The Regional Chairman of Muslimat Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) Role in Empowering the Islamic Community in Lampung

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Abstract: Islam greatly provides an opportunity for women to develop themselves as human resources in the midst of society and has clearly taught the equality between a man and woman to play a role in empowering society. However, there are a few women who fully play a role in empowering the Islamic community, because a woman is still not considered a man equal partner, and women is considered dependent enough in empowering the community. Therefore, we need a forum or women's organization in religious social activities, namely the Regional chairman of Muslimat Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) in Lampung to solve these women's problems in empowering the Islamic community. The purpose of this study was to determine the Regional chairman of Muslimat NU role in empowering the Islamic community in Lampung and to find out the empowerment carried out by the Regional chairman of Muslimat NU in empowering the Islamic community in Lampung. This research was designed to use a qualitative approach and a phenomenological research, namely a philosophical approach to investigate human experience by involving a careful and thorough test on the human experience consciousness that the main concept is a meaning. In collecting the data, it was using observation and interviews as primary data, while documentation as secondary data. The data analysis was according to Burhan Bungin's data analysis including unit arrangement, data categorization, and data interpretation.

Based on the results of the research, it can be concluded that the Regional chairman of Muslimat NU had played a role in empowering the Islamic community, especially the Muslimat NU, but it had not been maximized, because some Regional chairman of Muslimat NU programs were not running, and the empowerment carried out by the Regional chairman of Muslimat NU had not directly touched the community down to the bottom and breadth. As for the empowerments carried out by the Regional chairman of Muslimat NU in Lampung in empowering the Islamic community were Education and Regeneration, Health and Population, Economics, Da'wah, and Community Development.

Keywords: Role, Muslimat NU, Empowering Islamic Community

1. Introduction
A Muslimat Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) is one of the largest organizations in Indonesia that can be a forum of women self-development. In this organization, the woman has an opportunity to learn a lot of things such as how to organize, speak in public, manage administration, run the economic development through a cooperative, and inform a religious insight through the da’wah.

The Muslimat NU actually cannot be separated from the enthusiasm of NU people who fought the colonizer. Even though they had not been formally formed, the fighting spirit of women had shown its participation in fighting the colonizer. It was proven that Chasanah had attended NU Congress even though Muslimat NU organization had not yet been a part of NU. However, after the congress, this organization was officially formed.

In education and regeneration, the Regional chairman of Muslimat NU had collaborated with the Muslimat Education Foundation (YPM) to guide at the Early Childhood Education (PAUD) and Islamic Kindergarten (RA) levels. Likewise in culture and the environment, the Regional Chairman of Muslimat NU collaborated with da’wah activities such as the celebration of Islamic days (PHBI) which are not only a recitation activities, but various ways of reading Qur'an and Hadrah\(^1\) in each regional branch.\(^2\)

In health and population, the Regional Chairman of Muslimat NU cooperates with the Welfare Foundation (YKM) Muslimat, which is marked by the establishment of several medical centers. A medical center has grown rapidly in Central Lampung which has been incorporated directly by the central government for regional activities.

In the economic sector, the Regional chairman of Muslimat NU has established AN-NISA cooperative. Likewise the labor sector, the Regional Chairman of Muslimat NU collaborates with Special Job Fair (BKK) and Job training Center (BLK) for community development. In addition, the Regional chairman of Muslimat NU cooperates with National Crafts Council of Indonesia (DEKRANAS) to take the government program based on the Muslimat NU needs and carry out seminars supporting these activities.

In the law and advocacy sector, the Regional chairman of Muslimat NU often volunteers as legal advisors. In the da’wah and community development sector, they cooperation with social sector such as an orphan donation opens for orphanages, a guidance visit on women's prisons every two weeks, and joint activities with interfaiths conducted once a month.

From the explanation above, it can be understood that the Regional chairman of Muslimat NU existence is aspired a positive influence, especially for women, because basically every woman must be empowered and educated to explore her potential. If a woman is empowered,

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\(^1\) One of the art forms of Islamic music performed with a tambourine accompaniment (percussion instrument) while chanting poetry and praise to the Prophet Muhammad SAW. See Bagus Nirwanto, Hadrah of Nurul Ikhwan Music in Pemalang: Study of Music Arrangement and Analysis, Journal, UNNES Semarang, 2015, at http://lib.unnes.ac.id. (accessed June 25, 2019).

\(^2\) Ibid.
intelligent, knowledgeable, active, creative, and innovative, she will be a good and inspiring children's mother, a pious wife for her husband, and having a role in society.

2. The Women’s Role In Social Institutions And Islamic Community’s Empowerment

2.1 Islamic Community Empowerment Goals

The community development expects a community empowerment and enhancement of human life quality or enhancement of human dignity. Empowerment means developing strength or ability (power), potential, human resources to reveal the self-defence. The most important is increasing public awareness. A conscious society understands its own rights and responsibilities to reveal the self-defence and oppose the injustices on it.

Through a mentoring process, the community may learn to recognize their weaknesses and develop their abilities to overcome various problems faced, to understand the oppressive structural reality and to realize its position in reality. If people's awareness grows, there will also be a strong will to change in order to enhance the life quality through collective actions between the communities.

The empowered and aware communities will ultimately improve the life quality. The improvement of community's life quality must be undertaken on its own. Society cannot be built by others. As a human cannot be freed by others, because it is the awareness that help and build their own life improvement. In Qur'an, it is stated that: Allah changeth not the condition of a folk until they (first) change that which is in their hearts (Surah Ar-radu [13]: 11). This verse implies that the life improvement must be initiated by its community and carried out by its community. The heaven does not drop a fate improvement, but it comes from the people efforts cooperate with each other.

The community life quality is justified if the food and clothing are adequate, healthy, the suitable house living, schooling their children to a level they might improve the life standard, fully participating in community activities, making decisions independently, determining their own life way and fear Allah.

In Islamic teachings, the community development goal does not only achieve a progress or prosperity, but also to build a good normative life. This means that material progress to achieve the welfare of society must be inseparable from awareness and behavior of doing good so that progress and prosperity can provide blessings for all and lead to safety.

Building community welfare without enhancing a devotion to Allah SWT, or without the willingness to be well-behaved on others means building a human disaster, such as, injustice, oppression, rape, and so on. On contrary, building servitude or devotion to Allah by forgetting the task of building a life welfare means emptying and wasting the life. Allah SWT said: "seek the abode of the Hereafter in that which Allah hath given thee and neglect not thy portion of the world, and be thou kind". (Surah Al-Qashash [28]: 77).

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3 Aziz Muslim, Basics of Islamic Community Development,, p. 5.
4 Ibid., p. 6.
5 Ibid.
In line with the above opinion, according to Kamaludin, the goal of developing an Islamic community is having a strong faith, noble, and consistence moral and having sufficient skills so that khoiru al-bariyyah, usroh sakinah and khoiru al-ummah appear.\(^6\) The following are the Islamic community development goals:

1. To analyze religious problems particularly and social problems generally in community life as a result of social change;
2. To design community development activities based on the priority scale and existing problems;
3. To manage and carry out community development activities based on the mutual plan;
4. To assess the entire community development process;
5. To train the community in analyzing problems, designing, managing, and evaluating community development activities;
6. To be a Da’i (speaker) who has exemplary character, like trying to develop the society potentials such as economic, social, political, cultural, and scientific aspects.\(^7\)

### 2.2 Islamic Community Empowerment Results

A community empowerment activity has several indicators that determine its achievement. The result of empowerment, according to Edi Soeharto, refers to the people ability especially the vulnerable and weak groups so that having strength and ability in terms of:

1. Fulfilling their basic needs to have freedom, meaning they are not only free in expressing opinions, but free from starving, ignorance, and pain.
2. Reaching productive sources to increase their income and obtain the goods and services needed.
3. Participating the development process and the decisions affecting them.\(^8\)

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the empowerment result might see the level of need fulfillment, increased income, and participation.

### 3. Research Methods

The researcher of this study used a qualitative approach and phenomenological research. According to Strauss and Corbin quoted by Pupu Syaiful Rahmat, qualitative research produces findings that cannot be achieved using statistical procedures or other methods of quantitative (measurement). In addition, qualitative research aims to carry out phenomena through in-depth data collection. Qualitative research also actually does not always aim to find the cause and effect, but rather understand the certain situations to install an objective conclusion, and explore

\(^6\)Kamaluddin, *Da’wah* and Islamic Community Development (Basic Concept and Direction of Development), in HIKMAH Journal, Vol. VIII, No. 02 July 2014, 41-52.

\(^7\)Ibid.

and break through the symptoms by interpreting the problem or concluding a combination of the various problem meanings as presented by the situation.  

In addition, a phenomenological research is a philosophical approach to investigate human experience by involving careful and thorough test on the human experience consciousness. The main concept is meaning. So, meaning is an important content that emerges from the human experience consciousness to identify the essential qualities of the conscious experience carried out in depth and carefully. In addition, phenomenological research is a scientific method which assumes that people do not know the existence of reality through an ordinary experience but a lived and understood experience as the basic data of a reality. Thus, a researcher in phenomenological research is not interested in examining the causal aspects of an event but they are interested in investigating a people experience and experience meaning for themselves.

The researcher used the qualitative method, because the problems studied are complex, holistic, dynamic, and full of meaning so that it is impossible for the social situation data to be collected through the quantitative method. In this case, the researcher aimed to understand deeply social situations to find patterns, hypotheses and theories.

In addition, the researcher used the qualitative approach for various reasons, such as: a) it simplified the adjustment on multiple dimensional reality; b) simplified the relationship between the researcher and the research subjects; and c) simplified the adjustment on various influences arising from the patterns faced. Margono added that in this qualitative research, the analysis used is more descriptive-analytic, which means that the interpretation of the content is made and compiled systemically or thoroughly and systematically.

In addition, the use of qualitative research methods also directs attention on the people way in meaning their life. In another meaning, some researchers emphasize people's point of view or called “people's point of view”, and the present research results based on field data and information by drawing on the meaning and concept. According to Moelong, qualitative research, roots in a scientific background as a whole, relies on humans as a research tool, utilizes qualitative analytical methods inductively, directs research objectives in finding theory, is more concerned with process than results, chooses a set of writing data validity criteria, the research design is provisional and the research results are agreed upon by the research subject.

Based on the various reasons above, this study used a phenomenological research and

9 Lexy J. Moleong, Qualitative Research Methodology, (Bandung: Youth Rosdakarya, 1990), p. 5.
10Ibid.
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16Moeloeng, J Lexy, Qualitative Research Methodology ,, p. 5.
qualitative approach to determine the role of the Regional chairman of Muslimat NU in Empowering Islamic Communities in Lampung.

4. Result and Discussion
4.1 The Muslimat Community Empowerment Result of Regional chairman of Muslimat NU in Lampung

Based on the movements of Regional chairman of Muslimat NU, Lampung in empowering the Muslimat community, it empowers various fields, such as, education and regeneration, health and population, economics, da’wah, and community development.

1) Muslimat NU's empowerment results in education and regeneration
   a) The spread of Muslimat NU Early Childhood Education (PAUD) network which is marked by the establishment of Early Childhood Education (PAUD), Kindergarten (TK), Islamic Kindergarten (RA), and Al-Qur’an Learning Center (TPQ) Muslimat NU in each Branch leader throughout Lampung Province.
   b) The formation of ASWAJA-based Early Childhood Education (PAUD) curriculum which is a curriculum guide for all Early Childhood Education (PAUD), Kindergarten (TK), Islamic Kindergarten (RA), and Al-Qur’an Learning Center (TPQ) Muslimat NU throughout Lampung Province.

2) Muslimat NU's empowerment results in health and population
   a) The establishment of Muslimat NU health service clinics in several Branch leader of Muslimat NU, Lampung.
   b) The existence of a trainer or motivator for family planning immunization, elderly people, and drugs in every branch of Muslimat NU throughout Lampung Province in the health sector.
   c) The existence of public health services in the form of mass circumcision and blood donations in every Muslimat NU birthday activity in Lampung.

3) Muslimat NU's empowerment results in economics
   a) The establishment of the AN-NISA Muslimat NU cooperative in all Muslimat NU branches in Lampung;
   b) The existence of cooperative marketing expansion and Micro, Small, and Medium enterprises (UMKM) products in Muslimat NU environment which was marked by the formation of a home industry in every branch of Muslimat NU throughout Lampung Province.
   c) The existence of micro and macro-scale economic enterprises in every branch of Muslimat NU in Lampung.

4) Muslimat NU's empowerment results in da’wah and community empowerment
   Namely, the existence of Muslimat NU da’wah networks in various public communities;
4.2 The Muslimat Community Empowerment Goal of Regional chairman of Muslimat NU in Lampung

Based on the movements of Regional chairman of Muslimat NU Lampung, the goals of empowering the Muslimat NU community in Lampung are as follows:

1) Muslimat NU's empowerment goal in education and regeneration
   a) To improve the quality and professionalism of Early Childhood Education (PAUD), Kindergarten (TK), Islamic Kindergarten (RA) and Al-Qur’an Learning Center (TPQ) Muslimat NU teachers;
   b) To improve the quality Early Childhood Education (PAUD), Kindergarten (TK), Islamic Kindergarten (RA) and Al-Qur’an Learning Center (TPQ) Muslimat NU services such as in policing the administration of Early Childhood Education (PAUD), Kindergarten (TK), Islamic Kindergarten (RA) and Al-Qur’an Learning Center (TPQ) Muslimat NU;
   c) To expand the Early Childhood Education (PAUD) Muslimat NU network;
   d) To create and uniform the curriculum for all Early Childhood Education (PAUD), Kindergarten (TK), Islamic Kindergarten (RA) and Al-Qur’an Learning Center (TPQ) Muslimat NU;
   e) To establish a quality Islamic institution-based Early Childhood Education (PAUD);
   f) To form a quality family-based Early Childhood Education (PAUD);

2) Muslimat NU's empowerment goal in health and population
   a) To improve the quality and quantity of public health services and empower Muslimat NU administrators and health cadres in local villages to provide public health services properly;
   b) The Woman understands and realizes the importance of family planning and reproductive health;
   c) The community knows and implements a clean and healthy lifestyle (PHBS);
   d) To motivate and make drug victims aware so that they do not fall back into using prohibited items;
   e) To establish a trainer or motivator for immunization, family planning, the elderly people, and drugs in each regions throughout Lampung province;
   f) To provide health knowledge on pregnant women and women's reproductive health;
   g) To create family planning cadres of Muslimat NU.

3) Muslimat NU's empowerment goal in economics
   a) To develop the economy and enhance the Muslimat NU welfare, especially Nahdliyin community;
   b) To develop the cooperative marketing expansion and Micro, Small, and Medium enterprises (UMKM) products of Muslimat NU;
c) To preserve Lampung's typical products and form a home industry to increase the
girl economy.
4) Muslimat NU's empowerment goal in da’wah and community empowerment
a) To enhance IMTAQ, the spread of Islam, to follow the characteristics of the
Prophet, his friends, scholars, and others and to establish a friendship
b) To improve IMTAQ, expand networks or Islam insight, especially the ASWAJA
concept and realize the importance of living according to religion rules;

4.3 Muslimat Community Empowerment's Supporting Factors of Regional chairman of
Muslimat NU Lampung
Based on the movements of Regional chairman of Muslimat NU Lampung in
empowering the Muslimat NU community, it cannot be separated from the following supporting
factors:

1) Lampung Provincial Government Support in the activities carried out by the
Regional chairman of Muslimat NU in Lampung;
2) Regional chairman of Muslimat NU in Lampung support and NU's branches in
assisting the implementation of the activities of the Regional chairman of
Muslimat NU in Lampung.
3) Muslimat NU branches and Muslimat NU antusiasism and support on the activities
implementation of Regional chairman of Muslimat NU in Lampung.

4.4 Muslimat Community Empowerment's Obstacles of Regional chairman of Muslimat
NU Lampung
Based on the movements of Regional chairman of Muslimat NU Lampung in
empowering the Muslimat NU community, it is also inseparable from the obstacles as follows:

1) Limited funds owned by the Regional chairman of Muslimat NU Lampung, so that
several programs do not run well such as basic level training for educators and
education personnel for Early Childhood Education (PAUD), Kindergarten (TK),
RA, and Al-Qur'an Learning Center (TPQ), Muslimat NU Early Childhood
Education (PAUD), training family planning cadres, productive elderly training,
cooperative training, lecture or tausiyah competitions, and qasidah or hadrah
competitions;
2) Limited human resources (HR) owned by the Regional chairman of Muslimat NU
Lampung;
3) Lack of Regional chairman of Muslimat NU participation in the implementation of
activities, so only the daily leaders such as the Heads and Secretaries are active;
4) The activities of the Regional chairman of Muslimat NU in Lampung, who have
main jobs other than as the Regional chairman Muslimat NU, so they do not
participate actively in the activities.
5) Difficult relationships between members of Regional chairman Officer of Muslimat NU Lampung because of a distance or distant areas.

5. Conclusion
Based on the results of research and discussion, two conclusions can be drawn, first, the Regional chairman of Muslimat NU role in empowering the Islamic community in Lampung. Second, the empowerments carried out by the Regional chairman of Muslimat NU in empowering the Islamic community in Lampung.
1. The Regional chairman of Muslimat NU acted as a motivator and facilitator for the Muslimat NU and has played a role in empowering the Islamic community, especially the Muslimat NU community in Lampung. However, this had not been maximized, because some programs of Regional chairman of Muslimat NU were not running, and the empowerment carried out by the Regional chairman of Muslimat NU Lampung had not directly touched the community down to the bottom and breadth.
2. Empowerments carried out by the Regional chairman of Muslimat NU Lampung in empowering the Muslim community, especially the Muslimat community in Lampung, can be done through:
   a. In education and regeneration, the Regional chairman of Muslimat NU Lampung carries out empowerments by: 1) Improving the quality and training of Early Childhood Education (PAUD), Kindergarten (TK), Islamic Kindergarten (RA), and Al-Qur’an Learning Center (TPQ) teachers; 2) Improving the quality and quantity of Early Childhood Education (PAUD), Kindergarten (TK), Islamic Kindergarten (RA), and Al-Qur’an Learning Center (TPQ) services; 3) Expanding the Muslimat NU Early Childhood Education (PAUD) network; 4) Creating the Muslimat NU Early Childhood Education (PAUD) curriculum; 5) Conducting a Learning Orientation Workshop for a similar Early Childhood Education (PAUD) Unit Program based on an Islamic institution; and 6) Conducting a technical orientation for the Family-based Early Childhood Education (PAUD) Strengthening Program.
   b. In Health and Population, the Regional chairman of Muslimat NU Lampung carries out empowerments by: 1) Improving the quality and quantity of public health services such as increasing access to cooperation and health promotion at all levels of Muslimat NU; 2) Increasing the socialization and services of family planning and reproductive health; 3) Increasing the socialization of Healthy and Clean Lifestyle (PHBS); 4) Community service-based rehabilitation of drug users; 5) Training of immunization trainers or motivators, family planning, the elderly and drugs; 6) Programs to reduce maternal mortality, such as training for teen mothers aged 14-20 years, and training on women's reproductive health; and 7) training for family planning cadres, namely Muslimat family planning services in the workplace, mass circumcision, and blood donation.
c. In economics, the Regional chairman of Muslimat NU Lampung carries out empowerments by: 1) Improving the quality and quantity of economic services through cooperatives and small and medium enterprises; 2) Building access on cooperative marketing expansions and Micro, Small, and Medium enterprises (UMKM) of Muslimat NU; and 3) empowerment of economic enterprises on a micro and macro scale.

d. In da’wah and community development, the Regional chairman of Muslimat NU Lampung carries out empowerments by celebrating Islamic Holidays; and increasing the dakwah network in various communities.

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