

Understanding the Concept of Gender in Qur'anic Interpretation (A Feminist Study of the Thought of M. Quraish Shihab)

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Abstrak

Dalam konteks global yang semakin berkembang, peran dan hak perempuan dalam upaya meningkatkan perekonomian dan kesejahteraan Masyarakat semakin menjadi kajian yang hangat diperbincangkan. Hal ini menunjukkan pentingnya menggali kontribusi Islam terhadap perjuangan kesetaraan gender dan memberikan sumbangan pada wacana global tentang hak-hak perempuan. Artikel ini bertujuan memahami konsep gender dalam perspektif *Tafsir al-Mishbah*. Metode yang digunakan adalah kualitatif dengan jenis penelitian kepustakaan dengan mengumpulkan, menganalisis, dan mensintesis teks-teks al-Qur'an yang berbicara konsep gender. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan tafsir *Ijmali* yang mengungkap penafsiran secara ringkas dan global, artikel ini menunjukkan bahwa Islam menegaskan kesetaraan esensial antara laki-laki dan perempuan di hadapan Allah, meskipun terdapat perbedaan biologis. Pemikiran M. Quraish Shihab menekankan bahwa perbedaan tersebut adalah kodrat yang telah ditetapkan Allah, namun bukan menjadi alasan untuk merendahkan atau mengabaikan hak-hak perempuan. Ini mengindikasikan pentingnya memperjuangkan kesetaraan gender dalam konteks kekinian dan mendorong pemahaman yang inklusif dan adil terhadap peran perempuan dalam masyarakat.

Kata kunci: Gender, M. Quraish Shihab, tafsir al-Qur'an

Abstract

In an increasingly developing global context, the role and rights of women in efforts to improve the economy and welfare of society are increasingly becoming a hot topic of discussion. This shows the importance of exploring Islam's contribution to the struggle for gender equality and contributing to the global discourse on women's rights. This article aims to understand the concept of gender from the perspective of *Tafsir al-Mishbah*. The method used is qualitative with a type of library research by collecting, analyzing and synthesizing Al-Qur'an texts that discuss the concept of gender. By using an *Ijmali* tafsir approach that reveals a concise and global interpretation, this article shows that Islam affirms the essential

equality between men and women before Allah, despite biological differences. M. Quraish Shihab's thoughts emphasize that these differences are nature that has been established by Allah, but are not a reason to demean or ignore women's rights. This indicates the importance of fighting for gender equality in the current context and encouraging an inclusive and fair understanding of the role of women in society.

Keywords: Gender, M. Quraish Shihab, interpretation of the Qur'an

INTRODUCTION

There is increasing interest in studying gender issues, especially in relation to the concept of gender equality in Islam.¹ Discussion about women's rights and empowerment from a general perspective, as well as understanding the verses of the Qur'an and hadith which discuss the role of women, are the focus of discussion among academics, ulama and society at this time.² Responding to contemporary problems, including gender issues, contemporary figures have emerged in the study of al-Qur'an studies, such as Fazlur Rahman, Mohammad Arkun, Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd, Hassan Hanafi, Farid Esack, Asghar Ali Engineer, Amina Wadud-Muhsin and others. Studies that have become popular lately have a feminist style in interpretation, studies of interpretation, and so on.³

Within the framework of Islamic concepts, especially those rooted in the teachings of the Qur'an, the idea of gender equality contains two interrelated meanings. *First*, the Qur'an recognizes that both men and women have the same dignity, without distinction based on gender. *Second*, both men and women have equal rights and responsibilities in all aspects of life. However, the derogatory view that women are weak creatures is also widespread in the name of religion.⁴

There are four different streams of feminism in the effort fighting for gender equality. *First*, liberal feminism emphasizes political values where individual autonomy is prioritized, including equality and moral values that must not be imposed by others, as well as the freedom to have one's own judgment. *Second*, Marxist feminism sees women's backwardness as a result of social, political and economic structures that are closely related to the capitalist system, not due to direct individual action. *Third*, radical feminism focuses on women's sexual realities and ignores other aspects of women's lives. *Fourth*, socialist feminism is more oriented towards women's awareness of their oppressed position in society. These four schools have different approaches and focuses in combating gender inequality, with

¹ Ahmad Zainal Abidin, et al., "Tafsir Gender Jawa: Telaah Tafsir Al-Ikhlil Fi Ma'ani Al-Tanzil Karya Misbah Mustafa", *Musawa Jurnal Studi Gender dan Islam* 18, no. 1 (2019), h. 1-17.

² Barella, et al., "Kesetaraan Gender dalam Perspektif Tafsir Al-Quran: Studi Analisis terhadap Peran dan Hak-Hak Perempuan", *Innovative Education Journal* 5, no. 3 (2023), h. 225.

³ Ahmad Baidowi, *Tafsir Feminis*, (Bandung: Nuansa Cendekia, 2018), h. 106.

⁴ Tri Wahyudi Ramdhan, "Tafsir Gender", *Jurnal Lisan al-Hal* 8, no. 1 (2016), h. 81.

each offering a unique analysis of the root of the problem and corresponding solutions.⁵

In this study, although the four schools of feminism have the same ultimate goal, namely achieving gender equality, in practice, they often have differences in the concept of thought and actions taken to achieve this goal.⁶ These differences can range from an emphasis on certain aspects of gender inequality, such as liberal feminism which places more emphasis on individual autonomy, Marxist feminism which sees inequality as a result of capitalist structures, radical feminism which focuses on women's sexual realities, and socialist feminism which highlighting the position of women in society.⁷

Conflicts between these schools can arise due to differences in views in terms of strategy, priorities and understanding of the root causes of gender inequality. For example, liberal feminism may be more inclined to support policies that strengthen individual rights, while Marxist feminism may lean more towards structural change in society. Gender issues emerge as a problem when they create injustice that harms both men and women, although this injustice is often felt more by women. The impact of gender inequality has encouraged the emergence of gender struggle movements.⁸

The modernist view of gender equality recognizes that men and women have the same rights and equal opportunities in public life. According to this view, women have the ability to take on leadership roles outside the household realm. This view is also stated to be in line with the teachings of the Qur'an, which gives a signal that women can also be leaders, not just men.⁹ Some scholars allow women to serve as leaders in a general context if they meet the criteria and conditions set to become a leader. This shows that, in modern views and certain religious interpretations, there are no obstacles for women to achieve leadership positions in society, provided they have the necessary abilities and qualifications.¹⁰

M. Quraish Shihab is an Indonesian commentator who has a unique approach to interpreting the Qur'an. Even though he studied at the *al-Azhar*

⁵ Amin Bendar, "Feminisme dan gerakan Sosial," *Al-Wardah: Jurnal Kajian Perempuan, Gender Dan Agama* 13, no. 1 (2019), h. 25-37.

⁶ YUSDANI YUSDANI, et al., "Re-interpretasi Teks Al-Qur'an dalam Budaya Patriarkhi Telisik Epistemologi Feminis Egaliterianisme Asma Barlas", *Jurnal Semiotika-Q: Kajian Ilmu al-Quran dan Tafsir* 2, no. 2 (2022), h. 160-181.

⁷ Nurjannah Nurjannah, "Gender Perspektif Teori feminisme, Teori Konflik dan Teori Sosiologi," *AL-WARDAH: Jurnal Kajian Perempuan, Gender dan Agama* 16, no. 1 (2022), h. 71-82.

⁸ Kristian Thomas Djara, "Gerakan Feminisme Radikal Opmt Dalam Isu Kekerasan Seksual Di Timor Timur Tahun 1974-1999," *Journal Civics and Social Studies* 4, no. 2 (2020), h. 82-94.

⁹ Muhammad Mishbahul Munir, "Kepemimpinan Perempuan Dalam Bidang Politik (Studi Komparasi Pemikiran M. Quraish Shihab dan Ibnu Katsir)", Skripsi, IAIN Ponorogo, 2018, h. 69-71.

¹⁰ Fahmi Ibnu Khoer, et al., "Kepemimpinan Perempuan Dalam Perspektif Hukum Islam", *As-Syar'i: Jurnal Bimbingan & Konseling Keluarga* 4, no. 1 (2022), h. 42-49.

institution which tends to have a traditional character, Quraish Shihab produced *Tafsir al-Mishbah* which shows his progressive thinking on several issues related to women.¹¹ Several aspects of his thinking, which include the role of women in the public sphere, women's leadership in society, as well as the limits of women's private parts and the obligation to wear the hijab, show a more inclusive view of women in Islam.¹² Quraish Shihab in his interpretation reflects an effort to present an interpretation that is appropriate to the context of the times and the needs of modern society, while still adhering to religious principles. In this way, her work makes an important contribution to the discourse on the role and rights of women in Islam, as well as inspiring progressive thinking in the Indonesian Muslim community.¹³

Many previous studies have examined the concept of gender in the Qur'an from various points of view. For example, research conducted by Alharira Eisyi Latifah and Dudin Shobaruddin with the title *Gender Equality in the al-Qur'an Perspective (Comparative Study of Tafsir Ibn Katsir and Tafsir al-Mishbah)*,¹⁴ Halimatussa'diyah, et al., linked the concept of gender in the Qur'an to matrilineal culture in Minangkabau,¹⁵ Eko Zulfikar and Ahmad Zainal Abidin, discussing gender equality from the perspective of Wahbah al-Zuhaili's interpretation which is seen as interpreting textually,¹⁶ Irsyadunnas, explains about gender according to Amina Wadud,¹⁷ Fidian Zahratun Nurra'ida and Muhammad Arif Fatkhurrozi, explain gender by relating it to the views of Sufi interpretation, and many more. The study conducted by this author focused on *Tafsir al-Mishbah* which is a monumental work by a leading Indonesian commentator.¹⁸ *Tafsir al-Mishbah* uses the *tahlili* method, which means the interpretation is carried out in detail by interpreting verse by verse according to the order of the letters contained in the

¹¹ M. Fatih, "Strengthen the Role of Munāsabah In Interpreting The Al-Qur'an: Study of M. Quraish Shihab Perspective On Tafsir Al-Mishbah", *MUSHAF: Jurnal Tafsir Berwawasan Keindonesiaan* 1, no. 2 (2021).

¹² Nigita Ariyani, "Korelasi Ayat Manfaat dan Mudharat Dalam Al-Qur'an (Kajian *Taqdim wa Ta'khir* Perspektif Maudhu'i Dalam Tafsir Al-Misbah)", *Jurnal Semiotika-Q: Kajian Ilmu al-Quran dan Tafsir* 2, no. 2 (2022), h. 182-193.

¹³ Atik Wartini, "Corak penafsiran M. Quraish Shihab dalam tafsir al-Misbah," *Hunafa: Jurnal Studia Islamika* 11, no. 1 (2014), h. 109-126.

¹⁴ Latifah, "Kesetaraan Gender Dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an (Studi Komparatif Tafsir Ibnu Katsir dan Al-Mishbah)", *Tafahus: Jurnal Pengkajian Islam* 2, no. 1 (2022), h. 74-84.

¹⁵ Halimatussa'diyah Halimatussa'diyah, et al., "Minangkabaunese matrilineal: The correlation between the Qur'an and gender", *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 80, no. 1 (2024).

¹⁶ Eko Zulfikar, "Penafsiran Tekstual Terhadap Ayat-Ayat Gender: Telaah Penafsiran Wahbah az-Zuhaili Dalam Kitab Tafsir al-Munir", *Al-Quds: Jurnal Studi Al-Quran dan Hadis* 3, no. 2 (2019).

¹⁷ Irsyadunnas, "Tafsir Ayat-Ayat Gender Ala Amina Wadud Perspektif Hermeneutika Gadamer", *Musawa Jurnal Studi Gender dan Islam* 14, no. 2 (2015).

¹⁸ Fidian Zahratun Nurra'ida, et al., "Relasi Gender Dalam Tafsir Sufi (Studi Pemikiran Saciko Murata Dalam the Tao of Islam)", *Ullil Albab: Jurnal Ilmiah Multidisiplin* 2, no. 7 (2023).

manuscripts of the Qur'an. This method allows readers to follow the flow of interpretation systematically and in detail.¹⁹ This is to provide a better understanding of the concept of gender in order to reduce discrimination in society.

RESEARCH METHODS

The method used by the author is a qualitative research method with the type of *library research*. Researchers collected data sources from various articles, books and previous research related to the concept of gender from the perspective of *Tafsir al-Mishbah*.²⁰ Data is divided into two main types, namely primary and secondary data. Primary data is data obtained directly from the first source. The primary data in this research is *Tafsir al-Mishbah* regarding the concept of gender. In on the other hand, secondary data refers to data that comes from articles, books and various other supporting documents.²¹ The data collection technique in this research is documentation in the form of various written works such as books, journals, theses, or other articles relevant to the concept of gender in contemporary interpretation.²² Apart from that, the data analysis technique used is descriptive-analytic, namely describing the data that has been collected and then analyzed critically

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Gender Theory in Islamic Views

Literally, gender is defined as sex. Gender refers to the differences that underlie the different contributions of men and women to culture and collective life, taking into account the differences they have as men and women.²³ This includes gender roles, behaviors, and identities that are socially and culturally constructed. Gender is a difference in roles and responsibilities between men and women, which is not something that is determined by nature, but is the result of social and cultural construction. This is influenced by the socialization process from one generation to the next. Gender can vary from one place and time to another, and can change and be exchanged between individuals depending on cultural and temporal context.

¹⁹ Suharyat, et al., "Metodologi Tafsir Al-Mishbah", *Jurnal Pendidikan Indonesia: Teori, Penelitian, dan Inovasi* 2, no. 5 (2022).

²⁰ Milya Sari, et al., "Penelitian Kepustakaan (*Library Research*) dalam Penelitian Pendidikan IPA", *Natural Science* 6, no. 1 (2020), h. 41-53.

²¹ Nursapia harahap, "Penelitian Kepustakaan", *Jurnal Iqra'* 8, no. 1 (2014), h. 69.

²² Mahanum Mahanum, "Tinjauan Kepustakaan", *ALACRITY: Journal of Education* (2021), h. 1-12.

²³ Nanik Mandasari, "Analisis Pengarusutamaan Gender dalam Kebijakan Publik (Studi Kasus di Dinas Pemberdayaan Perempuan Perlindungan Anak dan Pengendalian Penduduk DP3AP2 Provinsi Jambi)", *Ebisma (Economics, Business, Management, & Accounting Journal)* 2, no. 2 (2022), h. 50-59.

This explanation highlights the importance of recognizing gender diversity and inclusive approaches in building a more just and inclusive society.²⁴

The study of gender issues in Islam has experienced significant development with many scientific studies highlighting it. The Islamic feminist movement is also attracting increasing attention, showing rapid growth in fighting for women's rights. Even though the definition of Islamic feminism is still a matter of debate among Muslim women activists, they can unite their vision and mission to fight for justice and gender equality.²⁵ In principle, Islam emphasizes the values of equality, justice and equality between men and women as servants of Allah who are responsible for goodness and justice. This concept was introduced in Islamic teachings itself and is manifested in verses of the Qur'an which emphasize justice and goodness for all humans. However, in interpretive studies reconstruction occurs, especially in the context of gender.

This explanation emphasizes that gender roles and responsibilities are not fixed, but are influenced by social norms, culture and the demands of the times. In diverse societies, definitions and expectations of gender roles can vary. For example, in some traditional societies, gender roles may be more polarized, whereas in more modern societies, gender roles may be more flexible and open to change. This shows the importance of understanding that gender is not something fixed or static, but is a social construction that continues to change along with changes in social and cultural dynamics. Therefore, an inclusive and sensitive understanding of gender concepts is necessary to ensure that the rights and equality between men and women are recognized and respected in various societal contexts. Top of Form

Gender is a concept that refers to the roles and responsibilities that men and women have in society, which are influenced by social and cultural factors. This concept highlights the division of roles and responsibilities within the family and society, which is the result of social construction that can change along with changing times and social demands. Several studies have highlighted the problem of injustice against women, such as exclusion from the public sphere, dismissive views of women, and stereotypes that position women as weak creatures. Gender discrimination is also included in different forms of discrimination, although in principle Islam rejects all forms of discrimination.²⁶ This indicates that men and women are obliged to worship and acknowledge Allah with the good deeds that

²⁴ Nurra'ida, "Relasi Gender Dalam Tafsir Sufi...", h. 2642-2651.

²⁵ Wely Dozan, et al., "Dekonstruksi Tafsir Ayat-Ayat Berbasis Gender Dalam Perspektif Pemikiran Feminisme Barat dan Islam," *AL-WARDAH: Jurnal Kajian Perempuan, Gender dan Agama* 15, no. 1 (2021), h. 31-48.

²⁶ Wely Dozan, "Dinamika Pemikiran Tafsir Al-Qur'an Di Indonesia Potret Metodologi, Kontekstualisasi terhadap Penafsiran", *Jurnal: Ijtima'iyya* 13, no. 2, (2020), h. 252.

each can do the day. Men and women have the same obligation to carry out God's commands according to gender regulations.

The context of this discussion is not clear and directly discusses gender, but the concept of worship in Islam has relevance to gender issues in several contexts. One of them is in specific established worship practices, such as prayer, fasting, zakat, and the pilgrimage, where gender roles may influence how these acts of worship are carried out. For example, in some societies, there are differences in demands and expectations for men and women in carrying out worship, such as the obligation to pray at the mosque for men and to pray at home for women.

Additionally, in the context of public worship which includes good works performed with the intention of being obedient and obedient to Allah, gender roles can also influence how the worship is understood and carried out. For example, women are often given greater responsibility for household matters and caring for children, which in the view of some societies may be considered part of public worship. Understanding the concept of sincerity in worship can also have gender implications, where social and cultural demands on gender roles can influence awareness of the importance of performing worship with sincerity. Therefore, in understanding the concept of worship in Islam, it is also necessary to consider the role of gender in the practice and understanding of worship in society.

The Concept of Gender Equality in the Qur'an

History records that in the early days of Islam, the image of women was often doubted, with the view that women did not have the ability to think rationally and tended to be dominated by men. In certain views, women are considered servants of men. However, Islam also considers women as noble creatures. The existence of women is recognized in Islam as honorable servants.²⁷

The Qur'an pays significant attention to issues relating to women, which is reflected in the various surahs that discuss the topic. For example, surah al-Nisa talks about the rights and obligations of women in society and the family. Surah Maryam tells the story of Maryam (Mary) and her role in religious history. Surah al-Ahzab discusses the ethics and behavior of Muslim women and their role in society. Surah al-Mujadalah tells the story of a woman who filed a complaint with the Prophet Muhammad SAW and received a revelation as an answer, showing the importance of listening to women's voices. Surah al-Mumtahanah, al-Thalaq, and al-Tahrim also contain laws and guidelines related to domestic life, divorce, and family ethics. All of these surahs show that the Qur'an provides comprehensive and

²⁷ Yusuf Qardawi, dkk, *Ketika Wanita Mengugat Islam*, (Jakarta: Teras, 2004), h. 4.

in-depth guidance about the role, rights and status of women in Islam, confirming that women have an important and respected position in religious teachings.²⁸

In providing a detailed explanation of the position of women, the Qur'an shows this in QS. al-Hujurat [49]: 13:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۗ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَىٰكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

*"O people, indeed We have created you from a man and a woman. Then, We made you into nations and tribes so that you might know each other. Indeed, the noblest among you in the sight of Allah is the one who is most pious. Indeed, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Compliant."*²⁹

The verse above explains the origin of human beings which originate from a man and a woman, and emphasizes that human glory before God is not based on race, descent or gender, but on piety.³⁰ All humans, both male and female, come from the same origin, demonstrating equality in creation without inherent hierarchy. Glory in the sight of Allah is measured by piety, which includes obedience to Allah, good behavior, and carrying out His commands and avoiding His prohibitions, enabling every individual to have the same potential to achieve high status in the sight of Allah. Mahmud Syaltut in his book "*Min Tawjihad al-Islam*," strengthens this view by stating that Allah has bestowed the same potential and abilities on men and women, so that both are able to assume the responsibilities given and participate in general and special activities without discrimination.³¹ This view implies that there is no theological reason to differentiate or discriminate against someone based on gender, and that men and women have equal rights and responsibilities in various aspects of life.

The concept of gender from the perspective of the Qur'an is often associated with verses that are considered to have gender bias. These verses, according to the claims of some proponents of the feminist movement, are considered to describe and authorize women. The Qur'an itself contains many verses that discuss this about men and women, both directly in the form of pronunciation and in the context of meaning. The Qur'an, as the main source of Islamic teachings, emphasizes

²⁸ Muhamad Zainul Abidin, "Kesetaraan Gender Dalam Bingkai Wasathiyah Islam Dari Perspektif Al-Qur'an", *Al-Shafi'i: International Journal of Islamic Contemporary Studies* 3, no. 1 (2023), h. 46-68.

²⁹ Departemen Agama, *Al Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*, (Jakarta: Yayasan Penyelenggara Penafsir dan Penerjemah Al-Qur'an, 2003), h. 847.

³⁰ Lukman Nul Hakim, et. al., "Etika Sosial Perspektif Mufassir Nusantara: Kajian Qs. Al-Hujurat Ayat 9-13 Dalam Tafsir Al-Ibriz", *Al-Shamela : Journal of Quranic and Hadith Studies* 1, no. 1 (2023), h. 70-86.

³¹ M. Quraish Shihab, *Dia di Mana-mana: Tangan Tuhan di Balik Setiap Fenomena*, (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2004), h. 299.

عن ابن عباس رضي الله عنهما قال: قال عمر بن الخطاب رضي الله عنه: كنا في الجاهلية لا نعدُّ النساء شيئاً فلما جاء الإسلام وذكرهنَّ الله رأينا هنَّ بذلك علينا حقاً

*"From Ibn Abbas ra said: Umar bin Khattab ra said: Previously, during the Jahiliyah era, we did not take women into account at all. Then, when Islam came down and Allah recognized them, we saw that they also had rights over us."*³⁴

During the Jahiliyah period, namely the period before the arrival of Islam, women were not considered in society. They have no recognized rights, and are often treated unfairly and belittled.³⁵ In this case it emphasizes the transformation brought about by Islam in the treatment of women, recognizing their rights, and giving them a more honorable and just status in society. Islam teaches equality and justice, improving women's social status which they previously did not have during the Jahiliyah era.³⁶

Analysis of Gender Interpretation According to M. Quraish Shihab

Equality between women and men in Islam. Equality between women and men, as well as between nations, tribes and descendants, is the main principle in Islamic teachings. In the Islamic view, both women and men have the same value before Allah. In *Tafsir al-Mishbah* emphasizes that there are differences between women and men which are natural has stipulated in the Qur'an.³⁷ The main thing is seen in the biological aspect between women and men. However, these differences do not imply inferiority or superiority of either sex. On the contrary, these differences are more part of the diversity created by Allah. In the creation of man is explained in QS. al-Baqarah verse 30 as follows;

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً ۗ قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَن يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ ۗ قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

*"(Remember) when your Lord said to the angels, "I will make a caliph) on earth." They said, "Are You going to place someone there who will cause corruption and shed blood, while we praise You and sanctify Your name?" He said, "Indeed I know what you do not know."*³⁸

³⁴ Faqihuddin Abdul Kodir, *60 Hadis Hak-Hak Perempuan Dalam Islam: Teks Dan Interpretasi*, (Cirebon: Umah Sinau Mubadalah, 2017), h. 21-22.

³⁵ Handayani, et al., "Interpretasi Progresif Hadis-Hadis Tema Perempuan: Studi Aplikasi Teori Qira'ah Mubadalah," *HUMANISMA: Journal of Gender Studies* 4, no. 2 (2020), h. 157-176.

³⁶ Eko Zulfikar, "Tipologi Hak-Hak Anak Perempuan Dalam Islam: Studi Tematik Hadis-Hadis Keperempuanan," *HUMANISMA: Journal of Gender Studies* 4, no. 2 (2020): 192-207.

³⁷ M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Mishbah: Pesan, Kesan dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an* (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2003), Vol. II, h. 443.

³⁸ Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Mishbah...*, Vol. I, h. 140.

The process of creating the first human (Adam) and the angels' response to Allah SWT's plan to make him caliph on earth. The angels suspect that humans will destroy and shed blood, based on their experiences or assumptions about non-angelic beings. They asked Allah SWT about this, not out of objection, but out of ignorance. Their questions reflect concerns that humans, as creatures different from angels who always glorify and praise Allah SWT, might cause damage.³⁹ In this context it does not directly mention the roles of men and women. However, it can be interpreted that the creation of humans as caliphs on earth includes all of humanity regardless of gender. This emphasizes that the duties of the caliphate, responsibility, and the ability to do good or bad are universal traits shared by all humans, both men and women.

Therefore, the role and responsibility of being caliph on earth is given to all mankind, demonstrating basic equality in moral and spiritual responsibilities between men and women in the Islamic view. Another thing explained was Quraish Shihab's view regarding the origins of the creation of women based on his interpretation of the QS. al-Nisa' verse 1 as follows:⁴⁰

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا
وَّنِسَاءً ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا

"O mankind, fear your Lord who created you from one person (Adam) and He created from him his partner (Hawa). From both of them, Allah produced many men and women. Fear Allah in Whose name you ask each other and (maintain) family relationships. Indeed, Allah always guards and watches over you."

The verse above explains the importance of unity and love between humans which is emphasized in Surah al-Nisa. Even though this verse was revealed in Medina, that is usually the call is addressed to believers, but in the context of unity, this verse invites all humans, both believers and non-believers, to fear God. This verse emphasizes that all humans were created from one entity (Adam) and his partner (Hawa), and that from the two of them God produced many men and women.⁴¹

Basic equality between men and women in the Islamic view, as confirmed in QS. al-Hujurat verse 13, states that the noblest among humans are the most pious, not based on gender, tribe or nation. Therefore, this verse supports the view that Islam upholds gender equality and respects human rights.⁴² Discussions about the

³⁹ Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Mishbah...*, Vol. I, h. 141.

⁴⁰ Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Mishbah...*, Jilid 2, h. 329.

⁴¹ Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Mishbah...*, Jilid 2, h. 329.

⁴² Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Mishbah...*, Jilid 2, h. 330.

position of women in the Qur'an often begin with interpretation QS. al-Nisa' verse 34:

الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ ۚ فَالصَّالِحَاتُ قَنِينَاتٌ
حَفِظْنَ لِلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ اللَّهُ يَوَالَتِي خَافُونَ نُشُورَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاصْرَبُوهُنَّ ۚ فَإِنْ
أَطَعْنَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا كَبِيرًا

"Men are the leaders of women because Allah has given some of them (men) superiority over others (women) and because they (men) have spent some of their wealth. Therefore, a pious woman is one who obeys Allah and takes care of herself when her husband is not around because Allah has taken care of them."

Say الرجال is the plural form of the word رجل which is usually translated as man, although the Qur'an does not always use it in that sense. Many scholars understand the word *ar-rijal* in this verse to mean husbands. If that's what it means with the word "men" refers to men in general, so of course the consideration is not like that. Moreover, the continuation of this verse and the next verse speak very clearly about wives and domestic life.⁴³

In *Tafsir al-Mishbah*, the biological and psychological differences between men and women are explained. From a physical perspective, men generally have bigger and taller bodies than women, with rougher voices and palms. Women grow faster than men, and they are better able to protect themselves from disease and speak more quickly and reach maturity. Men's heads are bigger on average, but when compared to body size, women are actually bigger. Men's lung capacity for breathing air is greater than women's, and women's heart rates are faster. From a psychological aspect, men tend to prefer physical activities such as sports and hunting, and are more interested in challenges and conflict. In contrast, women are more inclined towards peace and friendliness.

Women generally avoid violence and have lower suicide rates than men, with methods tending to be less aggressive. Women's feelings are aroused more quickly, get scared more easily, and are more emotional. They are more likely to adorn themselves and follow fashion. Women's psychological characteristics tend to be less consistent than men, but they are more careful, persistent, talkative, fearful, and small talk. Maternal feelings are more dominant in women, which is visible from childhood. Women's love for family and awareness of its importance institutional larger families than men. All these differences emphasize that the biological and psychological forms and functions of men and women are designed according to their respective needs and roles in society.⁴⁴

⁴³ Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Mishbah...*, kelompok XIX, h. 678.

⁴⁴ Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Mishbah...*, kelompok XIX, h. 426.

Quraish Shihab emphasized that there are no biological differences between women and men indicated differences in the potential given by God to humans. According to him, both women and men are blessed with the same level of intelligence and thinking ability by Allah. This indicates that women also have the same abilities as men in terms of thinking, learning and practicing what they learn from contemplation and respect for Allah, as well as in understanding and interpreting the universe. This view emphasizes that women have the same potential as men in their intellectual and spiritual development.⁴⁵

Thus, Quraish Shihab emphasized the importance of recognizing and treating women as individuals who have the same thinking abilities and potential as men, as well as providing equal opportunities for women to develop themselves and contribute to society and human life at large. In the *Tafsir al-Mishbah* Study, it is emphasized that the differences between men and women are definite. According to him, these differences are natural things that have been established by Allah and written in the Qur'an. This view emphasizes that the biological differences between men and women are part of a divine plan that was established from the beginning.

This difference is not something to be avoided or opposed, but rather a part of it from The diversity of God's creation must be respected and treated fairly. This emphasis on the concept of nature implies that each gender has its own role and responsibility in life, and this diversity should be used as an enriching aspect of society and not be a reason for discrimination or unfair treatment. By understanding the natural differences between men and women as part from the divine plan, Quraish Shihab invites us to appreciate and embrace this diversity as part of the harmony in Allah's creation. In QS. al-Qamar 49 Allah says:

إِنَّا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَاهُ بِقَدَرٍ

*"Indeed, We created everything according to measure."*⁴⁶

In context, this verse describes the concept of God's creation which is orderly and in accordance with His plan. Allah created everything with the right size and proportion, according to His perfect decree. This explanation reflects belief in the oneness of Allah and His power as creator universe. Allah created everything with unlimited wisdom and perfection, so that every element in His creation has a place and role determined according to His will.

⁴⁵ Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Mishbah...*, kelompok XIX, h. 427-428.

⁴⁶ Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an, *Qur'an Kemenag*, QS. al-Qomar ayat 120, (Jakarta: Kementrian Agama RI, 2019).

CLOSING

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that M. Quraish Shihab in *Tafsir al-Mishbah* has outlined the principle of gender equality from the perspective of the Qur'an. Quraish Shihab emphasized that the Qur'an provides equal status for men and women, especially in terms of glory before Allah which is based on piety, not gender. The concept of gender is an integral part of religious teachings. Both genders are equally respected before God and given the same potential in living life. The position of women in Islam is recognized as equal to men. Quraish Shihab emphasized that the Qur'an upholds gender equality, where a person's glory is measured based on piety, not gender. Male leadership mentioned in surah al-Nisa' verse 34 is more relevant in the context of household responsibilities, without absolutely regulating public leadership. Biological differences between men and women are recognized, but not used as a basis for discrimination.

The Qur'an recognizes the potential and ability of both sexes to contribute to various aspects of life. Women have the same rights and opportunities as men in thinking, learning and practicing religious teachings, as well as playing an active role in the public sphere. Overall, Quraish Shihab supports the view that Islam through the Qur'an promotes gender equality, emphasizing respect for women's rights and the elimination of gender-based discrimination. Thus, Quraish Shihab's interpretation provides a progressive and inclusive view of the position of women in Islam.

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