

Children's Rights in Islam: Towards Gender Equality and Youth Justice

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Abstract: This study examines the concept of children's rights in Islam, focusing on two key dimensions, namely gender equality and youth justice. This study uses library research methods by conducting a comprehensive literature analysis to compile and analyze written sources related to children's rights in Islam, gender equality, and justice of the younger generation. Through this approach, the study aims to gain a deeper understanding of the issues. The study results show that Islam has great potential in shaping a more just, inclusive, and sustainable society by applying the principles of children's rights, gender equality, and youth justice. It offers an optimistic view that religious values can be a significant cornerstone in building a better society. Islamic teachings emphasize the importance of providing quality education, protection from exploitation, and meeting children's basic needs as an integral part of the principles of justice in this religion. This includes the economic, social, and moral rights that must be fulfilled to build a brighter future for future generations.

Keywords: *children's rights; gender equality; Islam; youth justice*

Abstrak: Kajian ini mengulas konsep hak anak dalam Islam dengan fokus pada dua dimensi kunci, yaitu kesetaraan gender dan keadilan generasi muda. Kajian ini menggunakan metode penelitian keperpustakaan dengan melakukan analisis literatur secara komprehensif untuk menyusun dan menganalisis sumber-sumber tulisan terkait hak anak dalam Islam, kesetaraan gender, dan keadilan generasi muda. Melalui pendekatan ini, kajian ini bertujuan untuk mendapatkan pemahaman yang lebih mendalam tentang isu-isu tersebut. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa Islam memiliki potensi besar dalam membentuk masyarakat yang lebih adil, inklusif, dan berkelanjutan melalui penerapan prinsip-prinsip hak anak, kesetaraan gender, dan keadilan generasi muda. Ini menawarkan pandangan positif bahwa nilai-nilai agama dapat menjadi landasan utama dalam membangun masyarakat yang lebih baik. Ajaran Islam menekankan pentingnya memberikan pendidikan yang berkualitas, perlindungan dari eksploitasi, dan pemenuhan kebutuhan dasar anak-anak sebagai bagian integral dari prinsip keadilan dalam agama ini. Ini mencakup hak-hak ekonomi, sosial, dan moral yang harus dipenuhi sehingga dapat membangun masa depan yang lebih cerah bagi generasi mendatang.

Kata Kunci: *hak-hak anak; Islam; kesetaraan gender; keadilan generasi muda*

INTRODUCTION

The child's rights in Islam is one aspect that has significant implications in Muslim society and the world in general. As a religion covering all aspects of life, Islam pays special attention to individual rights, including children's rights. The child's rights in Islam include various elements, ranging from the right to education, health, and protection to the right to be respected and given fair treatment. The importance of understanding the child's rights in Islam is not only limited to the religious context but also has a significant impact on social, cultural, and political aspects.

Islam, one of the world's largest monotheistic religions, has millions of followers spread across different countries (Bülow et al., 2008). Within the framework of this religion, the concept of the child's rights has a solid theological and ethical foundation. Understanding the child's rights in Islam is based on principles found in the Quran and Hadith, the two primary sources of Islamic teaching. For example, in the Quran, the importance of protecting and fulfilling the child's rights is frequently quoted in verses surat Al-Isra (17:31), which states, "and do not kill your children for fear of poverty. We will provide for them and you. Indeed, killing them is a great sin." However, despite the strong foundations in Islamic teaching that affirm the child's rights, there are real challenges in implementing these rights in everyday practice.

The debate around the child's rights in Islam is not only relevant in the academic sphere but also has a tangible impact on the daily lives of Muslim communities. Recognizing the importance of the child's rights in Islam, many Muslim countries have committed to ensuring the fulfillment of the child's rights as part of their obligations as a state based on Islamic principles (Houmine & Loudghiri, 2023; Sait, 2002; Tekin, 2015). However, implementing children's rights in practice often faces various obstacles and challenges.

One of the issues of concern is the difference in treatment between boys and girls in Muslim societies. Gender discrimination that still occurs in some Islamic communities is one of the main focuses in efforts to achieve gender equality (Herlita et al., 2023; Kumari, 2022). There are various cases where girls may face barriers to getting the same education as boys, access to equal health care, or even inequality in protection from multiple forms of exploitation and violence. This is not always due to the provisions of the religion itself but often to different interpretations and implementations of the teachings of Islam. Moreover, the younger generation faces unique challenges in a constantly changing and increasingly complex world.

Globalization, technology, and social change have changed how young people interact with the world around them. They are faced with unprecedented opportunities and risks. In a global context, young people face unique challenges, such as access to decent education, decent work, and a sustainable environment. How Islamic teachings and understanding of children's rights can address the inequalities and injustices the younger generation may face is a question that needs to be answered. Therefore, it is essential to ensure that the rights of the younger generation are protected and that they have access to the necessary resources to fulfill their potential.

The importance of understanding children's rights in Islam in the context of gender equality and Justice for the younger generation is inevitable. Amid constant changes in the world, safeguarding and strengthening children's rights is a shared responsibility that cannot be ignored. This study is expected to contribute to achieving these goals, which are relevant to improving the fulfillment of children's rights within the framework of the Islamic religion to realize gender equality and Justice for the younger generation. Through a

deeper understanding of the child's rights in Islam, it can quickly move towards a more just, equal, and equitable society for children and young people. Furthermore, the findings of this study are expected to serve as a foundation for developing more inclusive and equitable policies in various aspects of Muslim community life, including education, health, and child protection. With a better understanding of the concept of the child's rights in Islam, Muslim societies can jointly work towards a more just and equal society where the rights of every child, regardless of gender or generation, are respected and fully protected.

METHODS

This study uses library research methods with a focus on comprehensive literature analysis. This approach was carefully chosen because it is considered the most relevant and effective in collecting, reviewing, and analyzing various written sources of information related to the focus of this study. The aim is to create a deeper understanding of the core problems discussed in this study. The process of collecting data using library research provides comprehensive access to various types of information sources (Dempsey, 2017). This study does not only rely on academic literature but also refers to religious texts, books, scientific articles, research reports, and other related documents. The diversity in these types of sources allows the collection of information from diverse perspectives, creating a solid foundation for the smooth running of these studies. In addition, this approach provides a systematic framework for analyzing the relevant literature. These systematic steps involve a thorough search, identification of the main themes, as well as the collection of evidence that supports or challenges the arguments discussed in the review. Thus, this study can design a solid conceptual framework, becoming an essential foundation for the development of this study.

In-depth literature analysis is not only limited to skimming but also involves a deep and critical exploration of each existing literary source. This allows for identifying the historical development, diversity of views, and the main trends in the relevant literature. Thus, this study can describe the evolution of thinking over time-related to the rights of the child in Islam, gender equality, and justice for the younger generation. Furthermore, this approach facilitates the preparation of systematic and structured arguments in this study. The use of this method allows a detailed presentation of various points of view, presenting strong evidence, as well as building arguments on a solid literary foundation. As such, the review is based on a solid foundation and adopts a comprehensive and structured approach to answering the core questions posed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Concept of Children's Rights in Islam

Children's rights in Islam represent a deep and varied aspect of this religious doctrine. As a global faith with a long legacy, Islam presents a rich perspective on individual rights, including those of children. The theological foundation of children's rights in Islam is rooted in the Quran, which is considered the divine revelation of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The Quran emphasizes protecting and fulfilling children's rights through various verses. One such verse is found in Surah Al-Isra (17:31), stating, "And do not kill your children for fear of poverty. We provide for them and you. Indeed, their killing is ever a great sin." This verse prohibits the killing of children, illustrating it as a grave sin unacceptable in Islamic teachings. It exemplifies how the Quran underscores protecting children's rights to life and development. In addition to the Quran, the sayings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), known as Hadiths, also highlight the importance of safeguarding

children. The Prophet often displayed affection and care towards children, setting an example for his followers to treat them with compassion and fairness.

The historical evolution of children's rights in Islam represents a diverse narrative that has undergone significant transformations. Initially, this concept might have been more narrowly focused on shielding children from cruel practices, such as the barbaric act of burying infant girls alive. However, as Islam progressed as a religion and a civilization, this concept evolved into a more comprehensive understanding of children's rights. A pivotal development in Islamic history was the emergence of "walayāh," which refers to the parental authority to make decisions concerning their children, including matters related to marriage. However, this concept extends beyond parental rights; it encompasses the obligation of parents to safeguard and provide protection for their children. Hence, 'walayāh' governs parents' rights and delineates children's rights concerning their safety, education, and well-being. This progression signifies a shift from mere protection against specific atrocities to a holistic framework ensuring the overall welfare and rights of children within the Islamic context.

In practice, the child's rights in Islam cover various aspects of life. These include the right to a decent education, good health, a recognized identity and religion, and protection from exploitation and violence. Children's education is considered one of the most essential rights in Islam, and Prophet Muhammad taught the importance of education to his Ummah. In the context of marriage, children have the right to determine their life partner upon reaching adulthood, although parental decisions are often respected (Sugitanata & Karimullah, 2023). This is an example of how the concept of the child's rights in Islam adapts to social and cultural development but remains by religious principles. In addition, protecting children from various forms of exploitation, including child labor and child marriage, is an essential aspect of the child's rights in Islam (Karimullah, 2022). Although these practices may occur in certain societies, they are contrary to Islamic teachings that emphasize the protection of children and their right to live in a safe and healthy environment.

The concept of the child's rights in Islam is an integral part of the teachings of this religion. Its theological solid foundation, historical development, and diverse practical applications make it an essential part of Muslim society. By understanding the concept of the child's rights in Islam, we can better respect and protect the children's rights, ensuring that they can grow and develop in a fair and safe environment by the teachings of the religion they profess.

Today, Muslim societies and the world face contemporary challenges that affect the understanding and implementation of children's rights in Islam (Mosaffa, 2011; Rajabi-Ardeshiri, 2009). One of the main challenges is rapid social, cultural, and technological change. For example, information technology and social media have allowed children to access information and communicate with the outside world more freely. While this provides positive potential in education and personal development, it also carries the risk of exploitation and insecurity. Therefore, how Islam handles the use of these technologies in the context of children's rights is a relevant question. In addition, in an increasingly urbanized and globally connected society, children often face mobility challenges and rapid environmental change. How the right of children to maintain their cultural and religious identity in a rapidly changing environment is a question that needs to be answered in this context.

In the face of these contemporary challenges, the Muslim community continues to develop the concept of child's rights in Islam. It encompasses a broader interpretation of the rights of the child in Islam, including the right of the child to participate in community

life, the right of the child to be protected from child labor, the right of girls to receive an education equal to that of boys, and the right of children to be involved in decisions that affect their lives. In addition, Islamic organizations and educational institutions have been instrumental in increasing understanding and awareness of the child's rights in Islam. They provide training and resources to promote child protection, gender equality, and youth justice in the context of the Islamic religion (Dagkas & Benn, 2006). This is a significant effort to create a more just and sustainable society for children and young people.

Education plays a vital role in understanding the rights of children in Islam. In the Islamic tradition, education is considered one of the most fundamental rights of the child. Thus, education is not only seen as a right but also as an obligation in Islam. Children have the right to a quality education relevant to their development (Wati et al., 2022). Education is also a tool for understanding and implementing children's rights in Islam. By understanding Islam's religious teachings and values through education, children can learn about the importance of respecting their rights and the rights of others. They can understand how concepts such as justice, compassion, and gender equality are integrated into Islamic teachings and how these are relevant to their daily lives. Education also plays a crucial role in addressing contemporary challenges affecting children's rights in Islam. With a better understanding of technology, social media, cultural change, and other challenges, children can better prepare for these changes wisely and understand how their rights relate to the modern context.

Child protection in Islam is an indispensable aspect of children's rights (Hasanah, 2023; Yazid et al., 2023). Islam emphasizes protecting children from exploitation, violence, and neglect. Child labor, child marriage, and other child exploitation are frequent problems in certain societies. However, Islam is categorically against these kinds of practices. According to the teachings of Islam, children should be protected and allowed to live with dignity and happiness. In addition, it is essential to note that the child's rights in Islam also include gender equality. Although girls may face obstacles in obtaining the same rights as boys in some cultures and societies, Islamic teachings affirm gender equality in fulfilling children's rights. Children, regardless of gender, have equal rights to education, protection, and personal development. In the Qur'an, Allah states that man and woman are allies of each other (Q.S. Al-Hujurat [49]: 13), emphasizing gender equality as a principle in human relations. Therefore, a correct understanding of the child's rights in Islam must include gender equality. Muslim societies are expected to ensure that children, both boys and girls, have equal opportunities to grow and develop in a just Environment. Thus, the child's rights in Islam remain relevant and can become the basis for creating a more just and sustainable society for children and the younger generation.

Gender Equality in Children's Rights

Gender equality in children's rights is an essential aspect of the understanding and implementation of children's rights around the world. This concept has broad relevance in the context of human rights and has a deep meaning within the framework of Islam. Gender equality in the child's rights refers to the principle that children, regardless of gender, have equal rights to protection, education, health, and personal development. This means that boys and girls have equal rights to grow and develop in a fair and safe environment. The importance of gender equality in the child's rights is relevant not only in secular society but also in the context of religion, including Islam. In the Qur'an, Allah states that man and woman are allies of each other (Q.S. Al-Hujurat [49]: 13), emphasizing gender equality as a principle in human relations. Therefore, in Islam, gender equality is integral to understanding the child's rights.

In Islam, protecting boys and girls has a strong foundation in religious teachings (Karimullah et al., 2023). The Prophet Muhammad emphasized the need to protect and give love to children, regardless of gender. In addition, Islamic teachings also prohibit practices that harm children, such as harmful child labor or child marriage under a set age. These are concrete measures to protect the child's rights, especially regarding gender equality.

Education has a vital role in promoting gender equality in children's rights. Education is the key to personal development and understanding religious values in Islam (Karimullah et al., 2022). Children, both boys and girls, have the same right to a quality education (Pratama, 2017; Salabi, 2016). Education is not only about knowledge but also about understanding the rights and responsibilities of individuals in society. With the proper education, children can understand the importance of gender equality and how their rights should be respected and enforced in everyday life.

Some cultures and traditions of societies may still encourage differences in treatment between boys and girls. These practices may conflict with the principle of gender equality in Islam. Some communities may also face limited resources in fulfilling children's rights, such as access to adequate education or health care. This can affect gender equality in children's rights. In addition, awareness and understanding of gender equality in the child's rights may be unequal in all societies. Efforts to raise awareness and provide education on these principles are critical. Although challenges in the implementation of this principle may exist, efforts to achieve gender equality in the rights of the child must continue to be made to create a just, safe, and sustainable society for children and young people.

A better awareness and understanding of the principle of gender equality in the child's rights is needed at all levels of society. Education and awareness campaigns are essential steps in addressing this challenge. Gender equality in children's rights is crucial in understanding children's rights, both in secular and religious contexts, including Islam (Rinaldo, 2014). This principle has implications in all aspects of children's lives, from education to health and decision-making participation. Although challenges in the implementation of this principle may exist, efforts continue to be made to achieve gender equality in the rights of the child as an essential step towards a just, inclusive, and sustainable society for children and young people. By granting equal rights to boys and girls, culture allows all children to develop their full potential. No child is limited by gender stereotypes in choosing their education, career, or interests.

Gender equality in the child's rights can also improve a society's social and economic well-being. When boys and girls have equal access to education and decent work, this can reduce economic inequality and improve overall quality of life. Gender equality in children's rights is also essential to women's empowerment. When girls have the same rights as boys, this opens the door for them to be involved in decision-making, participate in society, and play an active role in the development of their country. Gender equality can also help improve child safety and protection (Perera et al., 2022). Girls and boys have equal rights to be protected from exploitation, violence, and abuse. A society that understands and applies the principle of gender equality can provide better protection for all children.

Gender equality in children's rights can create a more just and democratic society. It creates an environment where everyone has an equal opportunity to participate in decision-making and give their voice. This encourages inclusiveness and better representation of culture. Public awareness campaigns can increase understanding of the importance of gender equality in children's rights. This can include training, seminars, and community programs that promote gender equality. In addition, society needs to focus on empowering

women and providing them with access to education, training, and economic opportunities (Karimullah & Aliyah, 2023; Rahman, 2023; Sugitanata, 2020). Women's empowerment is the key to achieving gender equality in children's rights.

Gender equality in the child's rights is an important principle and has a far-reaching positive impact on society (Fukuda-Parr et al., 2014). This is essential to creating a more just, inclusive, and sustainable world for all children. By the joint efforts of communities, governments, and international organizations, gender equality in the child's rights can be realized, providing equal opportunities to all children, regardless of gender.

Achieving gender equality in children's rights requires close collaboration between governments, communities, non-governmental organizations, and international institutions. Some critical steps in this collaboration include; First, policy development. Governments must develop and implement policies supporting gender equality in children's rights, including removing legal and social barriers that impede children's rights. Second, the implementation of educational programs. Schools and educational institutions must play a role in implementing inclusive education and creating an environment free from gender discrimination. Third, community support. Communities need to engage in awareness campaigns and support the implementation of gender equality in children's rights within their environment. It includes parents' active role in supporting their children's education regardless of gender. Fourth, women's empowerment. Women's and young women's organizations must be empowered to participate in decision-making processes and influence social change that supports gender equality in children's rights. Gender equality in the child's rights is an important principle that must be implemented worldwide. Implementing this principle has a significant positive impact on the development of children and the well-being of society as a whole.

Youth Justice in the Islamic Perspective

The younger generation's view of Islam reflects a deep wisdom that includes economic, social, and moral aspects of this religious view. The justice of the younger generation in Islam is an important pillar that shapes the identity and character of the Muslim community. Justice of the younger generation in Islam is a principle that recognizes the inherent rights possessed by future generations (Karimullah, 2023). It includes the right to quality education, fair inheritance, protection from exploitation, participation in decision-making, and parental responsibility. Education is a strong foundation in Islam. The younger generation has the right to a quality education, which is the key to understanding religion and the world. It also means providing the knowledge and skills necessary to be helpful in society.

The principle of justice of the younger generation also includes their right to a fair inheritance. It aims to prevent unfair concentration of wealth and ensure that future generations have equal economic rights. The protection of children from exploitation is an integral part of this concept. Marriage of minors, harmful child labor, and sexual exploitation are prohibited in Islam to protect the younger generation from physical, mental, and moral harm.

Participation in decision-making is another important aspect. The younger generation has the right to participate in decision-making that affects their lives, creating opportunities for them to contribute to the development of society. The responsibility of parents in educating, protecting, and giving attention to their children is another indispensable component of the justice of the younger generation in Islam (Sirin & Fine, 2007). Parents are at the forefront of applying these principles in everyday life.

The implications of the concept of youth justice in Islam are significant in shaping the character and development of Muslim societies (Sahin, 2018; Toor, 2009). An investment in quality education is an investment in the future. By providing a good education, the Muslim community helps the younger generation become intelligent, insightful, and empowered. The younger generation's fairness principle also promotes a more equitable distribution of wealth. This helps to reduce economic inequality and prevent unbalanced accumulation of wealth. Then, protecting children from exploitation and harm is an essential implication of this concept. These include prohibiting child marriage, harmful child labor, and sexual exploitation. In addition, the younger generation's justice principle also creates the basis for broader democratic participation in society. This allows the younger generation to take an active role in decision-making that affects their future.

Youth justice, from an Islamic perspective, is a profound and relevant concept in shaping the values and actions of Muslim communities. By providing quality education, protecting economic rights, preventing child marriage, and facilitating participation in decision-making, Muslim communities can ensure young people get the protections and opportunities they need to be productive members of society with integrity. Although challenges may exist, the concerted efforts of communities, governments, and religious organizations can help achieve youth justice in Islam, creating a just, inclusive, and sustainable society for generations to come. In the Islamic perspective, the justice of the younger generation is a guarantee to maintain a bright and sustainable future.

The influence of the concept of justice on the younger generation in Islam profoundly shapes the character of Muslim society. It creates a solid moral and ethical foundation that guides the behavior and interaction between the older and younger generations. In practice, this has some significant implications. First, morality and ethics. The concept of justice for the younger generation is deeply rooted in Islamic morality and ethics. Providing quality education to the younger generation clearly proves the commitment to pass on Noble religious values to future generations. Second, social welfare. By ensuring the economic rights of the younger generation, Muslim societies create a strong foundation of social welfare. It reduces economic inequality that can threaten social stability. Third, active participation. Encouraging the younger generation's involvement in decision-making paves the way for positive change in society. The younger generation brings fresh views and ideas that can help cope with the problems of their time. Fourth, peace and justice. The concept of justice for the younger generation in Islam also promotes relaxation and justice. Banning the marriage of minors and the exploitation of children helps create a safe environment for the younger generation. Fifth, women's empowerment. The concept of justice for the younger generation also includes the protection of the rights of young women. It helps in combating the practice of marriage of underage girls and promotes gender equality in Muslim societies.

The concept of justice for the younger generation in Islam is not just a religious teaching. Still, it is a principle that shapes the character and morals of the Muslim community. It reflects Islam's commitment to protecting rights, equality, and morality in the context of generations to come. The justice of the younger generation in Islam is a strong moral guide shaping Muslim societies' character. By prioritizing religious values, these principles profoundly impact the relationship between older and younger generations in society. Although challenges may exist, the shared commitment of communities, governments, and religious organizations can help realize the Islamic vision of youth justice, creating a just, inclusive, and sustainable society for future generations. By upholding these values, Muslim communities ensure the continuity of a bright and

abundant future for their young age, guiding them toward success in this world and the hereafter.

CONCLUSION

Islam has great potential to shape a more just, inclusive, and sustainable society by applying the principles of children's rights, gender equality, and youth justice. This shows that religious values can be a significant pillar in building a better society. Islam as a religion has a strong foundation in protecting children's rights. Islamic teachings emphasize the importance of providing quality education, protection from exploitation, and meeting children's basic needs as an integral part of the principles of justice in this religion. It includes economic, social, and moral rights that must be guaranteed. In principle, Islamic teachings support gender equality. Despite diverse interpretations and practices, Islam's sacred texts and the Prophet Muhammad's teachings encourage fair treatment of boys and girls. However, there are challenges in implementing gender equality in Muslim societies that must be addressed.

Furthermore, the study also highlights that implementing these principles is not a task that can be carried out in isolation but rather a shared responsibility of the entire Muslim community. Collaboration and commitment from all parties, including society, government, and religious organizations, are indispensable to achieving a vision of a brighter future. Only with solid cooperation can the Islamic values of child's rights, gender equality, and Justice for the younger generation become a reality that positively influences Muslim society and a brighter future for future generations.

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