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## Gender Equality in The Education System at Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation

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### ABSTRACT

This research aims to find out about the application of gender equality in the education system for schools under the auspices of the Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation. This study aims to find out about the application of gender equality in the education system for schools under the auspices of the Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation. The object of this research is the education system that applies in schools under the auspices of the Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation and also looks at the infrastructure contained in these schools, whether in accordance with its function and role in realising gender equality. This type of research is descriptive research using observation methods complemented by interview methods to several sources related to how gender equality is applied in schools under the auspices of the Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation. The results of this study indicate that in the education system implemented at the Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation, gender equality has been implemented, not only for students but also for teachers and educators at all school levels, starting from elementary, junior high and high school. This is evidenced by interviews conducted by researchers and supported by facts in the field in the form of infrastructure and the application of the gender equality system. Although the application of gender equality is not running one hundred percent, the functions and roles of gender are understood by students, teachers and educators at the Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation.

**Keywords:** *Gender Equality, Education System and Foundation.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Education is a typical activity for humans in a community with the aim of humanizing humans and is an important instrument for community empowerment, especially for people who feel marginalized. Education is also key to the realization of social justice, especially gender in society, because in addition to being a tool to transfer societal norms, knowledge and human abilities, it is also a tool to study and convey new ideas and values. Gender in a broad sense, not only talks about how and what are the roles of men and women, but gender in the real sense is how the roles and responsibilities are equal between men and women. The discourse on gender equality remains strong from time to time. This is due to the demand for equal rights and equality that continues to exist in

countries that have high civilization. According to Hutajulu (2004:103) cases of discrimination against women are a problem that often occurs in almost all groups of society at large.

Sex differences between men and women are God's nature because they are permanently unchanging and are biological provisions. Meanwhile, gender is a difference in behavior between men and women that is socially shaped. These non-natural differences are created through a long social and cultural process. There are several issues related to gender, namely gender differentiation, gender equality and gender oppression. In their view, in this world there are still differences, inequalities and gender violence. Gender bias takes place and is socialized through the learning process and system at school and in the family environment. If mothers or maids (women) always do domestic tasks such as cooking, washing, and sweeping, it will be embedded in the minds of children that domestic work is indeed a woman's job. Furthermore, in the world of learning in schools such as textbooks, for example, there are many images and sentence formulations that do not reflect gender equality. (Nasaruddin, 2007:70)

Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation is not only a formal educational institution in developing abilities and gaining experience, intelligence and knowledge for students as a basis for continuing education at a higher level. Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation is also an educational service to produce outputs that provide satisfaction about "knowledge" for the community. Satisfaction for the community will be achieved if the quality of products and services provided is in accordance with their needs. This study will be directed to the use of industry theory as one of the analytical tools, namely the education industry. Including in creating justice and equality that applies to all. Many school-age girls are forced to work, either as shop assistants or factory laborers. Economic conditions that do not allow it, forcing parents to send their daughters to work to increase the family economy. Seeing this situation, parents are more willing to sacrifice their daughters to work to help parents, while their sons continue their studies. Men are seen as more important in seeking knowledge, because one day men will provide for the family, while women will still be housewives. From this perspective, higher education is not necessary for women. This view seems unfair to one party, especially the women. They experience discrimination in terms of obtaining educational opportunities. In addition, they are exploited to work to help their parents, even though they should still be enjoying their childhood or adolescence.

There are at least three reasons for the need for alternative education for women. First, women's access to education is very low. Just look at the data on the level of illiterate women in various regions in Indonesia, always higher than men. On the other hand, the number of women who enter every level of education in Indonesia is always lower than men. Second, alternative education is important because the curriculum in Indonesia is still gender biased. As a result, women are increasingly disadvantaged by these stereotypical images. Third, formal education in Indonesia has not been able to answer the specific needs of women. The world of education seems to do nothing to help women from their downturn. Society with socio-cultural conditions that prioritize boys, actually marginalizes women in the world of education. Women are increasingly backward, poorly educated,

even illiterate. (Nasaruddin, 2007: 95). The alternative education in question is an educational design that strengthens the position of women in the world of work, they must also be equipped with skills and understanding of gender issues. This will have an impact on their bargaining power, so that the exclusion of girls from entering the world of formal education no longer occurs as well as being able to compete with men in raising a generation that is educated and concerned about social issues. Education plays a very important and strategic role in shaping productive, innovative and personality human resources in accordance with cultural values. Besides providing cognitive, affective and psychomotor values to every citizen, education is also used as a tool to transform values that are expected to be useful in the life of society, nation and state.

When we hear gender equality, we may think of the emancipation of women, meaning that women have the same rights as men. There is no need to think which one is right about the description of gender equality itself. Emancipation of women can be said to be born when a controversy arises concerning the attitude or behavior or view of a person in terms of respecting women. Events that occurred in the past that women were less valued and some even thought that women did not have the opportunity to play a central role in various fields like today. Until there are parents who send their sons to the highest school, parents' thoughts are compartmentalized that women in life are nothing but housewives who do not need to go to high school. But nowadays, it is felt that gender equality has been implemented in the Indonesian government. It can be seen that the government is implementing an education equality program throughout Indonesia, which can be seen to date that many of the nation's future generations who are candidates for the development of this country have the same opportunity to get an education. Cases like this have often occurred anywhere, and do not stop in the matter of getting education but in the workplace the problem of gender inequality often occurs and discredits women in their work. In the world of education, for example, women are not yet eligible to hold strategic positions and are preferred by men. This will certainly be a direct example for students at school to fight for gender equality itself. Gender Equality in Education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process so that students actively develop their potential to have religious spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and skills needed by themselves, society, nation and state.

## **METHOD**

Every science has a method, without a method the collection of knowledge about a particular object cannot be said to be a science. According to Abd. Rahman Hamid (2011: 40) the method is related to the workings or procedures to be able to understand the object that is the target of the science concerned. In order for a research to run efficiently and effectively, a method is needed. According to Kuntowijoyo (2003: xxi) research methods are implementation instructions and technical instructions on materials, criticism, interpretation and presentation of history. As a historical research, the author uses qualitative research methods as guidelines in conducting this research. This type of research

is descriptive qualitative research, namely data collected in the form of words, pictures, not numbers. According to Taylor (2022: 51) qualitative research is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observed behavior. Meanwhile, descriptive research is a form of research aimed at describing or describing existing phenomena, both natural phenomena and human engineering. The purpose of descriptive research is to make a systematic, factual, and accurate description of the facts and characteristics of a particular population or area. This research is used to find out how gender equality is achieved at the Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation. This research aims to get a clearer, more complete picture and information, as well as making it possible and easy for the author to conduct observational research. Therefore, the author determines the research location is the place where the research will be conducted. In this case, the research location is located in an educational institution under the auspices of the Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation. This research was conducted from September to October 2023 until the data was obtained in accordance with the title raised by the author.

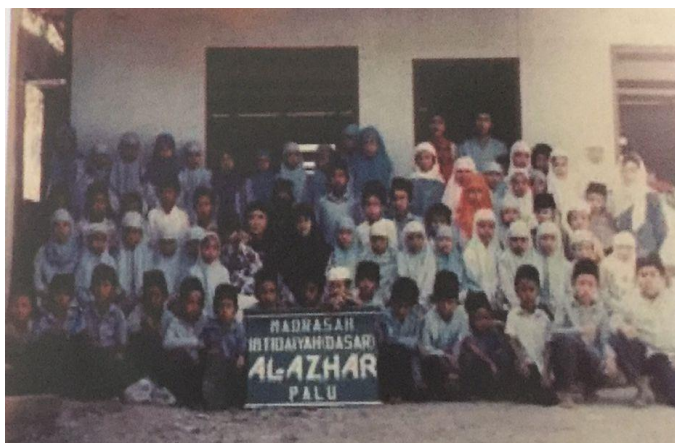
## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation is one of the educational foundations in Palu City, Central Sulawesi Province. Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation currently oversees four schools in kindergarten, elementary school, junior high school and high school of Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu, plus it has one recitation park for elementary school children located in Labuan Salumbone village, Donggala Regency, Central Sulawesi Province. Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation is currently led by Mr Drs Abdul Basit, M.Pd and the Trustee of Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation is Mrs Padriani. Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation currently has approximately 145 employees, consisting of 3 principals, 121 teachers, 12 administrative staff and 3 library staff and 6 security personnel.

Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation has its head office on Tanjung Malakosa street number 12, South Lolu village, Palu city, Central Sulawesi. In addition to having a Foundation office, the location of schools under the auspices of the Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation has different locations for each place. But the facilities available are almost all the same. Such as having, basketball court, futsal court, badminton court, table tennis court, library, laboratory and green house for hydroponic plants. All of these facilities are owned by schools under the auspices of the Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation.

At the beginning of 1985, this educational institution was a recitation garden which began with 12 students from neighbouring children who learned to read the Koran on the terrace of K.H Rustam Arsyad's private house. At the end of 1985 a classroom made of plywood was built, on top of this simple building, a madrasah ibtida'iyyah (religious elementary school) was established with 20 students under the guidance of three teachers, namely Ustazah Hj. Rahmah Latanga, Ustad Abdul Basit Arsyad and Ustazah Zubaedah Arsyad. The students study in the afternoon from 3.00 pm to 5.30 pm. The students are generally students from grade 1 to grade 6, and there are even students at kindergarten level. The students study based on the madrasah curriculum compiled by the Madrasah Ibtidaiyyah teachers, namely Ustazah Hj. Rahmah Latanga, Ustad Abdul Basit Arsyad and

Ustazah Zubaedah Arsyad, where they learn about reading and writing Arabic letters, basic Arabic language knowledge, reading the Koran, fiqh, hadith and so on. The books used are Juz'amma, Al-Quran Qiratus Asriyah. As the interest of the students grew day by day, the Foundation built a permanent building made of concrete and named it "Madrasah Ibtidayyah Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu".



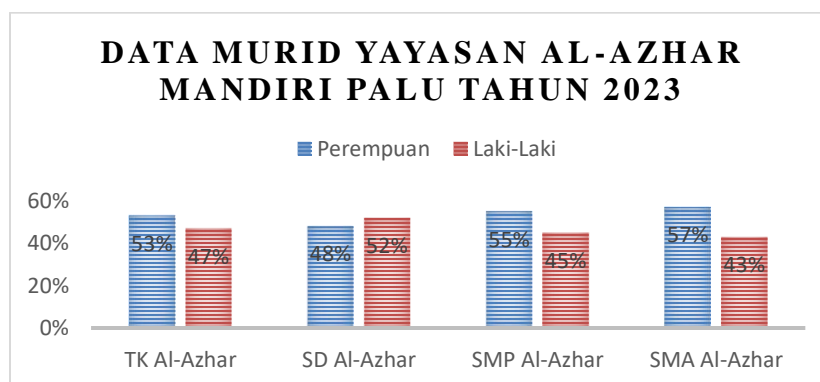
Source: Abdul Basit Arsyad's Personal Documentation

In 1988, on 10 October, Abdul Basit Arsyad officially established the Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu education foundation which has a notary deed no 15, with the chairman of the foundation KH Rustam Arsyad and Secretary Abdul Basit Arsyad. Meanwhile, Madrasah Ibtidayyah Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu was led by Ustadz Abdullah Arsyad (deceased). In 1992, Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Junior High School (SMP) was officially built, which was established because of the increasing interest of students to study at the Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation, the curriculum used is the general education curriculum used also in school.

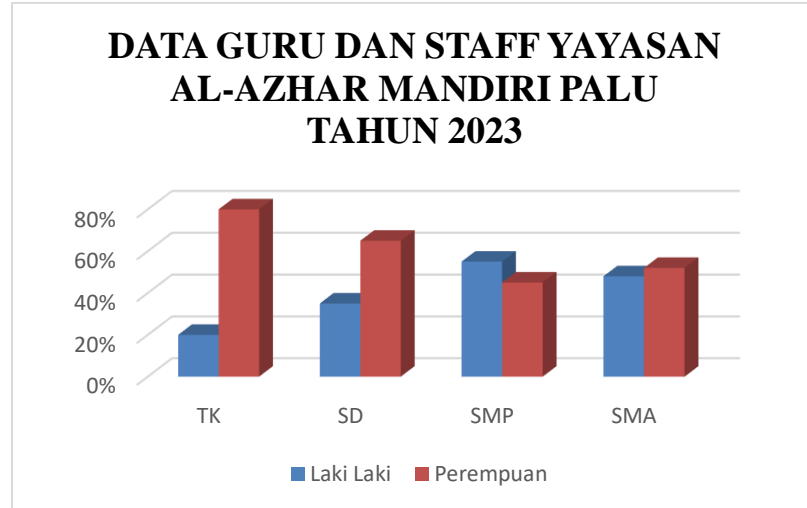
Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Education Foundation is a school that is very concerned about gender, not only from the education system implemented but also the available infrastructure that can support gender equality in education. In language, gender means sex, but it also means differences between women and men that can be viewed from the aspect of values and behaviour. While in terms of gender means social functions regarding rights, obligations, duties, functions, and opportunities that are constructed by society. Gender is a perception used in identifying differences that exist between women and men from non-biological aspects, which focus more on psychological, socio-cultural, and infrastructure aspects. Based on the above, since its establishment until now, Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation has always been committed to caring for gender equality, not only as a role in gender but also through the development of infrastructure that supports gender equality itself. This has been consistently realised by Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation until today. The existence of inequality between women and men is caused by several things, including being formed, socialised, strengthened, and constructed socially and culturally, this is certainly what motivates Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation to be consistent in building education that does not exclude gender equality.

Based on this view or stigma, some groups of people still believe that what is inherited is an absolute truth. As a result, we often encounter inequality or injustice in formal education. This can be seen from female students who sometimes do not continue their education to higher stages, even though they are competent to compete with men. This is contrary to what happens in schools under the auspices of Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation, which applies gender equality in various fields, both for teachers, educators and students themselves. The author's interview with several influential figures within the scope of Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation, is enough to explain that gender equality is indeed enforced in the education system implemented. As for the stigma of society in general that women cannot go to higher education, it does not seem to apply, because Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation strongly encourages and motivates students to be able to compete and continue their education to a higher stage.

Gender equality is a situation where women and men have an equal and equal position in obtaining rights in life which includes educational, political and religious rights. Biological differences that are natural between women and men do not justify the differences between women and men in terms of obtaining rights and obligations. The definition of gender equality can vary because it is influenced by beliefs, norms, customs, and provisions that develop in a society. However, in reality, gender injustice still occurs where women are the most disadvantaged, although men can also be disadvantaged in this regard. Gender injustice that usually befalls women is caused by the power of men who are often dominant compared to women, thus increasing the opportunity for violence and the formation of a patriarchal culture that is considered to be a trigger for oppression. The inequality that occurs between men and women in society is caused by the lack of opportunities for women to grow with education and the lack of female interest or male support for women to develop themselves. One of the efforts to overcome this gender injustice is to provide education for women. Through this education we can change the socio-cultural values regarding gender differences that grow in society. From the various opinions from the results of the interviews described above, it can be seen that women and men have equal opportunities in actualising themselves in honing their respective potentials.



Source : Yayasan Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu



Source : Yayasan Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu

Based on this data, the author argues that the number of students attending Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation is equal in terms of the ratio between men and women. But the benchmark for gender equality is not in the number of students based on gender, but many factors that influence this. Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation certainly realises the progress of education through the achievements achieved by schools under the auspices of Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation. Of course, this impact will be felt by all elements involved in Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation and the people in Central Sulawesi. Of course, Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation has become a role model for educational foundations in Central Sulawesi and even in Indonesia. Seeing the above about the theory and structure of the foundation, the author concludes that in building an advanced education system the role and support of the foundation is certainly very important. For example, in building an education system that realises good and fair gender equality, the role of all elements in the foundation is needed to support and provide freedom on this matter. This has been implemented by Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation.





Source : OSIS SMA Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu

Finally, in the research conducted by the author, all supporting factors state that Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation is an educational institution that has consistently implemented gender equality for all elements of the institution itself. Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation basically consistently implements a fair education system and prioritises good and fair services for students who study at all levels of Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation schools. For this reason, gender equality at the Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation has been implemented and has become an example for schools in Palu City and Central Sulawesi. Based on the results of the research, the author concludes that Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation can be said to be one of the educational foundations that is already aware of gender equality, especially in the field of education. This can be proven by the implementation of this system in schools and infrastructure that certainly supports all schools under the auspices of the Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation. In the future, Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Foundation must be an example of how gender equality can be properly implemented in educational institutions.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the discussion in the previous chapters and answering the problem formulation, research objectives and referring to the research process, the following conclusions can be drawn: 1. Sex differences between men and women are God's nature because they are permanently unchanging and are biological provisions. Meanwhile, gender is a difference in behaviour between men and women that is socially shaped. These non-natural differences are created through a long social and cultural process. There are several issues related to gender, namely gender differentiation, gender equality and gender oppression. In their view, there are still differences, inequalities and gender violence in the world. Gender bias takes place and is socialised through the process and system of learning at school and in the family environment. If mothers or domestic helpers (women) always do domestic tasks such as cooking, washing, and sweeping, it will be embedded in the minds of children that domestic work is indeed a woman's job. 2. The reality is that there are inequalities in the practice of education. The contributing factors include access, control, participation and benefits. The access factor is seen in the process of curriculum preparation and the learning process, which is dominated by men. Book writers and teaching staff are dominated by men, and policy control is also dominated by men, especially in structural positions from the Centre to the Regions. This situation has implications for women's participation in the pace of development is very low, the benefit factor is seen in the dominance of men in policy-making positions, especially bureaucracy and educational academic positions. Therefore, it is necessary to fight for gender equality in education by including gender materials in the curriculum by making efforts to integrate gender materials in a sustainable curriculum. 3. Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu Education Foundation is a school that is very concerned about gender, not only from the education system implemented but also the available infrastructure can support gender equality in education. In language, gender



means sex, but it also means differences between women and men that can be viewed from the aspect of values and behaviour. While in terms of gender means social functions regarding rights, obligations, duties, functions, and opportunities that are constructed by society. Gender is a perception used in identifying differences that exist between women and men from non-biological aspects, which focus more on psychological, socio-cultural, and infrastructure aspects.

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