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## SURAT KETERANGAN

Nomor: 330/UNUSA-LPPM/Adm-I/II/2024

Lembaga Penelitian dan Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat (LPPM) Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Surabaya menerangkan telah selesai melakukan pemeriksaan duplikasi dengan membandingkan artikel-artikel lain menggunakan perangkat lunak **Turnitin** pada tanggal 12 Februari 2024.

Judul : *Indonesian Students' Perception of Gender Equity in Education*

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No. Pemeriksaan : 2024.02.29.193

Dengan Hasil sebagai Berikut:

**Tingkat Kesamaan diseluruh artikel (*Similarity Index*) yaitu 8%**

Demikian surat keterangan ini dibuat untuk digunakan sebagaimana mestinya

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**Submission date:** 12-Feb-2024 04:11PM (UTC+0700)

**Submission ID:** 2292716575

**File name:** EJ1320272 (1).pdf (435.22K)

**Word count:** 9288

**Character count:** 51134

# Indonesian Students' Perception of Gender Equity in Education

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to figure out the difference in perceptions of female and male students of gender equity in education by determining quantitative and qualitative approaches. To measuring the three-domain of gender equity in education (1) equity of access, (2) equity of opportunity in the learning process, and (3) equity of opportunity in educational achievement. We used questionnaires and distributed them to 111 students which are categorized into two genders; 59 female students, and 52 male students. Subsequently, depth interviews were carried out with 10 male students who were randomly chosen to investigate why male students did not accept fully gender equity in education. The independent t-test analysis was utilized to pointed out empirical facts. There was a significant difference in perception between female students and male students of gender equity in education. Gender equity have been covered by many communities of society including the government. It is supposed to include gender equity material in the curriculum so that stakeholders and all school elements have awareness and are proactive in promoting gender equity in education.

**Keywords:** Education, Gender equity, Perception, Students

## INTRODUCTION

Until recently, gender equity becomes a debate in the public sphere and academics forums as well as a crucial issue in Indonesia (Adamson, 2007). Domination of men to women is unconscious by both, instead, inequity assumes something natural. A patriarchal cultural style legitimized by the interpretation of religious understanding and gender inequity is assumed biological, taken for granted (Adriany, 2019). The reality is that gender is not neutral or free from values and is not merely a biological matter, yet social construction in interaction with others (Adriany, 2019; Osgood & Robinson, 2017; Sallee, 2011; Tosolt, 2009). Also, one of the terms adapted from Islam is 'kodrat' (nature), which is embedded in Indonesian Communities. The terms of 'kodrat' origin from Arabic, which considers that women's nature has a different role to that of men, even an there is believe that women are the other' or 'under men' (Adriany, 2019).

Religion values are important in all parts of life, including religious education, normally, religion is materialized and be exposition as a moral virtue to students. (Nilan, 2009; Raihani, 2007). A rigid interpretation of religion that overlaps with culture, affects understanding gender in education. Whereas, education is simultaneously important part of modernization in Indonesia (Bull, 2000; Lukens-Bull, 2017; Nilan, 2009). Undeniably that education is an essential factor for developing a civilization. There is a thriving awareness in developing countries that education for women provides essential advantages (Rankin & Aytac, 2006). Bobbitt-Zeher's

study shows that it is significant that education continues to contribute to gender equity (Bobbitt-Zeher, 2007). In addition, educating women elevate family revenue and social distinction and leads to higher women's revenue and employment motion (Bobbitt-Zeher, 2007; Rankin & Aytac, 2006).

Prolonged, and rather dominant (despite invisible) distinction between men (social, cultural, ritual, and political) as the role of the official institutional territory, and women's competence as the subject of praxis domestic (Kloos, 2016), and that fact linked with education as well. Some research that has been conducted by the government reports that gender issues are still often found in schools, for instance, gender-biased student textbooks, gender-responsive learning styles, and extracurricular group division in schools are also inevitably from issues of gender. So that it has the impact of a gap between

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**How to cite this article:** Mustofa, Karya DF, Halim A, (2021). Indonesian Students' Perception of Gender Equity in Education. Pegem Journal of Education and Instruction, Vol. 11, No. 4, 2021, 185-196

<sup>8</sup> **Source of support:** Nil

**Conflict of interest:** None.

**DOI:** 10.47750/pegegog.11.04.18

**Received:** 22.06.2021

**Accepted:** 26.08.2021

**Publication:** 01.10.2021

men and women in educational attainment, such as statistical reports issued by the government (Indonesia Country Gender Assessment, 2006; Bappenas, 2013; Utomo & McDonald 2013). On the other hand, stereotypes that men are assumed to be more logical while women are perceived as more relying on feelings carries the consequence that only men are considered more proper in engineering and science fields (Francis et al., 2017; Quadlin, 2020).

In the last few decades, the government has been trying to promote gender equity in education by conducted much research as well as issued a circular letter through the Minister of Education (MoE). Regulation No. 84 2008, concerning guidelines for the implementation of gender mainstreaming in education (Kemendikbud, 2008). Referring to the MoE, gender-responsive teaching assures that males and females have the same opportunities and achievements in education. As well as equal opportunities for males and female to flourish their potential in school. Gender-responsive school environments, for examples, just treatment for male and female students, therefore textbooks, learning system, learning output, and curriculum should stand on from the argument that boys and girls have the equal right to flourish and thrive into a citizen (Kemendikbud, 2008). Nevertheless, gender equity has never been explicitly accommodated in the curricula. We assume that this is less effective due to the government does not explicitly include gender equity material in the curriculum.

This research was carried out in a private university faculty of education in Surabaya, Indonesia, under the shelter of the biggest Islamic organization in Indonesia. Whereby many *santri* (students) who finished from the *Pesantren* then forward their studies there because the university has been making Islam as a foundation value. *Pesantren* are formal traditional educational institutions that teach Islamic religious education and have been going on since the 18th century (Srimulyani, 2007).

*Pesantren* is a dormitory for '*santri*' to study Islam. The daily life of *pesantren* is different from mainstream educational institutions. For instance, there is no relationship or interaction between male and female students, and the teacher-student relationship is a monologue. The dormitory of female students and male students separated and couldn't meet utterly. We wondered how male and female students perceived gender equity in education. On the other hand, we determined the faculty of education since they prospective teachers in the future. We desired to find out how their perceptions of gender equity in education. This study intended to examine the distinction between female and male students' perception of gender equity in education employing mixed quantitative and qualitative approaches. Mixed methods were employed to gain a comprehensive picture of their perceptions. Further, we elucidate that there are still some people who desire to maintain the old view of gender, which in the social science

concept is called the status quo. We used this concept to explore how male students still desire to preserve the status quo. *We employed mixed methods to fill in the gaps in prior studies that focused solely on statistical results. In fact, perception is not black and white, there are always a myriad of reasons and arguments* hind it.

The systems justification theory elaborates, the motivation to choose the status quo is similar to the motivation to be superior to oneself and in groups and is thus social (Bäck & Lindholm, 2014; Jost et al., 2004). In addition, according to Eidelman, humans are cognitively biased to choose what is known over something new and less well known (Eidelman et al., 2009). This implicitly implies that it entails more effort and risk to confront the status quo rather than to endorse its existence.

## LITERATURE REVIEWS

### The Bias of Gender in Education

Life expectancy and opportunities of people are strongly affected by the highest level of attainment of education in their lifetime (Fine, 2015; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). For instance, health, future profit (Bobbitt-Zeher, 2007; Fine, 2015), and political complicity (Fine, 2015; Milligan, Moretti, & Oreopoulos, 2004). Education can be a significant instrument of predicting life chances, which is notable for women as well. Education has become the axis of all kinds of discourses that desire to modernize increase Muslim societies (Adely, 2009; Cornwall, 2007; Khurshid, 2015), and manifold models of the educational perspective as a process to support women being able to actualize themselves (Khurshid, 2015).

The current issue is that schools be either factor in fostering gender bias practices in education. The evidence is that many elementary schools to high school textbooks are written and constructed gender bias which marginalizes women and salient masculinity (Utomo & McDonald, 2013). The problem of gender-biased since curricula that did not explicitly enter gender equity materials. In 2013 the Ministry of Education established a new curriculum then well-known 'K-2013'. The curriculum provided discourse on character education and attempt to avoid and solve social issues in society, such as corruption, ethnic conflict, and faith-conflict (Qoyyimah 2018).

The Minister of Education and Culture 2009-2014, instructed teachers from each subject to integrate the 18 values that have been included in the syllabus. The values that determined to encompass areas such as religiosity, discipline, honesty, creativity, tolerance, curiosity, democracy, nationalism, independence, togetherness, respect, and social cohesion. The government endeavour that can be integrated these glorious values into all subjects not limited to civics education and religious subjects (Qoyyimah, 2018). Yet, the

government overlooks that one of the issues in education is gender inequity such as students' textbooks. The content of textbooks is important since offers the likelihood to set up future teachers to look that invisible, unconscious, and destroy gender biases that can ruin students. Textbooks tend to assist teachers in the coming to eliminate gender inequity, or, thru inadvertent, stigma, and stereotypes, student textbooks can reinforce biased views and behaviours.

Based on the 2003 education law the government mandates the essential of education to promote tolerance, peace, and diversity, as well as has long supported multicultural education (Raihani, 2018). Nevertheless, the support is not directly proportional to the actions taken, it is merely a discourse. Even though there have been many research results that show this necessity, including the aspirations conveyed by pundits. However, as discussed above the both did not explicitly discuss gender equity, whereas referring to Banks (2010) multicultural education is the notion of justice and equity for all students regardless of social status, ethnicity, racial or cultural characteristics, gender as well (Banks, 2010, Domnwachukwu, 2010).

As an effect of curricula that did not enter gender equity, the image of education was ruined with gender-biased construction. Then we examined several elementary school books to find evidence that many books were not oriented towards gender equity needs. The results of our research indicated many student textbooks are arranged with gender bias, such as the image below:

In figure 1, is a conversation among students, Geni asks Eca and Sakti, 'why the monsoon changes' the response of both are distinct. Eca's response 'perhaps this is the ending rain of this monsoon, immediately we will face the dry monsoon' while the

Sakti's response 'since the earth circumnavigates the sun'. Eca's response seems unscientific just opinion, rather, Sakti's reply is scientific. The point of the conversation in the image implicitly salient male superiority. This means the book is hegemonized by patriarchal views and the psychology of domination of men to women. Male is able to think logically and scientifically, while females vice versa. In fact, in the picture there is only one man and two women, despite men are in less quantity, they are constructed more superior. Rather, women showed inferiority.

Psychology plays a crucial role and would be manifested in behaviour and decisions also the consideration for methods, learning activities, materials, also provides the impulse for many curriculum policies (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2018). The images would have an affected-on student psychology and definitely will enshrine gender inequity in education. Gender issues are also clearly visible in the next picture since display visually. The next image in a student textbook that was arranged is extremely gender-biased as in the three images below. We gather them into one type; domesticating the duties of women.

The three pictures above are grouped into one character because they imply a similar meaning and message. The images indicate that household responsibilities are only for women. The pictures illustrate how to tame women's duties. In everyday life, a situation whereby a woman is in charge of household duties and treat of a sick child or family member. As such, if teachers desire to terminate gender bias in schools, they should conscious of how sexism and hazard operate in all children. Interaction biases in the classroom, abuse in the alleyway, imbalances, and stereotypes in the curriculum. Therefore, the textbooks used by students and teachers cannot organize teachers to counter those dares.



Figure 1: (Source: Utomo & Mcdonald, 2013)



**Figure 2:** (Source: Utomo & Mcdonald, 2013)

Longstanding a conservative understanding of gender has been going on those women and men are differentiated in almost all fields. In the early 20th-century education for women was opened, it was in coincide<sup>20</sup> the social change that took place and came along with the national school of the East Indies began to have school for women (Srimulyani, 2007). During the New Order regime in power for 32 years (1967-1998), the role of women was successfully domesticated to the smallest unit (Adamson, 2007; Smith-Hefner & Sears, 1998). As previously mentioned, although there have been many advances in gender equity, this is still far from the ideal criteria. The grip of a strongly patriarchal ideology in all lines of life has been transmitted to<sup>31</sup> next generation. For instance, stereotypes about the gap in the ability of male and female students in the science field (Francis, et al., 2017; Sezgintürk & Sungur, 2020), as well as gender-biased learning materials, very traditional extracurricular groupings.

**Curriculum reform in Indonesia: an overview**

History records that curriculum changes occur frequently. Since Independence on 17 August 1945, it has undergone revised 10 times; 1947, 1952, 1962, 1968, 1975, 1984, 1994, 2004, 2006, and 2013, (Mukminin et al., 2019). It is inevitable as a predominantly Muslim country that Islamic values greatly influence the development of the curriculum in Indonesia as

well as customs and culture (Suratno, 2014). Even in every aspect of life, religion gives a significant role, including in education, religious considerations are an important aspect in determining the direction of education because of the imagination of piety (Novera, 2004; Raihani, 2007). Yet, on the other hand, in reality, religious desire often subordinates women (Marhumah, 2019, 2016).

Before independence, predominantly before 1900, women have gained fewer chances rather than men to self-actualize (Surbakti & Davasahayam, 2015). During this period, girls were generally not allowed to attend school. As in many other countries, women in Indonesia continue to have less access to education rather than men. Predominantly the type of education required to operate in a secular world (Oey-Gardiner, 1991). They are even prohibited from working outside the home, let alone occupying communal positions. 40 Records show that in 1897 the two-year education available to the natives in Java-Madura were only 278 students, and no female students; In 1898, in schools organized by the colonial government there were only 11 female students throughout the Dutch East Indies region (Kartini, 1911; Surbakti & Davasahayam).

Since 17 August 1945, Indonesia has been declaring an independent country. An important marker of independence is the establishment of 'Pancasila' as the foundation of the

state. That is, education must refer to the philosophy and values of Pancasila (Suratno, 2014). Until the early 1960s, efforts to provide equitable access to education and character building for the nation. Therefore, the 1947 curriculum became the first curriculum in Indonesia which was called the '*Rencana Pembelajaran*' curriculum which was conceptualized into three important things: subjects, study hours, and learning materials with content that was concerned with character education, state awareness, and public awareness (Mukminin et al., 2019).

Then in 1952, the first revision was carried out to become the '*Rencana Pembelajaran Terurai*' proposed to producing prudent, democratic, and responsible citizens for the well-being of the nation. In 1962 it was reformed again by reorienting the values of national, international, and religious patriotism and nationalism to improve students' intelligence, emotions, and physicality (Mukminin et al., 2019).

In 1967 the regime changed from the 'Orde Lama' (Old Order-Soekarno) to the 'Orde Baru' (New Order-Soeharto). At that time, the government's tagline was developed so that it viewed education as an investment in human capital. Therefore, since the 1990s in the <sup>22</sup> text of economic development, the government has tried to improve access, quality, and role of education in order to gain the best outcome (Suratno, 2014). However, in the New Order era, the government systematically domesticated Indonesian women by touching the smallest unit of society (Suryakusuma, 2011).

It is almost impossible to define the role of women as mothers singly from different time contexts. Although the stigma of mothers who only carry out domestic functions is still dominant, images of alternative mothers continue to grow and spread. The culture of following husbands became increasingly embedded in the definition of a mother's role during the New Order. Suryakusuma even depicted that the New Order regime always displayed male prowess or masculinity and simultaneously desired to subdue women. This means that the curriculum is increasingly insensitive to gender equity in education even vice versa.

Curriculum <sup>13</sup> 1975 to replace the 1968 curriculum that inaugurated on January 15, 1975, with the Decree of the Minister of Education No.008d/U/1975 and 008e/U/1975. This curriculum is distinct from the prior to the one which was developed based on a theory-based curriculum development process (Bobbitt, 1981; Mukminin et al., 2019). Yet, the development of the 1975 curriculum was highly influenced by politics so that the government had a single construe of education (Apple, 2004). Roughly a decade later, to be precise 1984, reform was made again to correct 1975 even though there were no significant changes. Strengthening power at that time became a priority so that it was full of doctrines in education so that history became a compulsory subject as propaganda, and

call it 'Educational History of the National Struggle' (Hasan, 1984; Mukminin et al., 2019).

Significant changes in 2003 (Indonesian National Education System Law or INESA) when there was a dramatic change from centralized to decentralized with the autonomy policy (Jalal & Supriadi, 2011; Raihani, 2007; Tilaar, 1995). This important reform occurred because the 1998 New Order regime toppled through the student movement and marked the birth of a truly democratic country, known in Indonesia as the reform order. As written in INESA, national education proposes to enhance the competency of each student and believes and is devoted to God Almighty, has a glorious character, is healthy, insightful, intelligent, creative, self-determined, and becomes democratic and be the liable citizen (Raihani, 2007). Religion values become an important component of education as well as arises in the educational goals of the INESA. Religion is still strongly affected in education since people's imagination to be a pious person.

After the 2004 centralization policy, the curriculum was changed again, the 'Kurikulum Berbasis Kurikulum' (Competency-Based Curriculum) which was quite famous and influential at that time (Bjork, 2005; Kristiansen & Pratikno, 2006). However, referring to Raihani (2007), Despite the previous decentralization of education was one of the important attentions of the 'Orde Baru Regime' to be realized, which was signified by the Government Law no. 28 of 1990 and there was enthusiasm for reform in fact, in the early 1990s, there were no serious changes. In addition, to respond to the education decentralization policy prior to the year, the Ministry of Education socialize School-Based Management (SBM) top elementary and middle schools (Hamzah, 2013; Raihani, 2007).

This policy proposes to provide more liberty to stakeholders to organize <sup>10</sup> schools. It is as well as appropriate with the worldview perspective that SBM is currently a common phenomenon, trusted to be a pledge instrument for entire school advancement. Endorser of this approach argued that in SBM schools, whereby culture and democratic perspectives are promoted, advancements in all features of the school become more feasible and advantageous (Cheng, 1996; Hamzah, 2013; Raihani, 2007).

Ultimately, in 2013 the Ministry of Education established a new curriculum and implemented it until today. This curriculum provides a discourse on character education as a fight to intercept and cope with social issues (Qoyyimah, 2018). Of all the discourses on the educational curriculum in Indonesia, the face of education is always character-oriented with a religious frame. As mentioned above, meanwhile, the spirit of religion often negates women and even rejects gender equity. Hence, even though curriculum changes frequently from year to year, gender equity has never been explicitly discussed in the curriculum. Indeed, in 2008 gender-

responsive learning policy was being socialized, yet was not integrated into the curriculum.

## METHODOLOGY

### Sampling Procedure

This study was conducted in the faculty of education employing the random sample of 111 students, faculty of education that consisted of three departments; English Education Department, Elementary School Teacher Education Department, Early Childhood Education Department. Which are divided into 52 male students, and 59 female students. We determined the faculty of education since they prospective teachers in the future.

### Data collection

Mixed methods were applied in this research; both quantitative and qualitative methods (Yusuff, 2014). It was important to incorporate the two methods, on the one hand to obtained statistically current evidence on students' perceptions of gender equity in education. On the other hand, to followed up the results of statistic we conducted dept interviewed. For the quantitative method, data were collected using a questionnaire with positive questions, (statements), which consisted of three domains of gender equity in education; (1) equity of access (EoA), (2) equity of opportunity in the learning process (EOLP), and (3) equity of opportunity in education achievement (EOEA). Each domain consisted of five items (1= strongly disagree, up to 5= strongly agree).

**Table 1:** Construct validities of the gender equity in education

Domain	Corrected item-total Correlation (male)	Corrected item-total Correlation (female)	r table
	EoA1	0,422	
EoA2	0,311	0,550	0,3
EoA3	0,537	0,376	0,3
EoA4	0,411	0,603	0,3
EoA5	0,418	0,443	0,3
EOLP1	0,345	0,508	0,3
EOLP2	0,345	0,379	0,3
EOLP3	0,321	0,335	0,3
EOLP4	0,394	0,379	0,3
EOLP5	0,387	0,361	0,3
EOEA1	0,312	0,456	0,3
EOEA2	0,454	0,708	0,3
EOEA3	0,557	0,328	0,3
EOEA4	0,310	0,552	0,3
EOEA5	0,324	0,410	0,3

To guarantee the validity and reliability of the questionnaires, we have adapted from previous study among the Indonesian government under the MoE in collaboration with the European Union, and Australian Aid, which was legally issued in 2013 by the Ministry of National Development Planning (Kemendikbud, 2013). We have tested the validities and reliabilities of the instruments as well (see table 1 & 2). Besides, we have conducted an external validity test to discuss with Professor expert gender (Boyle & Fisher, 2008), at the College of Education in Taiwan, to provide input and suggestions and generate valid questionnaires. She was able to ensure that the essence of the questionnaire was accurate and represented gender equality in education.

For qualitative approach we selected ten (10) male students randomly to dept interviewed; explore their perceived. We only determined male students to be interviewed since based on statistical results there are issues in the perceptions of male students (see table 3). Based on statistical results, significant distinction in the three domains between male students and female students; male students are lower than female students. Hence, it confirms that male students are uncertain or disagree on several domain items. We desired to investigate them.

### Analyses of data

Mean and standard deviations were calculated for differences in perceptions of female and male students of gender equity in education. Meanwhile, an independent t-test was used to test differences in perceptions (Chang, McKeachie, & Lin, 2009), between male and female students. Furthermore, for qualitative data, we carried out discussed and dept interviews then we did code and analysed data. Interviews were conducted one-on-one with each participant and conducted in Bahasa Indonesia. To avoid boredom, we divided the interviews into two sessions with the duration of the interviews twice for 30 minutes. Prior to interviewing, we had asked the participants for consent to record the interview.

Firstly, we duplicated data on the paper and spotlighted the important information linked with the theme of research, secondly, we enquired or investigated and conceived the extent of their data (wrote and coded in margin), thirdly, we did a maiden review to obtain a sense of the entire stream and concept of the data. Fourthly, to found a theme or big idea from each answer given by participants, we reviewed it specifically and thoroughly. Next, we analysed how each individual used

**Table 2:** Construct reliabilities of the gender equity in education

Domain	Cronbach Alpha (male)	Cronbach Alpha (female)	r table
EoA	0,636	0,710	0,6
EOLP	0,629	0,611	0,6
EOEA	0,633	0,708	0,6



language, notes words or phrases so that the gained of the complete portrait, and does not distort all the answers given (Lodico et al., 2010).

To ensure the credibility of the data we made sure that the data we collect reflects what the participants think, not the thoughts of the researchers, we allowed participants to read or examine the data. We also tested the data with research questions or topics, whether they were related. We did a member check as well (Lodico et al., 2010; Miles, 1994). Secondly, is dependability, related to the extent to which the data can be explained in detail and the procedures we carried out in retrieving the data precisely. We carried out precise procedures in collecting data, we conducted interviews with a tape recorder to make sure there were no answers was missed (Lodico et al., 2010). Thirdly, related to transferability, we had understood the specific context of the study, and also had understood the background of the participants, before conducting the research we had built a good relationship with the participants. In addition, we have had discussions with experts (Lodico et al., 2010; Miles, 1994).

Furthermore, of the ten participants we discussed and interviewed, we gather their answers based on their answers or similar opinions. Based on interviews then we classified their answers into three important characters. This was done to make it easier to find the main ideas of the interview participants since each of them had a tendency. First, those who strongly agree and agree, secondly, they didn't fully agree, or in other words, they were uncertain, then the third, that disagree. Following that, we classified it into a main motive or idea (Lodico et al., 2010).

## RESULTS

As displayed in table 1 there was a significant result between male students and female students of gender equity in education. Mean scores female students obtained a higher

Table 3: Summary of student perception of gender equity in education

Domain	Male (n = 52)		Female (n = 59)		t	Sig.
	M	SD	M	SD		
Gender equity in education						
Equity of access	4.21	.58	4.65	.37	-4.73	.000
Equity of opportunity in the learning process	4.07	.41	4.28	.43	-2.51	.013
Equity of opportunity educational achievement	3.93	.52	4.40	.46	-4.91	.000

5-point level: 1 = Strongly disagree; 5 = Strongly agree

score than male students in all three domains; The mean results of male and female students in the three domains are as follows, domain one male were students (4.21), and female students (4.65), and domain two male students (4.70), and female students (4.28). In domain 3, the difference is further than the others because in this domain there are some sensitive issues as we discussed above. The mean score of male students was 3.93 and female students 4.40. The results affirmed that there was still residual of a patriarchal culture that male students defended (Adamson, 2007). Whereas, the finding of interviewed ten (10) male students are they have not fully accepted gender equity in education. Some were 'uncertain' and even 'rejected' We would elucidate these statistical results by elaborating with the interview findings from representatives of male students.

## DISCUSSION

Male students gained scored lower in all domains and the third domain was the lowest. This means that there are several items that male students rejected (uncertain or disagree) about gender equity in education. In this section, I discuss these issues and return to my original research question: that the results are not "black and white", that is, agree or disagree as reflected in the statistics above. Male students are uncertain and disagree on some items or in other words, did not fully accept gender equity in education. We would explore and discuss it. Indeed, several statements are still considered sensitive and are still being debated, including; (1) Males and females have the same opportunity to gain a tertiary education. (2) Male and female equal opportunity to gain the best grades and achievements in all subjects. (3) Male and females have equal leadership skills in schools. (4) Male and females have the same opportunity to participate in education and all aspects of employment. This is still crucial to debate in the Muslim intellectual communities (Adamson, 2007).

Our interview questions began with questions about gain higher education opportunities for males and females. The argument put forward by most of the male students interviewed had the same opinion tendency, that women's necessities were not equal to men's needs in achieving higher education since they were not required to cover their family necessities. Only three people said that women should continue to gain the same higher education as men.

It is not a problem for the female to attain tertiary education, yet I think, it is not too important because women are not required to provide for it so there is no need to be too high in education, in contrast to men who should provide it. Therefore, it is more priority for men than women (7 male students, 2020).

They always associate achieving higher education with the opportunity to gain work and that is only considered more relevant to men (Srimulyani, 2007). The culture of the society

that the necessities of life are in charge of the husband, as well as in the teachings of Islam that the husband must be a charge of all the necessities of the wife so that women do not necessarily seek employment. Meanwhile, three male students tended to agree. They argued that females necessary to attain tertiary education to educate their children later on. These opinions were unconsciously biased also, despite they were different from the others due to the responsibility of caring for children is as only the undertaking of women. In fact, caring for children is the responsibility of both. Indonesian feminism, in the meantime, has fought for equality for a long time. They have different and relatively "inclusive views about religion, gender, and community (Kloos, 2016; Srimulyani, 2012), they fight for gender equity in all aspects of life (Arimbi, 2009).

Related to the question 'about male and female student equal opportunity to gain the best grades and achievements in all subjects', six people of the same opinion, that men are usually superior in some subjects. Referring to their opinion that men are more rational than women so that they think men are more suitable in science majors because women rely more on their feelings than on their logic. However, 4 people considered that male students and female students were equal, and could have the same opportunity to gain the achievement.

In my opinion, women and men are not the same in ability, it is more suitable for women in literature, nursing or education majors, such as being a teacher, while men are in the science or engineering department due to men are usually more rational. Usually, women are also more patient in educating students (6 male students/ 2020).

This assumption is highly subjective and influenced by old culture and views. Since many studies show that <sup>29</sup> student achievement in certain school field subjects' sort of science or engineering were extremely affected by academics rather than non-academic self-concepts (Kang et al., 2019; Kang & Keinonen, 2017; Ma <sup>12</sup> 1992), instead of gender. Furthermore, other study shows that students' self-concept, for example, the ability of <sup>12</sup> science to increase the aspirations of student involvement in further studies or working in the field (Guo et al., 2017; Kang et al., 2019; Kang & Keinonen, 2017), and in this case, women seem more diligent and eager to study. Bobbitt-Zeher's study shows that young women are now outperforming young men on many indicators of educational attainment. Not only are more women enrolling in college than men, but they also outnumber men in terms of high school graduates, college degrees, and college degree attainments (Bobbitt-Zeher, 2007).

Referring to the role suitability theory, for instance, it is stated that it is expected that women and men possess distinct social roles that are in line with gender stereotypes. Men are assumed to occupy the role of agents, which project strength and self-confidence, women are different, occupying a communal role, emphasizing collaboration, and being preferred (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Quadlin, 2020). Men are

more inclined to extrinsic appreciation, sort of economic benefits, while women are usually more oriented towards intrinsic appreciation, such as assist others and collaboration with others (Konrad et al., 2000; Quadlin, 2020; Zafar, 2013). This also relates to men's and women's preferences in choosing majors. <sup>11</sup> However, several studies refute this premise and suggest that women today prioritize extrinsic rewards more than they ever had, making gender differences in the search for extrinsic rewards small or non-existent (Marini et al., 1996).

A more biased excuse when it derives to questions 'leadership', the item about 'has the equal capability in leading at school'. This is strongly disagreed and even pretty defensive delivered when we discussed with them about leadership in organizations on campus, and also educational institutions such as school principals. They did not recognize the same value to women in leading. Women have assumed not firm and insufficient capability to be leader, moreover, those led are men. This statement indicated how patriarchal dominance is still pretty solid among students. Two issues are debated among Indonesian scholars, even in the community, namely whether women may be leaders, referring to the scripture of the Qur'an (Al-Nisa': 34), saying that men are leaders for women and whether women have the same ability as men to lead. Prejudice and stereotypes are intertwined in academic and non-academic discourse. Despite currently, a couple of leaders in Indonesia such as mayors are women.

Men are more appropriate and suitable to lead than women because they are more assertive and authoritative, women are usually too carried away, besides that they are also busy with household matters so that time is not effective leading at school. On-campus, campus organizations also rarely find female students to be leaders. We don't know why, but the reality is like that, maybe we feel more comfortable being led by men (10 male students/2020).

This excuse affirms that in the imagination and perception of male students that assertiveness in leading is the domain of the male. As Indonesian feminists say, assertiveness is the imagination of strong and manly masculinity. This is directly in line with the fact that there are many leaders from the military, including a couple of Indonesian presidents. On the other hand, only women have to take care of the household, such as cooking, raising children, and washing clothes. Women are morally prepared to be godly wives and good mothers for future generations (Marhumah, 2019; Nilan, 2009; Srimulyani, 2007).

When we discussed more leadership for women, they always associate with religion and roles that are more suitable for women. Men are the imam (imam is a term from Arabic which means leader in all things) for women, so it is only natural for men to lead, not women. Even though in the faculty of education, the quantity of female students is much more rather than the number of male students does not

automatically female students also become an important entity in campus organizations, such as Student Executive Board, Student Association, and other extra-campus organizations. It is very rare for a female student to become a leader. We also found persuasive posters made by the General Election Commission (KPU) in the election for chairperson and vice-chairperson of student associations that only represented images faces of men. The KPU posted posters in the campus area that only represented pictures of men. When we discussed with them why they only display pictures of male, they said:

I don't know, it's always been a habit for a long time, and this poster we also copy from the previous posters. After all, usually, only male students register as candidate leaders. Female students rarely participate and are only regular members of the organization (male students/2020).

In figure 3 is a poster issued by the general election commission at the department level to elect the chairperson and vice-chairperson of the student association yet only display a face male image. The poster only shows pictures of males, even though there are more female students in the Elementary School Teacher Education Department. Based on the findings of the interview they argued that did not purpose to negate female students that thing was conducted unconsciously. They said it had become a habit and was just continuing from before. It means that gender bias has remained in the subconscious (Braddy et al., 2020; Madsen & Andrade, 2018). The gender bias that often occurs in schools or academic environment is often not only unconsciously by men but also by women

as objects. Gender biased thoughts, speech, and attitudes are often reflected in their subconscious. This means that proactive stakeholders are needed to promote gender equity in the curriculum explicitly.

The further crucial finding regarding 'equal chances to participate in education and all aspects of the occupation'. The respond from participants was also varied and we grouped them into three opinions. Firstly, disagreed, secondly, is agreed, thirdly, is agreed, yet in the condition that women should aware of their *kodrat* (nature) as women. This statement is to state that whatever a woman's profession she is a woman'. That is, that for them, women are housewives who must remain obedient and serve their husbands at home. This role is inherent and inseparable regardless of the profession or position. In their imaginations, women are delicate, loving, and obedient. Furthermore, the third group tends to doubt to accept it, they put it:

We actually don't have a problem if women have the same opportunities as men in education or work. However, in our opinion, it is better for women to have a role that suits them and not have to demand the same as men because men and women have different obligations and duties.

That is nature (4 male students/2020).

Policy reasons for promoting gender equity are often framed in economic terms. The expansion of literacy awareness and gender equity is carried out to improve national competitiveness in the global knowledge economy, for example, the education budget has increased significantly from the previous year. In other words, it is a development discourse informed by human capital theory, in which gender equity is desirable because increased levels of participation result in a more skilled workforce and, consequently, economic prosperity. The progress experienced by women in the field of education and being more involved in the modern world of work, apparently still leaves polemic among young people. Whereas ideally, young people should hold views that go far beyond the previous conservative generation.

The discourse on developing human capital has the potential to support a gender-equitable access agenda in terms of accessibility and availability. Youth who are qualified and motivated to enter tertiary education and the world of work, apparently, still face challenges. Therefore, the government is encouraged to use state-driven mechanisms to maximize the potential of young people from all groups regardless of gender. Since the enacted gender identity does not appear in a vacuum but is produced in collaboration with others (Sallee, 2011).

From the statistical results and interview findings, we found the major idea about male students' perceptions of gender equity in education, that the patriarchal ideology is still active and even they tend to preserve it. Even though their general view was agreed, but they did not fully accept, some items were uncertain even strongly rejected.



Figure 3: Poster the Candidate for Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of Student Association of Department Elementary Teacher Education

Schools are places where the academic climate is seeded and as places where dominant social norms and expectations are presented, instilled, and enforced, especially towards students from minority social class or lower, as well as female students (Ames, 2013). Yet it is inevitable that schools are also places where such norms are and are negotiated among social agents (Ames, 2013; Parker et al., 1997). Not a few people think that schools have legitimacy for upward social mobility, individual and collective improvement, and their various associations with the desire (to borrow Ames' term) that is 'becoming somebody' (Ames, 2013), yet this is not straightforward in many contexts.

Despite there is still some residual patriarchal culture in some male students, these findings little encouraging. In addition to the findings in statistics showing that the perception of female students is pro-active on gender equity in education, the perception of male students is also quite high, despite it is lower than that of females. These findings indicate that there is progress in thinking, especially among young people, rather than the previous study conducted by the government.

These findings pivotal to notify that stakeholder still have a tough obligation to promote gender equity in education. Consider incorporating gender equity into the curriculum explicitly to minimize gender bias since as we knew the curriculum is an umbrella for the delivery of education in schools. In addition, stakeholders will be more concerned and work proactively to promote gender equity in education due to the curriculum provides it. Since the fact is that despite the government has longed for gender equity in education (2008), through Presidential Decree 84 2008, by encouraging gender-responsive learning, even from the third president Gur Dur (Azisah, 2016; Kull, 2009), nevertheless, bias gender is still visible in many aspects of education.

## CONCLUSION

The results of the interviews confirmed the statistical results, that male students have not fully accepted gender equity in education. Some were 'uncertain' and even 'rejected'. This is different from female students who agree with gender equity in education fully. However, these findings are good progress compared to prior years. To alter the mindset is not straightforward, it takes a long time and continually. A shift in outlook to a more open mind moderate and has occurred and carry on to this day. However, traces of traditional thinking remain groups that wish to maintain the status quo. Fortunate over time, however, women have aware of the rights and equity of gender. This study is pivotal, to indicated current facts. This study is precursory, and it is hoped that there will be further research on gender bias in education related to learning methods, textbooks, teacher perceptions, curriculum,

and all-important things relate to education. Gender equity have been coveted by many communities of society including the government, as stated in the 2008 Ministerial Regulation (No. 84/2008). As mention above the government is supposed to include gender equity material in the curriculum so that stakeholders and all school elements have awareness and are pro-active in promoting gender equity in education.

## LIMITATION AND SUGGESTION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study was limit to the perceptions of female and male students. In addition, we only conducted interviews with male students since there was no issue regarding the results of female student statistics. Despite they might have specific aspirations or views regarding gender issues. The further study as a data triangulation step, we need to examine female students as well as teachers as a comparison. Besides, this study was carried out in a private university. We argued for future research in public universities, both for student perceptions and teacher perceptions.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We would like to thank Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Surabaya & National Dong Hwa University. We would also like to thank the anonymous reviewers for his/her critical support and insightful comments

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