



The Role of Women in Islamic Sacred Texts: A Critical Study of Women's Narratives and Authority in Islamic Tradition

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Abstract

This research aims to examine the role and authority of women in Islamic sacred texts, focusing on narratives within the Quran and Hadith and their implications for the social status and leadership of women in contemporary religious contexts. The urgency of this study stems from a significant discrepancy between women's representation in Islamic doctrine and their participation and recognition in broader religious and social power structures. Employing a qualitative methodology with a phenomenological approach, this study collected data from primary sources through in-depth interviews, as well as document analysis and secondary literature review, to explore interpretations of texts and prevailing practices. The findings reveal that although the sacred texts provide a basis for gender equality, traditional interpretations often restrict women's roles in leadership and authority capacities. Discussions on reinterpreting these texts with a more inclusive gender perspective offer opportunities to expand understandings of women's leadership in Islam. This study also highlights the importance of education in supporting women to take on more active roles in religious activities and leadership. Based on these findings, the research recommends adopting a more egalitarian interpretative approach in Islamic theology and integrating gender-inclusive religious education as strategies to overcome structural and social barriers that hinder women. These recommendations aim to encourage broader dialogue and fairer religious practices, supporting social change that recognises and promotes women's roles and authority in Muslim communities.

Keywords: Women's Roles, Women's Authority, Sacred Texts, Islamic Tradition

Introduction

Women's authority in government leadership remains far from gender parity. As of June 2024, only 28 women serve as Heads of State or Government in 27 countries, with projections indicating that gender equality at the highest echelons of power will not be achieved for another 130 years. At the cabinet level, women represent just 23.3% of ministers as of 1 January 2024, with only 15 countries having at least 50% female ministers. Meanwhile, women occupy 26.9% of seats in national parliaments, an increase from 11% in 1995, with only six countries boasting 50% or more female parliamentarians (Unwomen, 2024). These facts underscore the need for more intensive and structured efforts, such as the use of gender quotas, to accelerate the achievement of gender equality in political leadership, which can enhance the quality of public policy and inclusivity in decision-making processes (Fernández & Valiente, 2021; Wroblewski, 2021).



Although women have played key roles in various aspects of social and political life worldwide, their representation in leadership, especially in political and religious contexts, remains far from ideal (Shellock et al., 2022). This highlights a significant discrepancy between the recognized roles of women in theory and their practical implementation in power structures. In the context of Islam, for example, narratives about women in sacred texts are often complex and multivariate, yet dominant interpretations tend to depict them in more marginal roles (Badara & Jamiludin, 2020; Naguib, 2021).

It is essential to consider how contemporary policies and practices are influenced by interpretations of sacred texts in Islam. Often, prevailing gender-related policies and leadership norms reflect not just the sacred texts themselves, but also the socio-political contexts in which these interpretations are made (Ussabry, 2020). This indicates that women's access to leadership positions is not only restricted by the texts but also by broader power structures that define and confine gender roles.

This imbalance is also evident in the representation of women in religious institutions. Despite historical examples of influential women in Islam, such as Aisha renowned for her scholarly contributions and Khadijah as a successful entrepreneur, contemporary realities often do not reflect these capacities (Bahri et al., 2022). In fact, only a handful of women gain recognition in the religious hierarchy in contemporary Islam.

Interestingly, movements within some Muslim communities are pushing for the reinterpretation of sacred texts from a more inclusive gender perspective (Balode & Račius, 2023; Ghafournia, 2020; Rahiman, 2023). These efforts not only challenge traditional interpretations but also encourage a broader and more diverse dialogue about the role of women in Islam (Rehman, 2020). This, in turn, could expand understandings of female leadership in religious contexts.

The debate over the role of women in Islamic leadership also impacts how Muslim communities engage with other global issues, such as democracy, human rights, and social justice (Hefner, 2012; Sofi, 2018). In Indonesia, the presidency of Megawati Soekarnoputri, the nation's first female leader, exemplifies how women's leadership within Islamic contexts can influence democratic processes and the advancement of human rights. Women's involvement in these processes is not only necessary for achieving gender equality but also ensures that policies and decisions reflect the needs and experiences of the entire population.

Thus, to achieve gender parity, especially in leadership, more intensive and structured efforts are needed, including in religious interpretation and practice (Atkinson, 2019; Kashina, 2022). Approaches like the use of gender quotas, proven effective in the political arena, might also be considered within religious structures to expedite the achievement of gender equality.

The urgency of this research lies in the pressing need to address the persistent gender gap in leadership and authority structures within Islamic tradition. Although women have played pivotal roles throughout the history and development of Islam, they are often underrepresented or invisible in dominant narratives and leadership positions.

By examining the role of women in Islamic sacred texts and how these narratives influence women's current social status and leadership, this study aims not only to fill gaps in academic literature but also to foster practical changes in how communities and Islamic institutions recognize and promote women. Further investigation into Muslim communities within predominantly Christian, Buddhist, Jewish, or Hindu environments could elucidate the unique influences of religious minority status on the promotion and recognition of female leadership in Islamic contexts. This is crucial for creating a more inclusive and just society, where gender equality forms the foundational basis in religious policies and practices.



Literature Review

This study delves into the representation and position of women in Islamic religious sources, such as the Quran and Hadith, and how interpretations of these texts affect women's positions in contemporary Muslim society (Aspinall et al., 2021; White et al., 2023). The research aims to uncover and evaluate narratives relating to women within Islamic doctrine, and their implications for women's authority in both public and private spheres. This investigation is critical in understanding the social and theological constructions of women within a broader religious context, and the dynamics of power involved.

This article specifically reviews several prior studies for critical and scientific comparison to discover novelties. First, research by Ghafournia (2022), which explores the role of women's leadership in Australian mosques using a qualitative approach, indicates that despite women's active participation in religious activities, they are often not recognized as formal leaders. These results reflect the educational and social roles held by women more than official religious authority, which is relevant for your study in identifying how religious narratives influence women's positions within Islamic power structures.

In the context of Malaysia, Kloos (2019), using ethnographic methods, reveals how women gain Islamic authority through professionalism and performance expertise. This research shows that women use subtle yet effective strategies to assert their authority, providing valuable insights into the development of women's authority within similar cultural contexts, which can be integrated into your analysis of women's authority construction in Islam.

Meanwhile, Lari et al. (2022) examine gender challenges in political leadership and authority, demonstrating that despite legislative progress, gender norms remain a barrier. These findings support your study in comparing the influence of gender norms in political and religious authority, expanding understanding of the difficulties faced by women in achieving recognition in various domains of power.

Nazneen (2023) conducts an analysis of women's political agency in challenging countries using a mixed-methodology to evaluate how policy structures and individual experiences affect women's political participation. This research reveals how external factors and local policies influence women's ability to take on authoritative roles, offering a useful perspective for understanding the influence of similar factors within the religious structures discussed in your research.

Lastly, Stojmenovska (2023) investigates gender differences in job resources and stressors at positions of authority through a quantitative approach, finding that women face more challenges and receive less support compared to men. Although focused on a corporate context, these results can provide additional understanding of how structures and support affect women's ability to exercise authority, highly relevant for your analysis of women in Islamic leadership.

Methods

The methodology used in this research is qualitative with a phenomenological approach, aimed at understanding and interpreting the meanings contained in the life experiences of women in the context of Islam (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Weyant, 2022). This approach allows researchers to delve into how Islamic sacred texts and their interpretations affect the lives and status of women in society. Primary data sources include in-depth interviews with religious figures, academics, and Muslim community members who have direct experience or specific knowledge on the topic. Secondary data will involve analysis of relevant documents such as sacred books, exegeses, fatwas, and related academic literature.

Data collection is conducted through an extensive desktop qualitative literature review, where the researcher will examine various sources including religious texts, academic publications,



and other related documents and secondary sources (Américo et al., 2022). This process aims to build a robust understanding of the views and roles of women in Islam, and the changes and continuities over time. The review also includes literature discussing gender roles in broader religious and social contexts, to provide deeper context to the collected data.

Data analysis will be performed using the methods of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, which include data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification (Miles et al., 2020). This step allows the researcher to identify themes, patterns, and relationships within the data, and to develop a deeper understanding of the studied phenomena. Through this systematic analysis, researchers can ensure that the interpretations made are accurate and profound, reflecting the complexity of the subject of study.

The validity of the data is tested through triangulation, using various sources and methods to verify findings. This involves comparing results from interviews, document analysis, and existing literature, to ensure consistency and reliability of research outcomes (Flick, 2020). Triangulation helps minimize bias and enhances confidence in the data and analysis performed, making the research findings more robust and scientifically accountable.

Results and Discussions

Qur'anic Literature and Female Authority in Islamic Tradition

When examining the role of women in Islam, the pivotal role of the Qur'an as the primary source of law and life guidance for Muslims cannot be overlooked. This sacred text contains various verses that explicitly and implicitly discuss the status, role, and rights of women (Affandi et al., 2023; Saiful et al., 2020). This study analyses these verses to gain a deeper understanding of how Islam views women and their authority in various aspects of life. This approach is essential to identify how these teachings have been interpreted and implemented in the social and religious lives of various Muslim communities.

Furthermore, this review also encompasses how Islamic tradition, through the interpretations of scholars and ongoing religious practices, influences the recognition and respect for women. Specifically, the focus is given to how female authority is constructed and accepted in scholarly, religious, and leadership contexts. This analysis will provide crucial insights into the dynamics of power, gender, and authority, aiding in understanding the challenges and opportunities Muslim women face in claiming and exercising their authority across various life domains.

Table 1. Female Authority in Islamic Tradition According to the Qur'an (Author's Literature Observation)

No.	Evidence	Text of Evidence	Theme
1	An-Nisa (4:1)	"O mankind, fear your Lord, who created you from a single soul and created from it its mate and dispersed from both of them many men and women."	Equality in Creation
2	An-Nisa (4:32)	"And do not wish for the things in which Allah has made some of you excel others. For men there is a reward for what they have earned, and for women there is a reward for what they have earned."	Economic Rights and Responsibilities
3	Al-Ahzab (33:35)	"Indeed, the Muslim men and Muslim women, the believing men and believing women, the obedient men and obedient women..."	Spiritual and Moral Equality
4	At-Tahrim (66:11)	"And Allah presents an example of those who believed: the wife of Pharaoh when she said, 'My Lord, build for me near You a house in Paradise and save me from Pharaoh and his deeds and save me from the oppressive people.'"	Steadfastness and Courage
5	Al-Mujadila (58:1)	"Indeed Allah has heard the statement of her that disputes with you concerning her husband and complains to Allah. And Allah hears your dialogue; indeed, Allah is Hearing and Seeing."	Women's Right to Speak
6	An-Nur (24:31)	"And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and guard their private parts and not to show off their adornment except only that which is apparent..."	Ethics and Behaviour



7	Al-Baqarah (2:228)	"Divorced women shall wait concerning themselves for three menstrual periods. And it is not lawful for them to conceal what Allah has created in their wombs if they believe in Allah and the Last Day. And their husbands have the better right to take them back in that period if they wish for reconciliation."	Rights in Divorce
8	Sahih Bukhari 304	"When the wife of Zaid bin Haritsah came complaining to the Prophet about her husband, the Prophet listened to her and offered advice..."	Justice and Advice in Marriage
9	Sahih Muslim 3329	"Aisha said, 'The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said: 'Women are like ribs; if you try to straighten them, you will break them...'"	Treatment of Women

In Surah An-Nisa, verse 1, it is explained that all humans, male and female, originate from the same soul. Tafsir by Hamka and Al-Maraghi emphasizes equality and brotherhood among humans, urging to avoid division and to cultivate piety because all are derived from the same origin, Adam and Eve (Hamka, 2012; Maraghi, 1910). This underscores the importance of equality and justice in the treatment of women.

Next, Surah An-Nisa, verse 32, reminds that Allah has bestowed various blessings on each person according to their capacity and effort. Tafsir Al-Mishbah and Al-Muyassar elaborate that this includes women's right to acquire and manage their property, supporting women's independence and autonomy in an economic context (Al-Qarni, 2008; Shihab, 2015).

Surah Al-Ahzab, verse 35, reinforces that before Allah, believing men and women hold the same status. According to Tafsir Jalalain and the Ministry of Religious Affairs Indonesia, this verse underscores the spiritual and moral equality between men and women, affirming that faith is the primary criterion in Allah's judgment, not gender (As-Suyuthi & Al-Mahally, 2015; Kemenag, 2016).

Then, Surah At-Tahrim, verse 11, narrates the steadfast faith of Pharaoh's wife, who sought protection from her husband's tyranny. According to Tafsir Al-Kashaf by Zamakhshari, this story is a symbol of resilience and moral courage to be emulated, especially by women in oppressive situations (Al-Zamakhshari, 1995).

Surah Al-Mujadila, verse 1, shows that Allah hears every complaint, including from women often overlooked in society. Tafsir by Ibn Kathir highlights that Islam recognizes the importance of every voice, including women's, in religious dialogue, affirming that no complaint is too small or insignificant (Kathir, 2018).

Next, Surah An-Nur, verse 31, regulates ethics in dressing and interaction, reinforcing social privacy and comfort. Tafsir Al-Mizan by Thabathabai explains that this verse teaches women to control their interactions and ensure clear boundaries, supporting the concept of autonomy and self-protection (Thabathaba'i, 1991).

Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 228, discusses provisions in divorce, giving women time to consider their decisions during the 'iddah period. Tafsir by Jazairi and Baydawi reveals that Islamic law views the balance and justice in marriage as crucial, as well as protecting women's interests in making decisions about their futures (Al-Jaza'iri, 2003; Baydawi, 2010).

In Hadith Sahih Bukhari number 304, an incident is recorded where Zaid bin Haritsah's wife complained to Prophet Muhammad about issues she faced with her husband (Al-Bukhārī, 2002). The Prophet's response, listening to her complaints and offering advice, demonstrates Islam's approach to resolving marital conflicts. This illustrates a crucial principle in Islam about the importance of listening and responding fairly to women's complaints. In this context, the Prophet acted not only as a spiritual leader but also as a mediator in domestic matters, emphasizing the importance of justice and understanding in marriage. This approach



illustrates how justice should be upheld in personal relationships, particularly in listening to and resolving issues faced by women.

Sahih Muslim number 3329 conveys a hadith from Aisha describing women as "crooked ribs (Baqi, 2017)." Prophet Muhammad taught that if one tries to straighten a crooked rib, it will break, depicting that women have unique characteristics that should be accepted and valued, not forcibly changed. This hadith is often interpreted as an analogy about the importance of valuing women with all their uniqueness and adjusting approaches in social interactions and family relationships. Although some contemporary interpretations might see this analogy as a symbol of inequality, in its original context, it teaches sensitivity and appreciation for differences in character and individual needs, particularly in the context of marriage and interpersonal relationships.

Qur'anic literature and hadith narratives about women have revealed important insights into their status and roles within the Islamic context. Through the study of verses and hadiths, it can be seen how the religion historically established frameworks for justice, appreciation, and recognition of women, both in private and public life. The conclusions drawn from this study not only reinforce the understanding of religious texts in guiding social and individual behavior but also help in formulating more inclusive and fair approaches to gender in contemporary religious practices. Thus, a deep understanding of these documents is key to fostering broader dialogue and developing policies that support gender equality in Muslim societies.

Female Authority: Social Doubts vs. Islamic Tradition

In the modern era, female authority often finds itself under scrutiny and constrained by profound and systemic social issues. This phenomenon of constrained female authority is observed not only in Islamic nations but also globally, as seen in the gender disparities in leadership roles in countries like the United States and India. Despite significant advances in recent decades, substantial challenges persist, impeding women's full equality across various life domains (Gupta, 2023; Waheed et al., 2022). These issues include workplace discrimination, gender pay gaps, limited access to higher education, and disproportionate representation in leadership and decision-making roles. Deeply ingrained gender stereotypes and social norms continue to influence perceptions of women's roles and capabilities, often diminishing or undervaluing their contributions to society.

Further, the media and popular culture play a crucial role in shaping and reinforcing perceptions of women, often through lenses that objectify or limit them. This not only affects how women are viewed and treated in society but also how they perceive themselves and their aspirations. Gender-based violence, including domestic violence and sexual harassment, remains a serious barrier that threatens women's safety and well-being while restricting their participation in economic and public activities.

Table 2. Social Challenges Against Female Authority

No.	Social Issue	Description	Social Impact
1	Female Leadership	Doubts about the ability of women to hold high leadership positions in both the public and private sectors.	Lowers the representation of women in strategic positions and makes policies less inclusive.
2	Wage Discrimination	Wage disparity between men and women for the same work, often resulting in women being paid less.	Perpetuates economic inequality and affects the welfare of women and their families.
3	Education Access	Limited access for women to higher education or education in STEM and political fields.	Hinders the full development of women's intellectual and professional potential.
4	Gender Stereotypes in Media	Representation of women in media that often stereotypes or objectifies them.	Affects public perception of women's roles and capabilities, limiting women's aspirations.



5	Gender-Based Violence	High levels of domestic violence and sexual harassment against women.	Causes long-term trauma and reduces women's participation in social and economic activities.
6	Political Participation	Lack of women in policymaking and legislative positions.	Policies tend to not fully reflect women's needs or views.

Social issues such as exemplified in Indonesia, where Law Number 2 of 2008, mandating a minimum of 30% female representation in political party structures, highlights the barriers to achieving gender equality within the nation's political sector. This related to female authority illustrate various barriers they face in achieving full equality across society's sectors. A primary challenge is the doubt over women's capabilities to hold high leadership positions, both in public and private sectors. This often leads to women's underrepresentation in strategic positions and impacts the inclusivity of policymaking, which does not fully reflect their needs or perspectives (Avolio et al., 2024; Daitch et al., 2022).

In economic terms, wage discrimination remains a severe issue, where women are often paid less than men for the same work. This not only perpetuates economic inequality but also negatively affects the well-being of women and their families. Additionally, limited access for women to higher education or in STEM and political fields hampers the full development of their intellectual and professional potential, impacting their ability to contribute effectively to the knowledge economy (Heck et al., 2021).

On another note, detrimental gender stereotypes in media often portray women in roles that objectify or belittle them, influencing public perceptions of women's roles and capabilities and limiting their aspirations (Sebastián-Tirado et al., 2023; Zhong et al., 2022). Furthermore, high levels of gender-based violence, including domestic violence and sexual harassment, cause long-term trauma and reduce women's participation in social and economic activities. The minimal participation of women in policymaking and legislative positions shows that policies often fail to reflect women's needs or views adequately (Fussy et al., 2023). The absence of women's voices in these decision-making processes not only disadvantages women but also reduces the effectiveness and fairness of such policies. All these issues underscore the need for a more inclusive approach and greater equality in access and opportunities for women at all societal levels. The contemporary issues outlined above remain challenges for women. Female authority and rights are often restricted by societal stereotypes starkly contrasting Islamic values. In this context, Islamic tradition provides clear examples of how it can counter these issues, as summarized in the following table:

Table 3. Islamic Tradition in Countering Social Doubts About Women

Social Issue	Social Impact	Islamic Tradition Response
Female Leadership	Doubts about women's ability to hold strategic positions, resulting in low representation in key roles.	Historical examples such as Khadijah and Aisha demonstrate that women have played important and influential roles. Islam encourages active participation of women in society.
Wage Discrimination	Women often paid less than men for the same work, perpetuating economic inequality.	The Quran teaches justice and transparency in economic matters, emphasising the right of every individual to receive fair wages without gender discrimination.
Gender Stereotypes in Media	Objectifying or limiting the roles of women, impacting public perception and women's aspirations.	Surah An-Nur teaches respect and dignity for every individual, urging more balanced and respectful representation of women in the media.
Gender-Based Violence	Violence such as domestic and sexual abuse reduces women's social and economic participation.	Islam prohibits violence and supports legal protection for victims. Hadiths strongly condemn acts of violence against women.
Participation in Policymaking	Minimal participation of women in policy and legislation, indicating the need for more inclusive policies.	The principle of shura in Islam supports consultation and participation in decision-making, not excluding women from these processes.



Women's leadership is often doubted, especially in holding strategic positions in public and private sectors, affecting their low representation in key roles. However, Islamic tradition offers a contrasting view through historical examples of influential women like Khadijah and Aisha. Khadijah, a successful entrepreneur, and Aisha, known for her intelligence, prove that women have significant capacities in leadership. Islam explicitly encourages women's active roles in society, implying support for their leadership capabilities (Hemmet, 2023).

Wage discrimination is also a critical issue where women often receive lower pay than men for the same work, underscoring ongoing economic inequality. In response, the Quran teaches principles of justice and transparency in economic affairs, emphasizing that every individual, regardless of gender, deserves fair pay for their work (Chaoui, 2023; Hidayah, 2023). This is affirmed in Surah An-Nisa, which guarantees equal economic rights for women.

Public perception and women's aspirations are also often limited by gender stereotypes in media, such as in Indonesia, where television advertisements frequently depict women primarily in domestic roles, reinforcing gender stereotypes by portraying them mainly as caretakers and homemakers which tend to objectify or limit women's roles (Galpin & Vernon, 2024; Moratti, 2020). Islam offers a perspective that respects the dignity of every individual through teachings in Surah An-Nur. These verses urge society to present a more balanced and respectful representation of women, countering the stereotypes often portrayed in mainstream media. This underscores the importance of respect and dignity in depicting women.

Gender-based violence, such as domestic violence and sexual harassment, is a serious issue that reduces women's social and economic participation (Lang et al., 2023; Lorente-Acosta, 2020). In addressing this, Islam firmly prohibits all forms of violence and supports legal protection for victims. Various Hadiths explicitly condemn acts of violence against women and emphasize the importance of safety and protection for all individuals, particularly women.

Lastly, the minimal participation of women in policy-making and legislative roles highlights the need for more inclusive policies that fully reflect women's needs and views. While women do play a role in policymaking and legislative positions in Indonesia, their representation remains significantly lower compared to men, with only 22.24% of seats held by women in the DPR for the 2024-2029 period, far from the targeted minimum of 30%. Islam teaches the importance of consultation and participation in decision-making through the principle of shura, which does not exclude women from these processes. This principle shows that active participation of women in public and political affairs is not only supported but expected in a just and inclusive social structure.

Discussion

In understanding the role of women within the context of Islam, it is essential to examine how the Quran and Hadith depict women and the implications of these interpretations for social and Islamic legal practices. Women in Islamic sacred texts are portrayed not only as supporters in family life narratives but also as individuals with significant intellectual and spiritual capacities. Verses such as those in Surah An-Nisa emphasize justice and equal obligations between men and women, providing a basis for further discussion on gender equality in religion (Hidayatullah & Asiah, 2022; Huriyah et al., 2023).

Islamic feminism, which has emerged in recent decades, offers a useful analytical lens for discussing this topic. This theory proposes a more egalitarian reinterpretation of sacred texts, challenging traditional views that often place women in subordinate positions (Fattah Jeldres & Lorena Sequeiros, 2022; Hesová, 2019). Islamic feminism not only critiques patriarchal interpretations but also provides new perspectives on understanding verses traditionally considered to contain gender bias.



Additionally, Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity can be applied to understand how gender roles are shaped and internalized through repetitive social norms. According to Butler, gender is 'performed' according to social expectations, often based on religious text interpretations. In the Islamic context, this might mean that different interpretations of sacred texts contribute to how women and men 'perform' their gender roles in society (Butler, 2004).

The importance of education in enabling women to gain a deeper understanding of their rights according to Islamic teachings cannot be overlooked. Broader access to both religious and secular education can help women achieve autonomy in interpreting sacred texts, which have historically been controlled by male interpretations. Education also enables women to be more active in religious and public discourses, challenging traditional positions that often restrict their participation (Savira et al., 2023).

The representation of women in religious leadership is another crucial topic in this discussion. Examples from various Muslim communities show that when women hold leadership roles, they can provide different perspectives in decision-making and legal interpretation. This challenges the long-held assumption that women are unsuitable for such roles in Islam (García-Sánchez et al., 2023).

Stereotypes about women in society are often reinforced by the media and popular literature, sometimes rooted in erroneous or biased textual interpretations (Ukhova, 2023). Therefore, while it is evident that media and literature often perpetuate gender stereotypes, it is also essential to recognise the growing presence of alternative narratives that actively challenge and redefine these stereotypes, providing a more comprehensive understanding of women's roles in society. Identifying and critiquing such representations is important to deconstruct narratives that demean women and promote a more accurate and fair portrayal of their role in Islam.

Issues of gender-based violence are also inseparable from the discussion of women's roles in Islam. Verses often misinterpreted as justifications for poor treatment of women should be viewed within the broader context of Islamic teachings that emphasize compassion and justice. Addressing and rectifying interpretations that enable violence is a crucial part of reforming perspectives on women (Liebelt & Werbner, 2018).

Facing modern challenges, it is crucial for Muslim communities to continually explore and reevaluate the role of women in accordance with the principles of justice and equality taught by Islam (Humaizi et al., 2024). This is relevant not only in a religious context but also in advocating for broader social changes that support women's rights and well-being (Jahan et al., 2023).

Finally, cross-cultural and interdisciplinary dialogue can enrich understanding of women's roles in Islam. Through the exchange of ideas and best practices, both globally and locally, possibilities for achieving a more inclusive and fair understanding of women in Islam become more accessible (Perry et al., 2023). This involvement is vital to ensure that Muslim women have a strong and influential voice in shaping the future of their communities.

The novelty of this research lies in the combined use of Islamic feminist theory and gender performativity theory to examine the representation and authority of women in Islamic sacred texts. Through this approach, the research reveals how long-established gender norms embedded in sacred text interpretations can be challenged and reconstructed. This allows for new understandings of verses traditionally interpreted to support patriarchal views, offering alternative interpretations that support gender equality and justice. Consequently, this research not only contributes to academic discussions about the role of women in Islam but also offers practical perspectives that can aid modern Muslim communities in redefining gender roles to create a more inclusive and just society.



Conclusion

This study illustrates how Islamic tradition, through sacred texts and their interpretations, presents diverse perspectives on the role and authority of women. A critical examination of narratives in the Quran and Hadith reveals that, while there is potential for interpretations supporting gender equality, often social and religious practices do not fully reflect these egalitarian principles. This research underscores the importance of education and more inclusive reinterpretation of sacred texts as keys to overcoming strong patriarchal norms. An interdisciplinary approach, combining Islamic feminist theory with gender performativity theory, allows for a more dynamic understanding of how gender identities are formed and maintained within a religious context, offering valuable guidance for reforms oriented towards equality and justice.

These conclusions underline that progress toward gender equality in Muslim communities requires not only shifts in the interpretation of religious texts but also structural changes in social and religious practices. This includes increasing women's access to religious education and leadership positions, as well as broader community support for interpretations that advocate active female roles. Raising awareness and educating both genders about women's rights and responsibilities in Islam can facilitate more inclusive dialogue and fairer policies. Therefore, this research is not only academically relevant but also has practical implications in fostering constructive discussions and actions at various societal levels.

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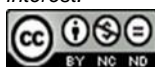
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