

# Gender Paradigm and Movement Model of 'Aisyiyah During the New Order Period (Case Study 'Aisyiyah of South Sulawesi)

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**ABSTRACT.** Land This study aims to analyze 'Aisyiyah's gender paradigm during the New Order Era, and to analyze Aisyiyah's contribution to advancing the social life of South Sulawesi women at that time. The research method uses the Historiography approach, which uses four stages, the first is Heuristics (data collection), Source Criticism, Interpretation, and Historiography. The research findings show that Aisyiyah's gender paradigm contributes to encouraging her members to not only dwell on the domestic sector. Women are encouraged to actively go out and preach as men. This change of view has begun to be practiced to provide equal rights, obligations and roles for women. Other research results, during the New Order, 'Aisyiyah played a significant role in the success of the national development agenda. 'Aisyiyah has never taken a frontal position with the government. 'Aisyiyah prefers to carry out a conformist-adaptive strategy, so that she can continue to carry out her da'wah agenda, especially in the fields of education, social and health, without getting too involved in matters of power politics.

**Keywords:** *Aisyiyah's Gender Paradigm; Aisyiyah's Role in the Old Order Period; Aisyiyah's South Sulawesi.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

A study that examines the history of 'Aisyiyah in depth is written in the book "Posisi dan Jati Diri 'Aisyiyah: Perubahan dan Perkembangan 1917-1998" [1]. The book is a translation of Rof'ah's thesis at McGill University Canada entitled "A Study of 'Aisyiyah: An Indonesian Woman Organization (1917-1998)" in 2000. Rof'ah explained that, during the first 20 years or so, Aisyiyah concentrated on Indonesian independence efforts. Aisyiyah's participation in building networks and consolidating women's organizations for independence was very significant. The First Indonesian Women's Congress in 1928 was an example of Aisyiyah's struggle during that period. During the Old Order era, the writer found that filling social development was the focus of Aisyiyah's agenda. Under the New Order regime, Aisyiyah was forced by the regime to support the idea of national development. Other women's organizations have also experienced similar fate. At this time, Aisyiyah only approved of the New Order policy. Aisyiyah rarely, if ever, protested against the policies of the New Order.

Another study related to Aisyiyah, entitled "Aisyiyah: Pemberdayaan Perempuan dalam Perspektif Islam" [2]. This book was written by Aisyiyah's Central Leadership, this book discusses Aisyiyah as a

women's organization, engaged in efforts to increase the dignity and awareness of Indonesian women in developing the State and Nation. The path that Aisyiyah has taken is by upholding and realizing the values of Islamic teachings, especially regarding women, to create family and community welfare.

The historical study of Aisyiyah in the Era of National Movement and in the Era of the Old Order was studied by Robiatul Adawiyah, in his Thesis at the Department of Islamic History and Culture UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. She raised the title "Peran Sosial Politik Aisyiyah pada Masa Pergerakan Nasional sampai Orde Lama (1917-1965)" [3]. The focus of this thesis, discusses Aisyiyah as one of the oldest women's organizations in Indonesia, which has produced female figures in every era and has done a lot of benefit to the people. The discussion of this thesis focuses on the discussion of how 'Aisyiyah's political activities were during the National Movement Order to the Old Order.

Based on these three works, this study will also portray the gender paradigm and model of the 'Aisyiyah movement during the New Order era in South Sulawesi. The study of 'Aisyiyah's work in this area is still very limited. The historical review of 'Aisyiyah is only found in a brief description of the Aisyiyah's Regional Board of South Sulawesi [4]. A biographical study has also been conducted on one of

the activists 'Aisyiyah Athirah Kalla, mother of Jusuf Kalla [5]. This study can complement previous studies examining the 'Aisyiyah movement in the archipelago.

#### A. *Gender Paradigm Aisyiyah*

The model of the 'Aisyiyah Movement during the New Order Era could not only be seen in the empirical programs that were carried out directly in the community, but also could be traced to books published by the Central Leadership of 'Aisyiyah. These books reflect 'Aisyiyah's perspective in carrying out her movement. This view is reviewed by Dzuhayatin (2015) in the 'dalam 'Rezim Gender Muhammadiyah: Kontestasi Gender, Identitas, dan Eksistensi' [6]. According to her, one of the ways to photograph 'Aisyiyah's work in the New Order era was by examining Aisyiyah's works of thought that discuss the position of women. There are at least two works that can be traced, namely the book "Adabul Mar'ah fil Islam" and the book "Keluarga Sakinah".

The book 'Adabul Mar'ah fil Islam' is the result of the formulation of the Muhammadiyah Central Leadership Council Tarjih. However, as a Muhammadiyah wing organization, 'Aisyiyah also guides the book. This book was published in line with the increase in public participation in the modernization process proclaimed by the New Order regime. Politically, 1975 was the decade of women declared by the United Nations by encouraging women's public participation in development.

In Dzuhayatin's assessment, this book is less systematically structured. The first chapter contains normative relationships in the household, mostly adopted from the book 'Aisyiyah, published in 1934, entitled "Tuntunan Mencapai istri Islam yang Berarti". Meanwhile, the social or social aspects of the community are more technical in nature, starting with school-period associations and containing morals in Islam. The second to ninth chapters are organized thematically, starting from the issue of dressing according to Islam, parades and demonstrations, women and arts, women and science, women and jihad, to Islamic and political women. The themes are a compilation of the Majelis Tarjih rubric published in Suara Muhammadiyah Magazine from 1929 to 1974.

With regard to social problems in the household, this book still emphasizes the main obligation of a wife to be obedient and respectful to her husband, without any guidance otherwise, that the husband must also respect his wife. The wife is also obliged to serve her parents-in-law more than her husband. In the social aspect, there is a balance between men and women, except for the emphasis on women's clothing, which is required to cover their genitals. However, it is still permissible to follow current fashions and models. Women are advised not to use jewelry, make

decorations and wear excessive fragrances, because it can cause slander and sin. The next chapter deals with women and science, with a positive view, such as the obligation of men and women to seek knowledge and fight for good, as well as their role as caliph on earth. Jihad is meant to preach and have the duty to defend the interests of Islam with energy and thoughts, assets and objects. This view seems very progressive, seen in the ability of women to work outside the home, for example as judges, directors, village heads, sub-district heads, ministers, mayors or regents. All that is done as part of the caliph on earth.

This view is different from the classical fiqh books which prohibit women from becoming leaders by referring to the verses of the Al Quran Surah An-Nisa, Arrijalu Qowwamuna Alan Nisa', and or the hadith of Abu Bakrah that: "it will not be fortunate for the group of people to hand over power to a woman.". In general, this verse is understood that men are the leaders of women. However, the Muhammadiyah Tarjih Council did not interpret Qowwamuna in the sense that men were the leaders of women, but men were the enforcers or the person in charge of affairs related to women. In relation to the hadith of Abu Bakrah, the Tarjih Council is of the view that the hadith text shows a temporary expression at that time, or is categorized as a conditional hadith.

Although the book is intended to complete the book "Tuntunan Mencapai istri Islam yang Berarti", its gender ideological base has not yet shifted towards gender equality. These modern professions are only limited to an extension of the economic and social roles of women in the past. Therefore, the expansion of women's roles does not significantly change the status of women in the senior-junior partnership gender ideology. Increasing women's public participation does not automatically increase their social status. The shift in the role of the public, which is still limited to natural issues, is not followed by changes in the pattern of relations in the domestic sphere. As a result, women have to bear a double burden.

Furthermore, the second book published in the New Order era, "Tuntunan Menuju Keluarga Sakinah", was published in 1989. If we think that change should ideally run linearly, this book should bring Muhammadiyah closer to contemporary gender equality discourse. In fact, according to Dzuhayatin (2015), this book actually shows a setback from the previous book. This decline can be observed in several ways. First, the tendency to place women from the public sector to the domestic sector (from publication to domestication). The book Adabul Mar'ah fil Islam gives more of the spirit of women's publication from domestication. On the other hand, the book "Tuntunan Menuju Keluarga Sakinah" aims at the domestication of women, instead of solving the

double burden problem by adjusting the pattern of husband and wife relationships that reflect partnerships, this book actually negates the public role of women. Dzuhayatin (2015) argues that this book is a theological justification of the New Order gender ideology with the five tasks of women in the 1984 GBHN which describe women as: a) loyal companions of their husbands; b) educators for the next generation of the nation; c) executing household tasks; d) additional breadwinner; e) community members.

Both books are circulated through 'Aisyiyah's network of organizations throughout Indonesia. It can be presumed that this book influenced the thinking style of 'Aisyiyah activists in the archipelago, and of course influenced the Movement Model that 'Aisyiyah was running in South Sulawesi.

*B. The 'Aisyiyah Movement Model During the New Order Era*

The gender paradigm framed with religious arguments was quite influential on the development of 'Aisyiyah's organizations and programs, including in South Sulawesi. During the New Order Era, 'Aisyiyah's existence in South Sulawesi was quite prominent. During the 1971 - 1974 leadership period, this organization was established in 25 Regencies/Cities, while the Branch Management consisted of 150 branches spread throughout the Provinces of South and Southeast Sulawesi. The programs carried out by 'Aisyiyah at that time were designed to be in line with national development goals.

This is shown by the various social and charity activities that have been carried out, such as educational institutions, orphanages and health centers. Aisyiah's programs are carried out according to the government's expectations. In practice, however, the activity was largely self-financed by 'Aisyiyah, receiving little funding from the government. The various problems of women in development, taken seriously by 'Aisyiyah, are even more serious than other problems.

**TABLE I.** Aisyiyah School Table

| No | Type                | Number of Schools |
|----|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1  | Kindergarten        | 75                |
| 2  | Madrasah Ibtidaiyah | 16                |
| 3  | Senior High School  | 6                 |
| 4  | Madsarah Muallimat  | 2                 |

(Source: Aisyiyah of South Sulawesi Report for the period 1971 - 1974 in 1973)

The progress of 'Aisyiyah in South Sulawesi during the early days of the New Order can be seen from the number of schools owned, as shown in the table above.

Based on the table, Aisyiyah makes a specific contribution to early childhood education, through the construction of 75 Kindergartens. Elementary and secondary education in the religious field has also

become the working ground for this Muhammadiyah women's organization. As well as in the field of education, Aisyiyah in South Sulawesi has also shown progress in the Relief Sector program. This effort is realized through the formation of charitable businesses such as maternity homes and orphanages. Until 1973, Aisyiyah in the area had 10 maternity houses and 5 orphanages [7].

In the field of women's economic empowerment, 'Aisyiyah is showing quite serious efforts. For example, in 1975, this organization conducted a skills education course program consisting of sewing, typing, and cooking/housekeeping. This activity, apart from being aimed at educating mothers, was also aimed at teenage girls. For mothers, this course can help improve family welfare. For young women, especially those who drop out of school, are expected to become skilled workers so that they can find jobs that can guarantee their future [8]. One of 'Aisyiyah's programs that supported development in the New Order Era, namely the village women's development program launched at the Aisyiyah Congress in 1978. The ultimate goal of the program is to provide information and training to village women that will make them more aware of their duties as Muslims. In addition, to make them understand their rights and responsibilities in the family and society. This program also aims to equip village women with a variety of skills that can support the family economy.

The decision to make village women the main target of the program was accompanied by other aspects such as emphasizing family values and women's economic empowerment. This suggests that Aisyiyah's program has similarities with the PKK program. In subsequent developments, the development of village women was complemented by other programs. In 1984 for example, 'Aisyiyah presented a new program, called *Qaryah Thayyibah*. The focus of the program is village development, the program functions as an additional program for fostering village women. Apart from focusing on village women, *Qaryah Thayyibah*. The focus of the program is village development, the program functions as an additional program for fostering village women.

**TABLE II.** Types Of Skills Education Course Of 'Aisyiyah, 1975

| No | Kinds of courses     | Department                                 | Length of study |
|----|----------------------|--|-----------------|
| 1  | Sew-on               | Couturier                                  | 3 - 6 Months    |
|    |                      | Embroidery                                 | 3 - 6 Months    |
|    |                      | Hand Embroidery                            | 3 - 6 Months    |
| 2  | Type                 | 10 finger typing skills                    | 3 - 6 Months    |
|    |                      | Stenograph and using a calculating machine | 3 - 6 Months    |
| 3  | Cooking/housekeeping |  | 3 - 6 Months    |

(Source: Announcement of Aisiyiah South Sulawesi Skills Project

Management No 005 / PKA / 3/77 dated March 11, 1977)

Apart from focusing on village women, *Qaryah Thayyibah* also targets underdeveloped villages and all their natural and human resources. As the name suggests, the program reflects Aisyah's wish to participate in national development, which is oriented towards a healthy and prosperous society. The *Qaryah Thayyibah* program aims to help villages improve a better quality of life, in various aspects, especially in the fields of education, health, and the family economy. The activities covered by this program include providing scholarships, providing debt capital to home industries, and others. Aisiyiah members are involved in this program, it is hoped that they will also invite other villagers to participate actively in the whole process of this program. The *Qaryah Thayyibah* program was first implemented in 1989, by selecting a small village in Bantul, Yogyakarta. In the 1990s, *Qaryah Thayyibah* was also run in seven other provinces, including South Sulawesi.

In the 1990-1995 period, the Tabligh Division of Aisiyiah's South Sulawesi region sought *Qaryah Thayyibah* for regions that did not yet exist, by completing the composition of its management. In addition, 'Aisiyiah also develops *Qaryah Thayyibah* for existing regions, in coordination with the Regional Leaders of Aisiyiah in South Sulawesi. In the report of 'Aisiyiah South Sulawesi 1990-1995, it was found that the Tabligh Leadership section of 'Aisiyiah for the South Sulawesi Region carried out a counseling program at *Qaryah Thayyibah Bori Masunggu* fostered village, 'Aisiyiah Labakkang branch, Pangkep Regency. This was followed by a visit to the District Polmas to monitor the *Qaryah Thayyibah* and Village Women Development program.

Regional Board of Aisiyiah South Sulawesi in the period 1978-1981 began to be involved in the Village Women Development Program. Initially attending the Village Women Development Workshop in Yogyakarta on 10-16 May 1983. The event was held by the Central Leadership of 'Aisiyiah as a pilot program for Guiding Village Women Outside Java, and South Sulawesi was also appointed to implement this program. The Regional Leadership of Aisiyiah sent three people to participate in this activity.

In 1984, the Regional Board of Aisiyiah South Sulawesi realized the Village Women Development program by determining three locations for the implementation of the program, namely Ujung Pandang, Maros and Sinjai. After running since 15 August 1984, a consolidation program was held on 3 October 1985, in the form of upgrading the Koran teachers and the person in charge of PWD in the regions. Although it seems very similar to the Government program, researchers have not found any data, that this activity is actually a Government activity

carried out by Aisiyiah, or that the Government provides financial assistance to make 'Aisiyiah's activity a success.

The vital role of the family in the New Order ideology encouraged Aisiyiah to participate in developing the family aspect of the Village Women Development program, through a program called 'Family Sakinah'. This program was discussed in the 'Aisiyiah congress in 1985. The Sakinah family is quite similar to the Guidance for Village Women, because the program aims at fostering five ideal aspects of family life, namely religion, education, health, and economic and social relations within and between family.

However, in reality the two programs are different. If the Village Women Program focuses on rural communities, the Sakinah Family is oriented towards addressing urban residents, especially middle-class families. At the same time, the main focus of the project, according to Kuntowijoyo, is that the response to the family crisis that occurs in Indonesian cities is not a matter of physical development, but on religious moral values.

In South Sulawesi, the Sakinah Family program was socialized through the Tabligh Section of Regional Board of 'Aisiyiah South Sulawesi. In the period 1990-1993, the Tabligh Section of 'Aisiyiah of South Sulawesi held a Muballighat Training for Sakinah Families throughout South Sulawesi on 23-26 September 1993. This activity seemed to be a continuation of a similar activity, which was held regionally by the 'Aisiyiah Central Executive, in the form of Upgrading of Muballighat 'Keluarga Sakinah' Aisiyiah throughout Eastern Indonesia, 12-13 July 1993 in Palu, Central Sulawesi. The socialization of the Sakinah Family may be considered more appropriate for Aisiyiah's preachers, because they are in direct contact with the community, especially through the recitation forum and or the majelis taklim forum.

Even though it has no formal relationship, some of Aisiyiah's activities have similarities with the PKK and Dharma Wanita programs. The relationship between 'Aisiyiah and the two women's organizations' golden children' of the New Order was not only in the imitation of the program. In the Regional Leadership Report of 'Aisiyiah at the 42nd Congress, 15-19 December 1990 in Yogyakarta, it was stated that one of the obstacles faced in South Sulawesi was the involvement of trained' Aisiyiah cadres who preferred to be active in Dhama Wanita and PKK than 'Aisiyiah [9]. In other words, the presence of the organization formed by the New Order also drained the resources of other women's organizations. It can be concluded that the existence of PKK and Dharma Wanita not only intervened in the discourse of women's movements at that time, but

also became a 'parasite' for other women's movements, such as 'Aisyiyah.

## 2. CONCLUSION

The birth of Aisyiyah as a Muslim women's organization is a form of Islamic reform in changing the paradigm of women which previously only oriented to domestic affairs. The viewpoint of advanced Islam introduced by 'Aisyiyah has changed the views of women in South Sulawesi. At the beginning of Aisyiyah's establishment, women were encouraged to actively go out and preach as men. This change of view began to be practiced to provide equal rights, obligations and roles for women.

During the New Order era, the 'Aisyiyah Movement played a significant role in the success of the Suharto government's development agenda. 'Aisyiyah has never taken a frontal position with the ruling regime. 'Aisyiyah, like Muhammadiyah, prefers to carry out a conformist-adaptive strategy, so that she can continue to carry out her da'wah agenda, especially in the fields of education, social and health, without being too involved in matters of power politics.

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