

## Soft-Skill Development in Ulama Character Building at PUTM Putri Yogyakarta: A Literature Analysis

Sulman<sup>1</sup>, Endang Rahmawati<sup>2</sup>, Najamudin<sup>3</sup>, Muhibburrahman<sup>4</sup>, Muhammad Mazin<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup>Study Program of Islamic Broadcasting Communication, Muhammadiyah Mataram University,  
Indonesia

[sulmon36@gmail.com](mailto:sulmon36@gmail.com)<sup>1</sup>

---

**Abstract:** This study explores the development of soft skills in shaping the character of female scholars at PUTM Putri Yogyakarta through an integrative literature review approach. Soft skills such as leadership, communication, collaboration, and self-management are essential in shaping competent and socially responsive female scholars. By reviewing literature published between 2015 and 2024, this study synthesizes various strategies used in Islamic educational institutions, including the integration of Islamic values into the curriculum, participatory learning methods, scientific approaches, and mentoring programs. The findings show that effective soft skills development requires collaboration between teachers, families and institutions, as well as structural support and curriculum innovation. The study also identified challenges such as the gap between theory and practice and the dominance of hard skills in the traditional curriculum. These findings highlight the importance of adaptive learning models, strong institutional support and responsive curriculum design in preparing a generation of female undergraduates with strong character and social competencies.

---

**Keywords:** Soft-Skills Development, Female Scholars, Character Education, Islamic Education, Integrative Curriculum.

---

### Article History:

Received: 30-04-2025

Online : 23-05-2025



This is an open access article under the [CC-BY-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) license

---



### A. INTRODUCTION

Soft skills are non-technical skills that include interpersonal, communication, self-management and leadership skills, which are essential in shaping individual character. In the context of Islamic education, soft skills development not only supports professional competence, but also strengthens moral and spiritual values. Sania et al. (2025) emphasized that Islamic Religious Education plays an integral role in shaping holistic character, including soft skills development, to achieve personal and professional success. In addition, Sailah (2008) states that soft skills include skills in interacting with others (interpersonal) and skills in managing oneself (intrapersonal) that can optimize individual performance.

Research by Sania et al. (2025) shows that Islamic Religious Education plays an important role in the development of soft skills, such as effective communication and teamwork, which support holistic student character building. In the pesantren environment, learning approaches that integrate Islamic values with soft skill development have proven to be effective in forming noble and competent individuals. This is in line with the findings from research in pesantren which shows that the integration of religious values in the curriculum can strengthen the character and social skills of students (Sania et al., 2025). Research by Sailah

(2008) highlights the importance of transformational leadership in improving students' soft skills in pesantren. Inspiring and supportive leadership can create a learning environment conducive to the development of skills such as empathy, responsibility, and initiative. This study shows that the role of kiai as a leader who provides examples and motivation can significantly strengthen the character and soft skills of santri.

Research by Darul Wahi (2023) emphasizes a holistic approach in Islamic education that integrates soft skills development with character building. Through a curriculum designed to develop interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, students can face the challenges of modern times without losing their Islamic identity. This approach has proven effective in creating individuals who are not only academically intelligent, but also have high integrity and social capabilities. Research by Munir (2023) shows that soft skills development in Islamic education can be done through various methods, such as training, habituation, and giving responsibility to students. These methods help students develop skills such as leadership, cooperation, and communication, which are important in the formation of the character of scholars who are adaptive and responsive to the needs of society.

From the various studies above, it can be seen that the development of soft skills in Islamic education has an important role in the formation of a complete individual character. However, there is a gap in research that specifically examines the development of soft skills in the context of Pendidikan Ulama Tarjih Muhammadiyah (PUTM) Putri Yogyakarta. Not many studies have highlighted how the programs at PUTM Putri Yogyakarta are designed to develop santri's soft skills in order to form female scholars who have strong characters and are able to face the challenges of the times. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the strategy and practice of developing soft skills in the formation of ulama character at PUTM Putri Yogyakarta through a literature review approach.

## **B. METHOD**

This research uses a library research approach with an integrative literature review method. This approach aims to examine in depth various relevant scientific literature to understand the strategy of developing soft skills in the formation of clerical character at PUTM Putri Yogyakarta. Data was collected from sources available on Google Scholar, Scopus, DOAJ, and Scispace. The included studies were selected from 2015 to 2024 to match the latest developments in the fields of Islamic education, character development and soft skills. This approach allowed the researcher to synthesize a range of empirical and conceptual findings to produce a thorough understanding.

The inclusion criteria in this study include national and international scientific articles in Indonesian and English that discuss soft skills development, character education in the Islamic context, pesantren education, and ulama education models. Included articles must be available in full-text and published in accredited journals. Meanwhile, the exclusion criteria included articles that were not relevant to the topic, not available in full-text, or published before 2015. The literature search process was conducted with keywords such as "Santri Soft-Skill Development", "Female Cleric Character", "Pesantren Education and Soft-Skills", And "Progressive Islamic Education."

The literature selection procedure was conducted systematically in three stages. The first stage was an initial screening based on titles and abstracts to identify topical relevance. The second stage was a full-text review to assess relevance to the research focus. The third stage was synthesizing the findings to categorize the literature into main themes. Data analysis was conducted qualitatively using content analysis techniques, which enabled the identification of patterns, strategies and models of soft skills development in the context of clerical education.

To maintain validity and reliability, the selected studies should come from reputable peer-reviewed journals. In addition, researchers also cross-checked the results of the studies found to ensure data consistency and avoid interpretation bias. All references used have been cited using APA Style format to comply with academic standards. The reliability of this study is strengthened by the source triangulation approach through comparison of findings from various scientific databases.

## **C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **1. Model and Development of Soft Skills in Islamic Education Institutions**

Soft skills development in Islamic educational institutions is an important aspect in shaping students' character and competencies. This stems from the need to prepare individuals who not only have strong academic knowledge, but also adequate interpersonal skills to interact in society. Researchers agree that soft skills development strategies should be grounded in a religious context, thus creating a synergy between science, morality and social skills.

First of all, one approach that can be applied is the integration of religious values in the existing curriculum. Zahraini & Musbir (2015) showed that teachers' ability to develop lesson plans that are in line with Islamic values has a significant effect on the development of students' soft skills. Their research at Banda Aceh State Vocational High School 3 found that the methods used by teachers in accordance with these values can increase interaction and collaboration between students, which is a crucial part of soft skills such as communication and teamwork. Furthermore, participatory and holistic teaching methods were found to be effective in improving interpersonal skills. In a study conducted by Imami et al. (2024), religious education-based training conducted at TPQ Badridduja Kraksaan showed that students' involvement in interactive activities could improve their social skills. This analysis is in line with the view that religious education needs to pay attention to aspects of developing students' soft skills, especially communication and cooperation skills, as expressed by Sarwadi et al. (2021) who emphasized the importance of character education in building entrepreneurship mentality among students.

The development of soft skills is also urgently carried out through the scientific approach in the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum. Romadoni (2023) showed that the application of the scientific approach can improve students' understanding not only of the teaching material but also strengthen their soft skills. This confirms that education is not only limited to knowledge transfer, but also builds critical and creative thinking skills that are essential in everyday life. Strengthening teachers' soft skills should also be a focus, as shown in research by Yuliharti (2019), who found that Islamic Religious Education teachers need to improve their intrapersonal and interpersonal abilities. This is in line with the opinion of Hatta

Hadi (2024) who emphasizes the importance of a combination of formal and non-formal education activities that can improve students' motivation as well as their soft skills development.

Finally, Islamic educational institutions need to utilize technology in the learning process to improve soft skills. Wahyudi & Safitri (2022) underline the need for a learning strategy based on soft skills development accompanied by religious values, in order to optimize learning outcomes. This approach is particularly relevant in today's digital era, where the ability to adapt and learn independently is crucial. In conclusion, soft skills development in Islamic educational institutions should be carried out with an integrative strategy, involving various teaching methods, teacher training, and the utilization of technology. This not only supports students' scientific development but also equips them with social skills that are essential for living in society.

## **2. The Role of Soft Skills in Character Building of Women Scholars**

Soft skills play an important role in character building, especially in the context of the character of female scholars, which is increasingly necessary in today's modern society. The character building of female scholars depends not only on deep religious knowledge, but also on strong interpersonal and social skills, which are part of soft skills. In the context of education, the role of teachers becomes very significant to achieve this goal.

First of all, teachers as educators have the responsibility of shaping students' soft skills, including the character of female scholars. Nurhasanah et al. (2024) emphasized that teachers not only function as material deliverers, but also as motivators and evaluators in student character building. This suggests that a teacher's interpersonal skills can encourage students to participate more actively in the teaching and learning process, thus enabling better soft skills development. This is in line with research by Shofwan (2022), which states that teachers act as counselors and motivators, which can increase students' self-confidence and social skills.

In addition, the characters of discipline and ethics also contribute to creating competent female scholars. The consistent application of character values in religious education is essential so that students can grow into individuals who are not only knowledgeable, but also have high morality and are able to interact well in society. Ulfah (2023) explained that Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers have a very strategic role in the religious development of students, which also supports the formation of a strong female cleric character.

In this context, character education that focuses on soft skills can be integrated with a value-based education approach. Auliarrahma et al. (2024) explained the role of the family in shaping character, but the role of the teacher together with the family becomes very crucial. Through the synergy between formal education and education at home, it is expected that students can better understand and apply ethical and moral values that will shape the character of quality female scholars.

The importance of coaches and mentors in this regard cannot be overlooked. Good mentoring from teachers and parents will encourage students to further explore the necessary soft skills, such as empathy, leadership, and communication skills, which are highly needed

in women leaders in various fields. According to Triyono and Mediawati Triyono & Mediawati (2023), education in pesantren institutions does not only focus on text knowledge, but also educates the character of students with deep soft skills.

Qualified human resources, especially among female scholars, are essential in facing the challenges of modern society. Therefore, a holistic approach to education, which includes the development of soft skills and character, should be a priority in Islamic educational institutions. Thus, through the role of teachers, families and communities, the character of female scholars can be shaped more effectively and sustainably.

### **3. Implementation and Challenges of Soft Skill Development at PUTM Putri Yogyakarta**

In the context of PUTM Putri Yogyakarta, the implementation of soft skills development is an integral part of efforts to improve students' readiness to face the challenges of the world of work and an increasingly dynamic professional environment. This soft skill development program is generally involved in the curriculum through internships and project-based learning activities, where students get direct mentoring from industry practitioners. This approach has proven effective in improving soft skills, such as communication, leadership, problem solving, and adaptability, which have been recognized in various educational programs, including MBKM programs in technology (Putri et al., 2023; Mariance & Rahmadani, 2023).

The implementation is carried out by utilizing learning models that not only emphasize the improvement of technical skills (hard skills) but also soft skills. For example, the learning method proposed by Aimang et al. Aimang et al. show the importance of synergy between hard skills and soft skills so that students are able to adjust to the ever-changing work environment. In addition, soft skills guidelines such as those compiled by Tentama (2019), provide a frame of reference in the development of ability, adaptation, motivation, and problem solving, which are essential components to respond to the dynamics of modern industry.

However, the challenges in developing soft skills at PUTM Putri Yogyakarta are inseparable from various structural and cultural barriers. One of the main challenges is the integration between theory and practice, where students often experience gaps in applying the knowledge gained in college to real situations in the industrial world. This is also reinforced by the findings of Ramadhani & Rahmah (2021) which show that limited face-to-face interaction and direct mentoring can reduce the effectiveness of soft skills learning, especially if the reliance on digital platforms and social media is not optimal.

In addition, the integration of soft and hard skills remains a challenge due to the tendency of traditional curricula to overemphasize technical aspects. The Lesson Study approach conducted in Japan, as reviewed by Sumanto & Sasi (2024), shows that success in developing both skills requires a paradigm shift in learning strategies, namely through interactive methods that encourage collaboration, communication, and critical thinking as a whole. At PUTM Putri Yogyakarta, this adaptation approach requires strong institutional support, increased availability of supporting resources, and curriculum revision to align with industry needs.

Overall, the implementation of soft skills development at PUTM Putri Yogyakarta has incorporated various learning innovations such as internship assistance and a holistic learning integration model. However, challenges that arise in its implementation, including gaps between theory and practice, limited resources, and a learning culture that still focuses on hard skills, must be addressed through improved strategies, increased collaboration with industry partners, and the development of learning modules that are more adaptive and responsive to the times (Putri et al., 2023; Mariance & Rahmadani, 2023; Aimang et al., 2022; Tentama, 2019; Ramadhani & Rahmah, 2021; Sumanto & Sasi, 2024).

#### **D. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

The development of women scholars' soft skills in Islamic educational institutions, especially in PUTM Putri Yogyakarta, has been directed integratively through holistic learning methods, teacher training, technology utilization, and internship mentoring programs. Nevertheless, there are still significant challenges such as the gap between theory and practice, limited resources, and an educational culture that dominantly focuses on hard skills. Therefore, educational strategies must continue to be strengthened through multi-stakeholder collaboration and curriculum development that is responsive to the dynamics of the times to produce female scholars with character and social competence.

#### **REFERENCES**

- Khodijah, S., Nurajizah, S., & Irham, I. (2024). Organizational contribution to character education and professional readiness of students. *Al Qalam Scientific Journal of Religion and Society*, 18(3), 1773. <https://doi.org/10.35931/aq.v18i3.3439>
- Melisawati, S. and Jamilus, J. (2024). Building a superior generation: exploring human resource development strategies in digital era Islamic educational institutions. *Jiip - Scientific Journal of Education Science*, 7(6), 5689-5697. <https://doi.org/10.54371/jiip.v7i6.4519>
- Mukaromah, A., Mukromin, M., & Kamal, F. (2024). Islamic education based on soft skills in the novel *ranah 3 warna* by ahmad fuadi. *Global Innovation Journal*, 2(3), 429-438. <https://doi.org/10.58344/jig.v2i3.75>
- Sholeh, M. (2023). Human resource development strategies in Indonesian Islamic educational institutions. *IDEALITA*, 3(1), 91-116. <https://doi.org/10.62525/idealita.2023.v3.i1.91-116>
- Suryani, E., Sutedja, E., Madjid, T., Husin, F., Budimansyah, D., Effendi, J., ... & Wirakusumah, F. (2017). The effect of community based medical education (cbme) practice implementation on improving leadership and communication soft skills in midwifery diiii students. *Journal of Indonesian Midwifery Education and Services*, 2(3), 45. <https://doi.org/10.24198/ijemc.v2i3.53>
- Wahyudi, A., Salamun, S., Hamid, A., & Choirudin, C. (2021). Management strategies for vocational life skills in Islamic education. *Journal of Islamic Education Management Al-Idarah*, 6(1), 39-45. <https://doi.org/10.54892/jmpialidarah.v6i1.131>
- Zulfikar, Z. (2021). Integration of soft skills in Islamic educational institutions. *Journal of Islamika Granada*, 1(1), 18-26. <https://doi.org/10.51849/ig.v1i1.8>
- Shofwan, A. (2022). Study on the implementation of character building in schools and madrasah. *lej*, 2(1), 19-25. <https://doi.org/10.59935/lej.v2i1.45>
- Sumardi, K. (2013). Portrait of character education in salafiah Islamic boarding schools. *Journal of Character Education*, 3(3). <https://doi.org/10.21831/jpk.v0i3.1246>

- Triyono, B. and Mediawati, E. (2023). Transformation of Islamic values through pesantren education: implementation in character building of students. *JIMR*, 1(1), 147-158. <https://doi.org/10.62504/jimr403>
- Ulfah, U. (2023). The role of pai teachers in facilitating students' religious developmental tasks. *Jiip Scientific Journal of Education Science*, 6(11), 8830-8836. <https://doi.org/10.54371/jiip.v6i11.2731>
- Istiqomah, I. (2022). The role of Islamic religious education teachers in improving the discipline character of students. *Jiip - Scientific Journal of Education Sciences*, 5(2), 512-518. <https://doi.org/10.54371/jiip.v5i2.446>
- Jusniaty, J., Baharuddin, B., Juniati, S., Djamaluddin, D., Hasyim, S., Putra, M., ... & Hidayat, A. (2024). Strengthening the soft skills of polewali village youth in entrepreneurship and proficiency in English. *Idea of Community Service*, 4(02), 105-111. <https://doi.org/10.53690/ipm.v2i02.268>
- Khanifah, S. and Fatimah, N. (2023). Strengthening students' social intelligence soft skills through extracurricular activities at sma it bina amal Semarang. *SOLIDARITY*, 12(1), 131-146. <https://doi.org/10.15294/solidarity.v12i1.71470>
- Mukaromah, A., Mukromin, M., & Kamal, F. (2024). Islamic education based on soft skills in the novel ranah 3 warna by ahmad fuadi. *Global Innovation Journal*, 2(3), 429-438. <https://doi.org/10.58344/jig.v2i3.75>
- Nuraeni, Y. (2023). Strategies for developing soft skills competencies of workers in vocational training centers (blk). *Journal of Employment*, 18(2), 168-183. <https://doi.org/10.47198/jnaker.v18i2.203>
- Putro, S. and Yuliadi, K. (2022). The influence of empowerment, hard skills and soft skills on the performance of employees of art studios in Yogyakarta. *Jrti (Indonesian Journal of Action Research)*, 7(2), 320. <https://doi.org/10.29210/30031770000>
- Suryaningrum, D., P, M., & Utami, E. (2024). Analysis of cooperative service quality, local government support, community involvement in improving the competitiveness of umkm in yogyakarta city. *West Science Journal of Economics and Entrepreneurship*, 2(02), 157-167. <https://doi.org/10.58812/jekws.v2i02.1100>
- Yatri, I., Fatayan, A., Sukmawati, W., Rahmiati, R., & Minawati, M. (2023). Building a millennial generation aware of education, science and technology and scouting-based soft skill character development. *JMM (Journal of Independent Society)*, 7(4), 3910. <https://doi.org/10.31764/jmm.v7i4.16464>