WOMEN'S WORLD IN SHORT STORIES ON DUNIASANTRI.CO: A READING OF SANTRIWATI'S WORKS

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ABSTRACT
This paper aims to examine the world of women in short stories written by santriwati (female students) on duniasantri.co website, which was the first pioneer of student journalism with the concept of citizen journalism. There are 78% of short stories written by santri (male students) and only 22% of short stories written by santriwati. This gender-based contribution imbalance was appealing to study further. Using qualitative descriptive method to explore the santriwati short stories, this research analyzes five short stories in duniasantri.co written by santriwati. To strengthen the data and analysis, the researcher also conducted interviews with the santriwati authors. The study found that there were various themes such as matchmaking and marriage in pesantren, the search for identity, the longing for Ramadan and Lailatul Qadar, and patriarchy culture. These themes indicate that education in Islamic boarding schools produces female students with heterogeneous thinking. Therefore, it can be concluded that the world of women is not seen as uniform by santriwati.

Keyword: duniasantri.co, Pesantren, Santriwati, Women's World.
ABSTRAK
Tulisan ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji dunia perempuan dalam cerpen-cerpen yang ditulis santriwati di website Duniasantri.co yang merupakan pelopor jurnalisme santri pertama berkonsep citizen journalism. Terdapat 78% cerpen ditulis oleh santri dan hanya 22% cerpen ditulis oleh santriwati. Ketimpangan komposisi tersebut menjadi daya tarik untuk melihat bagaimana kisah-kisah yang diproduksi oleh santriwati. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskripsi kualitatif dengan objek kajian cerpen-cerpen karya santriwati di duniasantri.co. Untuk memperkuat data dan analisis, peneliti juga melakukan wawancara dengan para penulis santriwati. Berdasarkan hasil analisis terhadap lima cerpen yang ditulis oleh santriwati di duniasantri.co memperlihatkan karakteristik tema yang bermacam seperti perjodohan dan pernikahan di pesantren, pencarian identitas para santriwati di pesantren, kerinduan terhadap bulan Ramadan dan Lailatul Qadar, serta budaya patriarki yang masih membelenggu perempuan. Tema-tema tersebut memperlihatkan, pendidikan di pesantren menghasilkan santriwati dengan pemikiran beragam (heterogen). Dengan demikian dapat disimpulkan dunia perempuan tidak dilihat seragam oleh santriwati.

Kata Kunci: Dunia Perempuan, duniasantri.co, Santriwati, Sastra Pesantren.

INTRODUCTION
As a website that claims itself to be the pioneer of santri\(^1\) journalism, duniasantri.co opened its door to anyone to contribute to duniasantri.co. By bringing the spirit of citizen journalism, duniasantri.co contributors could publish their thoughts and ideas in its various columns, including: Opini, Santriwati, Teras, Cerpen, Puisi, Sosok, Pondok, and Humor according to the guidelines set by the curators of duniasantri.co. All incoming contributions are going through selection process by the curators of duniasantri.co to ensure the quality of the writing, including preventing the writing from the plagiarism or double publication. The contributors whose piece was published in duniasantri.co

\(^1\) Santri is a term to describe students who study in Islamic schools or in pesantren (Islamic boarding schools). Santri refers to male students, while santriwati refers to the female students.
received monetary reward after their fifth published work. This system made duniasantri.co to be one of most-wanted web portals for santris who love writing. 2

Besides being active in publishing the writings of santri, duniasantri.co which was founded in 2019 under the Yayasan Jejaring Dunia Santri Foundation, is also active in conducting journalistic trainings in various places, both online and offline. The active involvement of pesantrens in responding to the digital world has resulted in changes in the attitudes and behavior of the santri 3. Today, duniasantri.co has published 2,200 articles spread out in its 10 columns. Based on data from duniasantri.co website, Short Stories column attracted the most readers after Teras, Opini, Sosok and Santri Way.

Although literature of pesantren (sastra pesantren) in early 21st century was dominated by women's writings 4, but the data on duniasantri.co shows that these writings are still dominated by male writers. Lately, contemporary pesantren literature was promoted by notable female pesantren writers such as Khilma Anis and Najhaty Sharma, who are Ning (the daughter or daughter-in-law of Kiai), not many santriwati writers could produce similarly unique experience of pesantren as did these two prominent authors. Khilma Anis, the writer of novel Hati Suhita (2019), is the pengasuh of PP An-Nur Jember. The popularity of Hati Suhita turned the novel into a film under the same title 5. Meanwhile, Najhaty Sharma, pengasuh of the Al-

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Munir Islamic boarding school, Tegalrejo Magelang, wrote the best-selling novel Dua Barista. Their level of education and privileges of being Ning gave them different experiences in the life of pesantren, so that they produce works that are different from the short stories produced by santriwati at duniasantri.co.

To date, there are 267 short stories published and written by 54 contributors of duniasantri.co from various pesantrens. From these 54 short story authors, 42 of them were male, and 12 of them were female. It means, 78% of short stories were written by santri, and only 22% of short stories were written by santriwati. This inequality shows that the involvement of santriwati in the publication process is not balanced with the very small number of publications when compared to santri writers. This study aims to explore the world of women in the short stories written by santriwati in duniasantri.co. The women’s world refers to the space (place) for women to carry out activities and the life of women themselves. This is in accordance with the concept of the sociology of literature which sees the relationship between literature and social reality and the background of writing as a producer of literary works. For the rest of the paper, the words santri and santriwati hence will not be italicized.

Pesantren presents unique setting for literature as it has segregation system that is not found in other formal education. Badrus Sholeh said that the segregation system in pesantrens resulted in limited access to santriwati compared to the santri. The segregation system also influences the mindset and writing produced between santri and santriwati. The segregation system in pesantren has also made research that has appeared so far focused on the work of santri. This is what makes this research necessary.

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Recently, literary works originating from pesantren and written by pesantren members are referred to as pesantren literature. Although scholars have not yet agreed on the term pesantren literature, various studies have begun to emerge. Jamal D. Rahman revealed three definitions of pesantren literature, namely literature that lives in pesantren, literature written by pesantren people, and literature with the theme of pesantren\textsuperscript{9}. Moving on from this definition, Astutiningsih and Pujiarti discussed how humanist religious discourse and ideological position of the santri are represented in the short stories written by santri\textsuperscript{10}. An important finding to note in this study is that, the religious understanding of the santri who comply with fiqh rules giving priority to human rights and prioritizing humanist values. The three short stories in Astutiningsih’s study represent a humanitarian discourse with a value of tolerance and were far from dogmatic-textual judgments. As a salaf (traditional) pesantren, discourses on divinity and humanity grow side by side in harmony as seen in literary works. The humanist religious discourse represented in pesantren literature provides space for humanitarian issues in a proportionate way with its cultural context.

Another study on santrei was conducted by Badrus Shaleh\textsuperscript{11} who directly related the literary tradition of pesantren with the santri sub-culture. This anthropological study suggests that literature is the only medium of creativity that can be accepted in the fiqih. Literature can be a medium for religious education and communication. It can also symbolize spirituality as well as personal and communal expression, search for identity, and even support the students’ economy. Shaleh's research only focused on male-only pesantrens, while there are also pesantrens with segregated genders.


\textsuperscript{10} Astutiningsih and Pujiati.

\textsuperscript{11} Shaleh, Sastrawan Santri: Etnografi Sastra Pesantren.
In contrast with the study by Badrus Shaleh\textsuperscript{12}, Nor Ismah\textsuperscript{13} conducted research on the writings of females from pesantren. In her research, nor Ismah underlined a phenomenon of writing genre in the early 21\textsuperscript{st} century marked by the booming of \textit{teenlit} and \textit{chick lit} genres, that eventually also influenced the old and new writings in pesantren literature. \textit{Teenlit} and \textit{chick lit} were muh written and read by females.\textsuperscript{14} Some categories were then explained by Nor Ismah by comparing the patterns and genres written by the old generation of pesantren literature writers with the new generation of pesantren literature writers.

The results of Ismah’s study underlined two main points. One, pesantren literature is a bridge that connects between pesantren cultures and people outside the pesantren. The new generation of pesantren writers is more inclined to write by genre \textit{teenlit} and \textit{chick lit} which Nor Ismah categorized as pesantren \textit{pop literature}. This phenomenon has made pesantren pop literature more widely known by the wider community and has become a point where pesantren are no longer alienated from modern life. Two, the old generation of pesantren literature between 1960-1990 was dominated by male authors rather than female writers. However, female pesantren literature writers are increasing in number at the beginning of the 21\textsuperscript{st} century. This is because older writers write novels for older mature readers, while new generations of writers write for younger readers, so that the two generations have different narrative patterns.

Another research related to other pesantren pop literature was conducted by Novita Dewi, who analyzed \textit{Santri Semelekte} by Ma’rifatun Baroroh and \textit{Jilbab Britney Spears} by Herlinantiens. In her study, Dewi shows how Islam can be in harmony with \textit{chick lit}. Both novels use the same plot pattern as \textit{chick lit} novels in the early 2000s, where the story was happy ending and

\textsuperscript{12} Shaleh.
\textsuperscript{13} Ismah, “The New Generation of Women Writers from the Pesantren Tradition in Indonesia.”
\textsuperscript{14} Suma Riella Rusdiarti, “CHICK LIT DALAM SAstra PRANCIS KONTEMPORER Studi Kasus: Pendapat Peserta Komunitas Sastra Maya Di Prancis Tentang Chick Lit” (Depok, 2007).
had an ideal depiction of characters. Islamic elements are used as decorations that reinforce conflicts related to identity crises.15

A study that relates on the women’s world in short stories is Hayati’s research16 which analyzed 15 short stories in the anthology Dunia Perempuan. The research shows that there are 14 short stories that feature the dual roles of women who live in domestic and public spaces, as well as one short story that depicts women in public spaces. The depiction of the domestic world reflects the society's thinking which considers women to be better at home. Hayati also connects the world of women with the image of women. Women were pictured as a mother, a loyal woman, a successful woman, a second woman, an ideal woman, and a negative woman. Through the imagery, it appears that Indonesian women writers adhere to moderate feminism.17

Based on this background, this research will look at how female writers in the pesantren literature tell stories that describe their world. The stories to be analyzed are short stories published in duniasantri.co in 2021. There was a scarcity of studies on pesantren literature, especially in the form of short stories in online portal like duniasantri.co. In addition, the lack of research on the works of santriwati makes this research important because of the differences in the life experiences of santriawati and women outside pesantrens. As a portal that publish santri works, duniasantri.co depicts the struggles and thoughts of santriwati with all their characteristics. Thus, this research will complement pesantren literature studies, especially by looking at how the world of women is described by santriwati whose experience is distinct.

Literary works function as a reflection of reality, as well as ideal future aspirations for equal roles and rights between women

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17 Hayati.
and men\textsuperscript{18}. To explore the world of women in santriwati short stories, qualitative descriptive research was conducted for this study. Descriptive research is an effort to find facts by making the right interpretation of the object of research. While qualitative study is used to show the nature of values whose data source is in the form of texts (works), as well as formal data in the form of words, sentences, and discourses\textsuperscript{19}.

This study employs a literary sociology approach. As a member of society, literary writers are bound to certain social groups that concern religion, customs, education, and various social institutions around them. Therefore, the relationship between literature and society is natural\textsuperscript{20}. There are five short stories under study, entitled: \textit{Bulan Kesiangan}, \textit{Cinta Istiqomah}, \textit{Sala-wat Pertama Runa}, \textit{Ruwaiya}, and \textit{Dialog}. These five short stories were chosen because they were published in the same year 2021 and have a traceable author's background. To strengthen the corpus and research context, interviews were conducted with santriwati. To support the data, the researchers interviewed the authors via the Google form which was distributed in June 2022. In addition, as a library research, various journal articles, research results, books, and newspapers were used as secondary data. Data collection employed the listening note technique to find narrative patterns, women's issues that appear in the text, and how the world of women is described in the writings of santriwati.

\textsuperscript{19} Nyoman Kutha Ratna, \textit{Teori, Metode, Dan Teknik Penelitian Sastra} (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2010).
\textsuperscript{20} Sapardi Djoko Damono, \textit{Sosiologi Sastra} (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2020).
FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS
Arranged Marriage in Pesantren

Arranged marriage in pesantren is not a taboo nor new tradition. According to Dhofier, arranged marriage occurred because the kyai tries to find a good partner for his daughters in terms of religion, lineage, and carácter. This is due to the fact that his son or his son in law will later lead the pesantren, hence arranged marriages are considered normal and unavoidable. There are at least two short stories that depicted the arranged marriage in pesantren, such as: Bulan Kesiangan (BK) and Cinta Istiqomah. Bulan Kesiangan short story was written by Zahrotul Wardati.

Bulan Kesiangan tells the story of a mother's wish to see her daughter get married. The mother's wish was in conflict her daughter’s the main carácter. Until the end of the story, this mother’s wish was not fulfilled. As the story title “Bulan Kesiangan” [late moon] suggests, the main carácter was passing her prime time in relation to lovemaking. The main character of this short story, Nauri, was a 32-year-old woman, the age range where usually Indonesian women had already get married for the first time and settled with children. The 2020 National Socioeconomic Survey (Susenas) mentioned that 48.59% of women in Indonesia married for the first time at the age of 19-24 years, 26.55% married at the age of 16-18 years, 16.67% married at the age of 25 and over and 8.19% of girls were married at the age of 7-15 years. Referring to this data, it was not surprising that Mrs. Fitri (the mother) wants Nauri to end her bachelor period and get married because she is no longer young, as she emphasized in the following quotation.


meminta tolong kepada Kiai Rasyid untuk mencarikan jodoh untuknya. Menurutnya jodoh dari sang kiai insyallah bebet, bibit, dan bobotnya adalah yang terbaik.  

[More importantly, she was no longer young. Her friends are already married. However, she said she was not ready. It was a long contemplation night for her. Finally, she decided to follow her mother’s request. This Monday, she met Kyai Rasyid and asked for his help to find her a husband candidate. For her, Kyai recommendation must be qualified in terms of piety, knowledge, and lineage (bibit, bebet, bobot)]

The main character of this short story, Nauri, was a female student who memorizes Quran (*hafizah*) and devotes herself to teaching at the Tahfidz An-Nur pesantren. Nauri was described as a santriwati who was obedient and highly dedicated to the pesantren where she studied. It was her dedication to her alamamater that made her putting off her mother's wish to get married. Becoming an *ustazah* (teacher) was a form of her solemn to the Kyai. For santris, Kyai are leaders, teachers, and role models who have a substantial role in disseminating religious concepts and teachings in pesantren. Kyai’s world view became the life guidance of the santri who hope to get the blessings when interacting with and respecting the kiai and his family. With this world view, Nauri was to ask Kiai Rasyid’s help to find a husband for her.

In this short story, the house and pesantren were the central settings of the story. The house connected Nauri and Ibu, while the pesantren became the spiritual setting that shaped the main character's etiquettes, customs, and values. With a pesantren background, polite and obedient characters were built. Culture that presents in pesantren was also present, including the tradition of arranged marriages that often occurs in many


pesantrens in Indonesia. Nauri was finally matched with Akbar, a santri administrator who was also looking for a wife. The author’s response to the matchmaking of the two can be seen from the following quote.


[The face of the future bride blushed. She blushed as she met her future husband's eyes. His heart fluttered. It was exactly what Nauri wanted. Kiai Rasyid's taste is very high.]

Arranged marriage is a theme that often appears in literature regarding pesantren. In the pesantren tradition, arranged marriages are common as an effort to maintain and expand the pesantren networks. With Nauri's character who is polite, obedient and devoted to the kiai, it was not surprising that as a santriwati, the kyai’s recommendation of a future husband was her happiness. Bu Fitri as an additional character created a conflict in the story. She was described as a patient, understanding and compassionate character. It was Mrs. Fitri's wish that made Nauri nervous, and attempting to fulfill her mother’s wish was form of respect (birrul walidain). Unfortunately, her desire was not fulfilled until the end of the story.

Bunga Kesiangan story also shows the generally accepted discourse about the obligation to marry at a young age for women. The slogan "perfecting the half of the deen" seems to be a mantra that continues to be passed from those who are married to (anyone) who is not married. In this sense, the happiness and perfection of women are socially constructed to be conditional to the event of marriage and childbearing. This social construct affected Nuri inasmuch when Nauri did not the second one, anxiety arose within her.


25 Wardati, “Bulan Kesiangan.”
26 Wardati.
[Sweetheart, I am already old. You go get married. You are no longer young, you know. I also want a grandchild so bad]

This conversation excerpt between Nauri and her mom indicated a pressure of marriage from a mother to a daughter. Society considers it “wrong” or “not normal” for a lady in her mature age for not getting married and having children. That is because, in the patriarchal society, marriage and childbearing were the ultimate achievement for women. Her other achievements (education or career) were considered insignificant when these women were not getting married and having children.

This short story portrays the typical spaces of Javanese women called kasur (bedroom), sumur (water well), and dapur (kitchen). Dapur became the opening setting of this short story, where Nauri was narrated to be in the kitchen. Kasur then became a space where Nauri was so anxious about marriage and children; kasur was the most private space for women. Kasur and dapur were mentioned in this story, depicting the spaces where women should be.

In addition to private homes, pesantrens are public spaces where the main character served and taught santriwati. The segregation of pesantrens based on gender, opens up opportunities for women study at pesantren and became a teacher. It is through these contexts of home and pesantren that the marriage discourse was built and resolved. Related to prospective husband, Nauri was quite passive and waited for a candidate to be recommended by her Kyai. For santri and santriwati, Kyai’s choices are the best and must be followed.

The story did not end happily, as Bu Fitri’s wish to see her daughter married was not fulfilled. Mrs. Fitri died when Nauri was finally proposed. Mrs. Fitri's passing seemed to be a punishment for Nauri, who married late. This delay in marriage was then illustrated as the late moon: meaningless and futile.

Another story that portrays arrange marriage is Cinta Istiqomah written by Yeni Sri Purwanti from Ponpes Al Ainy 2 Nganjuk. In general, the theme of this story was matchmaking and love stories among santri and santriwati. The main character in this short story, Zana was the daughter of a religious leader
and owner of the largest pesantren in Batu city, Malang, East Java. Zana was described as a third Aliyah student (Islamic high school) who was beautiful, friendly, and polite. Zana was also smart and accomplished. This shows a typical ideal character that makes her a popular student and much liked by boys. After becoming an Aliyah student, Zana's appearance became more religious as shown by her wearing a niqab (face cover) and gloves.

Another main character was Akbar, the son of a successful businessman and was Zana's boyfriend. The narrator describes Akbar and Zara as a harmonious couple, both in terms of their physical appearance and economic status. Both characters were loyal, patient, and obedient to their parents. It was this obedience that made Zana and Akbar not refuse an arranged marriage with another person, named Farrell, as can be seen from the following quotations.


“Abi dan Umi sudah mencarikan jodoh untukku, dan aku tidak bisa berbuat apa-apa selain menurutinya. Karena aku tidak mau jadi anak durhaka, Bar!” jelas Zana dengan air mata yang terus mengalir dari kelopaknya matanya.

“Abi dan Bunda juga sudah mencarikan jodoh untukku, Zana!” Jawab Akbar menjelaskan.

[“Abi and Umi (Dad and Mom) have found someone for me, and I cannot do anything but obeying their wish. Because I do not want to be a disobedient daughter, Akbar!”, explained Zana with flowing tears on her cheek.

“Allahuakbar! Why do we have the same faith, Za? Allah does not make us to be together”, responded Akbar with shattered heart.

28 Purwati.
“My mother and father have already found someone for me too, Zana!” said Akbar.

As a pesantren-based story, the conflict in *Cinta Istiqomah* shows the ambivalence of the characters. On the one hand, the characters (especially women) were depicted as religious and avoiding immorality, but on the other hand they were experiencing "puppy love". Their affection and love have been well maintained for years after school, even though the two were separated by distance. This is what gave rise to the conflict in the *Cinta Istiqomah*.

The word *istiqomah* means firmness, patience in carrying out "feelings of affection". It also means the obedience to arranged marriages made by both parents. In the end, the conflict of the story ends with a surprised matchmaking. Both of them did not know the person they were arranged to, which made them both so anxious. However, this story ends happily because it turns out that they are the arranged couple of both parents. It turns out that Farrell, the man who was arranged for Zana, was Muhammad Farrell Akbar, her very own Akbar. Istiqomah, or sustained love of Zana was then rewarded beautifully by this marriage. Zana said “So, our *istiqomah* is not in useless, Bar. Allah is indeed the Most Just.”

*Istiqomah* presents a different setting of story in the field of pesantren literature, Stories that took place in pesantren usually portrays arranged marriage to be occurred between Kyai’s family, between santriwati and Kyai’s son, between Kyai’s daughter to his santri, and so on. However, in this Istiqomah story, the arranged marriage was between Kyai's daughter and a businessman's son. However, the picture of Akbar's piety was highlighted from the start, as shown in the following quote.

.. *Dia sudah tidak berani membatah lagi kedua orangtuanya lagi, karena akbar sangat menghormati keduaanya. Sedari kecil, Akbar selalu menuruti perintah dan keinginan kedua orangtuanya. Dan kali ini, mau tidak mau dia harus menuruti*
permintaan mereka meskipun harus mengorbankan perasaan-nya. Dan Akbar pun hanya bisa pasrah dalam dilema ini. 29

[ He no longer dared to refute his parents anymore, because Akbar really respected them both. From a young age, Akbar always obeyed the orders and wishes of his parents. And this time, like it or not, he must comply with their request even if it means sacrificing his feelings. And Akbar can only surrender in this dilemma]

As a man, Akbar shows resilience in the face of failure in his love story. This was different for Zana who was described to be with tears flowing from her eyelids until her eyes were bruised and her voice trembled with sadness. The contrasting imagery between Akbar and Zana shows the stereotype of a woman who is weak, sensitive, and getting carried away easily. This gender-bias image was considered reasonable, originating from the patriarchal culture that is rooted in Indonesian society. Zana's fragility and her sincerity in accepting an arranged marriage, ended happily because it turned out that Akbar and Farrell were the same person. Arranged marriage was ideal because the story was finally happy ending and proving that being istiqomah was rewarded happily. There was no room for the main characters, Zana and Akbar to refuse an arranged marriage from their parents. So, in this case, the concept of dating which was prohibited in Islam ended with a proposal (khitbah).

The search for spiritual identity

A story that narrates someone’s search for identity was Salawat Pertama Runa (SPR) written by Anna Aruna, a santriwati of PP. Al-Hidayah Karangsuci Purwokerto. Her educational background became the capital for her to write stories with pesantren backgrounds. Runa, the main character in the story, was a new student at a pesantren in Purwokerto. Runa was described as cheerful, easy going with the people around her and had a persistent nature. Runa's tenacity made her a critical and brave person. Everything that was against her pre-conceived

29 Purwati.
understanding would always be questioned until she found an answer. Luckily, Runa was able to meet Ms. Inuy, Runa's senior, who was soft-hearted, compassionate, and patient in responding to Runa's curiosity about everything she had just experienced at the pesantren.

Runa enrolled to pesantren based on the wishes of her parents, who hoped that Runa would go to college but still lives at the pesantren. In addition, her parents did not want Runa to join the radical Islamic movement that was growing at the time. Thanks to Ustadz Baha's direction, a role model figure for Runa's family, her parents finally decided for Runa to stay at the pesantren.


"My dear daughter, Ustaz Baha has been a role model for our family since long ago. His knowledge of religion is undoubtable, his mysticism knowledge is equally qualified. Surely, he was not wrong to choose you to be in pesantren at this time. Ustaz Baha wants you to learn the non-radical Islam, dear. Umi knows you must be revolted by the current situation at the pesantren. But you must obey. Pesantren are different from other educational institutions. Later you will understand, what is the real reason you are there. Big hug from Umi.”

*Shalawat Pertama Runa* story expresses Runa's anxiety regarding the search for identity in life and religion. Her inner turmoil occurred when she found many differences from the knowledge, she previously learned with what she got at the pesantren. As a daughter, Runa was not given the opportunity to

choose which pesantren she would attend, let alone to refuse the pesantren that her parents chose. Therefore, although at first Runa felt uncomfortable with the habits of pesantren life, or feeling strange about the way the santri spoke which was different from the way she spoke, Runa persisted to stay in the pesantren.


"Umi, I don’t feel comfortable here. Whatever I do was not convenient as is at home. In fact, when I want to continue liqo here, I was not allowed. Meanwhile, Umi knows that I am the type of person who does not like being restrained. I like traveling, reciting the Quran outdoors, routine reciting one juz daily, halaqah, liqoat, dauroh, jalsa ruhi, and so on. I want to go home, Umi :( 31

What was depicted in the excerpt above mentioned Runa’s identity as hijrah Muslimah who recites one juz daily, halaqah, liqoat, dauroh, jalsa ruhi. She also wore niqab and gloves. All the attributes used by Runa, the way she dressed, the way she spoke, and the way she did her routines, all symbolized hijrah. Hijrah is now interpreted as a change in a Muslim to become more devout (religious) than before 32. Religious movements in the form of hijrah are a form of religious transformation that is implemented in changes in religious behavior and in the context of group activities. The religious movement developed in the form of the hijrah movement initiated by the millennial genera-

31 Yuliana.
The presence of the *hijrah* trend is becoming increasingly popular with the movement pioneered by artists in Indonesia. Increasingly unstoppable digital literacy makes *hijrah* a very interesting phenomenon to do.

Runa, before entering the Islamic boarding school, was following the trend of *hijrah* by changing her appearance and participating in all the activities of communities that claimed to be *hijrah*, such as wearing *isbal* pants (ankle length) for men and wearing socks for women. Runa was disturbed when she encountered many things that were different from what she understood. The religious experience experienced by Runa surprised her, so that she compared it to her previous experience of studying religion.

“Mba, kenapa sih, banyak yang berdandan mencolok di acara selawatan ini? Mereka kan bisa kelihatan sama santri putra?”


“Lalu, kenapa kita di acara puncak malah selawatan. Ndak pengajian atau lainnya?”

“Karena majelis-majelis selawat adalah majelis cinta. Kamu tahu, selawat itu ibadah yang sungguh luar biasa. Coba deh, salat, zakat, puasa, haji, apakah Allah melakukan ibadah itu semua?”

["Sis, why are there so many people who dress up so glamorous at this *salawatan* event? They can get some attention from the santri"]

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34 Yuliana, “Selawat Pertama Runa.”
“That intention is in the heart, Runa. We dress like this because we intend to ‘meet’ the Prophet Muhammad, so we try to be as pretty as possible. It is like someone who wants to meet his lover, they wear clothes and dress up as beautifully as possible for their lover. And tonight, we will meet our true lover, our Prop, how can we not beautify ourselves,” she replied.

Runa was stunned by Mba Inuy's answer

"Then, why are we, at the peak of the event reciting shalawat? Not reciting something different?"

"Because shalawat means love for Prophet. You know, shalawat is a truly extraordinary act of worship. Try it, prayer, zakat, fasting, hajj, does God perform all those acts of worship?"

The awareness to understand that religion is the essence of love and compassion made Runa realized that what she had been doing and believing have made her think badly of other people's ways of religion. Runa was thinking that her religious practices were the best way of religion, and that others’ ways of religion was wrong. With the new experience that Runa was living, she understood that feeling the most correct was not good and was not liked by Allah SWT. Through the journey to find self-identity, Runa had a new broader understanding that was more tolerant. This newly acquired understanding of Runa was in accordance with the objectives of moral development in pesantrens, including: being independent, living simply, having an al-karimah attitude, respecting each other, maintaining good relations with others and respecting pesantren residents, and interacting with the surrounding community. As a santriwati, the author used the pesantren as the spiritual setting for the story, so that the distinctive nuances of the pesantren appeared in each stage of the plot which was narrated chronologically.

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The world of women and longingness

A story narrating the world of women in relation to longingness was *Dialog*, written by Eva Maulidiyah, an alumnus of PP Mambaus Sholihin Gresik. *Dialog* told a story about the longing of the protagonist named *Aku* and *Ia*. In this story, *Ia* was an imagined character by *Aku*. *Ia* represents *Lailatul Qadar* which is believed by Muslims to arrive in Ramadan. *Lailatul Qadar* is the night where Allah sent down the Qur'an, so that it becomes the most special night for Muslims. Therefore, many Muslims crave it because they believe in the blessings of the *Lailatul Qadr* for those who get it.\(^{36}\)

The conflict occurred due to the inconsistency of *Aku* in carrying out worship. He gave sharp criticism to *Aku*, who only focused on worship and was only close to Allah in the month of Ramadan, and was distant when Ramadan ended. *Aku* seems to represent Muslims in general who were competing to do good especially during Ramadan.

“Ada banyak orang di dunia ini, ketika aku pergi mereka berubah, bahkan bisa jadi lebih buruk dari sebelumnya. Kepadamu, aku tak mau membicarakan yang lebih baik sebab aku ingin menegurmu. Aku sering hanya dijadikannya momentum untuk mengadu pada Tuhan dan orang hanya berlomba ketika aku datang saja. Sepeninggalanku, mereka kembali sama.”\(^{37}\)

[“There are many people in this world, of who, when I left they changed, maybe even worse than before. To you, I do not want to speak something better because I want to rebuke you. I was often only used as a momentum to complain to God and people only compete when I come. After I left, they returned the same.”]

To reinforce the theme of longing, the background is Ramadan and Lailatur Qadr night were described with people carrying out *tadarus* after the *tarawih prayer*. The gender of the character *Aku* was not explained because Lailatul Qadr meet any


Muslim who is consistent in carrying out worship, especially at the end of the month of Ramadan. By not referring to one particular gender, the reader can also reflect on the ego in the main character in the Dialog story.

“Kalau besok di sisa malam-malammu seperti ini, aku pasti kembali. Asal kamu tahu, aku benar benar pemilih. Hanya orang tertentu dari sekian puluhan juta jiwa di bumi ini yang kuajak berdialog seperti ini, dan kamu beruntung.” Ia mulai beranjak dari posisinya. 38

[“If tomorrow, in the rest of your nights you are like this, I'll definitely come back. Just so you know, I'm really picky. Only certain people out of the tens of millions of souls on this earth I invite to dialogue like this, and you are lucky.” He started to move from his position.]

Although the setting was not mentioned to be in pesantren, but the Islamic nuance was so adamant as shown in this quote:

Aku baru saja meletakkan mushaf di atas meja lipat di sebelahku. Pakaian salat masih lengkap kunenakan dengan sajadah yang sengaja kugelar kembali di atap rumah sekembali dari tarawih di masjid satu jam yang lalu. Beberapa hari ini aku sangat senang menyendiri di atap, entah untuk mendaras al-Quran atau kemudian mencoret-coret buku harian. 39

[I just put the mushaf on the folding table next to me. I still wore my prayer clothes with the prayer rug that I deliberately put back on the roof of the house when I returned from tarawih at the mosque an hour ago. These few days I really like to be alone on the roof, either to recite the Quran or to scribble in my diary].

The religiosity as conveyed in the story does not only occur because of the time setting in the month of Ramadan, but also because the character of Aku grew up pesantren tradition. It was living in pesantren that made Aku and Ia to be very close, although in the end this closeness lessened after Aku left the

38 Maulidiyah.
39 Maulidiyah.
pesantren. This short story used the point of view of self. The
dialogue that occurs between Aku and Ia uses many metaphors
(parables). In addition, the strong nuance of religiosity makes the
diction choices in this short story very close to religious symbols,
such as the Quran, Ramadhan, tadarus, mushaf, tarawih, God
which strengthens the theme of the longing of the people with
Ramadhan and Lailatul Qadar.

From this story, the longing of the writer (santriwati) for
the month of Ramadhan and Lailatul Qadr becomes the main
conflict in the text. As an Islamic educational institution, pesan-
tren is an ideal place to perform various acts of worship in the
month of Ramadhan. Therefore, after leaving the pesantren, Aku
and Ia became restless. The loneliness and sadness appear in the
dialogue between Aku and Ia as seen from the following quote.

“Kau tahu? Bulan-bulan tanpamu adalah kerinduan yang
kosong. Seperti sepanjang tahun menanti kekasih tanpa
kepastian,” kali ini aku mencandainya dan disambut tawa
riang hingga bahu kami terguncang.⁴⁰

[“You know, months without you were empty longingness.
As if the whole year was waiting for a lover without guaran-
tee,” this time I kidded her and our laughters were burst that
our shoulders were shaking.

From this excerpt, a woman’s world in the Dialog story
was a lonely, hard, resilient, memorable and longing.

Women and the manacle of patriarchy

Ruwaiya short story was written by Iffah, an alumna of
Darussalam Billapora pesantren in East Java. Iffah was a founder
of Perempuan Membaca [ Women Reading] community and
daily administrator of Duniasantri.co. This short story portrayed
the paralysis of the legal system in cases of sexual violence
against women.

Ruwaiya (Iya) the protagonist, had to suffer for the rest of
her life as the consequence of sexual violence committed by her
then boyfriend that put a profound trauma on her. Ruwaiya who

⁴⁰Maulidiyah.
only lived with her mother, attempted to report to the authority (police), charging the young man for rape. However, due to ineffective justice system on sexual violence and the little empathy towards rape victims, the case was not handled properly. Trauma burdened Ruwaiya’s life, so bad that she ever attempted suicide which ended she lost her sights. Such trials in her traumatic life brought Ruwaiya and her mom to leave the town they have been living, and starting a new life in a new place, far away from home.

The Annual Report of (Catahu) Komnas Perempuan 2022 shows that in the ten years timeframe (2012-2021), 2021 was the highest reported occurrence of gender-based violence, as of 338,496 cases. This number increased 50% from the previous year, even higher than pre-pandemic year (2019). The Annual Report also shows the 83% increase of gender-based violence committed virtually, from 940 cases in 2020 to 1,721 cases in 2021. This maigre data suggests that gender-based violence widely occurred in our society and became part of social problems. No wonder that the issues of violence against women also appeared in many literary works, one of which, was the short story.

Ruwaiya short story told us that violence against women in the form of physical and psychological must be fought. Unfortunately, the patriarchal culture leads to negative stereotypes on women who voiced their rights to fight violence. This makes women, especially the victims of rape, were “raped” many times. Physically, women receive sexual violence, mentally they also received violence from the surrounding community. This was also clearly narrated in Ruwaiya short story.

Aku ingat sepuluh tahun yang lalu, Ruwaiya mengaku padaku kalau pacarnya memperkosanya. Ia juga mengadukan itu pada ibunya. Ibunya mengadukan itu pada polisi. Tetapi polisi tidak percaya, begitu juga keluarga pacarnya. Tidak

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I remember ten years ago, Ruwaiya admitted to me that her boyfriend raped her. She also told her mother about it. Her mother reported the incident to the police. The police did not believe her, neither did the boyfriend’s family. They said that it was impossible that it was a rape, as they assumed it was a consensual intercourse. Ruwaiya and her mother did not want to drop their charges. The young man was going on a trial, plead guilty and charged with one year in prison.

Sadly, I am so sorry to see Ruwaiya like this: as probably, maybe, I was also ’raped’ her many times, repeatedly, by also blaming her.

The patriarchal system that dominates the society culture is a fertile ground for social injustice and gender inequality that affect various aspects of human activity. The case experienced by Ruwaiya was a portrait of how patriarchy had killed many women's voices and destroyed their lives. The complexity of life experienced by victims of sexual violence shows that the latent effects faced by victims are very dangerous.

Hingga suatu hari, Ruwaiya benar-benar menabrakkan dirinya ke sebuah mobil yang melintas, yang menyebabkan ia kehilangan pengelihatananya.

Until one day, Ruwaiya literally bumped herself to a passing car, which made her loss her sights.

Violence is a form of action carried out by someone against another person, either individually or collectively, that gives impact on the suffering of other parties who receive the violence. Violence happens in two forms, namely physical vio-

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43 Iffah.
lence which results in physical wound or even death, and psychological violence which does not result in a physical impact on the victim, but results in prolonged trauma on the victims.

Ruwaiya's depression and trauma lost her way to live again. She and her mother's struggle to bring justice to the man who raped Ruwaiya did not succeed. Only few people around her who believe and supported Ruwaiya to seek justice. The police as law enforcers and her boyfriend’s family who eventually raped her, rejected Ruwaiya's charge, on the pretext that the incident was of consensual action. The judge's verdict was not worth the pain and harm Ruwaiya has experienced.

*Ruwaiya meradang. Pemerkosa itu hanya didakwa setahun penjara, setahun yang Ruwaiya yakin pasti akan dipotong beberapa hari, minggu, atau bahkan bulan dengan alasan kelakuan baik di dalam penjara atau apalah. Ia dan ibunya putus asa; tak tahu meminta keadilan pada siapa. 44*

[Ruwaiya was in rage. The rapist was only charged with a year in prison, a year which Ruwaiya was sure would be reduced by a few days, weeks, or even months for good behaviors in prison or something. She and her mother were desperate; not knowing to whom they seek for justice].

Ruwaiya and her mother showed the resilience of women in fighting for their rights and in seeking for justice, even though they were lost in the end. To heal Ruwaiya's trauma, her mother took her to move to a a faraway place. This moving was Ruwaiya’s mother's resistance to the injustice she and her daughter experienced.

**CONCLUSION**

The five short stories written by *santriwati* in *duniasantri.co* present the characteristics of various themes, such as: matchmaking in *pesantren*, the identity search of *santriwati’s* identity in *pesantren*, their longing for the month of Ramadan and *Lailatul Qadr*, as well as the sense patriarchy that still

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44 Iffah.
shackles females. These themes suggest that pesantren education gives birth to santriwati who have heterogeneous thoughts. These santriwati did not view the world of women uniformly. The woman’s world in pesantren as presented in Bulan Kesiangan and Cinta Istiqomah short stories portrays arranged marriages and forced marriages, shows the ambiguity of the female character. Meanwhile, Ruwaiya narrates that the victim of rape was under a lot of pressure; the female character was portrayed as strong and fearful. In another story Salawat Pertama Runa the theme of hijrah and the search for identity appears, showing female characters who are open to changes. Whereas, in the Dialog, although the female character is not explicitly presented in the text, the narrator’s point of view shows the female character who is resilient and strong in living her bitter life.

Bulan Kesiangan, Cinta Istiqomah, Salawat Pertama Runa, and Dialog have strong pesantren background, both as the story setting and spiritual setting. Meanwhile, Ruwaiya’s setting is a small town to show that violence against women does not only occur in big cities. This study shows the variety of short story themes on Duniasantri.com and the openness of santriwatis minds to the female world of pesantren. This research complements research related to pesantren literature which previously focused on the writings of santri. The emergence of various websites that accommodate the writings of santri/santriwati facilitates access to the development of students' thinking so that research related to the works of Islamic boarding schools can continue to be carried out in line with the attitude of pesantren in facing changing times.

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Interview