



Polemics about Women's Leadership from a Modern Islamic Perspective

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Abstrak

Kepemimpinan perempuan dalam kancah politik menuai kontroversi dalam Islam. Hal ini disebabkan hadits shahih yang menyatakan bahwa suatu kaum tidak beruntung jika dipimpin oleh wanita. Bagi ulama konservatif, mereka akan memahami hadits secara apa adanya (tekstual). Namun, ulama moderat akan memahaminya dari perspektif kontekstual. Agama Islam berpedoman pada Al-Qur'an dan hadits, oleh karena itu tidak adil jika hanya mengambil gambar dari sisi hadits dan mengabaikan Al-Qur'an. Artikel ini akan membahas kepemimpinan perempuan dari perspektif Al-Qur'an, hadits, biologi perempuan dan sosiologi bangsa Indonesia. Kesimpulan dari artikel ini adalah Al-Qur'an melegitimasi kepemimpinan perempuan melalui kisah ratu Saba' (Bilqis). Hadits tentang kepemimpinan perempuan dapat dipahami sebagai 'komentar' Nabi tentang pergantian kepemimpinan di Persia dan memiliki muatan lokal-temporal. Perempuan memiliki kelemahan biologis saat menstruasi dan hamil, kelemahan fisik dibandingkan laki-laki, kelemahan psikis dan emosional. Padahal, bangsa Indonesia sebenarnya menganut patriarki. Jadi, kontestasi politik terbuka lebar bagi siapa saja, tanpa memandang jenis kelamin. Siapapun yang terbaik, dia berhak menjadi pemimpin.

Kata Kunci: polemik, kepemimpinan perempuan, al-Qur'an, hadits, sosial budaya

Abstract

Women's leadership in the political arena reaps controversy in Islam. This is due to the authentic hadith which states that a people will not be lucky if they are led by women. For conservative scholars, they will understand the hadith as it is (textual). However, moderate scholars will understand it from a contextual perspective. The Islamic religion is guided by the Qur'an and hadith, therefore, it would be unfair if you only take pictures from the side of the hadith and ignore the al-Qur'an. This article will discuss women's leadership from the perspective of the Al-Qur'an, hadith, women's biology and the sociology of the Indonesian nation. The conclusion of this article is that the Al-Qur'an legitimizes women's leadership

through the story of the queen of Saba' (Bilqis). The hadith about women's leadership can be understood as the Prophet's 'comment' on the change of leadership in Persia and has a local-temporal content. Women have biological weaknesses during menstruation and pregnancy, physical weaknesses compared to men, psychological and emotional weaknesses. Meanwhile, the Indonesian nation actually adheres to patriarchy. So, political contestation is wide open to anyone, regardless of gender. Whoever is the best, he has the right to be a leader.

Keywords: polemic, women's leadership, al-Qur'an, hadith, social culture

Introduction

In Indonesia, controversies regarding women's leadership have occurred, especially when Megawati Soekarno Putri ran for President of the Republic of Indonesia in 2004. At that time, it was not uncommon for the clerics to feel unsuited to the leadership of a woman. This discrepancy is not without reason, because in authentic hadith it is stated that a people will not be lucky if they are led by a woman (HR. Bukhari).(Muhammad, 2022)

Apart from these theological-normative considerations, women's leadership has indeed reaped controversy from various matters. Starting from physical, biological, even mental and emotional strength. In the past, many Islamic leaders who were men were suspected of being the cause of patriarchal culture. This was exacerbated by the 'no female clerics' who were brilliant in composing classical books. The impact is that Islam is branded as a religion that 'should corner women' in matters of leadership.(Muhammad Arif Mustaqim et al., 2022)

In a democratic system like that adopted by the Indonesian people, everyone has the same opportunity to become a leader. At this time, many women have appeared in the political arena, both as village heads, sub-district heads, regional heads, ministers, the DPR and the president. Equal rights in political contestation should not be measured by gender, but self-quality. It doesn't matter if he's a man or a woman, as long as he has qualities that he can rely on, he can be a leader.(Yakar, 2022)

On the one hand, Indonesia adheres to the notion of democracy which gives equal rights to every citizen to become a leader. However, on the other hand, the majority of Indonesia's population is Muslim and Muslims believe that the Qur'an and hadith are the basis of law. While the hadith above clearly prohibits women from becoming leaders. But is that really the case? Does the Al-Qur'an not talk about women's leadership at all? This article will discuss women's leadership from the theological-normative, physical, biological and socio-cultural aspects of Indonesian society.(Rouzi et al., 2022)

Research Method

This study seeks to understand the meaning of Islamic perspective about women's leadership in the new era. These communities are connected to the five components that form settlements, namely: nature, people, society, physical buildings, and networks. Using a qualitative descriptive research approach, in-depth interviews with informants, and

observation, based on the research objectives above. Then the data collection technique was carried out by triangulation (combined), inductive/qualitative data analysis and the results of qualitative research emphasized meaning rather than generalization.

Results and Discussion

Nash Al-Qur'an

The existence of a ban on women as state leaders is actually contained in the hadith (which will be discussed after the Qur'an). However, before entering there the author will explain about the role of women leaders described in the Qur'an. Because, the source of law in Islam is the Al-Qur'an beforehand compared to the hadith.

As far as the author knows, in the Qur'an there is not a single verse explicitly which prohibits women from becoming leaders in the world of politics. On the contrary, in the issue of women's leadership, the author finds an explanation of the verse which explains that the Qur'an actually 'legalizes' it. (Mohamed, 2022)

The legality of the Qur'an regarding women's leadership is contained in a story (qas.as.) which contains no orders or prohibitions. However, the story can be used as '*ibrah*', because the purpose of each story in the Qur'an is its '*ibrah*'. The Qur'an's explicit statement regarding women's leadership is in the story of the Queen of Saba (Queen Bilqis) which is contained in surah al-Naml [27]: 20-40.

It is said that the queen Bilqis has a great throne that rivals the kingdom of Solomon. Then the prophet Solomon held a competition for anyone who could move the throne of queen Bilqis before him? However, the Qur'an does not explicitly explain whether the competition has prizes or not. Even so, the contest continued and was won by a pious servant named Asif bin Barkhiya .

Ifrit genie who was still under the control of Prophet Sulaiman - stated that 'I can bring the throne before you (Sulaiman) get up from your seat'. But a servant named Asif bin Barkhiya- stated 'I will move the throne before your eyes blink'. After that the queen of Saba's throne moved before the kingdom of Solomon in a blink of an eye.

The beginning of the story of the queen of Saba' begins with the absence of the Hud-hud bird during the 'absent' by the prophet Sulayman. At that time all could be present except the Hud-hud bird. However, the delay brought big news to Sulay-man. In surah al-Naml [27] verses 20-24 Allah says which means:

20. He (Sulaiman) examined the birds and said: "Why did I not see the hud-hud [a type of woodpecker], was he one of those absent.

21. Really I will really punish him with a harsh punishment or really slaughter him except if he really comes to me with a clear reason".

22. So not long after (come Hud-hud), then he said : "I already know something that you don't know yet; and I bring you from the land of Saba an important news that is believed.

23. Indeed, I met a woman [Bilqis] who ruled over them, and she was gifted with everything and had a great throne.

24. I found him and his people worshipping the sun, besides Allah; and satan has made them look beautiful in their deeds and then hindered them from (Allah's) way, so that they were not guided.

This story in the Al-Qur'an at least provides evidence that there is female leadership in the Al-Qur'an. Allah did not forbid him nor did he give an order to elect a female leader. However, what is emphasized in this verse is about backbiting (gossiping) by Hud-hud that the queen does not have faith which is marked by 'worshipping the sun'. But in the end the queen Bilqis acknowledged the greatness of the prophet Solomon and declared that she followed Solomon's religion by worshipping Allah alone.

Understanding Misogynist Hadith

In this case the author will include two hadiths that will be used as an analysis of women's leadership, namely that women are considered weak in mind and a people are disadvantaged if they are led by women. First, the initial suspicion is that there is a hadith which explains that a woman's mind is half that of a man's. This statement is true in the authentic hadith narrated by Bukhari, but the understanding of the hadith is not complete, because when the understanding of the hadith is complete it will give a different meaning. Here is the full text of the hadith which states that a woman's mind is half that of a man's: Has told us Sa'i-d bin Abi-Maryam said, had told us Muh,ammad bin Ja'far said, had told me Zayd namely Ibn Aslam from 'Iya-d, bin 'Abdullah from Abu-Sa'i -d al-Khudri he said, "Rasulullah SAW. on the feast of 'Eid al-Adha or Fitri went out to the place of prayer, he passed the women saying: "O women, give charity, because it was shown to me that you are the most inhabiting hell." We asked, "Why is it, O Messenger of Allah?" He replied: "You curse a lot and deny a lot of husband's gifts. And I have never seen from the bones of men whose minds are quicker to lose and whose religion is weaker than you." We asked again, "O Messenger of Allah, what is the sign of a lack of reason and a weak religion?" testimony of men?" We said, "That's true." He said again: "That's the lack of reason. Isn't a woman when she is menstruating she doesn't pray and fast?" We said, "That's true." He said: "That is the deficiency of her religion.(Djono et al., 2022)

This hadith does indeed give the impression of 'putting women in a corner' from various sides. But the author will only explain about the aspects of women who are less resourceful. In this hadith, it is clear that what is meant by lack of reason is because the testimony of a woman is half that of a man. This is related to surah al-Baqarah [2] verse 282 which means... if the debtor is a person who is weak in mind or weak (his condition) or he himself is unable to write, then let his guardian write honestly, and testify with two witnesses from men (among you). If there are not two men, then (permissible) one man and two women from the witnesses you are pleased with, so that if one forgets then one reminds him. Let the witnesses not be reluctant (to give information) when they are summoned.(Samier & Elkaleh, 2021)

The context of this verse talks about indirect transactions (debt). So at such times the transaction must have written witnesses and eye witnesses. It was this eye witness who described one man and two women. If you look at the purpose of the testimony, it is to remind

each other if one of them forgets. Meanwhile, the second objective is for the witness to be present when summoned to testify. However, if one of them is absent, the other witness can still represent. (Koburtay et al., 2023)

The physical-biological condition of women is different from men. Women can conceive and give birth. This becomes an obstacle when the woman is used as a witness and requires her to be present at the trial that testimony. So, the determination of two women to be witnesses is to anticipate that there will still be someone who can provide testimony when needed if one of the witnesses is unable to attend such as being pregnant or giving birth. While deficiencies in religious matters are also related with biological problems. Women are indeed forbidden to perform certain acts of worship during their puerperium or menstruation. All that is not a woman's desire, but 'God's will'. If they were allowed to choose, of course all women would want to be free from this 'obstacle' and be disciplined in worship. If it is God's decree, do we then 'blame God' because he cannot worship?

In this context, the meaning could be that the woman lacks religion because she is unable to worship in terms of quantity, not quality. Because the only one who can measure the quality of a person's worship is Allah SWT. Therefore, it cannot be generalized that a woman with less religion means less obedience. But the understanding is that it only decreases in quantity and the lack of quantity of worship is God's will, not the will of the woman herself. So, lack of reason and religion in this matter is not a barrier to being a leader. Second, the hadith about women who are leaders, Al-Bukhari in his authentic hadith states that: A people who are led by a woman will not find luck (HR. Bukhari from Uthma-n bin Haithamr).

There are some scholars who understand these texts and hadiths textually, so the implication is that they forbid women from becoming heads of state or leaders of large institutions. This understanding is certainly not correct when looking at the hadith from the other side, namely from the context. The context of this hadith is very thick with the political atmosphere at that time that time. (Putra et al., 2021)

The story of the prophet Muhammad who sent a letter to the kingdom of Kisra which was rejected by tearing up the contents of the letter more or less is also the cause of this hadith. This hadith occurred when the Prophet heard from his companions that there was an appointment of the queen of Persia in 9 H. Whereas according to the existing Persian tradition, the appointment of the head of state was a man. The appointment was considered to violate Persian custom because previously the head of state was a man. The woman's name was Buwaran bint Svarawaih bin Kisra bin Barwaiz. She was appointed as the queen of Kisra after the commotion that caused many killings in the framework of the succession of the head of state. When the king died, Buwaran actually had a brother. However, the political climate heated up during the power struggle, causing Buwaran's brother to be killed so that Buwaran was crowned queen of Kisra. (Abbas & Rawabdeh, 2022)

In historical records, the person to whom the Prophet sent a letter inviting him to embrace Islam was his grandfather Buwaran who refused the Prophet's invitation and instead tore up the Prophet's letter. In the end the Prophet prayed to Allah that the Kisra kingdom would be torn

apart as well. Not long after the Prophet's prayer, Kisra heated up and an incident occurred as the author described above.

The Prophet said that "a people will not be lucky if led by a woman". At that time, the degree of women was not what it is today, they were not respected, they were not authoritative and so on. While the typical true leader is authoritative and respected. Thus, if they are not respected and dignified, then these people are threatened with destruction. It is in this context that the Prophet stated that "A people will not prosper if led by women." With reference to the events in this hadith, it can be concluded that the hadith has a local-temporal nature and is not universal. (Saleh, 2022)

Contextualization

In the current context, there are already many women who have extraordinary achievements, even exceeding men. Therefore, in today's era, the benchmark is not gender but self-quality. Anyone who is considered capable of bringing a better society, regardless of whether he is a man or a woman, is the right person to lead a society. How many women who proved successful in perform their duties as a leader. Both the President, ministers, governors, mayors, regents and so on. Leadership is not determined by gender, but by self-quality. (Rahim et al., 2022)

These names at least provide evidence that women's leadership cannot be underestimated. Tri Rismaharini, mayor of Surabaya served 2 terms until 2021 and won the title of the best mayor in the world. Khofifah Indarparawansa, minister of social affairs under President Joko Widodo who is currently the Governor of East Java. Puput Tantriana Sari, the Probolinggo defense regent, who has served since 2013 and in 2018, won 56% of the vote. Mundjidah Wahab, Regent of Jombang for the 2013-2018 period; Ika Puspitasari, mayor of Mojokerto for the 2018-2023 period; Anna Muawanah, regent of Bojonegoro for the 2018-2023 period; Faida, regent of Jember period 2016-2021. Haryanti Sutrisno, regent of Kediri 2 terms to year 2021. Dewanti Rumpoko, mayor of Batu until 2022. Rukmini Buchori, mayor of Probolinggo for the 2009-2014 period. All these names are just from one typology of leadership, namely the regional head in Java. Not to mention other typologies such as sub-district heads, village heads, ministers, and heads of other regions outside Java. In addition to political leaders, many leaders of higher education institutions are also occupied by women.

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Hadith Legal Status of Women's Leadership

The hadith above has the status of valid both from the history of Bukhari and others. However, the question is whether this legal status should be enforced today? No. Because not all of these hadiths have universal content. There are hadiths with local and temporal content, there are also those with universal content. Even though this hadith is valid, its legal content is

local-temporal. Local in the meaning for Kisra at that time and temporal is related to the 'prophet's comments' on the issue of Kisra's transition of power at that time .

Another example of a hadith having local-temporal content is 'al-Aimmah min Quraysh' (the Imam [leader] is from Quraysh). This hadith has the status of sahih lighairih, but what happens if this hadith is enforced around us. If there were no Quraysh, would there be no need for a leader? Of course it is still needed, because an area must have a leader. So, the legal status of hadith regarding women's leadership above must be understood and applied contextually and temporally.

Although the hadith about women's leadership above temporally charged, then the following should be considered when the leader is a woman. The Hadith of the Prophet can be applied in the present if only looking at the various considerations as follows:

First, related to mental. In general, women's mentality is below men's. Good about toughness in the face of trials, when facing difficult matters or other matters. Men are stronger than women. A simple example, for example, when driving a car that is about to crash, women are usually more concerned with closing their eyes than looking ahead and strategizing to avoid the collision. Moreover, most of them prioritize screaming rather than focusing on avoiding something. That means, mentally innate, women are indeed below men. Because mentally that is less strong in comparison with men, it is not strange when facing difficult situations women often panic and have the impact of making decisions that are not quite right. When experiencing serious problems, for example, women also often rely on tears as their weapon, even though state affairs are very difficult and are required to always be strong and firm in dealing with various problems so that the resulting decisions are in line with the expectations of the people.

Second, physical weakness. The physical strength of women is below average men. This difference can be seen in terms of height, physical strength and others. For heavy tasks such as walking long distances even to remote places and demanding physical strength, of course this will be an obstacle when the leader is a woman and this is minimal for men, because physically the average man is above woman . In addition, there are biological differences between women and men.

Third, biologically. If women become heads of state, then she will be a little disturbed at the time of menstruation. Because when menstruation occurs, she will experience hormonal and emotional changes, in such circumstances it will be difficult to decide complicated matters. If she is pregnant, then there will be a lot of time consumed. Because he had to rest for a few months. If you've only been pregnant once, it might just be easy. But if many times?

Is a country going to stop its policies just because the president is pregnant? Will a country fail important meetings just because the head of state gives birth? Will a government wheel stop for a moment because the head of government is menstruating?

All of that is the nature of women who are different from men. It is at times like that that women will be physically disturbed when they have to carry out such heavy state duties. So, in this matter, the choice of men and women to become heads of state is not seen from what is permissible and what is not permissible, but from what is good and what is not.

Patriarchal Issues

Feminists accuse that the impartiality of Islamic teachings on women is not only based on errors in understanding misogynist hadiths, but previous scholars are also accused of not taking sides with women. This is indicated by the absence of female clerics who wrote turath books and also the absence of female leaders in Islam after the Prophet Muhammad. died. So, these two things are considered to increasingly corner women in achieving leadership in various fields. Before further criticizing the prayer scholars. it would be nice for someone to introspect himself first in this patriarchal matter. (Hidayat et al., 2022)

Javanese social law actually also accommodates patriarchy (male domination) but indeed we ourselves are not aware of it. For example, when the wife became the head of the village (lurah), was the husband called the lurah? No. If the wife becomes president, is the husband called Mr President? No. But on the other hand, if the husband is the president, then the wife will also get the title of president, for example the president's mother, the village chief's mother and so on, even though the husband is the one who is in office. That means, our social system actually also approves of patriarchy, it's just that there are certain motives that corner Islam, as if Islam does not side with women. Even though our social system actually supports it. Therefore, the difference in terms of being a leader is not based on gender but on self-quality.

Conclusion

Women's leadership in Islam must be photographed from the side of the Qur'an beforehand compared to the hadith. Because the Al-Qur'an is the first legal basis. In the Qur'an there is a story that legalizes women's leadership, namely the story of the queen of Saba' (Bilqis) in surah al-Naml [27] verses 20-40. The hadith of the prophet which states that women's minds are half that of men must be understood in terms of quantity, not quality. Whereas the hadith which states that a people will not be lucky if they are led by women is related to the Prophet's comments to the Kisra kingdom which was undergoing a change of power by a woman named Buwaran.

Although this hadith has the status of valid, the legal content it contains is only local-temporal, not universal. Therefore, the understanding of the hadith cannot be applied textually but contextually. So, in this matter there is no obstacle for a woman to step into the world of politics. The existence of feminists who alleged that in the past there were no women among Islamic scholars and leaders caused a negative image of Islam that seemed as if Islamic teachings defended only men and singled out women. Even though this is actually not the case, the Javanese and even Indonesia themselves are actually patriarchal, but they don't realize it.

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