

THE ROLE OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION IN PROMOTING WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

Suud Sarim Karimullah

suudsarimkarimullah@gmail.com

Gümüşhane University, Türkiye

Abstract

This study explores the critical role of Islamic education in promoting women's empowerment for a journey towards a more inclusive and equitable society. This study adopts the literature study method with a systematic and comprehensive approach to literature analysis in the search, collection, and evaluation of literature sources relevant to the topic of study. The study results stated that Islamic education supports gender equality and women's empowerment. By providing equal access to Islamic education, women can develop the skills, knowledge, and gender awareness necessary to play an active societal role. However, significant challenges need to be addressed, such as limited access, gender bias, patriarchal social norms, and financial problems. Nonetheless, with the shared commitment of governments, educational institutions, communities, and families, Islamic education can be a force that encourages women's empowerment and creates a more just, inclusive, and sustainable society. In addition, it is essential to continue to push for reforms in Islamic education, strengthen the role of women in society, and overcome the barriers that prevent women from reaching their full potential.

Keywords: *Islamic Education, Gender Equality, Women Empowerment.*

Abstrak

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi peran penting pendidikan Islam dalam mempromosikan pemberdayaan perempuan untuk perjalanan menuju masyarakat yang lebih inklusif dan adil. Kajian ini mengadopsi metode studi pustaka dengan pendekatan analisis literatur yang sistematis dan komprehensif dalam pencarian, pengumpulan, dan evaluasi sumber-sumber literatur yang relevan dengan topik kajian. Hasil kajian menyatakan bahwa pendidikan Islam memiliki peran krusial dalam mendukung kesetaraan gender dan pemberdayaan perempuan. Dengan memberikan akses yang setara ke pendidikan Islam, perempuan dapat mengembangkan keterampilan, pengetahuan, dan kesadaran gender yang diperlukan untuk berperan aktif dalam masyarakat. Namun, terdapat tantangan yang signifikan yang perlu diatasi, seperti akses terbatas, bias gender, norma sosial yang patriarki, dan masalah keuangan. Meskipun demikian, dengan komitmen bersama dari pemerintah, lembaga pendidikan, masyarakat, dan keluarga, pendidikan Islam dapat menjadi kekuatan yang mendorong pemberdayaan perempuan dan menciptakan masyarakat yang lebih adil, inklusif, dan berkelanjutan. Selain itu, penting untuk terus mendorong reformasi dalam pendidikan Islam, memperkuat peran perempuan dalam masyarakat, dan mengatasi hambatan yang menghalangi perempuan untuk meraih potensinya sepenuhnya.

Kata kunci: *Pendidikan Islam, Keadilan Gender, Pemberdayaan Perempuan.*

Introduction

Islamic education has a vital role in society, not only in the religious context but also in social and economic development.¹ One aspect that has become the focus of attention is how Islamic education can be a means to promote women's empowerment. Women are an integral part of society and have tremendous potential to contribute to social and economic development. However, women often face challenges and obstacles that limit their potential. Therefore, it is essential to explore the role of Islamic education in promoting women's empowerment so that they can participate actively in the development of society.

Islamic education, as part of the educational system, significantly impacts the development of the individual and society.² Islamic education teaches the moral values, ethics, and social norms that shape an individual's character.³ In the context of women, Islamic education can serve as a tool to provide a better understanding of their rights in religion and society. This is important because there are differences in religious and cultural interpretations that often hinder women from accessing their rights. Islamic education can help women understand the teachings of their religion better and fight for the rights they should have.

Islamic education in promoting women's empowerment can also solve various social problems, such as poverty, gender inequality, and social injustice. Women with a good education have a better chance of achieving economic independence, which can help solve these problems. By producing robust research and accountable data, we can motivate policymakers, community leaders, and educational institutions to invest more in Islamic education for women. In addition, Islamic education as an instrument of women's empowerment is also in line with humanitarian principles that underlie all the teachings of major religions in the world. Universal principles such as justice, equality, and compassion are values embodied in religious teachings and can be applied in the context of Islamic education. Therefore, understanding and applying these principles in Islamic education is becoming increasingly important.

In addition to religious understanding, Islamic education can provide women with broader knowledge. In an ever-evolving society, knowledge is critical to understanding the world and competing in an increasingly competitive labor market. Providing quality Islamic education makes women better prepared to face social and economic challenges. They can become leaders in various fields, such as education, business, and Politics, which in turn will positively contribute to the development of society as a whole. However, effective Islamic education in promoting women's empowerment is a matter of curriculum and should include social and cultural aspects.

Often, women face discrimination and social barriers in their access to education. This is why there is a need to create an educational environment that supports women's empowerment. It involves the active role of community, family, and society in supporting women's education. It is also important to note that Islamic education must be inclusive,

¹ Mahrus Mahrus and Suud Sarim Karimullah, "Analysis of Educational Policy in the Framework of Learning Efficiency and Effectiveness," *FIKROTUNA: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Manajemen Islam* 16, no. 02 (2022): 1–17, <https://doi.org/10.32806/jf.v16i02.6179>.

² Suud Sarim Karimullah et al., "Iksan Kamil Sahri's Perspective on Dualism of the Education System in Indonesia," *Devotion Journal of Community Service* 4, no. 3 (2023): 737–48, <https://doi.org/10.36418/devotion.v4i3.422>.

³ Suud Sarim Karimullah, Moh Amin, and Ummu Diana Munawwarah, "Strengthening Spiritual Education Based on the Qur'ān in Building Character in the Digital Age," *Devotion Journal of Community Service* 3, no. 14 (2022): 2785–94, <https://doi.org/10.36418/dev.v3i14.316>.

allowing women from different social, economic, and ethnic backgrounds to access it. Gender equality is an underlying principle of human rights, and Islamic education should reflect this principle. Thus, women's empowerment through Islamic education is not only a matter of women's development but also a matter of social welfare and the progress of society.

In this study, we will explore various aspects of Islamic education and how Islamic education can play a role in promoting women's empowerment and see the influence of Islamic education in increasing women's religious understanding, providing broader knowledge, overcoming social and cultural barriers, and creating an inclusive educational environment. Through a better understanding of the role of Islamic education in women's empowerment, it can work towards a more just and sustainable society where women have a vital role in social and economic development. To realize a more inclusive and sustainable community, this study will explore various strategies that can be used to improve the role of Islamic education in promoting women's empowerment. Through this study, it can open the door to a brighter and more equal future for all citizens, regardless of gender.

Some results of previous studies have relevance to this study and can be used as a comparison and additional reference. One of the relevant studies is a study conducted by Rumana Ahmed and Ghaffar Nelia Hyndman-Rizk in Bangladesh in 2018.⁴ This study explores the impact of Islamic education on women and how Islamic education has improved women's knowledge, skills, and confidence. The results show that Islamic education has dramatically enhanced women's empowerment and assisted them in actively participating in life. Another study that can be mentioned is the study by Lynda A. Tyer-Viola and Sandra K. Cesario, which focuses on the role of education in curbing gender inequality and creating an environment that supports women's empowerment.⁵ The results show that inclusive and gender-informed education can positively impact society's view of women and give them more significant opportunities in various aspects of life.

Similar studies have been conducted in various countries around the world. The research covers various aspects of Islamic education, ranging from religious understanding to educational access, social and cultural barriers, and the impact of technology.⁶ All of these studies provide valuable insights into how Islamic education can be used as a tool to promote women's empowerment. This past study offers a vital reference frame for understanding the various dimensions of the role of Islamic education in women's empowerment. By understanding the results and findings of previous research, this review will continue efforts to delve deeper and integrate a more

⁴ Rumana Ahmed and Nelia Hyndman-Rizk, "The Higher Education Paradox: Towards Improving Women's Empowerment, Agency Development and Labour Force Participation in Bangladesh," *Gender and Education* 32, no. 4 (2020): 447–65, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2018.1471452>.

⁵ Lynda A Tyer-Viola and Sandra K Cesario, "Addressing Poverty, Education, and Gender Equality to Improve the Health of Women Worldwide," *Journal of Obstetric, Gynecologic & Neonatal Nursing* 39, no. 5 (2010): 580–89, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1552-6909.2010.01165.x>.

⁶ Samina Malik and Kathy Courtney, "Higher Education and Women's Empowerment in Pakistan," *Gender and Education* 23, no. 1 (2011): 29–45, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09540251003674071>; Muhamad Slamet Yahya, "Modern Education and Women's Empowerment as Constructs of Islamic Education in KH Ahmad Dahlan," *Edumas pul: Jurnal Pendidikan* 7, no. 1 (2023): 1018–26, <https://doi.org/10.33487/edumas pul.v7i1.5807>; Nuraan Davids, "Are Muslim Women in Need of Islamic Feminism? In Consideration of a Re-Imagined Islamic Educational Discourse," *British Journal of Religious Education* 37, no. 3 (2015): 311–25, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01416200.2014.944096>.

comprehensive understanding of the ways Islamic education can promote women's empowerment in a variety of social, economic, and cultural contexts.

Method

This study adopts a literature study method with a systematic and comprehensive literature analysis approach. This approach will involve searching, collecting, and evaluating literature sources relevant to the topic of study. In this process, the researcher will investigate and carefully compile the literature that has been published, such as scientific journals, books, articles, and related theses. A systematic literature analysis will make it possible to detail the findings and contributions contained in the relevant previous studies. Researchers will identify trends, themes, and differences in existing research results and explore the approaches and methodologies used by earlier researchers in examining the role of Islamic education in women's empowerment. The researcher's literature analysis approach will provide a solid basis for developing research concepts and hypotheses. The researcher will draw on the knowledge in the literature to build a deep and informed theoretical framework. Thus, a systematic and comprehensive literature study method will help carry out this research in a structured and scientific manner and generate a deeper understanding of the role of Islamic education in promoting women's empowerment.

Results and Discussion

The Role of Islamic Education in Raising Gender Awareness

Islamic education has long been a critical element in shaping the values and norms that underlie the lives of individuals in Muslim societies. Within this framework, the role of Islamic education in raising gender awareness plays an important role. Gender awareness includes understanding the roles and rights of women and men in society. In many Muslim communities, gender awareness has long been discussed, and Islamic education has great potential to play a central role in creating this awareness.

In many Islamic traditions, religious teachings contain strong principles of gender equality. However, in practice, the understanding and implementation of these principles can vary. Islamic education is vital in providing a better experience of inclusive religious teachings that support gender equality. Through in-depth religious studies, students can understand that Islam respects the rights of women and men and provides a solid foundation for promoting gender equality in everyday life. In addition to a deep understanding of religion, Islamic education also has a role in combating gender stereotypes that may exist in society. In many organizations, gender stereotypes can hinder women from reaching their full potential. Inclusive and educational Islamic education can help eliminate these stereotypes by teaching values encouraging equality and respect for differences between women and men.

Gender awareness is also closely related to women's rights in various aspects of life, including in the economic, political, and social fields.⁷ Islamic education can provide an understanding of these rights and how they should be respected in society. This can motivate women to actively participate in social and political life and pursue equal

⁷ Mala Htun and S Laurel Weldon, "When Do Governments Promote Women's Rights? A Framework for the Comparative Analysis of Sex Equality Policy," *Perspectives on Politics* 8, no. 1 (2010): 207–16, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537592709992787>; Erin Murphy-Graham, "Opening the Black Box: Women's Empowerment and Innovative Secondary Education in Honduras," *Gender and Education* 20, no. 1 (2008): 31–50, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09540250701650623>.

economic opportunities. In addition, Islamic education can also help create an environment that supports gender awareness. When educational institutions, families, and communities collectively understand and support gender equality, positive change can occur. Therefore, Islamic education can be crucial in stimulating broader social change.

In developing gender awareness through Islamic education, it is essential to identify several key aspects that should be emphasized in this approach. One of them is the teaching of gender equality values explicitly in the Islamic education curriculum. It includes an understanding of the rights of women and men in Islam, as well as how the teachings of this religion encourage equality in various aspects of life. In addition, Islamic education can play an essential role in engaging religious leaders and scholars in support of gender equality. They have significant moral authority in Muslim society, and the views and messages they convey can profoundly impact them. Therefore, educating and engaging them in efforts to raise gender awareness is essential.

Islamic educational Media, including textbooks and learning resources, must be carefully examined to ensure that they do not reinforce gender stereotypes or inequality. Inclusive Islamic education should include material that supports gender awareness and explores the role of women in Islamic history and contemporary society. In addition, Islamic education can facilitate intercultural dialogue that promotes gender equality. Because Islam is a worldwide religion, interfaith and intercultural cooperation can help understand diverse perspectives and challenges in the context of gender equality.

In some Muslim societies, Islamic education can also address issues related to child marriage, female genital mutilation, and gender-based violence.⁸ By educating the public about these practices' dangers and negative impacts, Islamic education can play an essential role in combating gender inequality that impacts women and girls. To achieve greater gender awareness through Islamic teaching, there is a need for cooperation between educational institutions, families, communities, and religious leaders. All parties have a role to play in creating an environment that supports the values of gender equality and in removing social barriers that may exist.

The challenges faced in creating gender awareness through Islamic education must also be considered. One of the main challenges is the still substantial gender inequality in society and the strong traditions that often hinder change. Social change takes time and sustained effort and often goes against norms that have existed for centuries. In addition, Islamic education accessible to women may still be limited in some cases due to various factors such as access to adequate educational facilities, social norms restricting women from attending school, or economic inability to access education. Therefore, improving the access and quality of Islamic education for women should be the main focus in increasing gender awareness.

Islamic education must also adapt to understand the new challenges in the context of globalization and evolving information technology. Information and views on gender equality can spread quickly through social media and technology, but it can also spread misconceptions. Therefore, Islamic education should equip students with a critical and robust understanding of gender issues. In addition, cooperation between Islamic

⁸ Chimaraoke Izugbara et al., “‘They Say Our Work Is Not Halal’: Experiences and Challenges of Refugee Community Workers Involved in Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Care in Dadaab, Kenya,” *Journal of Refugee Studies* 33, no. 3 (2020): 521–36, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fey055>; Judith-Ann Walker, “Engaging Islamic Opinion Leaders on Child Marriage: Preliminary Results from Pilot Projects in Nigeria,” *The Review of Faith & International Affairs* 13, no. 3 (2015): 48–58, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15570274.2015.1075760>.

education institutions and other formal education institutions is essential. Cross-disciplinary and cross-sectoral approaches must be applied to create an educational environment supporting gender awareness. This includes the integration of gender issues in curricula, teacher training, and the development of inclusive teaching materials.

It is also important to note the importance of the role of the family in supporting gender awareness through Islamic education. The family is the first environment in which individuals learn the values and norms that will shape their views on gender. Therefore, Islamic education that supports gender equality should be practiced in the family, including in the division of household duties, understanding of the roles of women and men, and appreciation of the contributions of both. Community involvement also significantly impacts promoting gender awareness through Islamic education. Community programs that support gender education and advocacy can be places for individuals to share experiences and strengthen their commitment to gender equality. In many Muslim communities, local initiatives and social activities can also be a platform for discussion and addressing relevant gender issues.

Furthermore, support from Islamic educational institutions and non-governmental organizations is essential in advancing the agenda of gender equality through Islamic education. They can provide resources, guidance, and training for teachers and educators to integrate gender issues into curriculum and teaching. They can also conduct public campaigns and outreach to raise gender awareness among the Muslim community. In addition, policy changes at the national and regional levels can also have a significant impact on raising gender awareness through Islamic education. Education policies that support gender equality, improving women's access to education, and eliminating gender discrimination in schools are vital steps that need to be taken by the government.⁹

The importance of Islamic education in raising gender awareness is also related to efforts to bridge the gender gap in the Muslim community and global society in general. Gender equality is not only a local issue but also a part of global issues concerning human rights. Muslim communities can play a significant role in international efforts to achieve gender equality. Islamic education also has the potential to create cultural change in society. Through instruction focusing on gender awareness, we can develop a more inclusive culture where women and men feel valued and have equal rights in different aspects of life. It can help end social norms restricting women and reduce existing societal inequalities.

It is essential to recognize that efforts to raise gender awareness through Islamic education require a holistic approach that covers all stages of education, from primary to tertiary level. This means integrating the principles of gender equality in curricula and teaching in religious schools, boarding schools, universities, and other Islamic educational institutions. In addition, developing subject matter that conforms to spiritual values and supports gender awareness is essential. This should include a better understanding of the role of women in Islamic history, as well as how they contributed to the development of religion and society. Islamic education should also include discussion of women's rights in Islam and how to promote gender equality in various contexts of daily life.

⁹ Naila Kabeer, "Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: A Critical Analysis of the Third Millennium Development Goal 1," *Gender & Development* 13, no. 1 (2005): 13–24, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13552070512331332273>; Funmi J Para-Mallam, "Promoting Gender Equality in the Context of Nigerian Cultural and Religious Expression: Beyond Increasing Female Access to Education," *Compare* 40, no. 4 (2010): 459–77, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2010.490370>.

Furthermore, involving teachers and educators in training on gender issues and how to integrate them into Islamic education is critical. Teachers who have a good understanding of gender equality can positively influence students and help change social norms in schools and society. Islamic education can also utilize various media, including radio, television, and online platforms, to spread the message of gender equality. This can include media-based educational programs dedicated to promoting gender awareness and addressing issues related to gender inequality.

Of course, Islamic education that supports gender awareness is about teaching and applying these values in everyday practice. Therefore, Islamic educational institutions must create an environment that promotes gender equality, including in the division of duties and responsibilities and advertising women's participation in the life of schools and religious institutions. It is important to note that gender awareness is about women's rights and creating a more just and balanced society where all individuals, regardless of gender, have equal opportunities.¹⁰ An Islamic educational approach that supports gender awareness is about creating a better culture where religious values and gender equality values can synergize. To achieve gender equality through Islamic education, continuous efforts and collaboration of the entire community are required. With a shared commitment to changing social norms, eliminating gender stereotypes, and promoting equality, we can create a more just and inclusive society where individuals can grow and develop to their potential.

Empowering Women Through Islamic Education

The empowerment of women through Islamic education is a crucial topic in understanding the role of women in Muslim societies and how education can be a tool to elevate their status and rights. Around the world, women have long faced challenges in various aspects of life, including education, employment, and participation in social and political life. Islamic education, an integral part of Muslim culture and identity, has excellent potential to play an essential role in creating positive change.

Islamic education has several vital dimensions as an instrument for women's empowerment. Islamic education should provide equal access for women to religious knowledge and general science. It ensures that women have an adequate knowledge base to participate in society and contribute to development. In addition, Islamic education that supports women's empowerment must also remove social and cultural barriers that may exist. It includes overcoming gender stereotypes that limit women's career choices, family roles, and participation in public life. Islamic education should provide a better understanding of the concepts of gender equality contained in religious teachings.

Furthermore, it is essential to achieve women's empowerment through Islamic education to involve the Muslim community in this effort. This includes involving religious leaders, scholars, families, and individuals in understanding and supporting gender equality. The Muslim community must jointly take responsibility for eliminating gender discrimination and promoting women's rights. Islamic education also has the potential to assist women in the development of social and leadership skills necessary to succeed in various aspects of life. It includes the development of communication,

¹⁰ Endalcachew Bayeh, "The Role of Empowering Women and Achieving Gender Equality to the Sustainable Development of Ethiopia," *Pacific Science Review B: Humanities and Social Sciences* 2, no. 1 (2016): 37–42, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psr.b.2016.09.013>; Teresa Rees, "Reflections on the Uneven Development of Gender Mainstreaming in Europe," *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 7, no. 4 (2005): 555–74, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616740500284532>.

problem-solving, and cooperation skills. Inclusive Islamic education should give women practical tools to participate in society and actively play a role in development.

Women's empowerment through Islamic education also positively impacts social and economic aspects. Women who are empowered through education have more opportunities to participate in economic and social life. It can help reduce poverty levels and improve family well-being. Women with access to quality Islamic education are also more likely to take a role in decision-making in the family and community. They become agents of change in their communities and can contribute to solutions to existing social problems. Thus, Islamic education that supports women's empowerment plays a role in creating a more democratic and inclusive society.

It is important to remember that Islamic education impacts not only women but also men and society as a whole. When women are supported and empowered, it creates a more harmonious environment where men and women work together to achieve common goals. Societies that respect women's rights tend to be more stable and prosperous. Furthermore, the empowerment of women through Islamic education also has an impact on future generations. Girls who see their mothers empowered through education tend to be more motivated to pursue their education. This creates a positive domino effect that can impact society in the long term.

Women's empowerment through Islamic education is also closely related to security and peace issues.¹¹ Research shows that societies where women have greater access to education and a more vital role in public life tend to be more stable and have lower levels of conflict. Educated women have the knowledge and skills necessary to prevent conflict, defuse tension, and promote peace. In addition, Islamic education that supports women's empowerment can help address the problem of gender-based violence. These include harassment, rape, and domestic violence. Education that empowers women to know their rights and understand the importance of fighting against all forms of violence is critical in addressing this problem.

Women with a solid Islamic education are also more likely to be agents of change in their society. They can play a role in changing social norms that are detrimental to women and stimulate positive change. They can also become leaders who fight for women's rights and gender issues on a larger scale, including national and international. Islamic education that supports women's empowerment also has implications for improving family welfare. Educated women tend to have better child health, nutrition, and development knowledge. They can contribute to their family more effectively, improving their quality of life and well-being.

Women's empowerment through Islamic education also positively impacts improving social and economic welfare in the community. Women with greater access to Islamic education tend to have better job opportunities and can contribute actively to economic growth. This, in turn, can reduce poverty and improve people's overall standard of living. Islamic education that empowers women also creates a domino effect regarding health. Educated women tend to have better knowledge about health care and proper nutrition. They can make better decisions about the health of their families and children, which contributes to improving family well-being and lowering infant and maternal mortality.

Islamic education that supports women's empowerment also plays a role in poverty alleviation. Education provides women with the knowledge and skills necessary to be

¹¹ Elisabeth Porter, "Rethinking Women's Empowerment," *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development* 8, no. 1 (2013): 1–14, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15423166.2013.785657>.

productive members of society and creates more excellent economic opportunities. It helps reduce economic inequality and improve women's access to financial resources. Furthermore, educated women tend to know more about their rights, including property rights, a decent job, and legal rights. They can protect themselves from economic exploitation and oppression. Islamic education can provide an understanding of religious values that support women's rights and social justice.

Women's empowerment through Islamic education also helps address environmental issues and contribute to sustainable development. When women have equal access to Islamic teaching, they become more aware of ecological problems and their essential role in preserving nature. This creates the potential for more sustainable environmental management, as educated women can play a crucial role in promoting environmentally friendly practices in families and communities. Islamic education that supports women's empowerment also plays a role in addressing social and cultural inequalities. In many societies, some patriarchal norms and values hinder women's progress. Islamic education should include a better understanding of the principles of gender equality in religious teachings to change the standards that harm women.

Women's empowerment through Islamic education also positively impacts efforts to maintain and strengthen cultural and religious identity in Muslim societies. When women get a strong Islamic education, they can understand religious values and cultural heritage more deeply. They can play an important role in conveying these values to the next generation, thus maintaining cultural and religious sustainability. In addition, Islamic education that empowers women also provides tools to face contemporary challenges. In a changing world, educated women have critical thinking, analytical skills, and the ability to tackle complex problems. They are prepared to face global challenges such as climate change, conflict, and economic change.

Women's empowerment through Islamic education also positively impacts the preservation and enrichment of cultural and religious heritage. When women have greater access to Islamic teaching, they not only understand their religious values more deeply but can also become protectors and bearers of their traditional cultural values. They can play an important role in preserving traditions and values passed on from generation to generation so society does not lose its cultural roots. In addition, women educated in Islamic education also have a significant role in preserving language and literature in their community. Language is the foundation of culture, and educated women can document, teach, and protect traditional languages that may be endangered. This helps maintain linguistic and cultural diversity.

Islamic education that supports women's empowerment can also present diverse perspectives in religious discussions. In many Muslim societies, women may have different spiritual understandings or emphasize certain aspects of religion that may enrich the overall spiritual knowledge. They can play a role in promoting tolerance, pluralism, and a deeper understanding of Islam. Furthermore, women educated in Islamic education have a greater chance of playing the role of religious leaders in their communities. They can be teachers, advisors, and religious leaders who guide their communities spiritually and morally. It helps develop people's spiritual quality of life.

Islamic education that supports women's empowerment also plays a role in facing global challenges. When women have better religious knowledge, they can play a role in understanding and addressing global issues such as conflict, peace, climate change, and poverty. As such, women's empowerment through Islamic education is about ensuring that women have a strong role in safeguarding and enriching cultural and religious

heritage and contributing to spiritual understanding and global peace. It is an investment in the culture and values we inherit and will pass on to the next generation. With the shared commitment of the entire community, it can achieve the goal of gender equality and greater empowerment of women in society and the world.

Challenges in the Implementation of Islamic Education for Women Empowerment

Implementing Islamic education to empower women is important in building a more just, inclusive, and sustainable society. However, like many other programs and initiatives, Islamic education aimed at strengthening the role of women in society is also faced with various challenges that need to be overcome for this goal to be achieved successfully. One of the main challenges in the implementation of Islamic education for the empowerment of women is limited access. In many countries, especially in rural areas and less developed societies, women's access to quality Islamic education remains limited. These accessibility issues include factors such as distance to school, cost of education, and social norms that restrict women from attending school. Therefore, efforts must be made to overcome these barriers and ensure that every woman has equal access to Islamic education.

The quality of Islamic education is also an important challenge. To empower women effectively, Islamic education must be of high quality. Curricula, teaching methods, and resources should support effective and relevant learning. Many schools and madrasas need to improve the quality of their Islamic education to provide instruction that meets the needs of women. In addition, gender bias in curricula and teaching is another challenge. A curriculum that is not balanced in portraying the roles of men and women in history, religion, and society can reinforce gender stereotypes and hinder women's empowerment.¹² In addressing this, Islamic education should promote a balanced understanding of the position of women in Islam and inspire women about their potential in various fields.

Another challenge is inequality in the school and madrasa environment. Women often face discrimination and harassment in the educational environment. This includes discrimination in school settings, insecurity around school, and verbal and physical abuse. Creating a safe and inclusive environment for women in the educational environment is a must and involves the entire school and surrounding communities. The role of teachers and educators is also crucial in the success of Islamic education, which focuses on women's empowerment. Teachers who are gender sensitive and trained in gender issues can have a positive impact on empowering women. Therefore, it is necessary to improve the training and professional development of teachers who promote awareness of gender issues.

Social and cultural issues also hinder the implementation of Islamic education for women's empowerment. Social norms, patriarchal cultures, and traditions restricting women's participation in education and society must be addressed.¹³ This requires

¹² Kazi Md Mukitil Islam and M Niaz Asadullah, "Gender Stereotypes and Education: A Comparative Content Analysis of Malaysian, Indonesian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi School Textbooks," *PloS One* 13, no. 1 (2018): e0190807, <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0190807>; Enna Gudhlanga, Chipo Chirimuuta, and Crispen Bhukuvhani, "Towards a Gender Inclusive Curriculum in Zimbabwe's Education System: Opportunities and Challenges," *Gender and Behaviour* 10, no. 1 (2012): 4533–45, <https://hdl.handle.net/10520/EJC121832>.

¹³ Charles Gyan and Magnus Mfofo-M'Carthy, "Women's Participation in Community Development in Rural Ghana: The Effects of Colonialism, Neoliberalism, and Patriarchy," *Community Development* 53, no. 3 (2022): 295–308, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15575330.2021.1959362>; Kunta Devi Pun

collaborative efforts with communities, religious leaders, and other stakeholders to change views that do not support gender equality. In addition, financial issues are an important challenge in implementing Islamic education that supports women's empowerment. These programs require resources to run effectively, including facilities, textbooks, teacher training, and financial aid for underprivileged families. Significant investment is needed to ensure that Islamic education that supports women's empowerment can run well.

Another challenge in the implementation of Islamic education for the empowerment of women is the lack of social and family support. Women often face pressure from family or society to pursue more limited traditional roles. Women seeking higher Islamic education may face rejection or obstacles from their families and surrounding communities. Therefore, it is important to raise awareness and support in families and communities towards women's Islamic education as a means of empowerment. Furthermore, the issue of geographical mobility is also an important obstacle to women's access to Islamic teaching, especially in rural and remote areas. Women may face difficulties reaching qualified Islamic educational institutions due to distance, limited transportation, and lack of accessibility. Efforts must be made to expand the network of Islamic schools and madrasas in remote areas and improve transportation access.

Another challenge that must be faced is the lack of successful female role models. When women do not have examples of women succeeding in Islamic education and careers, they may have difficulty visualizing their potential. Therefore, it is important to identify and promote successful women in various fields as inspirations and role models. In addition, Islamic education that supports women's empowerment often requires significant financial support. It covers tuition fees, textbooks, and other educational resources. Many families with limited resources may face difficulties financing their women's education. Improving access to scholarships, financial aid programs, and educational assistance is key to addressing this economic problem.

The next challenge in implementing Islamic education for women's empowerment is the lack of access to technology and digital resources. In the digital age, access to computers, the internet, and other technologies is essential to improve learning. However, many women, especially in rural areas, may not have adequate access to this technology. This can hinder their access to online educational resources, limiting their educational opportunities. Furthermore, inequality in gender roles in society remains a significant obstacle. Patriarchal cultures and social norms restricting women in household and care roles can make it difficult for them to pursue higher education or careers.¹⁴ Women are often expected to prioritize their domestic functions over education or work. It is important to change culture and social norms that support gender equality and women's empowerment.

Economic problems can also be an obstacle. Many women may face difficulties financing their education, especially in environments with limited family income. The availability of affordable scholarships, financial aid programs, or training can help

et al., "Community Perceptions on Domestic Violence against Pregnant Women in Nepal: A Qualitative Study," *Global Health Action* 9, no. 1 (2016): 31964, <https://doi.org/10.3402/gha.v9.31964>.

¹⁴ Suud Sarim Karimullah, "Reinterpretation of Women's Position in Islam Through Ta'wil KH. Husein Muhammad" (Arjis, 2022); Arif Sugitanata and Suud Sarim Karimullah, "Implementasi Hukum Keluarga Islam Pada Undang-Undang Perkawinan Di Indonesia Mengenai Hak Memilih Pasangan Bagi Perempuan," *SETARA: Jurnal Studi Gender Dan Anak* 5, no. 1 (2023): 1-14, <https://doi.org/10.32332/jsqa.v5i01.6536>.

address these issues and provide women with opportunities to pursue their education. Another challenge that needs to be addressed is the lack of access to good health care. Good physical and mental health is important in a person's ability to get a quality education. Problems such as limited access to reproductive health services, prenatal care, and mental health services can hinder women's development. Therefore, it is important to ensure that women have adequate access to the necessary health care.

Furthermore, implementing Islamic education that supports women's empowerment also requires support from religious leaders and community leaders. Suppose religious leaders and community leaders understand and support the importance of Islamic education for women's empowerment. In that case, it can help overcome barriers and increase acceptance of these programs in society. Another challenge is the need for effective monitoring and evaluation in measuring the impact of these Islamic education programs. Robust data and regular monitoring are needed to understand the progress of women taking the program and to assess its effectiveness. This will help in making necessary improvements and adjustments in the program.

Challenges in implementing Islamic education for women's empowerment also include funding and allocation of resources. Educational programs that support women require considerable investment in educational infrastructure, Teacher Training, Learning resources, and scholarships. Sufficient financial resources are essential to ensure that the program runs well. In many cases, budget constraints affect the quality and accessibility of Islamic education for women. Therefore, it is important to increase funding and appropriate allocation of resources for these programs. Another challenge is to ensure that Islamic education that supports women's empowerment is in line with the needs and expectations of women themselves. Sometimes, these programs may not take into account individual aspirations and preferences. It is important to listen to women's voices and involve them in planning and implementing the program. Understanding women's needs and wants can make these programs more relevant and effective.

The problem of inequality in policy and law can also be an obstacle. Identifying and addressing legal barriers impeding women's access to quality Islamic education is important. It covers issues such as child marriage, inheritance inequality, and gender discrimination in family law. Policy changes that support gender equality and women's rights are essential. In addition, society is often faced with rapid social and economic change, especially in an increasingly connected and globalized world. Islamic educational approaches to women's empowerment must reflect these changes and prepare women for new challenges and opportunities. This can include developing digital skills, understanding the global economy, and active participation in sustainable development.

Next, evaluate the long-term impact of Islamic education programs that support women's empowerment. Evaluation of these programs should include long-term monitoring of graduates to understand the extent to which this education has positively impacted their lives. It provides job creation, decision-making participation, and their societal role. Understanding the long-term impact is critical to measuring the program's success and making the necessary improvements. In the face of these challenges, stakeholders must be strongly committed, including governments, educational institutions, non-governmental organizations, and communities. Islamic education programs supporting women's empowerment invest in a more inclusive and sustainable future. With awareness of the various challenges and joint efforts to overcome them, it can achieve the goal of empowering women through Islamic education and creating a more just, strong, and sustainable society.

Conclusion

Islamic education has a crucial role in supporting gender equality and women's empowerment. Islamic education is not only a means to provide equal access to education but also plays an important role in raising gender awareness among women, strengthening belief in their rights, as well as encouraging them to participate in society actively. In addition, various challenges in the implementation of Islamic education for women empowerment, such as lack of access, inequalities in the school environment, restrictive social norms, and funding issues, can be addressed through close collaboration between various stakeholders and changes in culture, social standards, and policies that support gender equality. Thus, Islamic education has great potential to create a more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable society by empowering women and addressing gender inequality. With commitment and joint efforts, the empowerment of women through Islamic education can become a greater reality in the community and the world.

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