

Women's Leadership in Education: thematic analysis of the Qur'an and Hadith

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Abstract: The main objective of this article is to explain women's leadership in the study of Qur'anic and hadith interpretation. This study is a library research using the method of collecting bibliographic data, Reading and taking notes according to the research title, and processing research materials. Primary data sources include books on interpretations of the Qur'an and the Sunnah, as well as contemporary fatwas on women. Data analysis includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The research concludes that the Qur'an does not explicitly prohibit female leadership, even showing examples such as Queen Balqis (An-Naml 29-35) who led wisely. Leadership is based more on a person's qualities and abilities (capabilities) than on gender. Although there are verses interpreting the role of men as family leaders (An-Nisa 34), which have become the basis of debate, many modern scholars interpret it in the context of responsibility, not absolute superiority

Keywords: leadership, women, education, thematic interpretation

Abstrak: Tujuan utama artikel ini adalah untuk menjelaskan kepemimpinan perempuan dalam kajian tafsir Al-Qur'an dan hadist. penelitian ini merupakan penelitian pustaka dengan metode pengumpulan data kepustakaan, membaca dan mencatat sesuai dengan judul yang diteliti serta mengelolah bahan penelitian. Sumber data Primer terdiri dari buku-buku tafsir dalam Al-Quran dan Sunnah, fatwa-fatwa kontemporer tentang Perempuan. Analisis data dengan tahapan reduksi data, penyajian data dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil Penelitian menyimpulkan bahwa Al-Qur'an tidak secara eksplisit melarang kepemimpinan perempuan, bahkan menunjukkan contoh seperti Ratu Balqis (An-Naml 29-35) yang memimpin dengan bijaksana. Kepemimpinan lebih didasarkan pada kualitas dan kemampuan (kapabilitas) seseorang, bukan gender, meskipun terdapat ayat-ayat yang menafsirkan peran laki-laki sebagai pemimpin keluarga (An-Nisa: 34) yang menjadi dasar perdebatan, namun banyak ulama modern menafsirkannya dalam konteks tanggung jawab, bukan superioritas mutlak.

Kata Kunci: kepemimpinan, perempuan, pendidikan, tafsir tematik.

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Introduction

To achieve justice and equality in Indonesia, efforts are being made through national policies, as stipulated in the 1999 State Policy Guidelines (GBHN), Law No. 25 of 2000 concerning the National Development Program further clarified in Presidential Instruction No. 9 of 2000 concerning Gender Mainstreaming in social development, and Law No. 1 of 2017 concerning Gender Equality, as one of the efforts to realize gender justice and equality (Saputri & Novriza, 2024).

The government's commitment to achieving justice and gender equality can also be seen internationally, namely through the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (Judiasih, 2022), a convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, in 1984, and stipulated in Law No. 7 of 1984 concerning the Ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (Gusani, 2024).

According to (Round et al., 2024) research, female leaders tend to use five of the nine most important leadership behaviors that improve organizational performance more frequently than men: people development, expectations and rewards, role models, inspiration, and participatory decision-making. A March 2023 Women in Business study conducted by Grant Thornton International found that the number of women in senior management positions in global corporations rose to 87 percent of respondents, compared to 75 percent the previous year (Aibar-guzm & Nú, 2023).

Overall, the research found that the proportion of women in senior management positions in global corporations reached 29 percent. This figure has increased by only 10 percent over the past 15 years (Tormo-carb et al., 2024). However, half of that increase (5 percent) occurred in the past year alone. In the ASEAN region (including Indonesia), the number of women in senior management positions in corporates reached 94 percent, with the proportion of women at this level at 28 percent. This figure is relatively high compared to the European Union (EU) at 84 percent, or North America at 92 percent for women in senior management positions in corporates (Gharib et al., 2024).

However, women's leadership in Islam remains a matter of consensus or "*ijma*". Several contributing factors include: First, the existence of texts (the Quran and Hadith) that explicitly indicate the priority of men as leaders (Anggraini, 2024). However, in

reality, it cannot be denied that there are many women who objectively meet the criteria for leadership and are accepted in society.

Second, some communities are still unable to accept women as leaders, based on their understanding of several verses and hadith that prohibit women from being appointed to leadership positions. On the other hand, a discourse has emerged that interprets these texts through a more “relaxed” paradigm, prioritizing the substance or essence of the Quran and Hadith's teachings, such as equality and fairness, regardless of gender (Zohriah et al., 2023).

Third, there is a Quranic text (QS. al-Nisa' [4]: 34) that indicates the priority of men as leaders, and a hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) narrated by one of his companions, Abi Bakrah, which explicitly indicates that a nation will not prosper if led by a woman. However, some scholars (ulama) permit women to be active in public affairs, such as politics, even to the point of becoming heads of state or government. This issue warrants further examination, and this paper will examine it from the perspectives of the Quran and Hadith, using a socio-historical and gendered approach.

Research Method

This research method is library research, involving a series of activities related to data collection, Reading, taking notes on the research topic, and processing research materials. The data sources are both primary and secondary (Rustamana, 2021). Primary data sources consist of books on interpretations from the perspective of the Quran and Sunnah, contemporary fatwas on women, and books on women's jurisprudence. Secondary sources include documents, books, and previous research results such as theses and dissertations. Secondary Reading materials in this study include articles or notes that can support the completion of this research (Damanik & Lubis, 2024).

The legal materials collected in library research are collected through documentation techniques, namely from archival reviews or literature studies such as books, papers, articles, magazines, journals, or expert works. Data Analysis Techniques: The researcher used descriptive analysis, which explains concepts and provides explanations (Creswell, 2023).

The obtained data were processed by generalizing, clarifying, and analyzing them using both deductive and inductive reasoning. In analyzing the data, the researcher used the temathic method (Chu, 2023), which can dissect issues regarding women's leadership.

Results and Discussion

Ulama's Debate on the Interpretation of Women's Leadership

The issue of women's leadership remains a topic of ongoing debate. Regarding this issue, scholars are divided into three groups. First: those who do not permit women to serve in any form of public office. Their argument is the word of Allah SWT.:

الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ ۚ فَالْصَّالِحَاتُ قُنَّتْنَ حَفِظَتْ
لِلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ اللَّهُ ۚ وَالَّتِي تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاضْرِبُوهُنَّ ۚ فَإِنْ أَطَعْنَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ
سَبِيلًا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا كَبِيرًا

"Men are the leaders of women, because Allah has favored some of them (men) over others (women), and because they (men) have spent part of their wealth. Therefore, a pious woman obeys Allah and takes care of herself, when her husband is not around, because Allah has taken care of (them). Women whose nusyuz you are worried about, so advise them and separate them in their beds, and beat them. Then if they obey you, then do not look for ways to cause trouble for them." (Kementrian_Agama, 2019)

Even though this verse was revealed in a family context, they have applied it to the public domain based on qōidah mafhûm aulawiy. From there, they concluded that even on a small scale (family, household), women should be led by men, let alone on a larger scale (public affairs) that encompasses a greater area of responsibility (Fatmawati & Amir, 2024). They then supported their argument with the hadith: "A people who entrust their affairs to women will not prosper."

In deriving their ruling, they did not consider the reasons for the nuzul verse or the reasons for the wurud of the hadith above. Instead, they used the principle of *usul fiqh* "*al-'Ibratu bi 'Umum al-Lafz La bi Khushush al-Sabab*" (deriving the ruling based on the general wording, not the specific cause). This opinion is held by scholars such as al-

Qurtubi, al-Zamakhshari, al-Razi, Ibn Kathir, and other Salaf scholars, and it remains the opinion of the majority of scholars to this day (Hayati, 2024).

One of the Koran's texts that explains women's leadership is Surah An-Naml, verses 23-26.

إِنِّي وَجَدْتُ امْرَأَةً تَمْلِكُهُمْ وَأُوتِيَتْ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَلَهَا عَرْشٌ عَظِيمٌ وَجَدْتُهَا وَقَوْمَهَا يَسْجُدُونَ لِلشَّمْسِ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَرَبِّيَ هُمْ
الشَّيْطَانُ أَعْمَاهُمْ فَصَدَّهُمْ عَنِ السَّبِيلِ فَهُمْ لَا يَهْتَدُونَ أَلَّا يَسْجُدُوا لِلَّهِ الَّذِي يُخْرِجُ الْخَبَاءَ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا
تُخْفُونَ وَمَا تُعْلِنُونَ اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ ۝

Surely I found a woman who ruled over them. She was blessed with everything and had a great throne. I found him and his people worshipping the sun besides Allah. The devil has made them look beautiful in their deeds and has hindered them from (Allah's) path, so that they cannot be guided. So that they do not worship Allah who brings out what is hidden in the heavens and the earth and who knows what you conceal and what you reveal. Allah, there is no god worthy of worship except Him, the Lord of the Great Throne. (QS. an-Naml [27]: 23-26). (Zeeshan & Ullah, 2024)

In Tafsir al-Thabari, the woman referred to in this verse is Bilqis binti Shuraheel, or better known to Westerners as Shaebea. The Qur'anic story of Queen Bilqis shows that women can become leaders under certain conditions. Among these conditions are being strong, democratic, protecting their people, and skilled in diplomacy. The myth or assumption that women are unworthy and incapable of becoming leaders is slowly disappearing as more and more women demonstrate success and achievement across various fields (Abdul & Al, 2024).

In relation to the hadith, three hadith texts underlie the prohibition of female leadership. First Hadith; the Prophet's statement, narrated by his companion Abu Bakrah (r.a.), states:

لَنْ يَفْلَحَ قَوْمٌ وَلَوْ أَمَرَهُمْ امْرَأَةٌ.

"When news reached the Prophet that the Persians had appointed the daughter of Kisra as their queen, the Prophet (pbuh) said: "Never will a people be happy who entrust their affairs to women." The majority of scholars accept this hadith wholeheartedly. However, this does not mean that there are no scholars who criticize

its authenticity. Some scholars see an oddity in its narration: the narrator is a companion of Abu Bakrah (r.a.). This figure, during the time of Caliph Umar ibn Khattab (r.a.), was flogged eighty times for accusing his companion, Shu'bah ibn Mughirah (r.a.), of adultery without sufficient evidence before the court (Zulpiana Maulana, 2024).

In Surah al-Nur, it is stated that the testimony of someone who accuses another person of committing adultery without proof cannot be accepted at all times, even if (as is the opinion of the Hanafi School) he repents. Because his testimony was not accepted, his narration should not be accepted either. Another reason, stated by Abdul Hamid Muhammad al-Syawarebi, is that this hadith cannot serve as a legal basis at all because it concerns matters of principle, namely, state administration. Meanwhile, for matters of principle, the method for taking a legal basis should not be based on texts narrated by just one or two people, as is the case with this hadith. The acceptance of the narration of hadith by the majority of scholars is more due to the credibility of Imam Bukhari than to the hadith itself (Somad, 2022).

Second: those who allow women to hold certain public positions as long as they are not heads of state. Their argument: "And those who believe, men and women, some of them are helpers for others. They enjoin (do) what is right, forbid what is evil, perform prayers, pay zakat, and they obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah will give them mercy; Indeed, Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise.(Zohriah et al., 2023)

Amar ma'ruf nahi munkar is an obligation that includes various ways of struggle, including being involved in the political life of society. Among the scholars of this second group is Sa'id Ramadhan al-Bûthi. This cleric, who is known to be versatile and firmly adheres to the teachings of the Salaf, thinks that it is permissible for women to be members of the legislature, but not to be heads of state al-Imâm al-Kubrô (Afriyanto, 2023).

Third: those who allow women to hold any public position, absolutely as long as they meet the qualifications and can maintain honor. Among those who think this way are Said Aqil al-Munawar, Quraish Shihab, Hussein Muhammad, and all Liberal Islamic thinkers (Fatmawati & Amir, 2024).

Currently, the strongest opinion is the second, namely that allows women to hold certain public positions but not to become head of state. The reason is that facts on the

ground show that many women have advantages in specific fields over men. Furthermore, historical evidence shows that Umar ibn al-Khattab once appointed a woman as the market treasurer, as Ibn Hazm stated. Women are not permitted to hold the position of head of state. This is not only based on the Prophet's hadith, but is also supported by legal and psychological analysis (Begum, 2023).

The differences among scholars regarding whether women can be leaders stem from several factors. First, the view that men are the leaders of women. This fact is supported by a justification from Surah An-Nisa', verse 34 of the Quran. Commentators state that qawwam means leader, protector, organizer, and so on. Men's superiority is due to their intellectual and physical superiority, as al-Razi explains in his Tafsir al-Kabir (Somad, 2022).

Furthermore, al-Zamakhsari, in his Tafsir al-Kasysyaf, explains that men's superiority over women stems from their intellect, decisiveness, strong determination, physical strength, general literacy, and courage. Taba'tabai explains that men's superiority stems solely from their intellect, which can foster qualities such as courage, strength, and the ability to overcome difficulties. Conversely, women are more sensitive and emotional. The Scope of Women's Roles in Quranic Interpretation. As a reference for the basic principles of Islamic society, the Quran demonstrates that men and women are fundamentally equal. The position of women in Islamic teachings is not as perceived or practiced by some societies. Islamic teachings accord women great importance and a respectable status (Nadhiroh, 2024).

The reality depicted in sacred texts greatly honors women, as evidenced by the hadiths describing the Ansar women in Medina during the Prophet's time. They are portrayed as active, free, dynamic, critical, responsible, and independent, yet polite, courteous, and well-mannered. They were active in various aspects of life, both in the public and domestic spheres.

Numerous hadiths depict the Prophet's wives as critical, active, dynamic, and concerned with the problems of their community, and involved in public activities, both in peacetime and war. The Prophet did not discriminate against them in carrying out their social roles.

The Qur'an, through its verses, clearly defines the ideal type of Islamic woman (Muslimah) as someone independent in various areas of life. First, Muslim women must have political independence, as stated in QS.al-Mumtahanah [60]: 12:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِذَا جَاءَكَ الْمُؤْمِنَاتُ يُبَايِعْنَكَ عَلَى أَنْ لَا يُشْرِكْنَ بِاللَّهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَسْرِقْنَ وَلَا يَزْنِينَ وَلَا يَقْتُلْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ وَلَا

يَأْتِينَ بِمُهْتَنٍ يَفْتَرِينَهُ بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِنَّ وَأَرْجُلِهِنَّ وَلَا يَعْتَصِمْنَ فِي مَعْرُوفٍ فَبَايِعْنَهُنَّ وَأَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُنَّ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

"O Prophet, if there come to you believing women to promise you allegiance, that they will not associate anything with Allah; will not steal, will not commit adultery, will not kill their children, will not commit lies that they invent between their hands and feet and will not disobey you in good matters, then accept their promise of allegiance and ask Allah for forgiveness for them. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving, Most Merciful." (Kementrian_Agama, 2019)

This political independence is like the figure of Queen Balqis, leader of a superpower kingdom. Political independence can also be realized through an "opposition" movement against various forms of corruption in society and through the courage to convey the truth, which the Qur'an permits women to do (QS. al-Taubah [9]: 71).

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ

وَيُطِيعُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

" "And those who believe, men and women, some of them are helpers for others. They enjoin (do) what is right, forbid what is evil, perform prayers, pay zakat and they obey Allah and His Messenger. They will be given mercy by Allah; Indeed, Allah is Mighty, Most Wise."

In Surah al-Taubah, verse 71 grants women the right to territorial rights over men. The word "territorial rights" (ولاية) can mean control, leadership, cooperation, and mutual assistance. Fourth, the word "rijal" in this verse does not refer to the male gender, but to masculine traits that both men and women can possess (Tajuddin, 2021). For these four reasons, the claim that the Quran prohibits women's political leadership cannot be justified. Second, Muslim women must possess courage in the economic

field, as exemplified by the figure of the livestock manager in the story of the Prophet Moses in Madyan (Surah al-Qasas [28]: 23).

وَلَمَّا وَرَدَ مَاءَ مَدْيَنَ وَجَدَ عَلَيْهِ أُمَّةٌ مِّنَ النَّاسِ يَسْقُونَ هَـ وَوَجَدَ مِنْ دُونِهِمُ امْرَأَتَيْنِ تَذُودَانِ قَالَ مَا خَطْبُكُمَا قَالَتَا لَا

نَسْقِي حَتَّى يُصْدِرَ الرِّعَاءُ وَأَبُونَا شَيْخٌ كَبِيرٌ

“And when he arrived at the water source of the land of Mad-yan, he found there a group of people who were drinking (their livestock). He found two women behind the crowd, holding back their livestock. Moses said, “What do you mean by that?” The women replied, “We cannot water our livestock until the shepherds return, and our father is an elderly man.” (Gusani, 2024)

Third, Muslim women must possess individual independence, such as the freedom to make personal choices they believe are right, even when dealing with their husbands.

Conclusion

Based on the research analysis, their status, rights, and obligations are almost equal. However, because God created them with different physical and psychological characteristics, the Qur'an then differentiates their respective functions, roles, and duties in both the domestic and public spheres. This distinction is made so that both can work together, complement each other, and help create a harmonious life. The differences in duties, functions, and roles as prescribed by Islamic law cannot be considered discrimination. They should be interpreted as more noble than one. One over the other. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) himself firmly stated the equality of men and women by referring to women as Syaqa'iq al-Rijâl (blood sisters of men).

The prevailing views on women's leadership in classical Islamic thought were still heavily influenced by the dominant patriarchal culture and understanding of the time, so it is not surprising that their ideas still favored men's interests. Today, women have ample opportunities to participate in all fields, including leadership. This is not at all contrary to Islamic teachings, as the Qur'an does not discriminate between people except in terms of their acts of worship.

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