

RECONSTRUCTION OF GENDER THINKING BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN AS DIFFERENT IDENTITY IN ISLAM

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Abstrak

Gender sering diartikan sebagai perbedaan jenis kelamin antara laki-laki dan perempuan, dalam bahasa Inggris gender berarti jenis kelamin, sedangkan dalam Webster's New World Dictionary gender diartikan sebagai perbedaan yang tampak antara laki-laki dan perempuan (nilai dan perilaku). Pemahaman gender yang selama ini mapan seringkali membuat kita salah memahami arti sebenarnya, sehingga sering terjadi diskriminasi terhadap perempuan. Artikel ini akan fokus pada bagaimana melihat kembali pemahaman tentang gender yang telah mapan. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif, yaitu mencoba mendeskripsikan, menjelaskan, dan menjawab permasalahan yang ada. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa laki-laki dan perempuan sebagai identitas yang berbeda dapat mencapai nilai kesetaraan dalam Islam. Perbedaan biologis tidak dapat melegitimasi posisi yang lebih tinggi atau lebih rendah di antara keduanya. Dalam konteks Islam sendiri, tidak ada larangan khusus bagi perempuan untuk tidak terlibat dalam ruang publik, apalagi mengingat perkembangan zaman, konteks Indonesia sendiri membuktikan bahwa semakin banyak perempuan yang hadir, baik terlibat dalam politik maupun hal lainnya, tanpa melanggar moral agama.

Kata Kunci: Rekonstruksi, Gender, Kesetaraan

Abstract

People often interpret gender as the distinction between the sexes of men and women. In English, gender means sex, whereas Webster's New World Dictionary defines gender as the visible differences in values and behavior between men and women. The current understanding of gender often leads to a misunderstanding of its true meaning, resulting in frequent discrimination against women. This article aims to reexamine the established understanding of gender. The study adopts a qualitative descriptive approach to describe, explain, and address the existing issues. The findings of this study demonstrate that men and women, as distinct identities, can attain equality in Islam. Biological differences do not justify a higher or lower position between the two genders. In the Islamic context, there are no specific restrictions preventing women from participating in the public sphere, especially considering the evolving times. The Indonesian context itself exemplifies an increasing presence of women in politics and other domains without violating religious morals.

Keywords: Reconstruction, Gender, Equality

A. Introduction

Gender discussions increasingly find a space that is quite intense for discussion, especially about how gender can shape communication and culture about their views between men and women (Wood 1994). A society can be said to be democratic if, in its daily life, it respects various human rights fairly and equally. Cultural factors, social systems, and political systems, along with the problem of poverty, are problems that hinder women, especially women, from taking part in the public sphere. This reality shows that women must make a strategic effort to get out of these obstacles and challenges because cultural, political, and economic factors are common agendas that, in fact, have not been handled properly until now (Widiawati and Nurkhopipah 2021).

Placing women in the same position as men in the public sphere is quite difficult. Various challenges and obstacles must be faced in order to realize equality for men and women. The understanding that has been established so far needs to be reconstructed in order to create a flexible understanding treasure so that it is able to answer existing problems, especially realizing the value of gender equality in social life through religious construction, which has been understood textually and conservatively. Al-Quran, as a guide that regulates all aspects of human life, of course also discusses gender (Apriliani et al., 2021). To start the discussion related to gender, we need to start with the substance of gender itself. It must be admitted that there are still many of us who always argue about this issue without understanding the definition of gender and what the basic difference between gender and sex is. Gender has always been a crucial topic to be discussed throughout the ages from various perspectives, disciplines, and points of view. In general, it can be seen that the Qur'an describes the differences (distinction) between men and women, but not differences in a discriminatory sense that benefits one party by bringing down the other party.

However, the discussion of gender becomes a problem because of the constructed public perception of the biological differences possessed by men and women, which are used as appropriate values and norms. The nature of women as mothers who give birth is used as a reference for women who can only play a role in domestic activities. On the other hand, men are considered proficient only in public affairs. In fact, both can play a role in the domestic and public sectors. This view has always marginalized women from various viewpoints that are constructed, so does religion agree with that or go against the

understanding that has been acute in society? QS. An-Nisa verse 34, which contains the position of men as leaders for women,

There are several previous studies that have been carried out by several other researchers; for example, Hunawa (2018), in his study, discusses the position of husband and wife in Islam, seen from QS. An-Nisa [4], verse 34, as the main reference and discussion. This study uses a qualitative method with a linguistic approach, a book of interpretation, and literature. The results of this study indicate that the position of men is higher than that of women, as seen from QS. An-Nisa verse 34. The conclusion of this study shows that the advantages possessed by men are not necessarily the reason for men to act arbitrarily toward women. Supriyadi, Julia, and Firdaus (2019), in their study, discuss women's leadership and how it needs to be reconstructed on the grounds that traditional interpretations are no longer in line with changing times. In addition, Supriyadi, Julia, and Firdaus also serve as a re-actualization of Islamic concepts as well as an interpretation and re-understanding of the Qur'an and al-Hadith to provide opportunities for women related to their concept of equality with men. Furthermore, it tries to reconstruct the Islamic doctrine of women's leadership from the perspective of the Qur'an, al-Hadith, and Fiqh.

The results of previous studies have touched on the position that men are more than women in the household as leaders; it has also been found that religious doctrines that have been inherent in society need to be reconstructed so as to provide opportunities for women to lead without discrimination. The difference between this study and several previous studies lies in the further explanation related to gender through the approach of Berger and Lukman's social construction theory, which is more progressive in looking at the position between men and women in their roles in public and domestic life. So, this article examines how to look back on the understanding of gender that has been established in people's lives so that efforts are needed to reconstruct an understanding of different identities and achieve equality both in domestic life and in the public sphere.

B. Method

This research is a type of qualitative research through literature study using content analysis and applying descriptive analytic method. The type of data in this study

is qualitative data sourced from journal articles, books, interpretation books, research documents and other literature related to the topic of discussion (Fadli 2021)

C. Result and Discussion

In recent years, the discourse on Indonesian social movements has been colored by various gender discourses and women's empowerment movements. As a result, several higher education institutions have initiated the establishment of study centers that specialize in women's studies and their relationships with men more broadly. The establishment of various women's empowerment institutions is motivated by various social inequalities that occur, one of which is because of the wrong view of women's empowerment and the relationship between men and women. The results of gender analysis that are developed and established in society are quite surprising; therefore, it is natural that there are pros and cons. This also happens because the analytical knife used to read religious texts has so far been considered final, cannot be criticized, and cannot be contested, such as the Qur'an and As-Sunnah. The need for rereading with a critical analysis of religious discourses and texts is carried out because the Muslim spirit of learning is more exploited by textual approaches and historical romanticism and puts aside analytical aspects that are based on the reality that is closest to and experienced by the surrounding Muslim community. Therefore, it is a necessity that religious texts be studied and reconstructed according to current conditions (Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd 2003).

Gender is often defined as the difference in sex between men and women; in English, gender means gender, while in Webster's New World Dictionary, gender is defined as the visible difference between men and women (values and behavior) (Apriliani et al. 2021). According to John M. Echols and Hassan Sadhily (2018), the word gender comes from English, which means gender. In general, the notion of gender is the visible difference between men and women when viewed from their behavior. Meanwhile, according to Mansoer Faqih (2008), biologically, the genitals between men and women cannot be exchanged; this is the nature and provision of God given from birth. Gender is understood as an inherent trait of both men and women that is socially and culturally constructed. Changes in characteristics and traits that occur from time to time and from place to place are called the concept of gender (John 2012). Santrock (2002) suggests that the terms gender and sex have different dimensions. The term sex (gender) refers to the biological dimensions of a man and a woman, while gender refers to the

socio-cultural dimensions of a man and a woman. From some of the explanations regarding sex and gender above, it can be understood that sex is a division of sex based on biological dimensions and cannot be changed, while gender is the result of human construction based on socio-cultural dimensions of men or women.

Reconstruction of Thought in Realizing Gender Equality

Observing several women's relationships in the public sphere, Berger and Lukman provided an understanding that these conditions are the result of socially constructed realities or assumptions that are understood by everyday people (Nila Sastrawati 2018), despite the fact that there are still many things that are inhibiting factors from women's involvement that are difficult to eliminate. In everyday life, it is considered to present itself as reality par excellence, so that it is called the main reality (paramount). In line with what was stated by Berger and Luckman, according to them, the world of everyday life presents itself as a reality that is interpreted by humans. Therefore, what humans think is real in the world of everyday life is a reality that has subjective meaning, meaning that it is considered true or that is how it is perceived by humans (Nila Sastrawati 2018).

Previous studies have discussed a lot about the positions of men and women and emphasized that men as family leaders are always considered to have a higher position than women. This condition actually gives the impression of discrimination against other rights that should be shared equally. Some of them have also been found to confirm that, with the advantages possessed by men, they have the right to become women's leaders. I'm here to be the leader in the family. The problem of women in the public sphere is a hereditary problem because culture and religion provide justification (legitimacy). The problem of differences in biological conditions, which are then interpreted politically, economically, and socially, has implications for the division and hierarchy of work in society. Within this framework of thinking, the cultural system of society will still place women in a subordinate position (van Doorn-Harder 2019).

The strengthening of patriarchal hegemony stems from various perspectives on the nature, duties, and roles of women, which traditionally require that women's roles and functions be identified as actors in reproductive roles and objectified and internalized domestic roles in society (Matthews 2018). This is further strengthened by the legitimacy of the use of the doctrine of "religion". In this case, Berger is of the view that religion is

the most formidable bulwark against meaningless existence. In other words, religion has become the most effective and uncritical source of justification for the social world.

Gender Equality In The Household

There are several reasons for the unequal contribution of women and men into the household as labour. One of the main reasons is gender ideology. Men and women with more traditional beliefs about gender are more likely than those with less traditional gender beliefs to perceive it as a place for women to do most of the household work. The second reason is the alternative of women to a relationship. Women who do not perceive a desirable alternative to the current relationship have little leverage to persuade their partners to participate more in the domestic workforce. The third reason is a commitment to equality. Most people prefer a fair relationship—one in which they and their partner invest relatively equally and in which both partners benefit equally. The degree to which partners are committed to being equal and influencing how they divide household chores.

The fourth reason is gender socialization. Men's socialization usually deemphasizes developing skills in household work, whereas girls are often socialized to do more traditional "feminine" tasks such as washing, cooking, nursing and cleaning. As a result, girls usually have developed skills in these tasks by the time they set up adult households. In addition, many women have higher standards when it comes to domestic affairs than their male partners.

Concept of Difference and Equality

To answer the various discourses that develop in society, it is necessary to look at or reconstruct this understanding comprehensively.

First Ideally, Islam has a fairly firm view of equality regarding the relationship and duties between husband and wife. Thus, the value of equality in Islam concerns the relationship between men and women, leading to conformity (partnership) that results in justice for both. This can be seen in a number of verses of the Qur'an, for example, regarding the mention of the origin of human events, both male and female. It is stated that both originate from or were created of the same kind, so they have the same rights. The difference in biological function between men and women does not mean equal status and position between the two. Regarding the last point, it is indicated in the Qur'an that Allah has honored the children of Adam, namely male and female humans. In determining the quality of religion, Islam does not differentiate on the basis of male or female gender.

Second, The concept of gender relations in Islam can be observed from the Islamic perception of the existence of men and women, where both have the same rights and obligations in carrying out the roles of caliph and servant. Regarding social roles in society, there is no verse in the Qur'an or hadith that prohibits women from being active in them. On the other hand, the Qur'an and the hadiths indicate the ability of women to actively pursue various professions. Thus, gender justice is a fair condition for women and men to be able to actualize and dedicate themselves to the development of the nation and state.

Third, justice and gender equality are based on the principles that position men and women equally as servants of God (their capacity as servants), and men and women will each receive an award from God according to their dedication. In verses- The verses of the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet, which are the main sources of Islamic teachings, contain universal values that guide human life in the past, present, and future, including the values of humanity, justice, independence, equality, and so on. With regard to the values of justice and equality, Islam has never tolerated differences or discriminatory treatment among human beings.

From the results of the discussion that has been described, this article finds several important things in an effort to reconstruct a textual and conservative understanding of the position and status of men and women. Islam views that the equality of men and women can be realized in the form of cooperation by not focusing on one party or burdening work (double burden) on one of them. For example, some men choose to become stay-at-home dads because they find greater satisfaction in caring for a family than pursuing a paid career in an office or company. Some women find that they are more effective and fulfilled by working outside the home than by working just inside as a stay-at-home mom. And many people balance housework and paid work in ways that go beyond traditional roles. It is from this that traditional culture, which is considered normative, can be formed by the subject itself; men and women can and do exchange positions in their roles but cannot be separated from communicating with each other so that household relations can be harmonious without anyone feeling humiliated, discriminated against, or even getting bad treatment between the two (Cranny Francis et al. 2003).

Another way Islam views the role and function of women is that they are not limited by their position as housewives but can appear in public spaces without injuring their morals and responsibilities. Besides that, we can comprehensively understand the meaning of equality; women and men can achieve equality with different identities. This era has given breadth to play an important role in realizing collectivity between men and women, not limited to households, especially the use of social media space to express creativity. In addition, this article shows that the role between men and women as Caliphs emphasizes that there is no privilege for one of them as a human being who has more position because of his predicate as a servant of God other than his good deeds..

D. Conclusion

When examining the position of men and women in Islam, it becomes necessary to adopt an inclusive perspective. Islam considers both genders as equals with distinct identities, rejecting the notion of using biological differences to justify a higher or lower position between them. Within the context of Islam, there are no specific prohibitions that restrict women's involvement in the public sphere. This is especially evident in the evolving Indonesian society, where an increasing number of women engage in politics and other domains while upholding religious morals. This study recommends conducting further research to delve deeper into the text and context of the verses, taking into account social conditions. It is particularly important to consider the interpretations of female scholars when examining the positions of men and women.

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