *da'wah*, propagation of Islamic teachings. As the Qur'an and the Sunnah say, *da'wah* is mandatory for both Muslim men and women (Zahid 2017). Therefore, for the Tablighi Jamaat movement, both Muslim men and Muslim women are obliged to do *da'wah*. The *da'wah* obligation for men is called *khuruj fi sabilillah* (going out of home in the way of Allah), and the one for women is called *masturah*.

### **Nyai of Pesantren Al-Fatah and the *Da'wah* of Tablighi Jamaat in Temboro**

*Kiai* is a central figure in the development of Tablighi Jamaat movement in Pesantren Al-Fatah. However, *nyai* should not be ruled out in the spread of this *da'wah* movement. In 1986, when the second group of Tablighi Jamaat members came to Al-Fatah, the daughters of *Kiai* Mahmud, namely Umi Fathimmah Az-Zahroh and Nyai Masrohah, had started wearing *niqab* or face veils. The face veil worn by *nyai* was different from the one that is normally worn today. Umi Fathimmah provided face veils for religious teachers and *santri* in Pesantren Al-Fatah. But, teachers and *santri* had no obligation to wear a veil. *Nyai* only gave lectures on the virtues and benefits of wearing a veil. She played a role as *uswatun hasanah* (exemplary role) whose behavior is an exemplary model for her *santri*.

In 1991, all women in Pesantren Al-Fatah began to be obliged to wear a veil. But, there were *santri* who could not accept the obligation to wear a veil and finally decided to leave the *pesantren*. Umi Fathimah said: "Wearing a face veil means I respect my freedom. I am free to dress the way I do. I have the freedom to make myself not free for men's consumption".

The development of *masturah da'wah* movement in Pesantren Al-Fatah is inseparable from the role played by two *nyai*, namely Nyai Mashrohah and Umi Fathimah Azzahro, the daughters of *Kiai* Mahmud

(1956-1996). They and other Kiai Mahmud's daughters initiated the *masturah da'wah* in Al-Fatah and spread it to Temboro village and other villages and cities. Umi Fathim, a nickname of Fathima Azzahro, started to do the *masturah khuruj* for 40 days in 1991. This was to find out how the principles of *masturah da'wah* were applied. After finished her *masturah khuruj*, she developed *masturah da'wah* in Al-Fatah and began to spread it to the community Temboro village. Now, the house of Umi Fathim is used as a *markaz* and a transit place before the devotees do *masturah da'wah*.

Nyai Masrohah, the first daughter of Kiai Mahmud, is also an influential figure in Temboro village. Her husband, H. Syadzali Shiddiq, B.A., served as the village head of Temboro (1986-1998). Her position as the wife of the village head made it easy to spread the teachings of Tablighi Jamaat. The activities of women villagers changed gradually, especially in the way they wore clothes. She explained female villagers the obligation of wearing a veil and *niqab*. She attempted to provide a better understanding of face veil to those who looked at veiled women as 'foreign persons'.

Temboro village market also had a special characteristic after the spread of *masturah da'wah* movement. Many female traders at the market, who were Temboro villagers as well came from outer Temboro, initially did not wear a veil. In response, *nyai* and Pesantren Al-Fatah attempted to provide them with a better understanding of the importance of using veils and face veils. Some villagers joined the Tablighi Jamaat Movement to distribute veils free of charge to market traders. As a result, now all Temboro market traders wear veils or face veils and apply the Islamic law of buying and selling things (Masrohah 2018).

The Tablighi Jamaat movement is an Islamic conservative-fundamentalist movement inspired by the reformers of the Salafi movement from Saudi Arabia (Noor 2012). In contrast to other Islamic movements, Tablighi Jamaat focuses its mission on transforming the Muslim community and bringing Muslims back to the true path of Islam by following Tablighi standard of right practices of Islam. In spreading the teachings of Islam, the Tablighi Jamaat movement refuses to use the method of *da'wah* by force and chose not to engage in politics. Nyai Masrohah and Umi Fathimah took a persuasive approach in their *da'wah* to Temboro villagers. There were no violence and coercion in their *da'wah* so a harmonious relationship was established between the village community and Pesantren Al-Fatah.

*Nyai* have played important roles for Pesantren Al-Fatah. As a wife, a *nyai* played a role in educating her children, taking care of her household,



and participating in her household's decision-making meetings. As a dormitory caretaker, a *nyai* played as parents, educators, and caregivers for her students. As a community leader, a *nyai* gave advice or opinions on problems facing Temboro villagers. As a *muballighah* (female preacher), a *nyai* gave religious lectures to her students and Temboro villagers, and guided devotees on how to carry out *masturah* Islamic propagation.

### *Masturah: Da'wah Movement among Women of Tablighi Jamaat*

Etymologically, the word *masturah* is derived from the Arabic verb *satara* - *yasturu* which means "to cover". *Masturah* is a noun of *satara*, which means "be covered". In Urdu, the word *masturah* means "woman" (Az-Zahro 2018). There were different opinions of the meaning of *masturah* among Tablighi Jammah women of Pesantren Al-Fatah. Umi Fathim said that when she went to India and Pakistan, she found that *masturah* means "woman". But, Tablighi Jamaat members like Elis Nafisah and Yatini said that *masturah* is a closed Islamic mission because it is carried out in a closed house approved by members, which is not seen from outside and the members inside cannot see outside. So, we conclude that *masturah* is an attempt of *da'wah* among women of Tablighi Jamaat, in which women must be accompanied by their husband or *mahram* (guardians), and is conducted at a certain time and place agreed by the members.

*Masturah da'wah* was initiated by Shaykh Maulana Muhammad Ilyas (1887-1948) when he was concerned with the condition of Muslims in India at his time. It emerged at the same time as the obligation of *khuruj* for male members of Tablighi Jamaat (Az-Zahro 2018). Shaykh Ilyas expected that Muslims should use 10% of their time to do this religious mission. As described by Manshur (2010), requirements for a group that wished to perform *masturah da'wah* are as follow:

- a. In the three-day *masturah*, female participants should have attended *ijtima'* or *masturah ta'lim*. The *amir* (leader) of three-day *masturah* should be a person who has carried out *khuruj* for 40 days and has been an *amir* before;
- b. In 15-day *masturah*, participants should be married persons and have carried out three-day *khuruj masturah* for at least three times. The *amir* (leader) of this 15-day *masturah* should be a person who has carried out a 40-day *khuruj* and experienced the 15-day *masturah khuruj*;
- c. In 40-day *masturah*, with neighboring countries as a destination, participants should be male members of Tablighi Jamaat who have been

in the group for four months, have done a 15-day *khuruj masturah* or five 3-day *khuruj masturahr*s and are acknowledged by the *shura* (meeting board) in Indonesia; and

d. In two-month *masturah*, with India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan as countries of destination, participants should have done a 15-day *masturah* or 40-day *masturah*, acknowledged by *shura* in Indonesia, and get approval from *Shura* Nizamuddin, India.

*Masturah* is characterized by its closed nature as it is done by visiting a house of a *da'wah* participant, which was previously chosen, and a *satir*, a long cloth that must be installed surrounding the house so that those who are inside cannot see outside and *vice versa*. Additionally, the attires worn by the participants must cover their *awrah* entirely. If a female Tablighi wears a black veil and *abaya* for her daily clothing, she must wear attire with *niqab* that covers her body including face, arms and feet, except eyes, when she is attending a session of *masturah* (Yatini 2018).

*Masturah* is mainly aimed at re-establishing Islamic values in the participants' household so that it can function as a mosque. Religious values that can be implemented at the household are as follows: 1) re-establishing the Fadhail Amal Taklim Assembly (a main religious textbook of Tablighi Jamaat); 2) every woman has to be able to maintain their Fard Salah by doing it on time, preserve their *dzikir* all day, and read the Quran in routine; 3) frequently discuss righteous deeds and the afterlife at home; 4) living a simple life, and 5) encouraging and helping husbands to do the *da'wah khuruj fi sabilillah* (Az-Zahro 2018).

Another requirement of *masturah* is a female participant must be accompanied by her husband or *mahram* (religious guardians) such as her dad, brother, or another family member. *Masturah* is usually attended by married women, yet unmarried women and teenagers are permitted to get involved in this *da'wah* activity. The men who are accompanying their wives in a session of *masturah* will stay in a mosque near the household where the *masturah* is being conducted to keep an eye on their wives and their activities.

*Khuruj fi sabilillah*, which is conducted by male followers of Tablighi Jamaah, is focused on activities aimed at reviving religious practices outside the home such as reviving the function of the mosque as a place of congregational prayer and *da'wah* activities by visiting Muslims one by one at their houses. Meanwhile, *masturah* is aimed at reviving religious practices in the house, so the house functions like a mosque. *Masturah da'wah* is different from the common model of *da'wah* which is open to

the public because it is carried out in public places by presenting a *da'i* (preacher). *Masturah* activities in Temboro can be described as follow.

#### Daily Ta'lim

Daily *ta'lim* is religious learning which is held at home among family members for 30 minutes after the *maghrib* prayer. This includes learning the main reference books of Tablighi Jama'at such as *Fadhilah Amal*, *Fadhilah Sadaqah*, and *Muntakhab Hadith*, reciting Al-Quran, conducting deliberation of family issues such as determining what to be purchased the next day, religious issues, and others (Nafisah 2018).

#### Weekly Ta'lim

Weekly *ta'lim* is religious learning held once a week in *mahallah*, the residential place of a *masturah* participant. It is held at the day and time agreed by the participants of *mahallah* deliberation. The weekly *ta'lim* is attended by around 20 members. *Masturah* organizers control the programs of this weekly *ta'lim*. Participants do not use loudspeakers, stand, and sit on a chair. All sit on the floor. They are not allowed to bring children. New participants are permitted not to follow tightly the rule of body covering (Yatini 2018).

#### Bayan Masturah

*Bayan masturah* is religious learning usually held on Friday after the '*ashr* prayer. It provides Islamic lectures that describe the importance of *da'wah*, faith, and other Islamic teachings. *Bayan masturah* is attended by women and girls from Temboro and other places (Nafisah 2018).

#### Masturah Ahad Kliwon (Selapanan)

*Masturah Ahad Kliwon* is one of the routine activities, which is held on Kliwon Sundays at the house of Kiai Ubaidillah located in Trangkil. Male and female attendants are separated from each other in that male participants attend religious lectures in the Trangkil central mosque and female participants attend the house of Kiai Ubaidillah. *Bayan masturah* is delivered by using loudspeakers so that it can be well heard by all women participants.

## Khuruj Masturah

*Khuruj masturah* is a *da'wah* activity carried out by a group of Tablighi Jamaat members in a certain area. The data of the groups of devotees who carry out the *khuruj masturah* are recorded in the main office of Tablighi Jamaat (*markaz*). *Khuruj masturah* is funded through the group's own financial support. Before leaving for *khuruj masturah*, each group must get approval from *markaz*. The obligation that doing *da'wah* is not only for men but also for women as stated in the Quran (Alu Imran: 104 and 110; Al-Fushshilat: 33) is the basis of *masturah da'wah* movement.

## The Impact of *Masturah* on the Development of Pesantren Al-Fatah and Temboro Village

Our studies revealed that *masturah da'wah* impacted Pesantren Al-Fatah and the community of Temboro. First, women of Pesantren Al-Fatah were obliged to wear a face veil. The first kind of veil or *niqab* was different from that of today. Umi Fathimah sewed a face-veil herself from a thick piece of cloth and later provided face veils for sale. Umi Fathimah, Nyai Masyrohah, and other daughters of Kiai Mahmud showed themselves as exemplary models of face veil to teachers and students at Pesantren Al-Fatah. But, in the beginning, women didn't need to wear a face veil. These *nyai* gave lectures about the virtues of wearing a veil to women - female teachers and students - at Pesantren Al-Fatah.

Second, *masturah da'wah* movement has attracted more *santri* to study at Pesantren Al-Fatah. The *santri* did not only come from Magetan, but also from various regions in Indonesia and even from abroad. Also, *masturah da'wah* has provided Temboro villagers with positive impacts in terms of their social, religious, economic, cultural lives.

In terms of social-religious life, *masturah da'wah* has made Temboro villagers, around 7000 people, more devoted and obedient to Islam. When *adzan* (a call to prayer) was announced, they closed their shops and stopped their worldly activities. Men immediately went to the mosque to pray and women performed prayers in their homes. Besides, *ta'lim* (religious learning) was conducted in every house, mosque, and neighborhood. *Majlis ta'lim* (religious learning assembly) for women was found in each neighborhood. There was even a special *ta'lim* assembly for traders of Temboro market. The assembly was held on Thursday from 10.00 to 11.00 Eastern Indonesian Time at Mr. Bilal's house behind Temboro market. When the *ta'lim* assembly started, female traders left their shops and were guarded by their fathers or market security officers to attend to the *ta'lim*.

Female traders at Temboro market had to wear 'Islamic clothes' including face veils.

This development of the Tablighi Jama'at movement made Temboro called Kampung Madinah (Village of Medina). In some places, there were green signposts say *thayyibah*. Streets in the village use Arabic names and Islamic phrases such as Medina I alley, K. H. Ahmad Shodiq street, and Sunan Ampel road. Shops and other business places like lodging or pharmacy also use Arabic names and Islamic decoration such as Jeddah Shop that sold robe and abayas, and Al-Mabruk Shop.

The economy of Temboro grew rapidly due to the development of the *da'wah* business in this village. Many shops sold fittings for *masturah*, veils, *niqab*, abayas, and so on. The increasing number of *santri* every year also improved the economy of the local community. Many *masturah* routine activities attracted participants from various areas outside Temboro. Those who were natives to Temboro looked for a place to stay. There were also food sellers and vendors along the village street. Motorbike services were in high demand in this village mainly for female participants and attendees because they no longer felt embarrassed to travel to an area with men who were not their *mahram*. Other economic businesses also developed such as lodging, clinics, pharmacies, and car rental.

Women in Temboro village were instructed to wear a face veil from an early age. They normally wore black abaya and a face veil. Visitors to Temboro were also advised to wear Muslim clothes or at least wear decent clothes.

Furthermore, Temboro has transformed into a village of religious tourism. Male visitors could attend the regular congregation which was held every Friday night at the Trangkil mosque. Female visitors could participate in the activities of parenting on Fridays. Islamic learning sessions were held in almost every corner of Temboro. Islamic congregations held by Pesantren Al-Fatah were not only attended by laypersons, but also by local government officials and police officers of Magetan regency.

Besides, visitors to Temboro could experience natural tourism by taking a camel ride for IDR 10,000. Four camels brought from Malang zoo were available for rent. Visitors also could get on horseback for IDR 5,000. Water tourism in the form of canoe rental was also provided. Visitors could go canoeing for IDR 10,000. Every year, archery and horse riding competitions were held at Pesantren Al-Fatah which attracted enthusiastic visitors from the surrounding community.

## Conclusion

This article has shown that Jamaat Tablighi women, who had not been previously involved in any public activities, played an important role in the development of Islamic *da'wah* activities, particularly in Pesantren Al-Fatah and Temboro village. This is seen in the role played by *nyai*-wife and daughters of Pesantren Al-Fatah's leader (*kiai*)- in initiating and developing *da'wah* among women of Tablighi Jamaat movement called *masturah*. It is a form of *da'wah* activity conducted by and for female followers of Jamaat Tabligh with strict rules such as women participants must be accompanied by their husbands or religious guardians (*mahram*). *Masturah* is held in private houses of female followers of Tablighi Jamaat, only offered to and attended by Tablighi Jamaat women so that it is not well known by the wider society.

For Tablighi Jamaat movement, Islamic faith should be put into practice by Muslim men and women. This is manifested in *masturah* in which female followers of Tablighi Jamaat were actively involved in Islamic propagation by and for themselves. It is comparable to the obligation of *da'wah* for male followers of Tablighi Jamaat. As male followers go for *da'wah* by leaving their families for a certain time known as *khuruj*, their wives conduct *da'wah* activities by and for themselves known as *masturah*. While *khuruj* is aimed at reviving Islamic faith and practice in public space, *masturah* is designed to revive Islamic faith and practices at home, making houses as mosques for female members of Tablighi Jamaat.

*Nyai* played an important role as agents of *da'wah* in developing *masturah* at Pesantren Al-Fatah and the surrounding community of Temboro. This has helped the development of Pesantren Al-Fatah as well as the acceptance of Tablighi Jamaat movement among Temboro people. As a result, all this has transformed Temboro into a village with a stricter religious life and economic benefits due to the rapid development of Islamic *da'wah* model developed by Pesantren Al-Fatah and its Tablighi Jamaat movement.

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### **Interviews**

Interview with Ummi Fathimah Az-Zahro, 7 April 2018.

Interview with Elis Nafisah, 26 April 2018.

Interview with Yatini, 26 April 2018.

Interview with Muhammad Syafii, 7 April 2018.

Interview with Nyai Masrohah, 15 April 2018.