
Gender Equality in Islam: Integration of Qur'anic Values, Education, and Cultural Transformation

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Abstract

Objective: This study explores gender equality in Islam, emphasizing equal status for men and women as servants of Allah, challenging misconceptions about gender roles, and promoting equality based on faith and deeds, not biological differences. **Theoretical framework:** The study critiques gender-based disparities, arguing that Islam promotes equality based on personal qualities like faith and piety, rather than gender, and challenges cultural constructs that reinforce inequality. **Literature review:** The review highlights Qur'anic verses and research on gender differences in psychology, academics, and leadership, showing that these distinctions are relative and should not justify inequality. **Methods:** A qualitative approach is used to analyze Qur'anic verses and existing research on gender roles in Islam, comparing religious teachings with contemporary gender equality discussions. **Results:** The study finds that Islam promotes gender equality, with men and women valued equally, and that cultural misinterpretations, not religious teachings, perpetuate gender inequality. **Implications:** Promoting gender equality requires cultural reform and education, encouraging policies that align with Islamic teachings to ensure equal opportunities for all. **Novelty:** This research challenges misinterpretations of gender roles in Islam and highlights how Islamic teachings align with modern gender equality principles, contributing to the discourse on gender equality in Muslim societies.

Keywords: gender, equality, social justice, muslim societies, cultural transformation.

INTRODUCTION

Talking about gender issues, people still have different and wrong perceptions, even though the conversation is very interesting to discuss. In today's modern world, gender conversations are no longer taboo. However, there are still many people who have the perception that gender is God's preordained nature, and some others consider that gender is a social construct [1].

At first, gender was the classification of objects according to the sex of men and women, for example: skirts for women, trousers for men, hijab for women, and turbans for men. In

addition, colors such as pink are synonymous with females, and blue is identical to males. In addition, food is also more of a priority for men's food than women's food. However, the definition of gender is definitely not limited to things related to objects alone because gender has a broader meaning than just classifying between men and women [2].

Discussions on gender continue to generate diverse and often conflicting perceptions within society. Although gender discourse has become increasingly prominent and openly discussed in the modern era, misunderstandings persist regarding its conceptual meaning. A common assumption equates gender with divine destiny or biological determinism, while other perspectives frame gender as a product of social construction. These divergent views reveal that gender remains a contested concept, shaped by cultural, religious, and historical influences rather than universally understood as an analytical category [3].

Historically, gender was often associated with the classification of objects, roles, and attributes based on male and female distinctions. Clothing, colors, and even food consumption patterns were assigned symbolic gender meanings, reinforcing rigid binaries. Over time, however, scholars have emphasized that gender transcends material classifications and biological differences. Instead, gender refers to socially constructed roles, expectations, and power relations that shape how individuals experience identity, authority, and participation within society. This broader understanding highlights gender as a dynamic social phenomenon rather than a fixed or natural given [4].

Despite the growing body of literature on gender studies, a significant research gap remains, particularly in contexts where gender discourse intersects with religious values, cultural traditions, and normative social structures. Many existing studies focus predominantly on Western frameworks of gender theory, often overlooking non-Western perspectives or treating them as secondary adaptations. In societies where religion plays a central role in shaping social norms, gender is frequently interpreted through theological lenses that may reinforce traditional hierarchies or resist critical engagement with contemporary gender theories. Consequently, there is limited research that critically examines how gender concepts are negotiated, interpreted, and reconstructed within religiously informed societies [5].

The importance of this research lies in its potential to clarify conceptual confusion surrounding gender and to challenge deterministic interpretations that hinder social equity. Misunderstandings of gender often contribute to the normalization of inequality, particularly in access to education, economic resources, leadership, and decision-making processes. When gender roles are perceived as immutable or divinely fixed, social change becomes difficult to justify, and structural injustices are maintained. By examining gender as a socio-cultural construct that operates within specific historical and religious contexts, this research contributes to a more nuanced and critical understanding of gender relations [6].

Furthermore, this study is significant because it addresses the practical implications of gender perceptions for social development and justice. Gendered assumptions influence public policy, family structures, educational systems, and labor divisions. In many societies, women continue to experience marginalization due to entrenched gender norms that limit their social and economic mobility. A critical analysis of gender discourse can provide a foundation for more inclusive frameworks that recognize both men and women as active agents in social transformation. This has direct implications for promoting equality, reducing discrimination, and fostering balanced social participation [7].

The implications of this research extend beyond theoretical debates. By offering a contextualized understanding of gender, the study can inform educational curricula, religious discourse, and community-based initiatives aimed at raising gender awareness. It encourages scholars, educators, and religious leaders to engage with gender issues more reflexively, acknowledging the distinction between biological differences and socially constructed roles. Such engagement is crucial for building dialogue that respects cultural values while remaining open to ethical principles of justice and human dignity [8].

The novelty of this research lies in its integrative approach. Rather than positioning gender solely as a Western theoretical construct or as a religiously predetermined reality, this study seeks to bridge critical gender theory with socio-religious analysis. It explores gender as a fluid concept shaped by cultural practices, power relations, and interpretive traditions. By doing so, it offers a fresh perspective that challenges binary and reductionist understandings of gender. This approach not only fills an existing research gap but also contributes original insights to interdisciplinary scholarship on gender, culture, and religion [9].

In sum, this research responds to persistent conceptual ambiguities surrounding gender by situating it within broader social and cultural frameworks. It underscores the necessity of re-examining gender assumptions that are often taken for granted, highlighting their impact on social justice and human development. Through its critical and contextual lens, the study aspires to enrich academic discourse and contribute meaningfully to ongoing efforts toward gender equity.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Gender discourse has developed as a critical field of inquiry aimed at distinguishing between biological differences and socially constructed roles assigned to men and women. Existing literature consistently emphasizes that gender is not synonymous with sex, but rather represents a set of roles, expectations, behaviors, and power relations shaped by culture, religion, education, and social structures. This distinction is fundamental in understanding how inequalities emerge and are perpetuated within society [10].

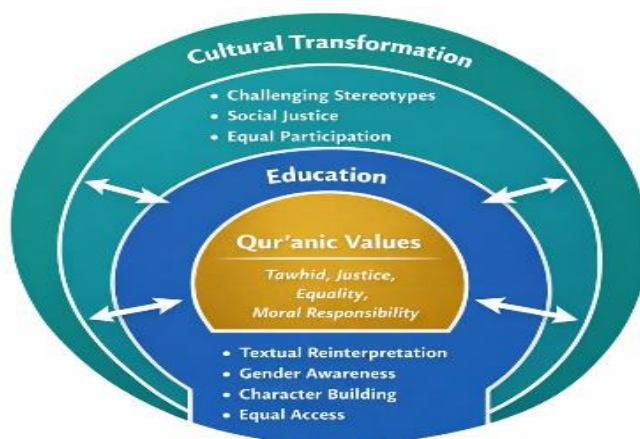


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of Gender Equality in Islam

Scholarly works in Islamic studies highlight that misconceptions about gender often arise from conflating biological differences with divinely ordained social hierarchies. In many Muslim societies, gender inequality is frequently justified through cultural practices or selective religious interpretations rather than through the core teachings of Islam. Literature grounded in Qur'anic analysis underscores that the Qur'an promotes moral and spiritual equality between men and women, positioning both as servants of God and stewards of the earth. Spiritual merit, responsibility, and reward are consistently framed as individual-based rather than gender-based. Studies focusing on Qur'anic perspectives reveal that men and women share equal obligations in worship, ethical conduct, and social responsibility. The literature emphasizes that both genders participate equally in the primordial covenant with God and are jointly accountable for moral choices. Narratives concerning early human history in the Qur'an are frequently interpreted as portraying mutual responsibility rather than attributing fault to one gender, challenging patriarchal readings that marginalize women [11].

Considerable attention in the literature is also given to gender differences in psychological and social domains. Research addressing gratitude, stress, language use, academic

achievement, problem-solving skills, and leadership indicates that while certain differences between men and women may exist, these differences are relative, contextual, and non-deterministic. Many studies conclude that variations are influenced more by socialization, expectations, and opportunities than by innate capability [12].

Leadership studies within the gender literature demonstrate that women often adopt participatory, democratic, and transformational leadership styles, contrasting with more hierarchical models commonly associated with men. However, these differences are not framed as deficiencies or advantages but as alternative approaches shaped by experience and social roles. Educational research further suggests that academic performance between genders shows minimal significant disparity, reinforcing arguments against gender-based discrimination in access and opportunity. Overall, the literature converges on the view that gender inequality is primarily a product of cultural construction rather than religious doctrine. Islamic teachings, when approached holistically, advocate justice, balance, and equal dignity. Consequently, advancing gender equality requires critical reinterpretation, educational reform, and cultural transformation to align social practices with ethical and spiritual principles of justice and human dignity [13].

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative research design using a library-based approach. The research is categorized as conceptual reminder research, focusing on the analysis of gender concepts through textual and theoretical sources rather than empirical fieldwork. This approach is considered appropriate because the primary objective of the study is to examine, interpret, and synthesize existing scholarly discussions on gender, particularly in relation to social, cultural, and religious perspectives [14], [15].

The data sources used in this study consist of primary and secondary materials. Primary data include authoritative texts that discuss gender concepts, especially those derived from religious sources and foundational gender theories. Secondary data are obtained from academic books, peer-reviewed journal articles, conference papers, theses, and other scholarly publications that address gender, social construction, cultural practices, and normative interpretations. These sources were selected based on their relevance, academic credibility, and contribution to the discourse on gender equality and social roles [16], [17].

Data collection was conducted through systematic documentation techniques. The researcher carried out an extensive literature search, followed by careful reading and note-taking to identify key concepts, arguments, and patterns related to gender perceptions and their implications. Relevant texts were then categorized according to thematic relevance, such as definitions of gender, distinctions between gender and sex, religious interpretations, socio-cultural constructions, and implications for social inequality. This process ensured that the collected data were organized and aligned with the research objectives [18], [19].

The data analysis process applied a descriptive-analytical method. Initially, the collected data were reduced by selecting essential information relevant to the research focus. The data were then presented in a structured narrative to highlight recurring themes, similarities, and differences among various scholarly perspectives. Analytical interpretation was conducted by critically examining how gender concepts are constructed, justified, and contested within social and religious frameworks. Particular attention was given to identifying assumptions that contribute to gender bias or inequality [20], [21].

To enhance the validity of the analysis, triangulation of sources was applied by comparing arguments from multiple scholars and disciplines. This allowed the researcher to identify consistent patterns as well as divergent viewpoints. The final stage involved synthesizing the findings to formulate comprehensive conclusions regarding the nature of gender as a social construct and its implications for justice, equality, and human dignity. Through this

methodological framework, the study aims to provide a balanced and critical understanding of gender discourse grounded in scholarly literature [22], [23].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The word gender in the Indonesian dictionary is adopted from English, although the dictionary does not clearly distinguish between gender and sex, meaning that gender is gender [24]. Victoria Neufeldt in Salmah Intan defines gender as a visible difference between men and women in terms of values and behavior [25]. Meanwhile, in the Women's Studies Encyclopedia, it is explained that gender is a cultural concept that seeks to make a difference in terms of roles, behaviors, mentalities, and emotional characteristics between men and women that develop in society [26]. In another sense, gender is the result of cultural thinking that assumes that men are stronger, rational, masculine, and mighty, while women are better known for gentleness, beauty, emotional, and motherhood [27]. Another view of gender is a set of roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that are considered appropriate for both men and women, which are socially constructed in a society [28].

Although the dictionary does not explain the difference between sex and gender, to understand gender, one should not equate gender and sex. Gender is an inherent trait in human beings, both men and women, due to social constructions influenced by religion, culture, ethnicity, and politics. These traits are inherent in human beings, both in men and women, which are interchangeable because they are not natures that cannot change according to conditions, for example, strong men, weak women, but there are also weak men, and there are also strong women [29]. Meanwhile, sex is an inherent trait in humans, both men and women, which is natural and cannot be exchanged, for example, men have penises and sperm, while women have vaginas, eggs, ovaries, and a uterus [30]. In line with what Sitti Azisah wrote, gender is a biological difference between men and women, while gender is a difference between men and women that is socially and culturally constructed, related to roles, behaviors, and traits that are considered appropriate for men and women that are interchangeable [31].

Likewise, Evi Fatimatur Rusydiyah said that gender is a concept that is always used to analyze or identify the characteristics, roles, attributes, and differences between men and women in placing their respective roles to realize an egalitarian social order [32]. In the same opinion, gender is a social construct regarding the differences in roles, positions, and opportunities between women and men in family life and society. The social construction of gender is man-made, not natural. Therefore, such social constructions are dynamic, not universal, and also not eternal, but can change. What is considered appropriate for a man or woman to do in a certain place or period of time can be different in other places or times [33].

The term gender is actually not only aimed at women but also at men. However, compared to men, women have experienced more oppressed positions, so women are the ones who are most talked about in gender issues. In order for women to achieve gender equality with men, in this case it must start from educational institutions. Even though gender is not synonymous with women, society, government, and academics still consider women and gender to be the same, even though gender actually includes everything between men and women [34].

Gender Equality in the Qur'an

According to Nasaruddin Umar, there are several criteria that can be used as a reference in looking at the principles of gender justice in the Quran. The criteria are as follows:

1. Men and Women Are Both Slaves

One of the purposes of Allah SWT is to create humans so that humans become worshippers of Allah, as stated in QS. Al-Dzariyat/51:56. Meaning: And I did not create the jinn and mankind except that they should serve Me [35].

The above verse explains to all humans that Allah SWT. created humans, both male and female, solely to worship Him. In the capacity of man as a servant, there is no difference between men and women. Both have the same potential and opportunity to become ideal servants, namely, in the Qur'an, it is usually termed as pious people, and to achieve this degree of piety, there is no known difference in gender, ethnicity, or certain ethnic groups. In their capacity as servants, men and women will each receive an award from Allah according to their level of devotion, as stated in Q.S. al-Nahl/16:97. Whoever does righteous deeds, both male and female in a state of faith, then We will give him a good life, and indeed We will reward them with a better reward for what they have done [35]. In this verse, it is emphasized that men and women in Islam receive the same reward in doing righteous deeds accompanied by faith.

2. Men and Women as Caliphs on Earth

The purpose and purpose of the creation of man on earth, in addition to being a submissive and obedient servant and serving Allah SWT, is also to become a caliph on earth, as stated in QS. Al-An'am/6:165. Meaning: And it is He Who has made you rulers on earth, and He has exalted some of you by a few degrees, to test you about what He has given you. Indeed, your Lord is quick to punish you, and He is Forgiving and Merciful [35]. In this verse, the word Khalifah does not refer to any particular gender or ethnic group. Men and women have the same function as caliphs, who will be accountable for the duties of their caliphate on earth, just as they must be responsible as servants of God.

3. Men and Women Receive the Primordial Covenant

Men and women alike carry out the mandate and receive the primordial covenant with God. As is known, before a human child comes out of his mother's womb, he must first accept a covenant with his Lord, as written in QS. Al-A'raf /7:172. And when your Lord brought out the children of Adam from their sins, and Allah took testimony to their souls, saying, "Am I not your Lord?" they replied, "Indeed (You are our Lord), we are witnesses." (We do this) so that on the Day of Resurrection you will not say: "We (the Children of Adam) are the ones who are careless about this (the oneness of God)" [35].

The verse explains to all of us that there is not a child of man born on earth who does not vow the existence of God, and their vows are witnessed by angels. No one says "no". In Islam, individual responsibility and independence take place from an early age, that is, from the womb. Since the beginning of human history in Islam, there has been no known gender discrimination. Men and women alike declare the same divine vows. A woman's confidence in Islam should be formed from birth, because from the beginning, there has never been a special burden in the form of "inherited sin" as is implied in the Judeo-Christian tradition, which gives a negative image once a person is born a woman. This is different from the Qur'an, which has a positive view of humans. The Qur'an emphasizes that Allah glorifies all the descendants of Adam, as written in Q.S. Al-Isra/17:70. Meaning: And indeed, We have glorified the children of Adam, We have transported them on land and sea, We have given them sustenance from the good, and We have given them a perfect advantage over most of the creatures We have created [35].

In the Qur'an, there is never a single verse that shows a person's virtue because of the gender factor or because of the descent of a certain ethnic group. Women's independence and autonomy in the Islamic tradition from the beginning have been seen as very strong. In the Islamic tradition, mukallaf women can make various covenants, oaths, and vows, both to their fellow human beings and to God. Meaning: Allah does not punish you for your unintended oaths, but He punishes you for your deliberate oaths. So kafarat (breaking the oath) is feeding ten poor people, that is, from the food that you used to give to your family, or giving them clothing, or freeing a slave. Whoever is not able to do so, then his kaffarat fasts for three days. That is the kafarat of your oaths when you swear (and you break them). and keep your oath. Thus Allah explains to you His laws so that you may be thankful (to Him) [35].

This verse statement is clearly different from the Bible's statement that indicates the subordination of women to men, that is, daughters in subordination to their fathers and wives subordinated to their husbands. In the Islamic tradition, the father and husband also have special authority, but not to interfere in the affairs of a woman's personal commitment to her God. Even in worldly affairs, women obtain the same rights as men do.

4. Adam and Eve, Actively Involved in the Cosmic Drama

The cosmic drama is the story of the Prophet Adam and Eve in heaven until they were brought out to earth. All the verses that tell about the cosmic drama always emphasize both sides actively by using pronouns for two people, namely, pronouns for Adam and Eve, as can be seen in the following cases:

- a. Both were created in heaven and made use of the facilities of heaven, Q.S. Al-Baqarah/2: 35.
- b. Both of them have the same quality of temptation from the devil, Q.S. Al-A'raf/7:20.

Both ate the fruit of khuldi, and both received the consequences of falling to the earth, Q.S. al-A'raf/7:22.

Beg for forgiveness and be forgiven by God, Q.S. Al-A'raf/7:23.

Once on earth, both develop offspring and complement each other and need each other, Q.S. Al-Baqarah/2: 187 [35]. Adam and Eve are mentioned together as the perpetrators and are responsible for the cosmic drama. So, it is unjustifiable if there is an assumption that states women as tempting creatures who are the cause of the fall of human children to the earth of suffering.

5. Men and Women Have the Same Potential to Achieve Achievements

In terms of the chances of achieving maximum achievement, there is no difference between men and women, as is specifically emphasized in some verses such as Q.S. Ali Imran/3:195. So their Lord granted his supplication (saying): "Verily I do not waste the deeds of those who do good among you, whether men or women, (because) some of you are descendants of others. So those who emigrate, those who are driven from their homelands, those who are hurt in My way, who fight and who are killed, I will surely wipe out their transgressions and I will admit them to the paradise of rivers flowing under them, as a reward in the sight of Allah. And Allah on His side is a good reward [35].

Q.S. Al-Nisa/4:124

Meaning: Whoever does righteous deeds, both male and female, while he is a believer, then they will enter Paradise, and they will not be persecuted in the slightest [35].

Then Q.S. Mu'min/40:40. Meaning: Whoever does evil deeds, then he will not be recompensed except in proportion to the evil. And whoever does righteous deeds, both male and female, while he is in a state of faith, then they will enter Paradise, and they will be given sustenance in it without hisab [35].

The Qur'anic verse above emphasizes that individual achievement is an ideal of gender justice, it does not have to be monopolized by one gender alone. Both in the spiritual field and in professional career matters, men and women have equal opportunities to achieve optimal achievements. However, what happens in society, this ideal concept is still very difficult to realize because there are still many obstacles, especially cultural obstacles that are difficult to solve. Therefore, this ideal concept still requires stages and socialization.

Some of the variables mentioned above, Islam does not distinguish between men and women in inviting people to faith. The absence of differences can be seen in the similarities carried out in carrying out their rights and obligations in Islam, including the following:

- a. Islam has united various obligations related to worship, such as prayer, fasting, hajj, and zakat, in terms of the obligation to carry them out. Allah says in QS. Al-Nur/24 : 56.

Meaning: And perform prayers, pay zakat, and obey the Messenger (Muhammad), so that you may be given mercy [35].

- b. Islam encourages every man and woman to adorn themselves with a commendable temperament and good morals. Allah states in QS. Al-Baqarah/2 : 153:

Meaning: O you who believe! Ask for help (to Allah) with patience and prayer. Verily, Allah is with those who are patient.

- c. Islam equalizes men and women in the legal system of muamalat, such as buying and selling, renting, wakalah, kafalah, and other contracts that are closely related to fellow humans. Allah says in QS. Al-Maidah: 1. Meaning: O you who believe! Keep your promises [35].

If you pay attention, all nas related to muamalah are general and apply to both men and women.

- d. Islam equates sanctions against both if they violate the law of Allah. For example, Allah states in QS. Al-Nur/24 : 2.

Meaning: A female adulterer and a male adulterer, then beat each of them a hundred times and do not have mercy on them to prevent you from practicing the religion of Allah, if you believe in Allah and the Day of Resurrection." [35].

- e. Islam obliges to seek knowledge and teach it to Muslims without distinguishing between men and women. Allah states in QS. Al-Anbiya'/21:7.

Meaning: Then ask those who know, if you do not know." [35].

Realizing equality in society is one of the biggest obsessions in the Qur'an. The obsession includes equality in all areas of human life, both as individuals and as members of society. Therefore, the Qur'an does not tolerate any form of discrimination, whether based on ethnicity, skin color, religion, or gender. If there is an interpretation that is oppressive or violates the noble values of humanity, then the results of the understanding and interpretation are open to debate.

Gender equality in the Qur'an is more related to universal verses. The Qur'an emphasizes that women are equal to men as creatures created by Allah who have the same obligation to worship Allah SWT. Men and women are both descendants of Adam, who is glorified by Allah SWT. They are the spouses of men and together will be individually responsible for each creation and choice. Men and women who believe and do righteous deeds are both promised by Allah to obtain happiness during their life on earth, and to enter heaven forever.

Basically, gender in an Islamic perspective considers women to have the same position as men, namely as servants of Allah. As stated in Surah Al-Nahl/16: 97). Meaning: Whoever does righteous deeds, both men and women in a state of faith, then We will surely give him a good life, and indeed We will reward them with a better reward for what they have done [35].

Gender justice is a situation where women and men have an equal status, such that they can fully realize their rights and potential for development in various areas of family, society, and state life. Islam teaches humans to always maintain the concept of balance, harmony, and integrity both among fellow humans and with their natural environment. Gender relations in the Qur'an are not only about taking care of gender equality in society, but theologically, equality regulates the pattern of relationships between humans, nature, and God. Thus man can carry out his duties as a caliph, and only a successful caliph can attain the degree of true servant.

The ideal gender mainstreaming in Islam affirms that individual achievements, both in religious and professional career matters, do not have to be dominated by one gender alone. However, men and women get the same opportunities to achieve the same achievements. However, the reality in society is that this ideal concept requires stages and socialization, because there are still a number of obstacles, especially cultural obstacles that are difficult to solve [36].

Based on some of these opinions, it can be concluded that the rights of men and women are the same, the only difference is their respective duties and roles because women and men need each other.

Table 1. Principles of Gender Equality in the Qur’anic Perspective

No.	Principle of Gender Equality	Qur’anic Basis	Substantive Meaning
1	Equality as Servants of Allah	QS. Al-Dharyyat (51): 56; QS. Al-Nahl (16): 97	Men and women are equally created to worship Allah and are rewarded based on faith and righteous deeds
2	Equality as Caliphs on Earth	QS. Al-An’am (6): 165	Responsibility to manage and prosper the earth is assigned to humanity without gender distinction
3	Equality in the Primordial Covenant	QS. Al-A’raf (7): 172	Both men and women equally affirmed the covenant of monotheism before birth
4	Equality in Moral Responsibility	QS. Al-A’raf (7): 22–23	Adam and Eve are jointly responsible in the cosmic narrative, rejecting gender-based blame
5	Equality in Opportunities and Achievement	QS. Ali Imran (3): 195; QS. Al-Nisa (4): 124	Spiritual and professional achievements are determined by personal merit, not biological sex

Differences and Similarities between Men and Women

Social scientists use the term gender to be able to explain which differences between men and women are natural and which are cultural demands that are constructed, studied, and socialized. Distinguishing the roles between men and women is very important, because so far there has often been a mixture between natural human characteristics (which cannot change) and non-natural human characteristics (which can actually change) according to the guidance of the summons, time, and place. Some of the differences and similarities between men in the context of gender will be discussed as follows:

1. Differences and Similarities of Men and Women at the Level of Gratitude

Gratitude is a form of expression of happiness related to well-being. Gratitude can help a person to be able to feel happiness because, by being grateful, a person can feel a pleasant life experience. That is why grateful behavior can arise when there is satisfaction in a person for the achievements obtained, whether it is a gift or something that is very expected to happen in their life, so that a person feels satisfied and joyful from the situation at that time [37]. According to research from Eko Kristanto, women have a higher level of gratitude than men.

Women's high gratitude is influenced by increased social relationships, openness in expressing feelings, and freedom in pursuing their desires or ideals. As Kasdan, Mishra, Breen & Froh think. It was stated that women express gratitude more than men because women communicate more intensely with each other in the form of very detailed verbal communication [38]. The same thing was also expressed by Froh et al., based on the results of their research, which found that girls tend to express gratitude more than boys [39]. Based on several studies, it can be concluded that women have a higher sense of gratitude compared to men.

2. Differences and Similarities of Men and Women in Terms of Stress Levels

Stress is a feud between physical and emotional events and thoughts that make a person easily angry, frustrated, or nervous. Gender has a great influence on stress levels, where stress levels are more often found in women than men, as the results of research from Lusiana Nasrani et al found that there is a prevalence of stress in yoga participants in Denpasar as much as 40%. Stress disorders are mostly experienced by women, which are around (72.2%), the average age is 37 years old, and the income is above Rp 3,500,000 per month [40].

Everyone must have experienced stress. Stress occurs due to demands that exceed the individual's ability to meet those demands. If a person is not able to meet these demands, the individual will feel tension within themselves. Prolonged tension, if not overcome quickly, will cause stress [41]. The Indonesian population also experiences a high prevalence of stress; in 2008, about 10% of the entire Indonesian population experienced mental disorders or stress [42]. A total of 135,000 cases were experienced by women, while 86,000 cases were experienced by men. The highest incidence in women was at the age of 35-44 years, while for men at the age of 45-54 years. Other studies have also found that gender has a significant effect on stress levels, and higher levels of stress are often found in women [43]. Although other studies suggest that the stress levels of men and women are the same. However, women are more likely to feel anxious, guilty, upset, have difficulty sleeping, and have difficulty eating [44].

Based on some of the findings above, it can be concluded that gender greatly affects stress levels, namely, the female gender is more susceptible to stress than males.

3. Differences and Similarities of Men and Women in Terms of Language

Language is a tool of human communication in social life, both men and women definitely want to communicate well. Language is a way to bring out what is in the heart [45]. Language is a tool used to be able to interact in the form of thoughts, ideas, concepts, or feelings [46].

Indirectly, every human being born on this earth must have a different style of language. As the theory of conformity and individualism states, although each individual grows up in the same environment, they have different languages because their experiences are also different. Even twins, even though they grew up together in the same environment, have different personalities. Men and women are no exception, they must have different language styles. Most experts suggest that, in terms of the number of words produced, women are more likely to speak than men, as well as Louann Brizendine, who says that a woman can utter about 20,000 words per day, while a man is only able to utter 7,000 words. Not only that, the topic of conversation between men and women is also different. Men always talk about sports, politics, and technology. While women prefer to talk about family, food, and clothing models [47].

From some of these findings, it can be concluded that the language styles of men and women are very different, both in terms of the number and in terms of the topics they discuss, where the number of words used is more from the female gender than the male gender, while the topics they often choose for women are more likely to tell stories about family, food, fashion, and fashion. However, men prefer to discuss topics about sports, technology, and politics.

4. Differences and Similarities of Men and Women in Problem-Solving Skills

Problem-solving skills or critical thinking are abilities that must be possessed by every student, so that critical thinking is one of the activities that must be developed in every subject taught in schools, because critical thinking skills are not innate from birth, but must be formed and developed through the learning process. One of the most important factors in forming critical thinking skills for students is the teacher, because the teacher has the ability to design their learning method according to the learning objectives, and a teacher is able to design the learning before the learning begins [48].

According to Leach and Good, the results of their research suggest that gender and major colleges can significantly affect the average critical thinking or problem-solving skills [49]. In some studies, it has been shown that there is no difference between the male and female sexes in terms of critical thinking. Among them is the research conducted by Rubin, in his research which found that there is no significant difference between women and men in terms of intelligence in general, although in certain aspects, there can be differences in intelligence between men and women [50]. The same thing was also stated by Myers, that according to the results of his research found no significant difference in critical thinking skills between men and women. From some of these findings, it can be concluded that in terms of differences in critical thinking between men and women, there is no significant difference.

5. Differences between Men and Women in terms of Academic Achievement

According to research conducted by Sartini Nuryoto, women's academic achievements are better than men's, indications of this finding have existed since the seventies. Women are more diligent, more meticulous, and willing to listen well. Her emotional attitude, which is more dominant than her physical ability, has put women in the best position, so much so that it is found that women occupy most of the top ten rankings in every school [51].

According to Rakhmat Hidayat, in his research found that in physics subjects, women have higher scores than men. Meanwhile, in sociology and Indonesian subjects, there is no significant difference between girls and boys [52]. Likewise, as conveyed by Fidia Oktarisa, Zulma Yusra, in her research, found that there was no difference in academic achievement based on coping and gender interactions, but there was a difference in academic achievement when viewed from gender [53].

From some of the findings mentioned above, it can be concluded that there is no significant difference between the academic achievement of men and women, although in certain cases, the academic achievement of women is higher than that of men.

6. Differences and Similarities of Men and Women in Terms of Leadership

Leadership is a leader's trait, meaning all the elements contained in a leader in carrying out his duties and functions to realize his vision and mission in leading his subordinates both in the social, organizational and state environment, which is an effort made by an official in influencing others to carry out a predetermined work plan for the achievement of effective and efficient goals [54].

According to Hasan Basri, several male leadership styles are often found, including the following:

- a. Authoritarian leadership, that is, a leader who behaves like a dictator to his subordinates, because he considers himself the leader and the one who knows best, so that such a leader only informs his subordinates of their duties and wants obedience from their subordinates.
- b. The militaristic type, that is, the type of leader who always rules to move his subordinates, depends on his position in mobilizing his members, likes formality, demands high and rigid discipline, finds it difficult to accept criticism, and likes ceremonies in various activities.
- c. Paternalistic style, which is a leadership style that considers his subordinates immature, being too protective, not allowing subordinates to be creative and take initiative, and being a know-it-all.
- d. The fielder contingency model, which is a type of leadership that upholds harmony between subordinates and superiors, a clear division of duties accompanied by responsibilities, and a strong leader in a formal manner.
- e. A three-dimensional leadership model, which combines basic, effective, and ineffective styles.

- f. Continuum model, which is a type of leadership that is based on two conditions, namely, including or not including subordinates in making decisions.
- g. Laissez-faire style, which is a leadership style that is free of control.
- h. Democratic leadership.
- i. Charismatic leadership style.
- j. Participatory leadership style [54].

Meanwhile, according to Kartini Kartono, there are eight types of leadership, namely charismatic, paternalistic and maternalistic types, militaristic, autocratic, laissez-faire, populist, administrative, and democratic [55]. This type or style of leadership greatly affects the work atmosphere in the institution or organization. Women's leadership is currently still a debate both among the public and scholars, as it is influenced by various interpretations of the Qur'an and hadith [56]. Some people think that leadership only belongs to men, so if there is a woman who wants to be a leader, it is considered an unusual thing, but as explained earlier, in terms of achieving achievements, men and women get the same rights, but it is undeniable that women's position in terms of leadership is still relatively small compared to men.

Leadership in various fields today is still dominated by men rather than women, even though women's ability in terms of leadership cannot be doubted [57]. Likely, this is still influenced by the limitations of women who have to play double roles both as wives and mothers for their children, so many women are unwilling to take on a much heavier role because of their very high responsibilities towards the family. Talking about women's leadership always receives close attention because, besides being still rare, it is also rare. After all, women's leadership always produces good changes, as in the Qur'an, it is told of a female leader named Ratu Balqis who successfully led a country from the land of Saba, which is known as a superpower country with the concept of a country that is safe, prosperous, and receives forgiveness from God (Qur'an, 34:15).

Likewise, the first female leader to become king in the Kingdom of Delhi, namely Razia Sultan, was also able to win the hearts of her people because of her popular leadership type, in Indonesia it is also inseparable from the history of women's leadership, namely the leadership of Cut Nyak Dien in Aceh and many more female leaders recorded in history who have a transformational leadership type that was not written in this study. Meanwhile, today's female leaders who have become a lot of talk and public attention are the leadership of Tri Rismaharini, a mother of the Mayor of Surabaya who was elected for the second time as Mayor, namely the first term was completed in 2015 and re-elected for the second term, but in mid-2016 Risma was considered one of the leading figures who were able to compete with Governor Basuki Tjahaja Purnama in the Jakarta Governor election in 2017. This is because Risma's achievements as Mayor of Surabaya are proud achievements, besides that, Risma is listed as one of the Mayors who have received international attention and has now been appointed as Minister of Social Affairs by President Jokowi.

Women's leadership styles, very different from men's leadership styles, women's leadership styles tend to be more democratic, encourage participation, and various powers and information to increase benefits for followers or those they lead. They involve a lot of charisma and interpersonal expertise in influencing others. In contrast to men who use a leadership style that is based on control and command, they are more based on positions of authority to influence others [58]. Meanwhile, according to Annisa, women's leadership styles are divided into two, namely, leadership styles Transactional, transformational, and masculine-feminist. According to the results of research from Sividian Elitasari on the leadership style of female school principals, three factors affect the leadership style of female principals of SMPN 1 Kalasan, as follows:

1. The mother is a type of leadership that considers her subordinates as her own children, as

a mother will certainly provide comfort, attention, protection, and assistance to her child if the child experiences difficulties.

2. Seductress, which is a type of leadership that always motivates its subordinates.
3. The Iron Maiden, which is a tough and assertive type of leadership, a female leader tends to have a strict leadership style towards her subordinates [59].

Likewise, the results of research from St. Sakiah on Women's Leadership at Madrasah Aliyah in Bone Regency found that of the five heads of Madrasah Aliyah in Bone that are led by women, all of them use the Transformational leadership style, which is a leadership style that carries out various kinds of reforms. Meanwhile, Putra Riszal Mahendra's research on the Leadership Characteristics of Tri Rismaharini. Finding that Tri Rismaharini's leadership style as the Mayor of Surabaya is a leadership style that serves, that is, a leadership style that starts from a sincere feeling that arises from a heart that is willing to serve. The sincere feelings that arise from the conscience are what present the desire to become a leader based on serving.

In addition to this opinion, there are several research results that state that the difference between leadership styles between men and women lies in the leadership model, men tend to have a masculine leadership model, while women tend to have a feminist leadership model. In addition, women's leadership style is more democratic than that of men in the same organizational environment. From some of the opinions and results of the research above, the author concludes that male leadership styles are more inclined to masculine leadership styles, leadership styles that are based on control and command, they are more based on positions of authority to influence others women are more likely to democratic, transformational-transactional, feminine-masculine leadership styles, which are influenced by maternal models, motivators, hard, authoritative and serving.

CONCLUSION

Gender equality in the Islamic perspective departs from the basic principle that men and women are creatures created by Allah who are equal as servants and caliphs on earth. The Qur'an never establishes the primacy of one gender over another, but affirms that human dignity is determined by piety, righteous deeds, and faith, not by gender, ethnicity, or social status. In various verses, the Qur'an affirms that men and women: 1) both were created to worship, receive the same commandments and prohibitions. 2) Both become caliphs, responsible for prospering the earth. 3) Equally accepting the Primordial Covenant, which shows equality of spiritual responsibility from the beginning of creation. 4) Both are actively involved in the cosmic drama, so there is no legitimacy to blame women for the fall of man to earth. 5). Get the same opportunities and rewards in achieving spiritual and professional achievements. This paper also highlights that the differences between men and women are more social and cultural (gender construction), not natural. Biological (sex) differences should not be used as a basis for discrimination. Therefore, the inequalities that arise in society, whether in leadership, education, role sharing, and career opportunities, are more caused by cultural constraints, stereotypes, and inappropriate religious understanding, rather than by the teachings of Islam itself. In various psychological and social aspects, such as gratitude levels, stress, language style, academic achievement, and leadership, research shows that there are both differences and similarities between men and women, but they are all relative and do not form a basis for differentiating rights. Thus, it can be concluded that: 1) Islam carries a grand vision of justice and equality, and rejects all forms of gender-based discrimination. 2) The rights and obligations of men and women are basically equal, while the differences are more related to the division of roles, social needs, and biological conditions. 3). Gender equality in Islam is a fundamental principle, but its implementation still requires a long process, education, and cultural change. 4) Equality in Islam does not mean uniformity, but provides equal opportunities for men and women to develop their best potential according to their respective natures and abilities.

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Author's Contributions

All authors jointly conceptualized the study and developed the research framework. Authors 1–3 contributed to theoretical analysis, data interpretation, and manuscript drafting. Authors 4–6 provided critical reviews, interdisciplinary perspectives, and language refinement. All authors participated in revisions, approved the final manuscript, and take full responsibility for its content.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest related to the publication of this article. This research was conducted independently without financial, institutional, or commercial influences that could affect the objectivity of the analysis. All views and conclusions presented are solely those of the authors.

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