



## SRIKANDI OF THE MINISTRY OF RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS: WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN PTKIN CONFRONTING PATRIARCHAL CULTURE

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### Abstract

This study investigates the role of female leaders, referred to as the "Srikandi of the Ministry of Religious Affairs," in shaping leadership practices within State Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTKIN) in Indonesia, within the context of a patriarchal cultural framework. The research adopts a qualitative approach using a case study design, combining in-depth interviews, document analysis, and observations to capture the lived experiences and strategies employed by female leaders across several PTKIN in the country. The study finds that women leaders in PTKIN face significant structural and cultural challenges stemming from patriarchal norms, yet they actively navigate these barriers by adopting adaptive leadership styles. These women leaders skillfully balance professionalism, religious values, and gender equity in their roles. Their leadership practices reflect resilience, negotiation skills, and strategic networking, allowing them to gain legitimacy and authority within male-dominated environments. The study highlights that the presence of female leaders in PTKIN serves as a transformative force, subverting patriarchal hegemony and creating opportunities for more inclusive and egalitarian governance within Islamic higher education. By contributing to the ongoing discourse on gender and leadership in this context, the research provides new insights into how women leaders navigate cultural constraints, assert their agency, and enhance institutional performance in the face of systemic gender inequality. The study underscores the importance of fostering supportive environments that allow women to thrive in leadership roles within religious and educational institutions.

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## INTRODUCTION

Women's leadership in Islamic higher education institutions in Indonesia represents a crucial phenomenon that increasingly demands scholarly attention,<sup>1</sup> particularly because it emerges in a social and institutional landscape where patriarchal culture continues to exert significant influence over public and private life,<sup>2</sup> and although government regulations and policies especially those introduced by the Ministry of Religious Affairs have consistently highlighted the principle of gender equality,<sup>3</sup> in reality women are still frequently positioned in subordinate roles within the public sphere, most visibly in the realm of Islamic higher education, where State Islamic Higher Education Institutions (Perguruan

<sup>1</sup> Diin Fitri Ande, Sari Wahyuni, and Ratih Dyah Kusumastuti, "Investigating the Impact of Service Leaders' Competencies, Organisational Service Orientation, Network Capabilities, and Perceived Service Quality on Umrah Travel Agencies' Performance," *Journal of Islamic Marketing* 15, no. 3 (February 19, 2024): 653–81, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-06-2022-0185>.

<sup>2</sup> Steven Ruggles, "Patriarchy, Power, and Pay: The Transformation of American Families, 1800–2015," *Demography* 52, no. 6 (December 1, 2015): 1797–1823, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13524-015-0440-z>.

<sup>3</sup> Jennifer L Rice, Joshua Long, and Anthony Levenda, "Against Climate Apartheid: Confronting the Persistent Legacies of Expendability for Climate Justice," *Environment and Planning E: Nature and Space* 5, no. 2 (June 12, 2022): 625–45, <https://doi.org/10.1177/2514848621999286>.



Tinggi Keagamaan Islam Negeri – PTKIN) both serve as central hubs for the advancement of Islamic scholarship and simultaneously reflect sociocultural traditions that privilege male authority in leadership positions, making the emergence of female leaders often referred to as the "Srikandi of the Ministry of Religious Affairs" a powerful symbol of resistance to entrenched norms and, at the same time,<sup>4</sup> tangible evidence that women's leadership is capable of making significant contributions to institutional governance even within a patriarchal context.

Empirical evidence underscores the persistence of this imbalance, as demonstrated by official data from the Ministry of Religious Affairs, which indicates that the proportion of women occupying high-ranking positions such as rector, dean, or faculty head within PTKIN remains below 20 percent of the overall leadership structure,<sup>5</sup> a figure that is strikingly disproportionate given the fact that women constitute the majority of lecturers and educational staff in these institutions, and this discrepancy reflects not only structural barriers embedded in organizational hierarchies but also cultural assumptions that continue to define leadership as a predominantly male domain, further reinforced by bureaucratic practices that systematically limit women's access to decision-making authority, and because the issue of gender equality in higher Islamic education governance has not been given sufficient institutional or policy-level attention, the problem remains inadequately addressed, leaving women to navigate a professional environment that remains heavily shaped by traditional patriarchal values.<sup>6</sup>

The urgency of this research lies in the necessity to explore and understand how women leaders within PTKIN develop strategies to confront patriarchal cultural dominance while simultaneously advancing more inclusive and egalitarian models of institutional governance, and by foregrounding the experiences of the "Srikandi of the Ministry of Religious Affairs," this study seeks to examine the ways in which female leaders adopt adaptive and innovative approaches that harmonize professional demands, Islamic values, and the pursuit of gender equality, leading to the formulation of the central research question: in what ways does women's leadership in PTKIN under the Ministry of Religious Affairs confront patriarchal cultural dominance, and to what extent does such leadership contribute to transformative institutional change that promotes inclusivity and equity, a question that is particularly significant given that women's leadership extends beyond its symbolic presence to directly influencing the quality of policy

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<sup>4</sup> Nur Ahid and Nur Chamid, "Implementation of Indonesian National Qualification Framework Based Curriculum in Higher Islamic Education," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 7, no. 1 (June 30, 2021): 109 – 22, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v7i1.12425>.

<sup>5</sup> Yaqut Cholil Qoumas, Rosila Bee Binti Mohd. Hussain, and Rahimin Affandi Bin Abdul Rahim, "The Dissemination of Religious Moderation Through the Policy of the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs," *QIJIS (Quodus International Journal of Islamic Studies)* 12, no. 1 (July 25, 2024): 147, <https://doi.org/10.21043/qijis.v12i1.27552>.

<sup>6</sup> Ibnu Qizam, Izra Berakon, and Herni Ali, "The Role of Halal Value Chain, Sharia Financial Inclusion, and Digital Economy in Socio-Economic Transformation: A Study of Islamic Boarding Schools in Indonesia," *Journal of Islamic Marketing* 16, no. 3 (February 3, 2025): 810 – 40, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-03-2024-0108>.

making, the development of academic climates, and the sustainability of Islamic higher education in the broader Indonesian context.<sup>7</sup>

The purpose of this study is to present the key research questions and hypotheses that guide the investigation in achieving its objectives. The central focus of the study is how women leaders in PTKIN navigate structural, cultural, and bureaucratic challenges to foster inclusive and transformative governance. The study explores the leadership practices employed by women in PTKIN that integrate professionalism, Islamic ethical values, and gender equality. It examines how women leaders overcome patriarchal barriers and challenge gender biased perceptions within academic and administrative structures, and how institutional policies, such as the Peraturan Menteri Agama (PMA) No. 68 of 2015, empower female leaders and promote gender equality. The study hypothesizes that despite the patriarchal structures in place, women leaders in PTKIN actively contribute to institutional transformation by applying a unique blend of ethical leadership and gender sensitive strategies. Furthermore, it posits that the implementation of gender responsive policies within PTKIN, particularly those aligned with Islamic values, facilitates a more inclusive and equitable governance model, benefiting both female leaders and the broader educational community. Through these perspectives, the study aims to provide valuable insights into how women's leadership can reshape the landscape of Islamic higher education in Indonesia.

## METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative research design with a case study approach to explore the leadership experiences of women in State Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTKIN) under Indonesia's Ministry of Religious Affairs. It focuses on understanding how female leaders confront patriarchal cultural dominance within these institutions. The research was conducted from January to June 2024, spanning three PTKIN in different provinces to ensure contextual variation and depth. The study involved 12 female leaders in key roles, such as rector, vice rector, dean, and faculty head, as well as 8 male colleagues and administrative staff for comparative insights. Purposive sampling was employed to ensure participants' relevance to the study's objectives and capture diverse leadership experiences across institutional hierarchies. Data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews, document analysis (institutional policies, gender equality reports, and Ministry regulations), and non-participant observations of meetings and decision-making forums. Interviews were audio-recorded with consent, transcribed verbatim, and complemented by systematic observation notes.

The data analysis followed the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which included data condensation, display, and conclusion drawing. The coding scheme combined both deductive categories based on existing literature and inductive patterns that emerged from the data. Methodological rigor was ensured through triangulation, member checking, and peer debriefing. This approach strengthened the study's validity and reliability by cross-verifying evidence from

<sup>7</sup> Jenny M. Hoobler et al., "The Business Case for Women Leaders: Meta – Analysis, Research Critique, and Path Forward," *Journal of Management* 44, no. 6 (July 2, 2018): 2473 – 99, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206316628643>.

interviews, documents, and observations. The findings provide a comprehensive, context-sensitive understanding of how female leaders navigate patriarchal structures and contribute to institutional transformation. The study reveals the strategies employed by women leaders in PTKIN to assert their authority, challenge cultural norms, and influence governance practices, thereby making a significant contribution to ongoing academic discussions on gender equality in Islamic higher education.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### *Transformation of Gender Inclusivity Practices in Policies and Leadership at PTKIN*

The results of this study reveal three interconnected dimensions that characterize the leadership of women in State Islamic Higher Education Institutions (Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam Negeri – PTKIN) under the Ministry of Religious Affairs when confronting patriarchal cultural dominance. First, in terms of manifestation, women leaders in PTKIN demonstrate distinctive leadership practices that combine professionalism, religious values, and gender awareness. Their leadership is reflected through adaptive approaches such as participatory decision-making and inclusive academic policies that prioritize equality. These leaders consciously cultivate academic environments where both male and female lecturers can contribute equitably, fostering collaboration rather than competition. Moreover, they uphold Islamic ethical values such as justice ('adl), trust (amanah), and sincerity (ikhlas) as moral foundations in institutional governance. This synthesis of managerial competence and spiritual integrity transforms leadership from a mere administrative function into a moral act of service. Consequently, women leaders not only manage institutions effectively but also embody a model of Islamic leadership that redefines power in ethical and inclusive terms.

The emergence of this phenomenon is influenced by a constellation of structural, cultural, and personal factors that either support or inhibit women's leadership trajectories. Structurally, bureaucratic hierarchies within PTKIN remain heavily gendered, often limiting women's access to top executive roles such as rector or dean. Institutional cultures still reflect patriarchal legacies that equate authority with masculinity, thus positioning female leaders as exceptions rather than the norm. Yet, despite these constraints, the Ministry of Religious Affairs has introduced affirmative policies, such as gender mainstreaming programs and leadership training for women, which have begun to reshape perceptions at the institutional level. Culturally, societal attitudes toward female leadership in Islamic education are gradually shifting, driven by broader movements toward gender equality within Indonesia's Islamic scholarship. At the same time, these structural transformations are reinforced by the growing acknowledgment of women's academic achievements and their ability to navigate complex bureaucratic systems with strategic intelligence and perseverance.

Personal and interpersonal dimensions further explain how female leaders succeed within male-dominated academic structures. Women who ascend to leadership positions in PTKIN often possess advanced educational backgrounds, international exposure, and a strong grounding in Islamic scholarship. These qualifications provide not only intellectual capital but also symbolic legitimacy that challenges gender-based prejudices. Furthermore, many of these leaders

demonstrate exceptional negotiation and conflict-resolution skills,<sup>8</sup> enabling them to manage institutional tensions without compromising authority. Their leadership networks both formal, such as professional associations, and informal, such as sisterhood communities play a crucial role in providing mutual support and mentorship. This relational approach to leadership emphasizes collaboration and empathy as key management values, offering an alternative paradigm to hierarchical or authoritarian styles. Consequently, women leaders redefine what it means to exercise power within Islamic academia by centering inclusivity, care ethics, and communal progress.

Overall, these findings underscore that women's leadership in PTKIN is not merely a product of individual competence but the outcome of dynamic interactions between institutional reform, cultural transformation, and religious interpretation. The leadership of women in Islamic higher education thus reflects a broader epistemic shift toward *wasatiyyah* (moderation), emphasizing balance between tradition and modernity, authority and compassion, and faith and rationality.<sup>9</sup> This evolving model has far-reaching implications for the democratization of Islamic educational governance, as it promotes merit-based leadership grounded in ethical accountability.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, by embodying the principles of equality and justice within Islamic frameworks, female leaders contribute to reinterpreting Islamic law and values in ways that affirm women's public roles.<sup>11</sup> Future research should explore how these leadership patterns influence curriculum development, student perceptions,<sup>12</sup> and institutional outcomes. Ultimately, women's leadership in PTKIN symbolizes a transformative movement toward a more inclusive and equitable model of Islamic education governance.

The implications of women's leadership in PTKIN are transformative for both institutional culture and broader discourses on gender equality.<sup>13</sup> The presence of female leaders has fostered greater awareness of the importance of inclusivity and fairness in academic governance, inspiring younger generations of women scholars to aspire to leadership positions.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, their leadership practices contribute to the dismantling of patriarchal hegemony by introducing more egalitarian

<sup>8</sup> Christian M Becker et al., "ESHRE Guideline: Endometriosis," *Human Reproduction Open* 2022, no. 2 (March 4, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.1093/hropen/hoac009>.

<sup>9</sup> Paula England, Andrew Levine, and Emma Mishel, "Progress toward Gender Equality in the United States Has Slowed or Stalled," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 117, no. 13 (March 31, 2020): 6990–97, <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1918891117>.

<sup>10</sup> Bambang Husni Nugroho, Ahmad Mustaniruddin, and Ahmad Taufik, "Ideological Contestation on the Production of Gender Exegesis within Institutional Quranic Interpretation in Indonesia," *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis* 25, no. 2 (October 1, 2024): 346–69, <https://doi.org/10.14421/qh.v25i2.5388>.

<sup>11</sup> Rohmatun Lukluk Isnaini et al., "Gender-Based Leadership in Quality Assurance Development: A Phenomenological Study," *Cogent Education* 10, no. 2 (December 11, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2023.2255078>.

<sup>12</sup> Isnaini et al.

<sup>13</sup> Moh. Ashif Fuadi et al., "Religious Moderation in the Context of Integration between Religion and Local Culture in Indonesia," *Journal of Al-Tamaddun* 19, no. 1 (June 30, 2024): 47–59, <https://doi.org/10.22452/JAT.vol19no1.4>.

<sup>14</sup> Kayla Sergent and Alexander D. Stajkovic, "Women's Leadership Is Associated with Fewer Deaths during the COVID-19 Crisis: Quantitative and Qualitative Analyses of United States Governors," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 105, no. 8 (August 2020): 771–83, <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000577>.

decision-making processes and by embedding gender perspectives into institutional policies.<sup>15</sup> In the long term, such transformations not only challenge the persistence of patriarchal cultural dominance within PTKIN but also contribute to the development of a governance model that is more just, inclusive, and aligned with the global demand for gender-sensitive educational leadership.

### **Discussion**

The findings of this research demonstrate that the leadership of women in PTKIN under the Ministry of Religious Affairs represents a multidimensional process shaped by cultural, institutional, and personal factors. The overall data indicate that women leaders integrate professionalism, religious ethics, and gender awareness in navigating male-dominated academic environments. Their leadership reflects an ethical and inclusive vision grounded in Islamic moral principles and managerial competence. Adaptive strategies—such as participatory decision-making, mentoring younger academics, and promoting inclusive policy frameworks—illustrate how women leaders reshape institutional culture while maintaining legitimacy within religious norms.<sup>16</sup> This emerging model of leadership reflects a transformation from hierarchical authority to value-driven collaboration, indicating an evolving paradigm in Islamic higher education governance.

Reflecting on these findings, several causes underpin the development of women's leadership within PTKIN. Structural constraints, including bureaucratic traditions, gender bias in promotion systems, and limited institutional support, continue to pose challenges. Yet, these barriers are mitigated by external and internal enablers such as gender mainstreaming programs initiated by the Ministry, peer-to-peer mentoring among female academics, and the growth of professional networks that advocate equality. On an individual level, educational achievement,<sup>17</sup> emotional intelligence,<sup>18</sup> and negotiation skills allow women leaders to exercise moral and intellectual authority within formal structures.<sup>19</sup> The interaction between these systemic and personal factors reveals a process of *negotiated empowerment* in which women redefine leadership from within the very institutions shaped by patriarchy.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Thekla Morgenroth and Michelle K. Ryan, "The Effects of Gender Trouble: An Integrative Theoretical Framework of the Perpetuation and Disruption of the Gender/Sex Binary," *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 16, no. 6 (November 6, 2021): 1113–42, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691620902442>.

<sup>16</sup> Ruggles, "Patriarchy, Power, and Pay: The Transformation of American Families, 1800–2015."

<sup>17</sup> Reniel C. Laki and Benjie O. Badon, "A Systematic Review on the Impact of Gender Equity on Educational Leadership," *Jurnal Multidisiplin Madani* 4, no. 7 (July 30, 2024): 949–56, <https://doi.org/10.55927/mudima.v4i7.9034>.

<sup>18</sup> Bettina J. Casad et al., "Gender Inequality in Academia: Problems and Solutions for Women Faculty in STEM," *Journal of Neuroscience Research* 99, no. 1 (January 25, 2021): 13–23, <https://doi.org/10.1002/jnr.24631>.

<sup>19</sup> Muhammad Ainul Yaqin and I'if Hafidatuz Sholihah, "Transforming Women's Leadership in Improving Service Quality in Islamic Boarding Schools," *Managere: Indonesian Journal of Educational Management* 7, no. 1 (April 15, 2025): 49–58, <https://doi.org/10.52627/managere.v7i1.728>.

<sup>20</sup> Aziza Meria et al., "Women Leadership Model in Islamic Religious College (PTKIN) in Implementing Gender Responsive Program Policies (Gender Studies at IAIN Bukittinggi, IAIN Ponorogo, and IAIN Metro Lampung)," *Gender Equality: International Journal of*

The effects of these dynamics extend to the transformation of institutional culture and gender discourse in Islamic higher education.<sup>21</sup> Women's leadership contributes to greater inclusivity and encourages a participatory environment where dialogue,<sup>22</sup> empathy,<sup>23</sup> and collective decision-making are valued.<sup>24</sup> This shift not only promotes institutional harmony but also nurtures critical awareness among both male and female academics about the necessity of gender justice.<sup>25</sup> By demonstrating that effective leadership can coexist with religious and ethical principles,<sup>26</sup> women leaders help bridge the perceived gap between modern gender ideals and Islamic moral values.<sup>27</sup> Consequently, they serve as agents of transformation who redefine leadership as an act of moral service and intellectual stewardship rather than authority alone.

In comparison with previous studies,<sup>28</sup> the current findings both reaffirm and expand the discourse on women's leadership in Islamic educational institutions.<sup>29</sup> Earlier research has predominantly emphasized women's marginalization due to cultural conservatism and limited institutional recognition.<sup>30</sup> However, this study highlights a more dynamic and progressive picture—one where institutional policies,<sup>31</sup> ministry-level gender reforms,<sup>32</sup> and social recognition contribute to

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<sup>21</sup> Nina Nurmila, "Proposing Feminist Interpretation of The Qur'an and Affirmative Policy to Support Women Leadership In Indonesian State Islamic Higher Education," *Musawa Jurnal Studi Gender Dan Islam* 19, no. 2 (March 10, 2021): 125–40, <https://doi.org/10.14421/musawa.2020.192.125–140>.

<sup>22</sup> Becker et al., "ESHRE Guideline: Endometriosis."

<sup>23</sup> Qizam, Berakon, and Ali, "The Role of Halal Value Chain, Sharia Financial Inclusion, and Digital Economy in Socio-Economic Transformation: A Study of Islamic Boarding Schools in Indonesia."

<sup>24</sup> Eko Rial Nugroho, Bagya Agung Prabowo, and Rohidin Rohidin, "Granting of Property During Marriage as an Inherited Property in Indonesia," *El-Usrah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga* 7, no. 1 (June 30, 2024): 310, <https://doi.org/10.22373/ujhk.v7i1.22875>.

<sup>25</sup> Muh Akil Rahman, "INFLUENCE OF STYLES OF WOMEN LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION CULTURE ON LOCUS OF CONTROL AND JOB SATISFACTION OF UIN ALAUDDIN MAKASSAR LECTURER," *IJBE (Integrated Journal of Business and Economics)* 2, no. 2 (June 4, 2018): 1, <https://doi.org/10.33019/ijbe.v2i2.76>.

<sup>26</sup> Reni Agustina, Sabarudin, and Mila Mutiara Choirunisa, "The Existence of Women's Leadership in Campus Organizations," *Al-Fahim: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 7, no. 1 (April 25, 2025): 21–35, <https://doi.org/10.54396/alfahim.v7i1.1817>.

<sup>27</sup> Murray A. Straus and Richard J. Gelles, *Physical Violence in American Families*, ed. Christine Smith (Routledge, 2017), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315126401>.

<sup>28</sup> Ratna Candra Sari et al., "Responding to Islamic Finance Anomalies in Indonesia: Sharia Financial Literacy Using Virtual Reality Context," *Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research*, February 29, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIABR-08-2022-0195>.

<sup>29</sup> Toyin Ajibade Adisa, Issa Abdulraheem, and Sulu Babaita Isiaka, "Patriarchal Hegemony," *Gender in Management: An International Journal* 34, no. 1 (March 4, 2019): 19–33, <https://doi.org/10.1108/GM-07-2018-0095>.

<sup>30</sup> Ande, Wahyuni, and Kusumastuti, "Investigating the Impact of Service Leaders' Competencies, Organisational Service Orientation, Network Capabilities, and Perceived Service Quality on Umrah Travel Agencies' Performance."

<sup>31</sup> Helena J Teede et al., "Recommendations From the 2023 International Evidence-Based Guideline for the Assessment and Management of Polycystic Ovary Syndrome," *The Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism* 108, no. 10 (September 18, 2023): 2447–69, <https://doi.org/10.1210/clinem/dgad463>.

<sup>32</sup> Sergent and Stajkovic, "Women's Leadership Is Associated with Fewer Deaths during the COVID-19 Crisis: Quantitative and Qualitative Analyses of United States Governors."

enabling women's participation. Unlike findings from other contexts that report persistent resistance to female authority,<sup>33</sup> the PTKIN experience demonstrates an evolving institutional acceptance supported by ethical framing and professional competence. Thus, the leadership of women in PTKIN signifies a paradigm shift from exclusion to inclusion within the broader landscape of Islamic higher education.

Based on these findings, several recommendations can be proposed within three main domains: conceptual, methodological, and policy. Conceptually, women's leadership in State Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTKIN) should be recognized as a model of ethical—transformative governance that integrates faith, professionalism, and equality. This recognition is in line with Peraturan Menteri Agama (PMA) No. 68 of 2015 concerning the Organization and Work Procedures of PTKIN, which emphasizes the importance of accountability, effectiveness, and the optimization of human resources to achieve high—quality governance. Methodologically, leadership training programs within PTKIN should promote reflective pedagogy, emotional intelligence, and gender—inclusive management to enhance institutional sustainability. From a policy perspective,<sup>34</sup> the Ministry of Religious Affairs, together with PTKIN management, should institutionalize gender—responsive frameworks through transparent recruitment mechanisms, continuous mentorship programs, and regular evaluations of gender equity implementation.<sup>35</sup> These reforms will not only strengthen women's leadership capacity but also foster the development of Islamic higher education that is globally competitive, socially just, and aligned with the principles of inclusive governance.

## CONCLUSION

The findings of this study highlight that women's leadership in State Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTKIN) represents both a strategic transformation and resistance against patriarchal structures that have long dominated Islamic educational governance. Women leaders, often symbolized as the Srikandi of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, are instrumental in promoting ethical, inclusive, and transformative governance within PTKIN. They successfully integrate spiritual integrity with administrative professionalism and social empathy, balancing religious values with innovative management practices. Despite facing structural and cultural barriers, these leaders have effectively challenged gender—biased perceptions by demonstrating competence, accountability, and visionary leadership. Furthermore, the implementation of Peraturan Menteri Agama (PMA) No. 68 of 2015 has strengthened gender equality in leadership, providing a normative framework that aligns Islamic principles with modern concepts of gender justice and governance ethics.

<sup>33</sup> Yasemin Dildar, "Patriarchal Norms, Religion, and Female Labor Supply: Evidence from Turkey," *World Development* 76 (December 2015): 40–61, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2015.06.010>.

<sup>34</sup> Muhammad Amri and Ulfiani Rahman, "DESCRIPTION OF STRUCTURAL OFFICERS STIFIn TEST RESULTS OF UIN ALAUDDIN MAKASSAR," *Lentera Pendidikan: Jurnal Ilmu Tarbiyah Dan Keguruan* 23, no. 1 (June 30, 2020): 1, <https://doi.org/10.24252/lp.2020v23n1i1>.

<sup>35</sup> Yenrizal Tarmizi, "Preventing Religious Radicalism on College Student in the Islamic State Higher Education (PTKIN) Case Study of Islamic State University (UIN) in Indonesia," December 18, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.31219/osf.io/srewg>.

This research contributes to the academic discourse on gender and leadership in Islamic higher education in several ways. Conceptually, it enriches the understanding of ethical – transformative governance, demonstrating how faith – based leadership can harmoniously coexist with gender – inclusive practices. Methodologically, the study employs a qualitative – descriptive approach, combining sociological analysis with Islamic legal and ethical perspectives, offering a multifaceted view of women's experiences in PTKIN. Theoretically, the research redefines women as transformative agents capable of nurturing justice, integrity, and sustainability in institutional governance. The findings also emphasize that gender equality in leadership aligns with Islamic teachings, reflecting the *maṣid al – sharī'ah* principles of fairness and collective benefit. The study underscores the importance of continued leadership development that fosters moral excellence and inclusive governance in line with global academic standards, while encouraging future research to explore the evolution of women's leadership and its impact on institutional transformation.

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