Islam and Gender Equality: A Critical Exploration of Its Role in Global Peace

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Abstract: This research aims to analyze the Islamic perspective on gender equality and its role in supporting sustainable global peace. Within this framework, the research explores Islamic teachings that support gender justice and its contribution to social harmony and conflict resolution. This research approach uses a qualitative method with literature review as the main technique, utilizing classical and contemporary literature related to Qur'anic interpretation, hadith, and the views of Muslim scholars and scholars. The results show that Islam theologically encourages the principle of gender equality through the values of justice, respect, and cooperation between men and women. Gender equality practiced in Muslim societies has the potential to become the foundation for creating harmonious relationships, both within the family, community and between nations. The research also highlights that biased interpretations of religious texts often become obstacles in realizing this principle. The implications of this research provide an important contribution to efforts to create global peace through a religious value-based approach. The study encourages more inclusive cross-cultural and religious dialogue in addressing gender issues, while providing practical guidance for Muslim communities to reconstruct their understanding of Islamic teachings that support equality and peace.

Keywords: Islamic Perspectives, Gender Equality, Global Peace

Abstrak: *Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis perspektif Islam mengenai kesetaraan gender dan perannya dalam mendukung perdamaian global yang berkelanjutan. Dalam kerangka ini, penelitian mengeksplorasi ajaran Islam yang mendukung keadilan gender serta kontribusinya terhadap harmoni sosial dan penyelesaian konflik. Pendekatan penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan kajian pustaka sebagai teknik utama, memanfaatkan literatur klasik dan kontemporer terkait tafsir Al-Qur'an, hadits, serta pandangan ulama dan cendekiawan Muslim. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Islam secara teologis mendorong prinsip kesetaraan gender melalui nilai-nilai keadilan, penghormatan, dan kerja sama antara laki-laki dan perempuan. Kesetaraan gender yang dipraktikkan dalam masyarakat Muslim berpotensi menjadi fondasi untuk menciptakan hubungan yang harmonis, baik dalam lingkup keluarga, komunitas, maupun antarbangsa. Penelitian ini juga menyoroti bahwa interpretasi yang bias terhadap teks-teks agama sering kali menjadi hambatan dalam mewujudkan prinsip ini. Implikasi penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi penting dalam upaya menciptakan perdamaian global melalui pendekatan berbasis nilai agama. Kajian ini mendorong dialog lintas budaya dan agama yang lebih inklusif dalam mengatasi isu gender, sekaligus memberikan panduan praktis bagi komunitas Muslim untuk merekonstruksi pemahaman mereka terhadap ajaran Islam yang mendukung kesetaraan dan perdamaian.*

Kata kunci: Perspektif Islam, Kesetaraan Gender, Perdamaian Global

Introduction

Gender equality is one of the global issues that continues to be a concern in various disciplines and international forums.[1] In recent decades, global organizations such as the United Nations (UN) have placed gender equality as one of the main goals in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).[2] Gender equality is not only considered a fundamental human right but also a prerequisite for peace, prosperity and sustainable development. However, in many parts of the world, the challenges to achieving gender equality are still considerable, especially when these issues intersect with local religious and cultural values, including Islam.[3]

Islam, as a religion practiced by more than one billion people worldwide, has complex teachings related to gender roles and relations. Most

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[1]   Yetty Faridatul Ulfah et al., "The Character of Semar in Wayang: A Synthesis of Javanese Cultural Philosophy and Islamic Principles," *JUSPI (Jurnal Sejarah Peradaban Islam)* 8, no. 2 (2025): 396–404.

[2]   Retisfa Khairanis and Muhammad Aldi, "The Role of Arabic in Strengthening Cultural Identityin the Digital Age," *CARONG: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sosial Dan Humaniora* 1, no. 3 (2025): 119–30.

[3]   Anne Sisson Runyan, *Global Gender Issues in the New Millennium* (Routledge, 2018).

literature states that Islam promotes values of justice, respect and equal responsibility between men and women.[4] However, interpretations of religious texts, such as the Qur'an and Hadith, are often influenced by social and cultural contexts, creating diverse views on gender equality in Islam. Therefore, it is important to investigate how Islam can theologically and practically contribute to global peace through gender equality.[5]

Several previous studies have addressed the relationship between Islam and gender. For example, Wadud's research explores the concept of gender justice in the Qur'an, while Barazangi's work highlights the role of education in empowering Muslim women.[6] These studies show that Islam has great potential in supporting gender equality, but its application is often hampered by patriarchal interpretations that dominate Muslim societies. On the other hand, other research by Esposito and Mogahed reveals that most Muslim women in different countries consider Islamic teachings to be compatible with gender equality, even though local cultural practices often contradict these values.[7]

However, there is a gap in research regarding how Islam can be used as a tool to create global peace through gender equality. Most studies tend to focus on either theological or sociological aspects alone without bridging the two to produce a comprehensive framework. In addition, there is controversy regarding the extent to which Islam promotes or hinders gender equality, especially in political and social contexts. Thus, this research aims to answer the need for studies that integrate Islamic theological perspectives with practical approaches in realizing peace through gender equality.[8]

This research aims to analyze Islamic perspectives on gender equality and how such values can contribute to global peace. In this regard, a literature review is an important component to explore the views of classical and contemporary scholars, as well as modern interpretations of religious texts. In

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4   Muhammad Aldi and Retisfa Khairanis, "Integrasi Ilmu Pendidikan Islam Dan Psikologi Pendidikan Dalam Membentuk Karakter Dan Kecerdasan Spritual Siswa," *Akhlak: Journal of Education Behavior and Religious Ethics* 1, no. 1 (2025).
5   Supratik Guha, "Women, Gender Equality, and Environmental Justice," in *Gender, Environment, and Human Rights: An Intersectional Exploration* (IGI Global, 2025), 245–68.
6   Ulfah et al., "The Character of Semar in Wayang: A Synthesis of Javanese Cultural Philosophy and Islamic Principles."
7   Jack Dash Harris and Rocco Capraro, "Sharing Power Willingly: The Role of Self-Interest in Overcoming Male Resistance to Gender Equity," in *Building Inclusive Leadership Beyond the Gender Binary* (IGI Global Scientific Publishing, 2025), 57–70.
8   Aliya Kuzhabekova, Naureen Durrani, and Zumrad Kataeva, "Situating Gender and Education in Central Asia: An Introduction," in *Gender and Education in Central Asia* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2025).

addition, this research seeks to identify the main obstacles Muslim societies face in implementing gender equality and the solutions that can be offered.[9]

Conceptually, gender equality refers to a situation where men and women have equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities in all aspects of life. In the Islamic context, this concept is often linked to the terms "'adl" (justice) and "rahmah" (compassion), which are fundamental principles in Islamic teachings.[10] Peace, on the other hand, is defined as a state of social harmony free from conflict and injustice. Thus, this research will use an integrative approach to analyze how Islamic values that support gender equality can promote global peace.

The literature review shows that several relevant theories can be used to support this research, such as the theory of Islamic feminism developed by scholars such as Amina Wadud and Asma Barlas. This theory argues that patriarchal interpretations of religious texts can be challenged through an equality-based hermeneutic approach. In addition, the positive peace theory introduced by Johan Galtung can be used to explain how gender equality contributes to sustainable peacebuilding.

Previous research has also provided insights into how religion can be a positive force in promoting gender equality and peace. For example, research by Abdullah highlights community-based initiatives in Indonesia that successfully integrate Islamic values in women's empowerment programs.[11] The study emphasizes the importance of religious leaders' involvement in changing cultural narratives that limit women's roles. On the other hand, research by Hashim reveals that in some Muslim countries, gender equality is still hampered by patriarchal social structures and biased textual interpretations.

However, a number of criticisms of previous research highlight the lack of a holistic approach to discussing gender and peace issues in Islam. Many studies have focused on one particular dimension, such as education or law, without considering the interaction between various social, cultural and theological factors. Therefore, this study aims to fill the gap with a

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[9] Siyanda Buyile Shabalala and Megan Campbell, "The High Price of Gender Noncompliance: Exploring the Economic Marginality of Trans Women in South Africa," *Social Inclusion* 13 (2025).

[10] Ulfah et al., "The Character of Semar in Wayang: A Synthesis of Javanese Cultural Philosophy and Islamic Principles."

[11] Ingeborg Janssen Reinen and Tjeerd Plomp, "Information Technology and Gender Equality: A Contradiction in Terminis?," *Computers & Education* 28, no. 2 (1997): 65–78.

multidimensional approach that integrates theological, social, and practical analysis.[12]

Considering this background, this study has a significant contribution in enriching academic and practical discourse related to gender equality in Islam. This study not only provides a deeper understanding of Islamic values that support gender equality but also offers concrete solutions to overcome existing obstacles.[13] Through this approach, the study is expected to contribute to the creation of an inclusive and sustainable global peace.

This research uses a qualitative design with an exploratory approach to analyze the relationship between Islamic perspectives on gender equality and its contribution to supporting global peace. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore in depth the understanding, views and experiences of the participants related to the issue under study. It also enables critical analysis of religious texts and their interpretation in diverse social contexts. Thus, this research combines theological and sociological analysis to provide a holistic view.[14]

The population in this study are individuals who have a deep understanding of Islam, including scholars, academics, gender activists, and community leaders who are active in peace issues. The research sample was purposively drawn by considering the participants' expertise and experience in gender equality and peace issues in Islam. A total of 15-20 participants from various backgrounds were selected to ensure diversity of views and experiences. [15]In addition, this research also involved document review of classical and contemporary literature, such as Qur'anic commentaries, hadith, and relevant academic works.

Data collection techniques were conducted through in-depth interviews and document studies. Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner to explore participants' views and experiences in detail. In addition, the documents analyzed included commentaries, academic books, journal articles, and reports related to gender equality in Islam. Data obtained through interviews were recorded, transcribed, and thematically analyzed to identify key patterns in participants' views. Meanwhile, document analysis was conducted

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[12] Daniel N Andrew, "Called to the Missional Frontline in a Turbulent World: The Role of Theological Education," *African Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 2, no. 1 (2025): 8.

[13] Niklas Potrafke and Heinrich W Ursprung, "Globalization and Gender Equality in the Course of Development," *European Journal of Political Economy* 28, no. 4 (2012): 399–413.

[14] Hilmi S Rathomi et al., "'It Just Made Sense to Me!' A Qualitative Exploration of Individual Motivation for Time-Restricted Eating," *Appetite* 204 (2025): 107751.

[15] Rodrigo Rosa and Sara Clavero, "Gender Equality in Higher Education and Research," *Journal of Gender Studies* 31, no. 1 (2022): 1–7.

using the content analysis method to identify themes relevant to the research focus.

Data analysis was conducted in stages using a thematic approach. Interview data and documents were categorized into key themes covering gender equality, peace and Islamic values. This process involved coding the data, identifying themes, and interpreting the findings in the context of relevant theories. Data validity was ensured through triangulation of data sources, member-checking, and discussions with experts in related fields. The results of this analysis are expected to provide a deep and comprehensive insight into the contribution of Islam in promoting gender equality and global peace.

Gender Equality in Islamic Perspective

Gender equality in Islam is often misunderstood as a concept that contradicts religious teachings. However, a study of the texts of the Qur'an and Hadith shows that Islam theologically supports the principles of justice and equality between men and women.[16] In the Qur'an, for example, Surah Al-Hujurat verse 13 asserts that all human beings are created equal, regardless of gender, race or social status. This principle is also reflected in the Hadith of Prophet Muhammad, which states that women are the siblings of men (HR Abu Dawud).[17]

However, the application of gender equality is often influenced by patriarchal interpretations of religious texts. For example, on issues such as women's leadership or participation in economics and politics, many traditional scholars argue that women have more limited roles than men.[18] These opinions are often not based on explicit religious texts but rather on social and cultural norms developed in a particular society.[19]

> *Islam theologically supports gender equality. If we refer to Surah Al-Hujurat verse 13, it is clear that Allah does not differentiate between people based on*

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[16] Muhammad Aldi and Retisfa Khairanis, "The Synergy of Religion and Malay Culture in Improving the Empowerment of Islamic Communities Towards Achieving SDGS," *PERADA* 7, no. 2 (2024).

[17] Nuril Huda and Difi Dahliana, "Child Education in the Family: Perspectives of Modern and Traditional Pesantren Kiai on Gender Equality," *Tarbiyah Wa Ta'lim: Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran* 12, no. 1 (2025): 1–10.

[18] Retisfa Khairanis and Istiadah Istiadah, "The Impact of Post-Potivism and Constructivism on Public Policy: A Review of Philosophy of Science in Indonesia," *J-CEKI: Jurnal Cendekia Ilmiah* 4, no. 2 (2025): 2101–8.

[19] Mennan Gamal Nour El Din, "The Feminization of Deteriorated Labor Force Participation In Egypt: 1990–2024," 2025.

gender, but rather on piety. The challenge we face is the patriarchal interpretation that has been institutionalized in many Muslim cultures. I agree that Islam is a just religion and gives equal rights to men and women. However, we must also understand the social and cultural context in which Islamic teachings are applied. Some rules that appear to restrict women are actually meant to protect them in traditional societies. The main challenge is cultural resistance, which is often considered part of religious teachings. Many people still think that women's roles are limited to the domestic sphere, even though Islamic history shows women's great contributions in various fields (Interview, Linda 2025).

From the interviews above, we can draw a common thread that gender equality in Islam is supported theologically, but the challenge lies in patriarchal cultural interpretations and lack of inclusive education.[20] The interviewees emphasized the importance of education, inclusive dialogue and women's empowerment as strategic steps to overcome these obstacles. They also agreed that Islam has great potential to support global peace through the implementation of fair and inclusive gender equality values.[21]

A review of the literature shows that Muslim feminists such as Amina Wadud and Asma Barlas have challenged these patriarchal interpretations. They argue that religious texts must be understood in their historical context and reinterpreted in accordance with the principles of justice taught by Islam. This hermeneutic approach allows for reinterpretations that are more inclusive and relevant to modern challenges.

Furthermore, the practice of gender equality in Islam can be seen in the early history of Islam. For example, Khadijah bint Khuwailid, the first wife of Prophet Muhammad, was a successful businesswoman who played an important role in supporting the Prophet's mission of preaching. Similarly, Aisha bint Abu Bakar is known as a prominent scholar who made a significant contribution to the development of the science of hadith.

The implications of the principle of gender equality in Islam are highly relevant to supporting global peace. When women and men are given equal rights to participate in the development of society, potential conflicts arising

[20]   Retisfa Khairanis, Ahmad Kholil, and Wildana Wargadinata, "Political Dynamics of the Mughal Empire: An Integrated Historical Analysis," *J-CEKI: Jurnal Cendekia Ilmiah* 4, no. 2 (2025): 1907–17.

[21]   Muhammad Aldi and Akhmad Nurul Kawakib, "Reconstruction of Islamic Education Philosophy in Minangkabau Customary Values: Actualizing the Principles of Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah," *JIIP-Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pendidikan* 8, no. 2 (2025): 1548–57.

from gender injustice can be minimized. Therefore, Islam has a strong value framework to promote social harmony through gender equality.

However, to realize this, greater efforts are needed in reforming society's views. Education based on inclusive Islamic values can be one of the solutions to change biased perceptions towards gender equality. In addition, the role of religious leaders in voicing the importance of gender equality cannot be ignored.

The Relationship between Gender Equality and Global Peace

Gender equality has a close relationship with efforts to create global peace. Research shows that countries with higher levels of gender equality tend to have lower levels of conflict. This is because gender equality provides space for women to contribute to the decision-making process, both at the local and international levels.[22]

> *In Indonesia, gender principles have actually begun to be integrated in Islamic law through policies such as the Marriage Law. However, implementation is often hampered by the strong patriarchal culture in some regions. Malaysia has made strides with the existence of a Sharia Court that gives women space to voice their rights. However, gaps remain, especially in inheritance issues and women's leadership roles in religious institutions. A major obstacle is the misalignment between religious texts and implementation at the local level. Many policies are already progressive, but their implementation is still influenced by conservative interpretations. I see the lack of comprehensive religious education as one of the main causes. Many women do not know their rights in Islam due to limited access to information. Islam has never prohibited women from becoming leaders, both in the political and religious sectors. Examples such as Queen Balqis in the Qur'an show that women's leadership is acceptable if certain conditions are met. Legal reform must be balanced with social change. The media and religious leaders have a big role to play in conveying messages that promote gender equality.[23]*

From the interviews above, it can be drawn that the application of gender principles in Islamic law is highly dependent on the cultural context and policies in each country. The main obstacles are conservative interpretations and lack of inclusive education. However, education, advocacy and legal reform

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[22] Cynthia McDougall, "Beyond Gender Inequality: How the G20 Can Support a Gender-Equitable Future and Accelerate the SDGs," 2030.
[23] Interview with Ahmad, 2025

can be strategic solutions to accelerate gender equality in line with Islamic values.[24]

In the Islamic context, global peace can be achieved through the principles of justice ('adl) and compassion (rahmah). These two principles emphasize the importance of treating all individuals fairly, including in terms of opportunities and gender rights. The Qur'an itself teaches the importance of creating harmony in human relations, as mentioned in Surah An-Nisa verse 135 about the importance of upholding justice regardless of any differences.[25]

However, many challenges remain in integrating gender equality with global peace, especially in Muslim-majority countries. In some countries, textual interpretations of Islamic teachings are used to justify restrictions on women, such as in education and political participation.[26] Such practices not only create gender injustice but can also be a source of social conflict.

On the other hand, there are positive examples of Muslim countries that have successfully integrated Islamic values with gender equality to support peace. For example, in Indonesia, organizations such as Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama have taken an active role in promoting women's rights through education and empowerment programs.

Women can also play a key role as agents of peace. Research by the UN shows that women's involvement in peace processes increases the likelihood of achieving more sustainable solutions. In the Islamic context, women's role as educators of future generations contributes significantly to the establishment of a culture of peace in society.

Integrating gender equality in global peace efforts is thus not only a moral imperative but also an effective strategy. This requires cooperation between governments, civil society organizations, and religious institutions to create policies that support women's participation in all fields.[27]

Barriers and Solutions in Implementing Gender Equality in Islam

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[24] Muhammad Aldi and Ahmad Barizi, "Filsafat Ilmu Dalam Perspektif Budaya Alam Minangkabau: Membangun Kearifan Lokal Untuk Pengembangan Pengetahuan," *Teaching and Learning Journal of Mandalika (Teacher) e-ISSN 2721-9666* 6, no. 1 (2025): 212–21.

[25] Erina Pane, Khairuddin Khairuddin, and Adam Muhammad Yanis, "Empowering the Islamic Community to Minimize Child Marriage in Lampung Province," *RADEN INTAN: Proceedings on Family and Humanity* 2, no. 1 (2025): 132–38.

[26] Muhammad Aldi and Moh Toriquddin, "History of Thought Syuhudi Ismail: A Study of Textual and Contextual Analysis of Prophetic Hadiths," *J-CEKI: Jurnal Cendekia Ilmiah* 4, no. 2 (2025): 1723–32.

[27] Supratik Guha, "Women, Gender Equality, and Environmental Justice," in *Gender, Environment, and Human Rights: An Intersectional Exploration* (IGI Global, 2025), 245–68.

Although Islam has a strong foundation to support gender equality, the implementation of this principle faces various obstacles. One of the main obstacles is the patriarchal interpretation of religious texts that has taken root in many Muslim societies. These interpretations are often used to justify discrimination against women in various aspects of life, such as education, employment and leadership.[28]

> *Gender equality in Islam plays an important role in building the foundations of a just and inclusive society. When women are empowered, they can play an important role in conflict mediation and peaceful community building. Islam emphasizes justice and balance, which is also relevant in gender relations. In the context of global peace, women have the capacity to be significant agents of peace, as demonstrated by Islamic history. Women are often the primary victims of conflict, but they also have great potential to be agents of change. Islam supports them in this role through teachings on justice, compassion and cooperation. We need to encourage policies that support women's participation in diplomacy and conflict mediation. Ulama should also play a role in advocating for this role of women based on Islamic teachings. Economic and social empowerment should be a priority. When women have adequate resources, they can be more active in resolving conflicts and creating peace.[29]*

From the interview above, we can draw a common thread that gender equality in Islam has great potential to support global peace. Muslim women can be agents of change through conflict mediation, advocacy, and community building. Key challenges such as gender stereotypes and lack of access to education should be addressed through inclusive education, supportive policies, and social reforms. Thus, the principle of gender equality based on Islamic values can contribute significantly to global harmony.

Another barrier is women's lack of access to education, especially in countries with high poverty rates. Education is key to empowering women, but many Muslim women still face cultural and structural barriers to accessing education on par with men. This results in low levels of women's participation in the economic and political sectors.

In addition, pervasive gender stereotypes in society are also a major barrier. These stereotypes are often reinforced by the media and popular culture that portray women's roles as limited. As a result, many women feel inhibited from exploring their full potential. Overcoming these barriers requires a holistic

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[28] Zakir Hossen Shaikh et al., "Barriers to Education: A Study of Determinants of Dropout Among Muslim Girls in an Underdeveloped Region of India," *Available at SSRN 5078607*, n.d.

[29] Interview with Muhammad Yunus, 2025

and multidimensional approach. One possible solution is to promote inclusive gender-based education. This education not only provides equal access for women but also teaches men the values of equality.[30]

In addition, legal reforms are also needed to eliminate rules that discriminate against women. In some Muslim countries, legal reforms based on Islamic principles have successfully improved women's rights, such as in Tunisia and Morocco. These examples show that progressive interpretations of Islamic teachings can be the basis for positive social change.

The importance of the role of religious leaders cannot be ignored. Religious leaders have great influence in shaping public opinion and can be effective agents of change in voicing the importance of gender equality. With the right approach, religious leaders can help reform people's views on the role of women in Islam. Overcoming these barriers requires a strong commitment from all parties. By integrating Islamic values that support justice and equality, Muslim societies can create a more inclusive and peaceful environment that benefits not only women but also the entire community.

Conclusion

This research shows that gender equality in Islam is an important and relevant theme in today's global context. From the interviews and discussions that have been conducted, it can be concluded that Islam theologically supports gender justice and equality. These principles, if understood and applied correctly, have great potential to strengthen the role of women in various aspects of life, including in global peacebuilding. The obstacles that arise mostly come from cultural interpretations and social structures that do not yet support the implementation of these equality values.

This research shows that Muslim women have and can continue to play an important role in creating social harmony and peace. In practice, Muslim women have been involved as conflict mediators, educators, and community leaders. Islamic history also records female figures who made major contributions, showing that their involvement has been recognized since the beginning of Islamic civilization. However, their representation in strategic positions still needs to be improved through education, empowerment and policy reform.

This research is a reminder that it is important to overcome barriers such as gender stereotypes, lack of education, and access to economic resources. Education that is inclusive and grounded in Islamic values should be a priority

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[30] Xueer Chen, "Gender Inequality in Education in the United States: Evidence from PIAAC," *Studies in the Education of Adults*, 2025, 1–16.

to equip women with the necessary knowledge and skills. By empowering Muslim women, not only can global peace be realized, but also the creation of a more just, harmonious and prosperous society, in accordance with Islamic teachings that prioritize justice and compassion.

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