Islamic Education and Concept of Gender Using a Culture Approach in Minangkabau

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze Islamic education and the concept of gender with a cultural approach in Minangkabau. This study uses a qualitative method with content analysis, all data are taken from theories, opinions of experts, and results of previous research on related issues. The data that has been collected is analyzed through identification, categorization, and conclusions. Overall this article will discuss three topics, i) gender and matrilineal culture in Minangkabau, ii) Islamic education in Minangkabau and iii) relevance of culture, gender, and Islamic education in Minangkabau. The implication of this article is that gender with cultural perspective in Minangkabau has regulated the functions and roles of men and women according to their portions, therefore the concept of gender in Minangkabau culture can be used to the platform in understanding functions and roles of men and women in Islamic education. The understanding of the concept of gender in Minangkabau culture has been discussed in this article at least can be used as initial information and reading material for next researchers to examine this problem in context and different issues.

Keywords: Matrilineal culture, gender, Islamic education, Minangkabau

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganilisis pendidikan Islam dan konsep gender menggunakan pendekatan kebudayaan di Minangkabau. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan jenis konten analisis, seluruh data diambil dari teori, pendapat pakar, dan hasil penelitian terdahulu yang membahas isu dan permasalahan dalam konteks yang sama. Data yang sudah terkumpul dianalisis dengan cara identifikasi, kategorisasi, dan kesimpulan. Secara umum artikel ini akan

membincangkan tiga topik, yaitu i) gender dan budaya Minangkabau, ii) pendidikan Islam di Minangkabau, dan iii) relevansi budaya, gender, pendidikan Islam di Minangkabau. Sebagai implikasi dari artikel ini adalah bahwa gender dalam perspektif kebudayaan di Minangkabau sesungguhnya telah mengatur fungsi dan peran laki-laki dan perempuan sesuai dengan porsinya, oleh sebab itu konsep gender dalam budaya Minangkabau dapat dijadikan sebagai platform dalam memahami peran dan fungsi laki-laki dan perempuan dalam pendidikan Islam. Konsep pemahaman gender dalam budaya Minangkabau sebagaimana telah dibincangkan dalam artikel ini setidaknya dapat disajikan sebagai informasi awal dan bahan bacaan peneliti berikutnya untuk mengkaji permasalahan ini dalam konteks dan isu yang berbeda.

Kata kunci: Budaya matrilineal, gender, pendidikan Islam, Minangkabau

Introduction

The discussion of gender equality continues to echo in the public sphere. Gender differences are average as long as there is no gender inequality or injustice. However, due to the different roles between men and women in society, it is not uncommon for this to result from the insubordination of one party, namely men or women (Sumar, 2015; Marcen and Morales, 2021). Gender issues have much relevance in various aspects of life, both related to individuals and their relationships with other people. Fatimah & Mahmuda's (2020); Murniyetti et al., (2016) research aims to determine the relationship between gender, mental health, pandemics, and e-learning. The broad scope of gender studies makes gender issue reviewers look at gender from their respective scientific perspectives, including from the realm of education.

In general, education is a process to form a person's skills, both for himself and to behave in society. According to Rahmat (2010), Hasanah et al., (2019), Atmaja (2019), and Ashari (2020) education is an effort to improve the quality of basic human skills which includes three aspects, namely cognitive (ability to think), affective (ability to empathize), and psychomotor (skills).

Meanwhile, according to Undang-undang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional (SISDIKNAS) No. 20 Th. 2003 Pasal 1 explains that education is a conscious and planned effort to increase students' potential so that they have the power of self-control, intelligence, personality, skills, and noble character. In addition to sharing knowledge and strengthening individual abilities, education is also a forum for

discussion to share new ideas (Kopnina, 2020; Mashvufah, 2020; Horban et al., 2019). Thus, the educational process becomes one of the best alternatives in providing an understanding of gender.

In addition to education, religious values also have a crucial role in understanding gender. Apart from regulating transcendent relationships, the talks about conception of religion also human social relations (Mukhammadsidiqov, 2020; Haryanto, 2015; Eriyanti et al., 2020). Islam is also a teaching that emphasizes the same thing, where its adherents are promised happiness in the world and the hereafter if they can balance the two (Amboro, 2020; Ulinnuha dan Nafisah, 2020; Madjid, 1999). To achieve this degree of happiness, the first thing that Islam revealed to its followers was Igra (QS. al-Alaq/119: 1-5). Thus, to achieve this happiness, individual skills are needed to understand everything. It can be interpreted; Islam and education are two things that are intertwined in their development.

Islam and Islamic education, in its development, of course, come into contact with the values of society and its culture. Minangkabau is one of the many tribes in Indonesia, precisely in West Sumatra, a province located on the coast of the island of Sumatra. The Minangkabau people are known as indigenous peoples who are thick with their culture and local wisdom. These values result from the interaction between local traditions and the values of Islamic teachings, which can be seen in one of the Minang philosophies, *adat basandi syara', syara' basandi kitabullah* (Iswadi *et al*, 2021). The use of tradition in Minangkabau is also the key to the successful development of Islam in Minangkabau. It can be seen how previous scholars used local traditions as Islamic educational institutions in Minangkabau, namely Islamic education conducted in surau (Yusutria & Febriana, 2017).

The role of the surau is quite significant in shaping individual skills in Minangkabau. The surau is an element of culture and is related to belief in the perspective of the Malay tribe (Afdayeni, 2017). In the development, the surau was used to teach religious knowledge after the arrival of Islam in Minangkabau.

However, surau education was prioritized for boys only because at that time, the public perception of the nature of women was only limited to domestic affairs, thus making Minang women leaders voice education for girls in Minangkabau (Yanti, 2017). Gradually the role and function of the surau as an educational institution began to diminish with the discourse of renewal initiated by three hajjis through their Wahhabi understanding. After the renewal movement, the return of Minang students to the Middle East also decreased the surau's role (Alfurqon, 2020; Juharmen, 2020; Fithri, 2015).

In addition to Islamic education, one of the Minangkabau cultures in the spotlight of many circles is the matrilineal culture adopted by the Minang community, where lineage is based on the mother's lineage. At first glance, such a culture is not in line with the teachings of Islamic paternalism (Faslah, 2020). Of course, applying matrilineal culture amid religious teachings has a long journey and upheaval. However, this paper does not discuss the history of cultural and religious integration in Minangkabau. As previous scholars used local traditions to disseminate knowledge and religious teachings in Minangkabau, this paper attempts to analyze the concept of gender in local culture, namely matrilineal culture, which is applied in Minangkabau as an alternative to making it easier to understand gender in Islamic education in Minangkabau.

Literature Review

Research by Zakia (2011) & Fatimah (2012), aims to find out the gender in Minangkabau tradition in theory, practice, and its implications for the life of the Minangkabau ethnic in family and society. The research indicates that there is no gender inequality and injustice in Minangkabau customary norms, although the Minangkabau community applies a matrilineal system.

Gender equality in Minangkabau is seen in customary norms that place women in a strategic position domestically and publicly. Domestically, Minangkabau women take care of household needs and their children. In the public sphere, the role of Minangkabau women is seen in the proverb, *bundo kanduang*

limpapeh rumah gadang. The application of matrilineal culture in Minangkabau does not marginalize the role of man at all. Concerning family and society, men in Minangkabau as someone who protects and is represented as honorable persons, namely as *mamak*.

Siregar and Imran's research (2018) aims to integrate gender equality and the matrilineal system in Minangkabau tribe. This research explains how the proposition of men and women in the matrilineal system, where men are placed as respected people in the family and society and women are given access to ownership. In terms of making decisions, both have the same position. Putri (2019) has also researched how to implement gender in Minangkabau families. This study also shows that the matrilineal culture adopted by the Minangkabau community is very gender-equitable. That equality is described by describing the role of husband and wife in family and society in Minangkabau. The role of the husband is seen in proverb, *anak dipangku kamanakan dibimbiang*.

Many studies about Islamic education in Minangkabau have also been carried out, including Zulhimma (2015); Kharles & Nazmi (2015); Afdayeni (2017); Saharman (2017); Yusutria & Febriana (2018); Satria (2019); Rivauzi (2019); Juharmen (2020); Iswadi et al., (2021), overall, these studies discuss the roles of the surau in community empowerment in Minangkabau by utilizing the local traditions of the Minangkabau to spread and teach Islamic values and teachings. Other than that, these studies also discuss the dynamics of Islamic education in Minangkabau from time to time and the pattern of changes in Islamic education in Minangkabau which was initially carried out in surau to switch to more advanced and modern madrasah education by updating methods, system, and teaching curricula. However, madrasa education does not eliminate the essence of surau education that has been carried out.

The fundamental difference between this paper and previous studies lies in taking perspective. Previous studies have only described the relationship between culture and gender in the customs of the Minangkabau community and only examined how Islamic education in Minangkabau in general is. Meanwhile, this paper attempts to discuss Islamic education and the concept of gender using a cultural approach in Minangkabau. Based on the literature review, this study is critical because it looks at the history of education in Minangkabau (Islamic education in particular), which was initially less profitable and in favor of Minangkabau women due to the perception of society that was not right about men and women.

Method

This research is qualitative research with content analysis. All data are taken from previous studies on gender, culture, and Islamic education in Minangkabau. In the next stage, the data is identified and grouped according to the information needed by the author. According to Wilson (2016), dan Mayring (2014), Engkizar et al., (2018), Kasmar et al., (2019), Rahawarin et al., (2019) content analysis is a technique that allows writers to read and analyze objects indirectly through articles, books, magazines, and other media. Sari et al., (2020), Chyrun et al., (2016), and Graneheim (2017), Syafril et al., (2021) suggest that this analysis is used to determine certain concepts and themes by determining the author's specific goals and ensuring that the analysis carried out can be re-examined and further based on the context. The presentation of the data in this study is descriptive, describing the findings in detail by describing the similarities and differences of a concept (Siyoto dan Sodik, 2015; Auni & Hermanto, 2020; Azmi & Wardi, 2020; Asril, 2021).

Findings and Discussion

Based on the author's findings, this article discusses three aspects. Namely, i) gender and culture in Minangkabau, ii) Islamic education in Minangkabau, and iii) relevance of culture, gender, and Islamic education in Minangkabau. The matrilineal system implemented by the Minangkabau community has been gender-equitable, and the use of local culture as a tool of understanding will be more exciting and easier to understand because culture contains noble values that are born society cultural itself, and education as a knowledge transfer institution is one

of the right places for learning. Discuss and discuss new ideas and ideas so that making culture an alternative to understanding gender is very appropriate in Islamic education in Minangkabau.

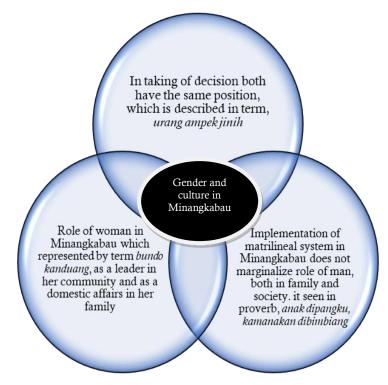


Fig 1. Gender and culture in Minangkabau

Talking about gender, a comprehensive concept of gender is needed. In general, the term of gender is used to identify differences between men and women based on non-biological aspects. The discussion about the biological side between men and women is included in the scope of sex (Suryadilaga, 2018). From this explanation, it can be understood that gender is something that is non-natural. Every human being born has an innate nature (God's creation) inherent in the individual, such as the penis, Adam's apple, and sperm for men; vagina, ovaries, and uterus for women (Kartini & Maulana, 2019).

Meanwhile, non-natural things talk about the place where the individual lives, such as: social and cultural. The embedding of social and cultural values on individuals, both men, and women is the realm of gender studies, where this embedding results in differences in roles and functions between men and women in society (Hereya, 2012; Rokach, 2018; Giuliano, 2020).

Within the scope of gender, men and women have the same rights to participate in various aspects of life in society, both in the social, economic, political, educational, and other aspects that are not innate (sex) (Khasanah, 2018). However, in line with Islamic teaching, there are no differences between hierarchy or position in society except piety (QS. Al-Hujarāt/49: 13).

يَاأَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا حَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَى وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْقَاكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّه عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

The meaning: *The noblest of you, in the sight of Allah is best in conduct*. (Alquran, 2010).

The Qur'an as a source of Islamic teachings also contains many verses with signs of gender equality. For example, when the Qur'an talks about every individual having the same opportunity to excel and get results that are following what he does (QS. An-Nisā'/4: 124; QS. An-Nahl/16: 97; QS. Gāfir/40: 40). These verses contain hints of the concept of gender justice, which emphasizes that there is no monopoly of opportunity by a particular gender.

وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِنَ الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَى وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ الجُنَّةَ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ نَقِيرًا

The meaning: And whose doeth good works, whether of male or female and he (or she) is a believer, such will enter paradise and they will not be wronged the dint in a date-stone. (Alquran, 2010).

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَى وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهُ حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

The meaning: Whosoever doeth right, whether male or female, and is a believer, him verily we shall quicken with a good life, and We shall pay them a recompense in proportion to the best of what they used to do. (Alquran, 2010).

مَنْ عَمِلَ سَيِّئَةً فَلَا يُجْزَى إِلَّا مِثْلَهَا وَمَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَى وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ الجُنَّة يُرْزَقُونَ فِيهَا بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ The meaning: Whoso doeth an ill-deed, he will be repaid the like thereof, while whoso doeth right, whether male or female and is a believer, (all) such will enter the garden, where they will be nourished without stint. (Alquran, 2010).

The Qur'an uses different expressions when talking about men and women biologically (natural) and gender (non-natural). When the Qur'an talks about non-natural gender, the Qur'an uses the expressions *rijāl* (masculine nature) and *nisā'* feminine nature), while when the Qur'an talks about the biological nature of men and women, the Qur'an uses the expressions *dhakar* and *unthā* (Umar, 1999). It means, when a woman can lead a group with the skills she has, then at that time, the woman can be called *rijāl*. In other words, gender talks about individual abilities, functions, and roles (Nurmila, 2020; Milestone and Mayer, 2020; Neculaesei, 2015).

In line with Islamic teachings, which provide equal space for men and women, Minangkabau customary norms, built on the spirit of Islam, also apply the same thing even though the Minangkabau community adheres to a matrilineal system. In the matrilineal system, women are placed in a particular position because of regulating life patterns in society, such as inheritance, lineage, ethnicity, and other things based on maternal lineage (Sastra, 2018). In the customary matrilineal norms in Minangkabau, women have a dual role, namely, in their families, Minang women are responsible for the welfare and care of domestic affairs of their households. Whereas in Minang society, women are the leaders of their people (Nurman, 2019; Handrianto, 2017; Sukmawati, 2019).

The application of the Matrilineal System in Minangkabau does not marginalize men's role in the family and society. Minangkabau men in the household have a role ahead of the household, a father, protector, and supervisor for his wife and children. In social life, Minangkabau men are *ninik mamak* whose figures are role models for their nephews (Zakia, 2011). Minang men and women both play a role in decision-making, reflected in the *urang ampek jinih* element, which consists of *ninik mamak, cadiak pandai* (also known as *manti*), *alim ulama* (also called *malin*), dan *bundo kanduang* (Firiani *et al*, 2017). It can be understood that the Minangkabau customary norms ideally regulate the pattern of life of men and women according to their respective roles and functions. Of course, this is in line with the concept of gender justice, which does not want a monopoly on the roles and functions of one particular sex. In other words, the customary norms applied by the Minangkabau community provide access, opportunities, and space for men and women to mutually maximize their abilities in life, both personal and social.

Islamic Education in Minangkabau

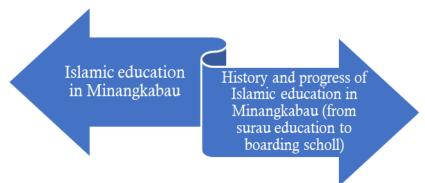


Fig 2. Islamic education in Minangkabau

Islam, a religion that emphasizes on its people to always *iqra* (QS. Al-Alaq/94: 1-5) to achieve the goal of human creation on earth, namely *khalīfah fil ar*d (QS. Al-Baqarah/2: 30 Of course, to achieve this goal, humans must have the skills to think and analyze every element in life (Idris and ZA, 2017). It shows that there is an affirmation so that humans can balance faith, knowledge, and charity. These values are also inseparable from Islamic education based on the Qur'an and hadith. In the Qur'an, it is also explained that the position of individuals who believe and have knowledge is appointed (QS. Al-Mujadalah/58: 11).

The meaning: Allah will exalt those who believe among you, and those who have knowledge to high ranks. (Alquran, 2010).

Therefore, Islam obliges humans to seek knowledge. In this case, the educational process becomes an essential thing, where Islamic education itself encourages humans to achieve the perfection of beings who have noble character, knowledge, and faith (Lubis, 2015; Hidayat, 2016; Idris et al., 2018).

The rapid development of Islam also has an impact on Islamic education itself. In its journey, Islam and Islamic education come into direct contact with local culture and make it a medium for spreading the values of Islamic teachings, including in Minangkabau. Islamic education in Minangkabau cannot be separated from the role of the surau which is used as a place to transform religious knowledge and values. At first, the surau was a cultural institution used as a meeting place (Rivauzi, 2019). The subsequent development, surau has integrated with Islam, and the function of surau has remarkable development, besides for socializing and cultural study, it was also used as a place of worship by Muslims, such as reciting the Koran, praying, and becoming an Islamic educational institution (Kharles & Nazmi, 2015; Mawangir, 2016; Natsir, 2019).

Along with the times, the surau as an educational institution experienced a decline in function, one of which was caused by the reformist movement pioneered *by* Haji Sumanik, Haji Pioban, Haji Miskin, and coupled with the arrival of Minang students (young people) from the Middle East who brought a new understanding about Islamic education which later established a *madrasah* with a modern pattern (Juharmen, 2020).

According to Azra (2003), the differences between *surau* education and *pesantren* education include: first, surau education does not have a formal bureaucracy with complicated and binding rules but is only based on the interpersonal relationships of surau residents. Second, the method used by surau education is the halaqah method (memorization, reading, and lectures. In comparison, modern Islamic education encourages critical thinking and analytical skills. Third, surau education does not use the class system used by modern Islamic education. Fourth, the tools used for writing used, the *urang siak* (teachers) in the

surau use the bark as paper and traditional writing instruments. Fifth, the educational curriculum, madrasa education, presents a more planned curriculum and includes general subjects, such as language, history, and mathematics. Azra (2003) says that the spirit and function of madrasas founded by young people are the same as surau.

In 1915, a young cleric, Zainuddin Labai, founded Madrasah Al-Diniyah, and this madrasa accepted girls (girls) as students (Azra, 2003). The pattern of education for Minangkabau women began to change in the 19th century, after the arrival of the Dutch colonials. The primary and first education that Minang women get and feel is education in the family environment (informal education), namely education on household management skills and matters relating to domestic affairs. The nonformal education obtained by Minang women is education in religious knowledge, sewing courses, and weaving. As for formal education at the beginning of the 20th century, many Minang women still could not feel it. At the same time, Minang women began to feel dissatisfied with family education and non-formal education only, so efforts to promote formal education opportunities for Minangkabau girls began to be carried out by Minangkabau female leaders (Qalbi, 2018). It indicates a gender gap at the beginning of education in Minangkabau, both general education and Islamic education because not all Minang women had access and opportunities to school. This injustice is caused by the public's perception that education is taboo for women and prioritized boys (Zulmuqim, 2015; Zen and Hasnawati, 2020; Rodin and Huda, 2020).

As a criticism of the Minang community's perception that education is only for men, while women only take care of domestic matters, then in 1923, Rahmah El Yunusiyah, one of the pioneers of education for Minangkabau girls, succeeded in establishing Diniyah Putri in Padang Panjang with an education system. Modern without eliminating and leaving the function of women in the family and environment (Helfi and Afriyani, 2019). It can be said that when developing the educational institution that she initiated, Rahmah El Yunusiyah understood very

well how the community understood the role of Minang women in the customary matrilineal norms. Indirectly provided an understanding that matrilineal customs do not limit women only to taking care of the house and inheriting *pusako* assets because the system is matrilineal support strongly supports gender justice. The backwardness of women will result in a downturn in the Minang community (Sitto et al., 2021; Elian et al., 2021).



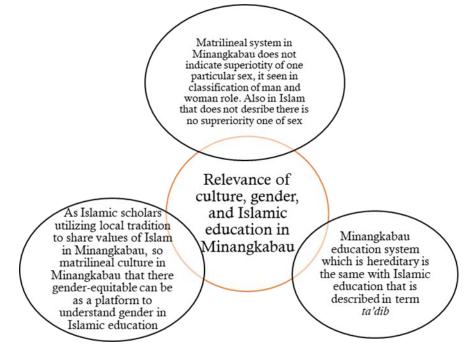


Fig 3. Relevance of culture, gender, and Islamic education Minangkabau

Minangkabau, one of the ethnic groups that implement a matrilineal system in which women are placed in a strategic position; however, the application of matrilineal in Minangkabau customary norms does not completely marginalize or minimize the role and function of men in the family and community spheres. Ideally, the matrilineal culture in Minangkabau has very much regulated the roles of men and women in a balanced way that supports gender justice.

These roles are depicted in Minangkabau philosophy: i) For Bundo Kanduang as a representation of Minang women, namely *Limpapeh rumah nangadang, sumarak di dalam kampuang hiasan dalam nagari, kok iduik tampek banasa, kok mati tampek* baniat, kaunduang-unduang ka Madinah, ka payuang panji kasarugo, cahayo rumah selendang dunie (Yunarti, 2017). ii) For Ninik Mamak as a representaion of men, namely Nan gadang basa batuah, nan dianjuang tinggi mambalah maampalau, mamapeh mandatakan, mamacik naroco adie, mamagang bungka nan piawai. (Supanggah, 2017).

As already explained, gender is the role and function of individuals in society based on social and culture. Then from this philosophy, it can be understood that each gender has got the main task and function of each in Minangkabau customs. The values in the division of basic tasks and functions between men and women in Minangkabau are taught from generation to generation and continue to the next generation. It is in line with the pattern of education in Islam, which is represented by the term *ta'dib*, namely the gradual installation of values that is focused on fostering character or improving morals by covering elements of science (knowledge), *ta'lim* (teaching), and *tarbiyah* (parenting) (Hidayat, 2016; Ridwan, 2018; Hasibuan, 2018; Lahmar, 2020). It shows that education is a place to discuss and share new ideas.

This *ta'dib* pattern is also influential in the process of spreading Islamic values that can blend in with the local traditions of the local community. This is enshrined in the Minangkabau traditional philosophy, the *adat basandi syara', syara' basandi kitabullah* (Utomo, 2020). That is, culture, gender, and Islamic education in Minangkabau are relevant. The reasons are i) the matrilineal system in Minangkabau does not at all show the superiority of one particular sex. It can be seen in the division of roles of men and women according to their respective portions. Likewise, Islamic teachings do not explain the superiority of one gender in any aspect of life. ii) The Minangkabau education system, passed down from generation to generation with the pattern of Islamic education described in the term *ta'dib*. iii) As *ulama* compromise with local traditions in spreading Islamic teachings and values, the matrilineal culture in Minangkabau that is gender-just can be an alternative to understanding gender.

Conclusion

The application of the matrilineal system in the life of the Minangkabau community seems to support gender justice. It is relevant to Islamic teachings and values that do not favor a specific gender. The noble values in culture can be an alternative understanding that makes it easier for a society to understand specific issues. In this context, understanding gender justice through a matrilineal system approach in Minangkabau can facilitate gender teaching and education in line with Islamic values. Therefore, as scholars who have been able to compromise the Minang tradition with Islamic teachings contained in the philosophy, *adat basandi syara', syara' basandi Kitabullah*, then strengthen Minang culture, especially gender in Islamic education in Minangkabau as an attractive alternative understanding and facilitate.

Islamic education in Minangkabau as an attractive alternative understanding and facilitate. This research suggests that this article only ideally discusses the concept of gender contained in matrilineal culture in Minangkabau. However, it is undeniable that there is still often a public perception that views women as secondclass social beings after men in everyday life. However, it cannot be denied in society - life still often found in society's perspective saw women as second-class social beings after men. For that purpose, we need more research on gender literacy in society, especially in Minangkabau Islamic education. Thus, culture as a platform of understanding can be applied optimally following the position and understanding of the community about gender.

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