



GENDER EQUALITY IN THE QUR'AN: IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE EDUCATION

KESETARAAN GENDER DALAM AL-QUR'AN: IMPLIKASI TERHADAP PENDIDIKAN Keadilan Sosial

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One of the serious considerations in Islam pertains to the position of men and women. Islam highly values the worth of women. Gender equality is an essential topic to ensure that individuals, regardless of their gender, have equal opportunities, rights, and responsibilities in all aspects of life, while eliminating discrimination, violence, and harassment against women. Therefore, further discourse is necessary to rectify misconceptions. This research aims to explore the positions of both genders. It emphasizes that men and women share the same human status, having been created from the same substance, as ordained by God. The study employs qualitative research, specifically a literature review using relevant journals, books, and articles related to this topic.

Keywords: Gender; Education; Islam.

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Salah satu perhatian yang dipandang serius dalam Islam adalah mengenai kedudukan seorang laki-laki dan perempuan, Islam sangat menghargai nilai-nilai seorang perempuan. Kesetaraan gender menjadi pembahasan penting agar individu dari laki-laki dan perempuan memiliki peluang untuk menikmati kesempatan, hak, dan kewajiban yang sama dalam semua bidang kehidupan, dan menghilangkan diskriminasi terhadap perempuan, kekerasan serta pelecehan terhadap perempuan. Oleh karena itu perlu adanya diskursus lebih lanjut untuk meluruskan kesalahan berpikir dalam hal tersebut. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui kedudukan diantara keduanya; perlu digarisbawahi kedudukan laki-laki dan perempuan memiliki status



kemanusiaan yang sama, dan diciptakan dan jenis/bahan yang sama sebagaimana yang telah difirmankan-Nya. Penelitian ini menggunakan jenis penelitian kualitatif yang bersifat studi pustaka menggunakan jurnal, buku, artikel yang berkaitan dengan penelitian ini.

Kata Kunci: Gender; Pendidikan; Islam.



I. INTRODUCTION

Gender discussions have always been a hot and widely debated topic. Nowadays, gender debates continue to take place on both national and international stages. This is rooted in issues of gender roles and the injustices or inequalities surrounding gender. Furthermore, the feminist movement emphasizes the importance of achieving progress in social, political, and economic aspects, particularly for women. By addressing this issue, the researcher aims to uncover the universal values found in the Qur'an, specifically in Surah An-Nisa, verse 34, along with several other related verses that correlate with gender issues. This understanding can then serve as a foundational reference for addressing various gender-related problems that frequently arise today.

A serious issue of concern in Islamic teachings is the status and relationship between men and women. Islam greatly values the dignity of women by teaching and granting them civil rights that are equal to those of men, as well as encouraging women to attain a respectable position. Islam strongly advocates for women to adorn themselves with knowledge, as stated in the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. It is narrated by Imam Muslim that: 'Seeking knowledge is an obligation for every believing man and woman.' (Quraish, 2014)

In contrast to the situation in England until the 18th century, when English legislation recognized a husband's right to sell his wife, this tradition was one way to end a marriage that was unsatisfactory to the man, based on mutual agreement that may have begun in the late 17th century. This practice became very popular at that time because official divorce for couples was impossible except for the wealthy. After placing a collar around his wife's neck, arm, or waist, the husband would auction her off to the highest bidder (Thompson, 1991). Furthermore, Nasaruddin Umar, based on his research findings, states that this patriarchal and sexist view is not solely a monopoly of the Qur'an, which does not provide what is due to women, but is also present in the Bible and other sacred texts, such as the Confucian and Buddhist scriptures, as well as classical texts like the Talmud, (Nasaruddin, 2004).

Universally, social justice refers to the efforts to achieve equality and fairness in the distribution and allocation of resources and opportunities. This means that every individual has the right to equal access to education, healthcare, employment, and a decent livelihood. In the context of education, social justice means ensuring that every individual, regardless of their social, economic, or cultural background, has equal opportunities to obtain quality education. By ensuring equal access to education, we can strengthen the foundation for progress and collective well-being. (UU 2003).

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research employs a qualitative research method characterized as Library Research, with the primary focus on utilizing literature and books as sources for data collection. This involves



reading and taking notes (Zed, 2014), as well as analyzing and interpreting written documents based on the context of the research (Sani, 2022). Library Research does not require direct fieldwork to obtain primary data.

According to M. Zed, sometimes research is limited to library studies alone, as is the case in this study. There are three reasons for choosing library research as the research method: (1) the research questions can only be answered through library research and cannot rely on field data, (2) a preliminary study is conducted to understand the indications present in society, and (3) library data is still capable of addressing the research questions. Library research is related to theoretical studies through references concerning the values, culture, and norms that develop in the social situation being investigated. This library research is closely linked to scientific literature. (Sugiyono, 2018) This study examines Surah Al-An'am (6) verse 165 from the perspective of literature, tafsir, books, and previous research."

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Gender Equality in Q.S. An-Nisa (3): 34

The Qur'an is a guide for all of humanity on this earth and serves as a foundation for achieving a peaceful and comfortable life. The Qur'an is also the primary reference for absolute laws that must be followed.

Nowadays, a handful of people believe that women's rights have been oppressed, and some even argue that they have been neglected and disregarded as human rights. These perceptions may arise due to their connection to the dark history of the 18th century, marked by prolonged oppression of women in England and Europe, which ultimately raised many voices and support, leading to the emergence of the feminist movement. In her book (Mary E. Hawkesworth, 2018), feminism is described as a collection of socio-political movements and ideologies with the common goal of expressing, building, and achieving political, economic, personal, and social equality between the two genders. In his book (Rokhmansyah, 2016), one of the common misconceptions among the general public is that feminism is a form of rebellion by women against men or an attempt to oppose social institutions, including family and marriage, to deny their nature. In fact, feminism is an effort to end the oppression and exploitation of women.

Prior to this, the Qur'an had already addressed this issue, discussing how it responds to the status of men and women, stating that both were created from the same source and that their purpose is to cooperate in building sustainability on this earth. 'O mankind, indeed We have created you from a male and a female and made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another.' (Q.S. Al-Hujurat: 13).

In another of His verses, it is explained that the creation of humans in this universe is as servants, and there is no distinction between men and women; whoever does good and is conscious of Allah will receive great goodness."



الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ فَالصَّالِحَاتُ قَانِتَاتٌ حَافِظَاتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ اللَّهُ وَالَّتِي تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاصْرَبُوهُنَّ فَإِنِ اطَّعْنَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا كَبِيرًا

Men (husbands) are the protectors and maintainers of women (wives) because Allah has made some of them (men) superior to others (women) and because they (men) spend from their wealth. Righteous women are those who are devout (to Allah) and guard themselves when their husbands are absent, for Allah has kept them safe. As for those women from whom you fear disobedience, advise them, and forsake them in bed, and (if necessary) strike them (in a way that does not cause pain). But if they obey you, do not seek a means against them. Indeed, Allah is Exalted and Grand. (Q.S. An-Nisa (3): 34).

According to the narration of Hasan al-Basri: "A woman complained to the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) that her husband had struck her. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, 'He will be subjected to the law of retaliation (qisas).' Then Allah revealed the verse, 'Men are the protectors and maintainers of women' (Q.S. An-Nisa (3): 34)." It is also narrated that the woman returned to her home, and her husband did not receive punishment as retribution for his actions, because this verse permits striking a disobedient wife with the aim of educating and reminding her. The righteous wife referred to in this verse is described in the words of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him): "The best of women is the one who, when you look at her, pleases you, and when you command her, she obeys you, and when you are absent, she safeguards your property and herself." (Narrated by Ibn Jarir and al-Baihaqi from Abu Hurairah)

His command in another verse:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَكُمْ خَلَائِفَافَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ وَرَفَعَ بَعْضَكُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجَاتٍ لِّيُبْلُوَكُمْ فِي مَا آتَاكُمْ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ سَرِيعُ الْعِقَابِ وَإِنَّهُ لَغَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

"He is the One who made you successors (khalifah) on the earth and raised some of you above others in degrees, to test you concerning what He has given you. Indeed, your Lord is swift in punishment. Indeed, He is Most Forgiving and Most Merciful." (Surah Al-An'am, 6:165).

The term "khalifah" (Tafsir, 2018) refers to "leader" and has the plural form "khalaiif," which encompasses all of humanity. This indicates that every person born from the descendants of Adam shares the same purpose as leaders to nurture the earth, promote goodness, and prevent corruption, similar to what the previous nations (banul jan) did when they caused corruption on the earth. In the interpretation (Quraish, 2009), "khalifah" originally means one who replaces or comes after someone who was there before. From this explanation, some understand the term "khalifah" here to mean replacing Allah in the sense of upholding His will and establishing His decrees. It is important to emphasize that this meaning does not imply that Allah is incapable or that humans are positioned as gods; rather, it is because Allah intends to



test humanity and grant them honor. Others interpret it as replacing other creatures as inhabitants of this earth, as indicated in Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 30, in the Tafsir Jalalain.

In another part of the verse, Allah says:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

"And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me." (Surah Az-Zariyat, 51:56)

Imam Ibn Kathir explains in his tafsir, "Indeed, I created them so that I could command them to worship Me, not because I need them." Ali bin Abi Talhah narrated from Ibn Abbas regarding His words: "except to worship Me," meaning that they should acknowledge their worship of Me, whether willingly or unwillingly. This is also the view chosen by Ibn Jarir. Ibn Jurayj stated that the intended meaning is "except so that they may know Me." Both men and women hold equal status before Him, with the distinction being who is most pious.

Essentially, both men and women are equal in terms of how Allah treats them, except in matters related to their respective natures. In addition to Surah An-Nisa, verse 34 mentioned above, there are many verses in the Quran that affirm this reality, including Surah Ali Imran (3:195) and Al-Ahzab (33:35). A woman is permitted to strive and work as long as the work is necessary for her or as long as she is needed for the work. Each has the right to manage and enjoy the fruits of their labor, as emphasized in Surah An-Nisa (4:32). Even if some religious figures from non-Muslim backgrounds accuse women of being the reason for Adam's expulsion from paradise and that women are tools of Satan for temptation, the Quran presents a different view, affirming that both were tempted by Satan (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:36): فَآزَلَهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ عَنْهَا فَأَخْرَجَهُمَا مِمَّا كَانَا فِيهِ (Quraish, 2022)

B. Gender Equality in Education and Social Justice

Gender is a concept used to identify the differences between men and women from social, cultural, psychological, and other non-biological aspects. In this sense, gender defines men and women from a non-biological perspective, as gender is a form of social construction rather than something inherent. The Women's Studies Encyclopedia explains that gender is a cultural concept that seeks to create distinctions in roles, behaviors, mentalities, and emotional characteristics between men and women as they develop within society (Nasarudin, 1999).

Islam highly values the principle of equality among humans, not differentiating based on rank, race, ethnicity, or gender. Gender inequality in education is largely a result of unequal educational backgrounds. There are three main issues: opportunity, advancement, and curriculum. Gender inequality in education can be observed through quantitative indicators such as literacy rates, school participation rates, field of study choices, and the composition of teaching staff and school principals (Bemmelen, 1995).



Education is an essential part of human life, as it helps us to be active and lead better lives. Currently, some segments of society perceive women's mobility as limited to the kitchen, well, and bed, but this view seems to confine women's roles to family situations. Women are crucial for raising future generations because they will become mothers, and a mother is a child's primary school. The goal of educating girls is to produce intelligent, educated, and healthy women who can utilize their abilities for the benefit of their families, communities, and themselves (Dwi et al., 2023). From a health journal perspective (Herlina et al., 2017), a child's intelligence during pregnancy is influenced by several factors, one of which is genetic, primarily inherited from the mother's chromosomes. Maternal genetic factors are passed down through mitochondria, which are only inherited from the mother. Mitochondria are parts of cells that have their own DNA, which is why a mother's investment in her child reaches 75%. This is why education for women is a valuable asset that must be pursued; women have the right to their civil rights just as men do.

Education for women is crucial because it provides equal opportunities in life, transforms thinking for better progress, and benefits themselves, their environment, and future generations. Women's education also plays a vital role in achieving success and well-being, especially in the current digital era and development.

Low education levels among women significantly affect their access to production resources, as they tend to be concentrated in low-paying jobs. Furthermore, the influence of education shows a tendency that the lower the education level, the greater the gender inequality in the wage system (Suryadi & Idris, 2004). There are several key factors that contribute to gender inequality according to Suleeman (1995): (1) The higher the level of formal education, the more limited the number of available schools; (2) The higher the level of education, the more expensive the cost of schooling; (3) Investment in education is often not realized because daughters become members of their husbands' families after marriage.

4. CONCLUSION

Islam greatly values the dignity and worth of women by teaching and granting them civil rights that are equal to those of men, as well as encouraging women to attain honorable positions. Islam strongly advocates for women to adorn themselves with knowledge.

Men and women hold equal status before Allah, as obedient servants who fulfill His commands and avoid His prohibitions. The distinction lies in who is most pious towards Him.

A woman has the right to her civil rights just as men do, and education is one of those rights. Women who possess intellect, intelligence, and mature knowledge significantly influence the future of their children. Women are the first school for their children, which is why they deserve equality in education.



It is important to emphasize that there are differences between men and women, not only physically but also psychologically. However, it must be acknowledged that there are many differences in rights and responsibilities highlighted by Islamic teachings concerning men and women, such as women's testimony, inheritance rights, leadership in prayer, and community activities. Despite these differences, a balance is ultimately achieved between the two, resulting in equality.

As explained by Quraish Shihab, men need women, and the gentleness of women is desired by men. The needle must be stronger than the fabric, and the fabric must be softer than the needle; otherwise, the needle will not function, and the fabric will not be stitched. Together, they create beautiful, harmonious, and comfortable clothing.

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