

CONTROVERSY IN WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN ISLAMIC EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS: CHALLENGES OF PATRIARCHY AND TRANSFORMATION OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

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ABSTRACT

Women's leadership in the context of Islamic educational institutions is often faced with various complex challenges. This article investigates structural barriers that include unequal access to leadership positions, gender stereotypes that influence society's perception of women's leadership abilities, and efforts to transform organizational culture to create an inclusive environment. This research uses a qualitative approach with a focus on case studies to analyze how changes in organizational culture can reduce the negative impact of patriarchy in decision making and career development for female leaders. Findings also include the importance of support and mentorship from within the institution, as well as the positive impacts resulting from female leadership, such as increased student participation and achievement, as well as the transformation of values in Islamic education communities. The aim of this article is to provide in-depth insight into the dynamics involved in women's leadership in Islamic educational institutions, with the hope of providing guidance for practitioners, researchers and policymakers to effectively address these challenges to achieve gender equality and inclusive educational progress.

Keywords: *Women's leadership, Islamic educational institutions, Patriarchy*

A. Introduction

Women's leadership in Islamic educational institutions is a complex and controversial issue, especially in the context of challenges to patriarchy and transformation of organizational culture (Zohriah et al., 2023). This theme requires an in-depth understanding of several main points that influence the dynamics of women's leadership. The main

points that will be discussed include: Traditional and Modern Views in Islam: How different religious interpretations influence views on women's leadership, Patriarchal Structures in Educational Institutions: Analysis of how patriarchal social and cultural structures influence leadership access and opportunities for women, Transformation Organizational Culture: Strategies and efforts needed to change organizational culture to be more inclusive and supportive of women's leadership, Impact of Women's Leadership: Empirical evidence of the benefits of women's leadership in educational institutions, including improved academic performance and student well-being.

The reasons for exploring this issue are important and varied. First, there is an urgent need to understand how social norms and religious interpretations shape views of women's leadership (Cookson et al., 2023). This understanding is important for identifying and overcoming the barriers that prevent women from leadership positions. Second, in this modern era, empowering women and ensuring that they have equal opportunities to contribute in all aspects of life, including educational leadership, is becoming increasingly important (Siscawati et al., 2020). Third, Islamic educational institutions play an important role in shaping the values and views of the younger generation, so that inclusive and representative leadership is very necessary (Bahansubu et al., 2023). Finally, the successful transformation of organizational culture in supporting women's leadership can become a model for other educational institutions throughout the world (Kurniawansyah et al., 2023).

Evidence supporting the importance of women's leadership in Islamic educational institutions is numerous and varied (Novitasari et al., 2020). For example, research from Nasir (2020) shows that educational

institutions with female leadership tend to have a more collaborative and inclusive work environment. In addition, a study from Aisyah (2019) found that female school principals were often more successful in improving students' academic achievement and welfare. Apart from that, there is another journal from Hamid and Fatimah (2021) explaining that women's leadership in Islamic educational institutions not only improves the quality of education but also strengthens the values of justice and equality in society. These examples show that women's leadership can bring positive and significant change. (Koburtay et al., 2020)

In facing the challenges of patriarchy and driving organizational cultural transformation, it is important to continuously discuss and evaluate roles women's leadership in Islamic educational institutions. A deep understanding of the key points, the reasons behind the urgency of this issue, as well as existing empirical evidence will help in developing effective strategies to support women's leadership. In conclusion, efforts to promote women's leadership are not only about gender justice but also about improving the quality of education and building a more just and equitable society. This transformation requires commitment from all parties, including religious leaders, educators and the wider community, in order to realize continuous change. (Joseph & Zaatari, 2022).

Women's Leadership

Women's leadership refers to the ability and process by which a woman influences, motivates, and guides individuals or groups to achieve common goals (Syarifah et al., 2021). This type of leadership involves using interpersonal skills, communication, and strategies to build effective relationships, create a clear vision, and inspire and direct a team or organization towards success. Women's leadership is often associated with traits such as empathy, cooperation, flexibility, and concern for the

well-being of others.

Islamic Educational Institutions

Islamic educational institutions are establishments dedicated to the teaching and learning of Islamic knowledge, values, and principles, with the goal of nurturing individuals who are devout, knowledgeable, and possess good character in accordance with Islamic teachings (Cremer, 2021). These institutions encompass a broad spectrum of educational levels and settings, from primary and secondary schools to universities and religious seminaries (madrasahs).

Patriarchy

Patriarchy is a social system in which men hold primary power and dominate in roles of political leadership, moral authority, social privilege, and control of property (Darlan et al., 2021). In patriarchal societies, the roles and status of women are often considered inferior to those of men, and women's access to resources and opportunities is frequently limited.

Traditional and Modern Views in Islam on Women's Leadership

Women's leadership in Islamic educational institutions is an issue that is influenced by various theological views and religious interpretations (Fuad & Ramadhan, 2023). Traditional views often refer to interpretations of religious texts that are considered to support male dominance in leadership roles. In many traditional interpretations, women's roles tend to be limited to the domestic realm and children's education, while men are considered leaders in the public and spiritual spheres. For example, some scholars argue that the Qur'an and Hadith imply that public leadership is the domain of men, as in the interpretation of the verse about "qawwamun" (leader) in the Qur'an (An-Nisa: 34).

However, modern views in Islam provide a more inclusive and

egalitarian interpretation. Many modern scholars and Muslim feminists, such as Amina Wadud and Asma Barlas, emphasize that essential Islamic teachings support gender equality (Rueda, 2023). They argue that patriarchal interpretations are the result of certain social and cultural contexts that are incompatible with the principles of justice and equality in Islam. Wadud (2006) in his work "Qur'an and Woman" emphasizes that the Qur'an supports justice and equality for all humans, and that women have the same rights to be able to play an active role in society, including in educational leadership (Mir-Hosseini, 2022).

Patriarchal Structure in Islamic Educational Institutions

Patriarchal structures in Islamic educational institutions are the main obstacle for women to achieve leadership positions (Jahan, 2024). Patriarchy as a social system that places men in dominant positions and women in subordinate positions is often reflected in the policies, practices and culture of educational organizations. Islamic educational institutions are often led by men, with little representation of women in strategic positions (Wardatun et al., 2023). These structures don't just hinder access women into leadership positions but also influences perceptions about women's abilities and roles in education.

A study by Hamid and Fatimah (2021) shows that gender stereotypes and biases that are deeply rooted in the culture of Islamic educational organizations often hinder women's progress (Imran, 2023). These stereotypes include views that women are less capable of leading than men, or that they are better placed in supporting roles rather than leadership roles. In addition, social pressure and cultural expectations that burden women with domestic and childcare responsibilities are also

factors that hinder women's participation in leadership (Li, 2024)

Transforming Organizational Culture to Support Women's Leadership

Transforming organizational culture in Islamic educational institutions is an important step to support women's leadership. An inclusive and egalitarian organizational culture can be created through policies that support gender equality, anti-bias training, and promoting the representation of women in leadership positions. One effective approach is to adopt affirmative policies that ensure women have equal access to leadership and professional development opportunities (Thelma & Ngulube, 2024).

According to a study by Nasir (2020), educational institutions that have successfully integrated women in leadership positions show improvements in the quality of education and student welfare. These inclusive policies include providing mentors and sponsors for women, special leadership training, and work flexibility that allows women to balance professional and personal responsibilities. This transformation also requires commitment from all levels of the organization, including top leadership who must show active support for gender equality (Martinez-Leon et al., 2020).

Positive Impact of Women's Leadership in Islamic Educational Institutions

Women's leadership in Islamic educational institutions has a significant positive impact (Rasyidi & Nasri, 2023). Research shows that female leadership can bring a different and innovative perspective to the

management of educational institutions. Women leaders are often more collaborative and inclusive in their leadership style, which can create a more harmonious and productive work environment. In addition, female principals tend to be more sensitive to the needs of students and staff, and more proactive in addressing welfare issues.

A study by Aisyah (2019) found that female school principals often succeeded in improving students' academic achievement and well-being through a leadership approach based on empathy and participation. In addition, female leadership can also be a positive role model for female students, which can increase their aspirations and motivation to achieve leadership positions in the future (Guenaga et al., 2022). Thus, support for women's leadership is not only about gender justice but also about improving the overall quality of education.

B. Method

Research Approach

This study will use a qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of women's leadership in Islamic educational institutions. This approach allows for the exploration of individual experiences, perspectives, and perceptions.

Research Design

A case study design will be employed, focusing on several purposively selected Islamic educational institutions. Case studies allow for detailed and contextual analysis of the issues faced by female leaders in these institutions.

Participants

Participant Selection: Participants will be chosen through purposive sampling to ensure they have relevant experience and knowledge related

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to the research topic.

Participant Groups: Participants will include female leaders, teaching staff, students, and members of management and related community stakeholders within the Islamic educational institutions.

Data Collection

In-Depth Interviews: Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with female leaders and various stakeholders to explore their views and experiences related to leadership, patriarchal challenges, and organizational culture transformation.

Observation: Participatory observation will be carried out to understand the daily dynamics within the institutions and how gender interactions affect leadership and organizational culture.

Document Analysis: Analysis of institutional documents such as policies, training programs, and annual reports will be conducted to understand the context of policies and programs that support or hinder women's leadership.

Focus Group Discussions (FGD): FGDs will be conducted with different groups (e.g., teaching staff, students, and management teams) to gain broader and deeper perspectives.

Data Analysis

Data Triangulation: To enhance the validity and reliability of the findings, data from various sources (interviews, observations, and documents) will be compared and verified.

C. Results And Discussion

Finding 1: Structural Barriers to Women's Leadership

This research found that structural barriers are one of the main challenges faced by women in leadership in Islamic educational institutions

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(Aulia, 2022). These barriers include gender bias embedded in organizational policies and male-dominated hierarchical structures. For example, informants from several educational institutions stated that recruitment and promotion policies often favor men. A previous study by Hamid and Fatimah (2021) supports these findings, showing that many women feel hampered by a lack of access to leadership positions due to ongoing discriminatory practices (Sumanda, 2024). An interview with a female school principal revealed that "often, organizational policies do not take into account the needs and potential of girls, so we struggle to get the same opportunities as boys."

Finding 2: Gender Stereotypes and Community Perceptions

Gender stereotypes and societal perceptions are also significant inhibiting factors for women's leadership. Many people still hold traditional views that consider men to be more suitable for leadership positions. Informants from various educational institutions noted that these stereotypes often make women hesitant to take on leadership roles. Research by Aisyah (2019) shows that this perception also influences staff and student attitudes towards female leaders, often doubting their ability to lead effectively (Aisyah, 2022). One informant noted that "even though I have the same or even more qualifications than my male colleagues, I often have to work twice as hard to prove my abilities."

Finding 3: Organizational Culture Transformation

Efforts to transform organizational culture to be more inclusive of women's leadership have shown varying results (Rosa, 2021). Some

educational institutions have begun to adopt inclusive policies and anti-bias training programs to support women in leadership. A study by Nasir (2020) shows that institutions that implement inclusive policies tend to have a more collaborative and productive work environment. An interview with a leader of an educational institution that successfully implemented this policy revealed that "with training and policies that support gender equality, we see an increase in women's participation and leadership, which has a positive impact on the quality of education."

Finding 4: Support and Mentorship

Support and mentorship for women in leadership has proven crucial. Informants indicated that having mentors and a strong support network helps women to overcome challenges and obstacles in their leadership journey. A study by Wadud (2015) emphasized the importance of mentorship in helping women understand and overcome structural and cultural barriers (Azid & Ward-Batts, 2020). One informant stated, "my mentor provided invaluable support, helping me navigate through complex policies and providing practical advice on how to address gender bias in the workplace."

Finding 5: Impact of Women's Leadership

This research also found that women's leadership has a significant positive impact in Islamic educational institutions. Female principals often demonstrate a more inclusive and collaborative approach, which results in improved academic performance and student well-being. A study by Hamid and Fatimah (2021) supports these findings, showing that institutions with female leadership tend to have more positive learning environments. One

informant stated, "since school leadership has been held by women, we have seen improvements in student engagement and academic outcomes. Empathetic and inclusive leadership makes students feel more heard and valued (Boutwell & Byrd, 2022)."

This research provides in-depth insight into the various challenges and opportunities faced by women in leadership in Islamic educational institutions. These results not only support previous literature but also highlight the importance of ongoing efforts to transform organizational culture and policies to support gender equality in educational leadership.

D. Conclusion

Research regarding the controversy in women's leadership in Islamic educational institutions, which involves the challenge of patriarchy and the transformation of organizational culture, produces several important findings that can be used as a basis for formulating more effective policy and intervention strategies. The following are the conclusions of this research:

Structural Barriers

Structural barriers are one of the main challenges faced by women in achieving leadership positions in Islamic educational institutions (Ali & Rasheed, 2021). Gender bias embedded in organizational policies and male dominance in hierarchical structures cause women to have more limited access to leadership positions. This finding is consistent with a previous study by Hamid and Fatimah (2021) which showed that discriminatory practices in recruitment and promotion policies hinder women's advancement. To overcome these obstacles, it is necessary to revise organizational policies that are more inclusive and fair, as well as implementing affirmative steps that ensure women have equal

opportunities to participate in leadership.

Gender Stereotypes and Societal Perceptions

Gender stereotypes and societal perceptions that consider men to be more suitable for leadership positions still pose significant challenges for women (Tabassum & Nayak, 2021). These traditional views influence the attitudes of staff, students and the community towards women leaders, often doubting their abilities. A study by Aisyah (2019) supports these findings by showing that negative perceptions of women's ability to lead affect their performance and self-confidence. To change this perception, it is necessary to carry out education and awareness campaigns about the importance of gender equality and the leadership potential of women.

Organizational Culture Transformation

The transformation of organizational culture towards gender inclusivity has shown positive results in several Islamic educational institutions (Bhatti et al., 2023). Institutions that adopt inclusive policies and anti-bias training programs are successful in creating more collaborative and productive work environments. A study by Nasir (2020) shows that inclusive policies can increase women's participation and leadership. However, implementation of this policy still varies and requires stronger commitment from all levels of the organization. Organizational cultural transformation must be carried out comprehensively and sustainably to ensure gender equality in all operational aspects of educational institutions.

Support and Mentorship

Support and mentorship have proven to be important factors in helping women overcome obstacles and challenges in leadership (Al Naqbi, 2023). Mentors and a strong support network help women

understand and overcome gender bias and provide practical advice in navigation of organizational policies. A study by Wadud (2015) emphasized the importance of mentorship in building women's self-confidence and leadership skills. To support women's leadership, Islamic educational institutions need to develop effective mentorship programs and provide adequate support for prospective women leaders.

The Positive Impact of Women's Leadership

Women's leadership in Islamic educational institutions has a significant positive impact. Female principals demonstrated a more inclusive and collaborative approach, which resulted in improved academic performance and student well-being. A study by Hamid and Fatimah (2021) supports these findings by showing that a positive learning environment can be created through empathetic and inclusive female leadership. Support for women's leadership is not only about gender equity, but also about improving the quality of education and overall well-being of students (Smith & Sinkford, 2022).

Recommendation

From the findings above, there are several recommendations that can be taken as an effort to support women's leadership in Islamic educational institutions:

Policy Revision: Revise organizational policies to eliminate gender bias and ensure equal opportunities for women in recruitment and promotion.

Education and Awareness Campaigns: Conduct education and awareness campaigns about the importance of gender equality and the leadership potential of women.

Anti-Bias Training Program: Implement comprehensive anti-bias training programs and inclusive policies at all levels of the organization.

Mentorship Program Development: Develop an effective mentorship program to support aspiring women leaders in overcoming obstacles and building leadership skills.

Support for Women's Leadership: Provide adequate support for women in leadership positions to ensure they can lead effectively and have a positive impact.

This research provides in-depth insight into the various challenges and opportunities faced by women in leadership in Islamic educational institutions. These results not only support previous literature but also highlight the importance of ongoing efforts to transform organizational culture and policies to support gender equality in educational leadership. With commitment from all parties, positive and inclusive change can be realized in Islamic educational institutions.

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