Inclusive Islamic Education and the Empowerment of Alpha Women Amidst the Patriarchal Culture of Society in Tuban Regency

Sita Isna Malyuna[1], Rachmalia Vinda Kusuma[2], Moh. Saddad Muhibbi[3]
[1,2] Universitas PGRI Ronggolawe, Indonesia
[3] Universiti Utara Malaysia, Malaysia
E-mail: [1]sitaisna93@gmail.com, [2]vindarachmalia@gmail.com,
[3]saddadmuhibbisaddadmuhibbi@gmail.com

	Abstract
Keywords: Gender in Islam; Women's Empowerment; Patriarchal Culture.	This study aims to analyze how inclusive Islamic education plays a role in empowering Alpha women amidst the patriarchal culture of Tuban Regency society. This study uses a qualitative approach with data collection techniques through in-depth interviews and documentation with six women active in the education, social, and public sectors, including Tuban Regency Tourism Ambassadors. The results show that Islamic spirituality is the main foundation for women's self-awareness and independence. Inclusive Islamic education serves as a space for identity negotiation, where women learn to interpret Islamic values in their social context and negotiate their position in the public sphere. The findings also show that the strategy for empowering women in Tuban is carried out through a socio-spiritual approach that emphasizes the values of wisdom and mercy, rather than confrontation. Inclusive Islamic education has proven to be able to foster critical awareness and leadership in women based on faith, knowledge, and morality.

	Abstrak:
Kata Kunci: *Gender dalam Islam; Pemberdayaan Perempuan; Budaya Patriarki.*	*Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis bagaimana pendidikan Islam inklusif berperan dalam pemberdayaan perempuan Alpha di tengah budaya patriarki masyarakat Kabupaten Tuban. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui wawancara mendalam dan dokumentasi terhadap enam perempuan yang aktif di sektor pendidikan, sosial, dan publik, termasuk Duta Wisata Kabupaten Tuban. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa spiritualitas Islam menjadi fondasi utama bagi kesadaran diri dan kemandirian perempuan. Pendidikan Islam yang inklusif berperan sebagai ruang negosiasi identitas, tempat perempuan belajar menafsirkan nilai-nilai keislaman dalam konteks sosialnya serta menegosiasikan posisi mereka di ruang publik. Temuan juga memperlihatkan bahwa strategi pemberdayaan perempuan di Tuban dilakukan melalui pendekatan sosial-spiritual yang menekankan nilai hikmah dan rahmah, bukan konfrontasi.*

Pendidikan Islam inklusif terbukti mampu menumbuhkan kesadaran kritis dan kepemimpinan perempuan berlandaskan iman, ilmu, dan moralitas.

1. Introduction

Women's empowerment in the context of a patriarchal society is an issue that continues to be relevant in contemporary Islamic education discourse. In religious areas such as Tuban Regency, patriarchal values remain deeply rooted in the social, cultural, and even religious structures of society. Women are often positioned as complements to men, rather than as independent and empowered subjects. Normatively, however, Islam affirms the principle of spiritual and social equality between men and women as enshrined in QS. Al-Hujurat [49]:13 and QS. An-Nisa [4]:1.[1] This gap presents a paradox between egalitarian Islamic values and discriminatory social practices. *Gap* which makes this topic important and urgent to be researched.

This fact shows how patriarchal culture has long influenced the social construction of women in Indonesia. Several studies have stated that the patriarchal system in Indonesia has been rooted since the colonial era, where women are positioned as inferior both in the family and society.[2] Male domination in the social system has an impact on the marginalization of women in various areas of life, including education and leadership.[3] In this context, the role of Islamic education should be a transformative force capable of reaffirming the values of justice and universal humanity as taught in Islam.

Several experts have offered solutions to bridge this gap. Erogul, through research in *Women's Studies International Forum* shows the importance of reflective education and self-awareness of women to free them from *patriarchal conditioning*.[4] Kim found that increasing women's social status does reduce levels of gender violence, but often creates a backlash in highly patriarchal societies.[5] Meanwhile, Tesafa emphasized that empowering women through active participation in social decisions can increase social resilience, although its success depends heavily on cultural and educational support.[6]

In contrast to the secular feminist approach, inclusive Islamic education has epistemological strength rooted in the concepts of monotheism and justice ('adl). This approach positions humans, both men and women, as moral subjects who have equal potential to become *caliph fil-ardh.* It is within this framework that

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[1] Wahyu Trisno Aji, "Feminisme Vis A Vis Patriarki Dalam Islam," *Sophist : Jurnal Sosial Politik Kajian Islam Dan Tafsir* 4, No. 2 (2023): 142–70, Https://Doi.Org/10.20414/Sophist.V4i2.71.

[2] Azmil Muhibbatul Bariroh And Firanti Annisa, "Menepis Budaya Patriarki Dalam Perspektif Islam," *Amaliyatu Tadris* 1, No. 2 (2023).

[3] Rae Yule Kim, "An Unforeseen Story Of Alpha-Woman: Breadwinner Women Are More Likely To Quit The Job In Work-Family Conflicts," *Applied Economics* 52, No. 55 (2020): 6009–21, Https://Doi.Org/10.1080/00036846.2020.1781775.

[4] Nebile Erogul, "Housewives And Patriarchal Conditioning In Turkey," *Women's Studies International Forum* 112 (September 2025): 103157, Https://Doi.Org/10.1016/J.Wsif.2025.103157.

[5] Fentahun Tesafa Et Al., "Women Empowerment, Efficiency And Food Security Nexus In Rural Ethiopia: A Generalized Structural Equation Modeling," *Heliyon* 11, No. 1 (2025): E41273, Https://Doi.Org/10.1016/J.Heliyon.2024.E41273.

[6] Fentahun Tesafa Et Al., "Women Empowerment, Efficiency And Food Security Nexus In Rural Ethiopia: A Generalized Structural Equation Modeling," *Heliyon* 11, No. 1 (2025): E41273, Https://Doi.Org/10.1016/J.Heliyon.2024.E41273.

inclusive Islamic education is understood as a process that fosters spiritual and social awareness through the values of mercy, empathy, and justice. As explained by Bariroh and Annisa, Islam rejects oppressive patriarchal structures because they contradict the principle of respect for human dignity.[7]

This view is reinforced by Aji, who stated that patriarchy is not an Islamic teaching, but rather a cultural heritage that must be corrected through education and a reinterpretation of religious texts. Therefore, inclusive Islamic education was chosen as an alternative approach that is not only in line with Islamic values, but also effective in building awareness of equality in religious communities such as Tuban.

A number of previous studies have highlighted gender issues in Islamic education, but most of them still emphasize structural and policy aspects, without touching on the social dimension, a*gency* women in the local cultural context. For example, Johnson in her study in Timor-Leste showed that women's empowerment can go hand in hand with preservation of local cultural values without having to abandon traditional identity. [8] This kind of approach is relevant to the Tuban context, where women can be empowered without having to abandon the religious values and traditions of their community. However, there are not many studies that connect this with Islamic education as the main instrument of social transformation.

The novelty of this research lies in the integration of inclusive Islamic education with the concept of Alpha women, defined as women with leadership capacity, reflective independence, and internalized spiritual and social awareness. In the context of Tuban Regency, the Tuban Regency Tourism Ambassadors are positioned not merely as symbolic representations, but as practical arenas for the role of Alpha women. Through their public roles, Tourism Ambassadors carry out the functions of cultural communication, social leadership, and value negotiation, where they are required to appear in public spaces, make decisions, build social networks, and represent regional identity without relinquishing their religious values. This role reflects the character of Alpha women who are able to integrate self-confidence, social competence, and spiritual ethics in one leadership practice.

Theoretically, this research contributes to the expansion of the discourse on Islamic education as *medium of transformation of equality.* Practically, these findings are expected to serve as a reference for Islamic educational institutions, women's organizations, and local governments in designing contextual, inclusive, values-based education programs. Thus, Islamic education serves not only as a transmission of religious knowledge but also as a moral force that liberates women from the shackles of patriarchy and upholds social justice in accordance with the values of *Rahmatan Lil'Alamin* (blessing for all the universe).

2. Methods

This research uses qualitative approach because its main focus is to understand the subjective meaning and experiences of Alpha women in Tuban Regency in facing a social reality that is still shrouded in patriarchal culture. A qualitative approach allows researchers to explore in depth the process of reflection, narratives of experience, and religious values that underlie women's actions and awareness in the context of Islamic education. According to Johnson,

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[7] Aji, "Feminisme Vis A Vis Patriarki Dalam Islam."
[8] Cate M. Johnson, "Gender, Empowerment, And Cultural Preservation At Topu Honis Shelter Home, Timor-Leste," *Gender, Place & Culture* 22, No. 10 (2015): 1408–25, Https://Doi.Org/10.1080/0966369x.2014.970134.

qualitative research functions to interpret social reality by placing humans as the center of meaning where experience, language, and symbols become the main data that are interpreted reflectively.[9]

The type of research used is qualitative descriptive-interpretive, where researchers attempt to describe social phenomena and interpret them within the context of Islamic values and local Tuban culture. This interpretive approach aligns with Erogul's perspective, whose research on women in Turkey demonstrates the importance of reflective awareness in understanding how women respond to and negotiate patriarchal values through educational processes and spiritual experiences. [10] As Aji points out, understanding patriarchal culture cannot be done solely through numbers or statistics, but requires an analysis of the discourse and meanings that are present in the daily experiences of Muslim women.[11]

This research was conducted in Tuban Regency, East Java, an area with a strong socio-religious character, where religious norms and traditional customs are intertwined in shaping the mindset of the community. The research subjects consisted of six Alpha women with diverse backgrounds, ranging from students, social activists, private workers and all of them are tourism ambassadors who were selected purposively based on their active involvement in social and educational activities. This purposive selection of informants was carried out to obtain rich and relevant data, as was done by Tesafa in her research on the empowerment of rural women who emphasized the real experiences of participants as a source of social knowledge.[12]

Data was collected through in-depth interview and documentation. The interviews were conducted semi-structured so that researchers could openly explore women's experiences in understanding Islamic teachings, their social roles, and how they deal with patriarchal cultural pressures. The interview process not only focused on verbal responses, but also paid attention to the expressions, emotions, and narratives that emerged during the interaction, as suggested by Cao in her study of rural women's reflections on identity and public spaces that are rich in cultural values.[13]

The collected data was then analyzed using thematic-interpretive analysis. The analysis process began with transcribing the interview results, reading them repeatedly, and then conducting open coding to identify categories of meaning. Each category was then grouped into main themes that reflected women's mindsets, experiences, and strategies in dealing with patriarchal culture. This process concluded with thematic interpretations linked to Islamic values and the concept of inclusive education. This analytical model was also used by Rahmania in their study of gender relations and social sustainability in Indonesia, where the process of categorizing qualitative data yielded an understanding of values-based social transformation.[14]

To ensure the validity of the data, this study uses triangulation of sources and methods. Interview findings were compared with observations of documents

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[9] Johnson, "Gender, Empowerment, And Cultural Preservation At Topu Honis Shelter Home, Timor-Leste."

[10] Erogul, "Housewives And Patriarchal Conditioning In Turkey."

[11] Tesafa Et Al., "Women Empowerment, Efficiency And Food Security Nexus In Rural Ethiopia."

[12] Tesafa Et Al., "Women Empowerment, Efficiency And Food Security Nexus In Rural Ethiopia."

[13] Tia Rahmania Et Al., "Empowering Women For A Sustainable Future: Integrating Gender Equality And Environmental Stewardship," *Social Sciences & Humanities Open* 11 (2025): 101503, Https://Doi.Org/10.1016/J.Ssaho.2025.101503.

[14] Tia Rahmania Et Al., "Empowering Women For A Sustainable Future: Integrating Gender Equality And Environmental Stewardship," *Social Sciences & Humanities Open* 11 (2025): 101503, Https://Doi.Org/10.1016/J.Ssaho.2025.101503.

and academic literature to ensure consistency of meaning and avoid subjective bias. In addition, member checking**,** namely confirming the results of the interpretation with the respondents so that the resulting meaning does not deviate from their original experience. The principle *trustworthiness* as explained by Lincoln and Guba is strictly applied through four main aspects: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. [15]

3. Result and Discussion
3.1 Self-Awareness and Spirituality as the Foundation of Women's Empowerment

Interview results show that all six respondents demonstrated a strong awareness of Islamic spiritual values as the foundation for identity formation and independence. They understood empowerment as not just economic capacity or control of public space, but rather a moral and spiritual responsibility to actualize one's potential as a trust from God. One respondent stated that an empowered woman is one who is able to uphold Islamic values while still being beneficial to society. This mindset signifies a paradigm shift from being a cultural object to being a reflective and critically thinking subject of faith. Inclusive religious education provides space for women to interpret Islamic teachings contextually and liberately. Erogul in *Women's Studies International Forum* call this process as *reflective emancipation* where self-liberation born from spiritual awareness against patriarchal oppression.[16]

Interview results show that spirituality for Alpha women in Tuban is not understood as mere resignation or individual ritual, but rather as a social driving force that encourages conscious and reflective action. Several respondents stated that the religious understanding they gained through Islamic education empowered them to express their opinions in public forums, take on leadership roles in schools and communities, and remain consistent in their life choices despite the pressures of patriarchal norms. One informant, for example, interpreted the values of trust and responsibility as the moral foundation for active involvement in social and educational activities, rather than simply focusing on the domestic sphere. Another informant emphasized that belief in human equality before God gave her spiritual legitimacy to reject the stereotype that women are unfit to lead or speak in public. In this context, Islamic education functions not only as a transfer of knowledge, but also as a transfer of consciousness that shapes moral-spiritual awareness, fostering empathy, courage, and a sense of social responsibility. This active spiritual awareness is a turning point in building women's self-autonomy without having to relinquish their cultural and religious identities.[17]

3.2 Inclusive Islamic Education as a Space for Negotiating Social Identity and Leadership

The second theme demonstrates that inclusive Islamic education serves as a space for women to negotiate their identity amidst patriarchal pressures through dialogical and reflective learning experiences. Respondents described formal education in madrasas, Islamic boarding schools, and Islamic universities not only providing a normative understanding of religious teachings but also

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[15] Johnson, "Gender, Empowerment, And Cultural Preservation At Topu Honis Shelter Home, Timor-Leste."

[16] Erogul, "Housewives And Patriarchal Conditioning In Turkey."

[17] Mohammad Adnan, "Islamic Education And Character Building In The 4.0 Industrial Revolution," *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 5, No. 1 (2022): 11–21, Https://Doi.Org/10.31538/Nzh.V5i1.1771.

opening up critical discussions about women's roles in Islam, leadership, and social responsibility. During their learning, they engaged in tafsir studies, class discussions, and student organizations, enabling them to question cultural assumptions about women's nature. Meanwhile, informal education through religious studies, youth training, and community religious activities reinforced the understanding that women's involvement in the public sphere is part of their social mandate and devotion. Through these experiences, women learned to negotiate their identities while remaining religious and ethical, while also being active, critical, and instrumental in the social sphere without confronting existing cultural values.

The educational process, both formal in Islamic institutions and informal through religious activities, becomes an arena for dialogue between cultural values and Islamic values of justice. This is in accordance with the concept of *Tahdzib al-Nafs* (self-purification) and *Tahqiq al-'Adl* (realization of justice) which is the goal of Islamic education. Islamic education is an effective way to eradicate patriarchal culture if it is focused on refining the values of justice and respect for human dignity.[18]

Several respondents stated that education gave them the ability to argue and think critically without losing their religious ethics. An elementary school teacher, for example, described her struggle against the stereotype that women are unfit to lead as part of jihad. Education educates not only students but also society. Education not only functions to educate students in the classroom but also plays a role in shaping community awareness and mindsets through the process of value diffusion and social role models. In the context of inclusive Islamic education, the knowledge and values acquired by students do not stop at the personal realm but are manifested in social practices that can be observed in their surroundings. When educated women appear as teachers, activists, or community leaders, their attitudes, ways of arguing, and decisions become a medium of social learning for the community. Through daily interactions, society gradually learns that leadership, rationality, and public responsibility are not the monopoly of men but are also part of the role of faithful women.

This narrative emphasizes that inclusive Islamic education fosters both rational and spiritual thinking, transforming women into agents of change who use knowledge as a subtle tool of resistance to patriarchal hegemony. Education serves not only to educate students in the classroom, but also to shape societal awareness and mindsets through the diffusion of values and social role models. In the context of inclusive Islamic education, the knowledge and values acquired by students extend beyond the personal realm but are embodied in social practices observable by their surroundings. When educated women emerge as teachers, activists, or community leaders, their attitudes, arguments, and decisions become a medium of social learning for the community. Through daily interactions, society gradually learns that leadership, rationality, and public responsibility are not the sole preserve of men but are also part of the role of faithful women.

In the case of Tuban, Alpha women do not reject tradition, but reinterpret it from the perspective of Islamic justice. This is a concrete form of *gender-transformative education* Empowerment that transforms social structures through participation, collaboration, and spirituality. The sixth respondent, the Tourism Ambassador of Tuban Regency, is a concrete example of the integration of

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[18] Maider Pérez De Villarreal And Paolo Scotton, "Yes We Can: Promoting Gender Equality From University To Primary Education Teaching Through The Design Of Knowledge Models," *Interchange* 55, No. 3 (2024): 349–65, Https://Doi.Org/10.1007/S10780-024-09522-1.

education, religiosity, and public leadership. Alpha women do not reject tradition, but reinterpret cultural values from the perspective of Islamic justice because sustainable social change can only occur when new values are negotiated from within the cultural structure itself. Inclusive Islamic education equips women with the reflective ability to distinguish between religious teachings and patriarchal cultural practices, so they can maintain traditions that align with the principles of justice and correct discriminatory meanings. This process is what makes educational practices *gender-transformative*, because it does not stop at increasing individual capacity, but encourages changes in social relations through active participation, collaboration, and spiritually-based role models. The sixth respondent, the Tourism Ambassador of Tuban Regency, serves as a concrete example because in her public role she carries out the functions of cultural representation and social education, where religious values, public ethics, and women's leadership are practiced simultaneously. Through this involvement, women's leadership is not perceived as a threat to tradition, but rather as part of social service rooted in Islamic values, thus gradually shifting patriarchal perceptions and being accepted by society. She illustrates that empowered women are those who are role models, not rivals.Educated women have a strategic role in realizing sustainable development based on social and religious values. [19]

3.3 Socio-Spiritual Strategies in Eroding Patriarchal Culture and Realizing Transformation

Although a paradigm shift is apparent, all respondents agreed that patriarchal culture has not completely disappeared from the lives of the Tuban community. They still face social biases such as the stereotype that "career women are less devoted," excessive domestic demands, and ambiguous moral judgments. However, rather than confronting these directly, the Alpha women chose a transformative strategy based on Islamic values: educating, modeling, and raising awareness. This approach is rooted in the concept of *wisdom* (wisdom) and *mercy* (love) as a gentle and effective way of preaching.

Patriarchy in Indonesia has become a value system that permeates education and religious interpretation, so change must be achieved through reinterpretation of values, not social confrontation. [20] Therefore, Alpha women prioritize an educational approach changing people's mindsets through learning, social activities, and participation in the public sphere. From a global perspective, this strategy is in line with the approach *bottom-up transformation.* It was found that changes in gender equality arose from social movements based on cultural and spiritual values, not structural coercion. [21] Social transformations like this can only be understood through a qualitative approach because they involve changes in meaning, not just formal policies. [22]

From these three major themes, it is clear that inclusive Islamic education plays a central role in the empowerment of Alpha women in a patriarchal society. It serves as both a space for learning values and an arena for liberating social struggle. Spirituality fosters self-awareness; education strengthens identity and

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[19] Maidin Gultom, *Indikator Kesetaraan Gender Dan Isu-Isu Gender Di Bidang Pendidikan*, 2, No. 1 (2021).
[20] Syamsul Alam And Andi Alfian, "Kekerasan Simbolik Terhadap Perempuan Dalam Budaya Patriarki," *Satya Widya: Jurnal Studi Agama* 5, No. 2 (2022): 29–47, Https://Doi.Org/10.33363/Swjsa.V5i2.873.
[21] Kim, "An Unforeseen Story Of Alpha-Woman."
[22] Johnson, "Gender, Empowerment, And Cultural Preservation At Topu Honis Shelter Home, Timor-Leste."

leadership; while socio-spiritual strategies serve as a bridge for peaceful change. Inclusive Islamic education in Tuban Regency has proven to produce not only knowledgeable and devout women, but also courageous, reflective women, capable of becoming agents of change who uphold justice and social welfare amidst a persistently strong patriarchal culture. In-depth interviews indicate that the inclusive Islamic education process shapes women not only in cognitive and religious aspects, but also in reflective courage and social responsibility. Respondents revealed that the religious understanding they gained encouraged them to be critical of social practices deemed unjust, such as restrictions on women's roles in family, school, and community decision-making. Several informants recounted experiences where they chose to actively lead educational and social activities despite negative assessments from their peers, believing that public involvement is part of their faith. Other respondents explained that the Islamic values they learned such as justice, welfare, and responsibility form the basis for resolving social conflicts through dialogue and empathy, rather than confrontation. These findings demonstrate that inclusive Islamic education not only produces women who are knowledgeable and faithful in a normative sense, but also fosters courageous, reflective individuals capable of acting as agents of social change, upholding justice and welfare amidst a persistently patriarchal culture.

3.4 Tuban Regency Tourism Ambassadors as Alpha Women Representing the Bridge between Spirituality and Public Leadership.

One of the key narratives emerging from this research comes from an informant who once held the title of Tourism Ambassador for Tuban Regency. For research ethics, we refer to her by the pseudonym "Diana." Diana is not simply a public figure; she is both a product and agent of reflective Islamic education. As a graduate of a bachelor's degree in Islamic education from a university in East Java, her involvement in socio-religious activism has been ingrained since her college days. For her, college was not only a space to gain knowledge, but also a laboratory for testing and shaping her Islamic identity amidst complex social dynamics.

In an in-depth interview held at her modest home on the outskirts of Tuban, Diana fluently unfolded her experiences. Her voice was calm yet confident as she described how her role as a tourism ambassador transcends mere ceremonial duties or tourism promotion. For Diana, the title serves as a cultural platform and a contemporary space for preaching, where she navigates complex identity negotiations. On the one hand, she must appear as a representative of progress and openness; on the other, she must remain within the socio-religious values of Tuban society, which are still deeply influenced by patriarchal structures. She is acutely aware that her body and voice as a woman in public space are a battleground for meaning between tradition and transformation.

Her journey wasn't smooth sailing from the start. Diana recounted the waves of doubt she faced, both from her immediate circle and the wider community. Being too young and being a woman were two labels often attached to her, as if they were signs that her leadership abilities were questionable. However, it was precisely under this pressure that Diana devised a clever and contextual strategy: a socio-spiritual approach. She chose not to fight the current head-on, but to forge a new one by organically blending Islamic values into her every public action.

One concrete example she shared was promoting religious tourism at the Tomb of Sunan Bonang, a significant site in Tuban. Diana didn't just memorize

and relay historical data on years and genealogies. She framed her narrative with messages of tolerance, inclusive diversity, and, most importantly, tracing the role of women in the early spread of Islam in Java. In this way, she became more than just a tour guide, but a cultural interpreter connecting the spiritual past with contemporary challenges. "I don't want to be seen as a mere display item at tourism events," she asserted, her eyes sparkling. "I want to be an educational voice, especially about how women can be active, contribute, and lead in the public sphere without feeling like they are abandoning, but rather strengthening, the teachings of the religion we love."

Her commitment extends beyond official duties. Diana voluntarily initiates and conducts leadership training for young women at various Islamic boarding schools and high schools in Tuban. Her training modules are a compelling synthesis of:

1. Spiritual Foundations of Islam: He introduced concepts such as khilafah (stewardship on earth) and amanah (responsibility) as the ethical basis of leadership, and shura (deliberation) as a method of inclusive decision-making.
2. Practical Public Skills: Starting from public speaking techniques, event management, to utilizing social media for positive social campaigns.
3. Critical Gender Awareness: This is where Diana connects the grand narrative to local realities. Using an inclusive approach to Quranic interpretation, she discusses verses on equality, encouraging teenagers to reread religious texts through the lens of justice.

Diana's transformative strategy resonates with Johnson's (2015) findings, which assert that preserving local culture and empowering women are not mutually exclusive. They can coexist when the approach is participatory, respectful of context, and rooted in the community's own values, rather than forced from outside.

Diana's case study reveals a broader pattern. Alpha female figures in Tuban demonstrate not only leadership skills but also, more importantly, the ability to transform understanding (meaning-making). Through an educational, religious approach rooted in local wisdom, they carry out subtle and sustainable social transformation. Diana's success serves as empirical evidence that inclusive Islamic education is not limited to the classroom or Islamic boarding school *Halaqah* (Islamic boarding school) groups. She lives and breathes in daily leadership practices in the broader public sphere, through inspiring, dialogical actions and sensitivity to the pulse of local culture. Thus, Diana and Alpha females like her are not only products of empowering Islamic education but also teachers and living curriculums that teach the path to transformation for the communities around them.

3.5 Practical Implications and Policy Recommendations

The findings of this study go beyond academics and pave the way for more concrete social transformation. The success of inclusive Islamic education in developing Alpha women in Tuban suggests the need for systematic and integrated intervention from various parties. The following are several practical implications and recommendations that can be implemented in concrete actions by educational institutions, the government, community organizations, and grassroots communities.

1. Transformation from Within: The Central Role of Islamic Educational Institutions

Islamic educational institutions such as madrasas, Islamic boarding schools, and religious colleges are not only places to gain knowledge, but also spaces for character and perspective development. To strengthen their

role as agents of change, strategic steps are needed. First, the curriculum needs to be overhauled to be more responsive to gender issues. Subjects such as Islamic Jurisprudence (*Fiqh*), Aqidah (*Aqidah and Akhlak*), and Islamic History can serve as a medium for introducing inspiring female figures who have been hidden behind the grand narratives of history, such as Khadijah with her business acumen and spiritual support, Aisha with her scholarly authority, or Fatimah Al-Fihri with her educational vision. Second, educators must be equipped with more inclusive methodological skills. Ongoing training in participatory pedagogy and gender awareness can help teachers avoid patriarchal biases that often arise unconsciously. Third, structured inter-gender dialogue needs to be created. Discussion forums between male and female students, on topics such as equality in Islam or women's leadership in history, can become shared learning spaces that foster empathy and critical thinking.

2. Pro-Parent Policy: Local Government Steps

Local governments have the capacity to create an ecosystem that supports women's empowerment through affirmative policies. One program that could be promoted is the Women's Empowerment School, a community-based initiative that combines life skills training, inclusive religious education, and leadership mentoring. This program could be run in village halls or mosques, involving women from diverse backgrounds. Furthermore, the government could collaborate with women's organizations and religious leaders to develop gender-friendly Da'wah modules, emphasizing the values of *Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin* (blessings for the universe) and justice from an Islamic perspective. Appreciation for high-achieving women also needs to be strengthened. Annual awards like the *"Perempuan Alfa Tuban Award"* should not be merely ceremonial but serve as a symbol of public recognition for women's contributions to breaking down patriarchal cultural barriers.

3. Movements from Below: The Role of Community Organizations and NGOs

Community organizations and NGOs serve as bridges between citizens and policymakers, as well as driving local initiatives. To support women's empowerment, a Women and Islam study center or resource center can be established to serve as a forum for research, discussion, and advocacy based on local values. This study center can produce educational content such as modules, bulletins, or podcasts that are easily accessible to the public. Furthermore, digital literacy training for rural women can be a contextual solution. This training not only teaches how to use technology but also how to leverage it for education, economic growth, and networking without violating social norms. It is also crucial to create intergenerational dialogue forums where young and older women can share experiences, strategies, and wisdom in addressing the challenges of patriarchy over time.

4. Social Foundations: The Role of Family and Community

The most fundamental changes often begin in the smallest social units, namely the family and community. Family religious studies or *majelis taklim* (Islamic study groups) can be directed to discuss themes of equality in Islam, such as women's rights in education, employment, and decision-making. In these forums, the values of partnership (*Zawjiyah*) within the household can be emphasized as an alternative to hierarchical relationships. Family support for women's education and careers is also key. Parents need to be encouraged to view their daughters' potential as an investment for the future, not a burden or social risk. Finally, the role models of male figures, such as fathers who support their wives' careers or husbands who actively share domestic roles, can provide a powerful counter-narrative. These

examples demonstrate that men are not disadvantaged by women's empowerment but, rather, benefit from the creation of more balanced and harmonious relationships.

With this synergy between stakeholders, inclusive Islamic education will not remain merely a theoretical concept but can be realized as a collective movement that brings about real change, from the classroom and public policy to the daily lives of families and communities. Ultimately, the goal is not simply the empowerment of individual women, but rather a transformation toward a more just, equal, and humane society, in accordance with the message of *Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin* (blessing for the universe) that is at the heart of Islamic teachings.

4. Conclusion

This study shows that inclusive Islamic education has a strategic role in building women's awareness, identity, and social role in a patriarchal culture. Islamic values emphasize justice ('*adl*), love (*mercy*), and social welfare have proven to be the foundation for the birth of Alpha women, namely educated, reflective women with leadership character grounded in spirituality. First, Islamic spirituality serves as a source of moral awareness and independence. An open and reflective religious education fosters women's courage to interpret Islamic teachings contextually and critically, enabling them to avoid the patriarchal trap that positions women as passive subjects. This awareness aligns with the liberating values of Islam, which prioritize respect for human potential, rather than gender hierarchy.

Second, Inclusive Islamic education acts as a space for identity negotiation and social transformation. Through a dialogic and participatory learning process, women gain the opportunity to build equal gender relations, lead social activities, and make real contributions in the public sphere. Socio-Spiritual strategies become a peaceful path to erode patriarchy. Alpha women in Tuban demonstrate a model of resistance based on empathy and education: they transform society's mindset through role models, teaching, and social activities without direct confrontation. This strategy demonstrates that Islam has liberating power when understood contextually and inclusively, as a religion that honors women, not oppresses them.

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