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Empowering Equality: *Mubadalah* As A Catalyst For Peace, Justice, And Harmony Among Humanity

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ABSTRACT: *This article explores the transformative concept of Mubadalah, seeking to unravel its potential as a powerful catalyst for fostering justice and harmony among humanity. Mubadalah often overlooked in discussions surrounding equality, emerges as a promising framework that goes beyond conventional approaches. By examining its principles and applications, using documentative and library research, this exploration aims to shed light on how Mubadalah can be harnessed to address societal imbalances and promote inclusivity. Drawing on real-world examples and theoretical perspectives, the article navigates the intricate landscape of Mubadalah, highlighting its capacity to cultivate a more equitable and just global community. Through a comprehensive qualitative analysis, the valuable insights into the potential of Mubadalah are expected to contribute significantly to the pursuit of a more harmonious and egalitarian peaceful world.*

Keywords: Equality, Justice, Humanity, Peace, *Mubadalah*

INTRODUCTION

In the ceaseless evolution of human civilization, the quest for equality and justice has persistently occupied the forefront of societal discourse. In this complex tapestry of human society, the pursuit of equality and justice stands as an enduring aspiration, indeed. The intricate challenges of global community, however, always involve the problematic situations even the clash within society. Certain critical diversity also potentially highlights the emergence of the clash in the form of discrimination, stereotypes, and dehumanized negative practices.

Basically, all humans are created equal. In fact, this state of being equal is ironically trapped in such subjective narrow mindset that put exclusivity and domination above equality. In this case, diversity also plays an important role in sharpening those subjectivities and clashes. Diversity within society can actually lead to both positive and negative outcomes. Whereas clashes often arise from a variety of factors. It is important to note that diversity itself is not inherently

problematic.

Moreover, conflicts arise when certain conditions or attitudes are present. Several possible factors that commonly trigger the clashes within a diverse society are cultural differences, economic disparities, religious diversity, political ideologies, ethnic and racial differences, language barriers, media influence and lack of education and awareness. When these all factors are interpreted mistakenly, then people will just easily judge and treat others in wrong way. In addition, addressing these challenges requires a commitment to fostering understanding, promoting inclusivity, and implementing policies that ensure equal opportunities for all members of society.

As traversing the complexities and challenges of this interconnected global community, having bundles of diversities triggering unfairness and negative practices, the concept of Mubadalah emerges as a compelling yet often underexplored force, beckoning to decipher its intricacies and harness its transformative potential. Mubadalah, rooted in Arabic, translates to 'initiative' or 'agency,' encapsulating a dynamic and proactive approach to addressing disparities within human societies. The concept of Mubadalah is way of looking at two relations, namely man and woman, in which both of them as dignified human beings who are able to take advantages of all aspects of life for their good (Werdiningsih and Natsir 2020). Beyond conventional approaches, Mubadalah represents a nuanced and comprehensive lens through addressing societal imbalances and cultivating inclusivity.

In this analysis, the researcher will delve into the principles, applications, and real-world implications of KUPI's Mubadalah concept, aiming to illuminate its capacity to reshape the collective path toward a more just and harmonious global landscape. The congress of Indonesia women ulama (KUPI) is a social, cultural, intellectual and spiritual movement of Indonesian Women Ulama to create a just civilization. This civilization is characterized by placing men and women together as complete humans and complete subjects in the system of life.

The just civilization that KUPI aspires to requires viewing every person, including women, as a complete human being and a complete subject. Fully human means that every person, male and female, has consciousness and is seen as a physical, intellectual and spiritual being. The value of both depends on how much one uses one's reason so that each action can have a beneficial impact (maslahat) on oneself as well as on other parties (Mubadalah.id 2019).

Regarding the concept and point of view of KUPI on how to consider human equality, no matter what the gender, religion, race, and community is, the researcher presumes that the concept of Mubadalah echoed by Indonesian women ulama congress will be able to stand the critical way out over the challenges of global community to carry the equality beyond diversities. In KUPI's perspective, mutuality is the important key in relations between two parties, thus, is rooted in social monotheism which emphasizes equality, justice, compassion and respect for humanity. With this perspective, two parties in a relationship are required to be

friendly and humane, not to discredit, not to look down on, not to be hegemonic, and not to commit violence or all forms of injustice.

The word Mubadalah itself is a form of mutuality (*mufā'alah*) and cooperation between two parties (*musyarakah*). It means replacing each other, changing each other, or exchanging each other. In KUPI's perspective, it is developed for an understanding in a particular relationship between two parties, which contains the values and spirit of partnership, cooperation, mutuality, reciprocity, and the principle of reciprocity. Good relations between humans in general, employers and workers, parents and children, teachers and students, majority and minorities (kupipedia 2022)

Unlike conventional frameworks, Mubadalah extends beyond the mere pursuit of equality and delves into the realms of fostering genuine harmony. Its principles, deeply rooted in ethical considerations and social justice, advocate for a comprehensive restructuring of societal norms, challenging the status quo to cultivate a more inclusive and equitable environment. This paper expects to probe the depths of Mubadalah and consider its profound implications for the empowerment of equality among diverse human societies. By examining its applications in diverse contexts and cultures, the researcher seeks to uncover the subtle nuances that render Mubadalah adaptable to the unique challenges faced by disparate communities around the world. Through documentative and library research, using existentialist theory, this paper aims to decipher the ways in which Mubadalah concept of Indonesian women ulama congress serves as a catalytic agent, propelling humanity toward a future marked by justice, equality, and genuine harmonious coexistence.

However, realizing the full potential of Mubadalah requires a profound understanding of its principles and an appreciation for its capacity to redefine the very fabric of societal structures. As it embarks on this intellectual odyssey, the researcher will explore the intersections of Mubadalah with existing societal practices, unveiling its potential to complement and augment ongoing efforts to create a world where every individual, regardless of background or circumstance, can thrive on an equal footing.

Hence, this paper, entitled "Empowering Equality: Mubadalah as a Catalyst for Justice and Harmony Among Humanity," embarks on a comprehensive journey to delve into the depths of Mubadalah, illuminating its nuanced principles and applications as a formidable catalyst for societal transformation. It seeks to unravel the layers of the often-overlooked paradigm, inviting on a journey into the heart of a framework that holds the promise of fostering true equity. Through a synthesis of theoretical insights, real-world applications, and critical analysis, this paper aims to contribute to the ongoing discourse surrounding the empowerment of equality and justice within diverse society. By scrutinizing the intricacies of Mubadalah, we endeavor to seeking innovative solutions to humanitarian challenges, ultimately fostering a collective vision of a global society characterized by unity, peace, justice, unoppressed human rights, and genuine harmony among all its inhabitants.

METHOD

This article employs a qualitative method to explore the concept of mubadalah deeply. It involves conceptual and normative analysis to understand mubadalah as a framework for gender equality and social justice, grounded in Islamic teachings. The study includes contextual analysis, examining how mubadalah principles are applied in contemporary situations to foster harmony and address injustices. Additionally, the research takes an interdisciplinary approach, integrating perspectives from gender studies, Islamic theology, sociology, and peace studies to provide a comprehensive analysis of how mubadalah promotes reciprocity, justice, and mutual respect in human relationships.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Indonesian women ulama congress determines the concept of Mubadalah based on three teaching premises in Islam;

1. Islam comes with all its texts and teachings for men and women. So, a text, which may due to certain contexts merely addressing men, actually also addresses women. Likewise, those who just greet women, for some reason or another, actually also greet men.

Interpreting Mubadalah concept, there must be an effort to find primary meanings that can apply to men and women. This includes realizing goodness (*jalb al-mashalih*) and keeping away evil (*dar al-mafasid*).

2. The principle of the relationship between human is cooperation and mutuality, not hegemony and power. Every legal decision that leads to a hegemonic and despotic model of relations is contrary to this principle. Therefore, there must be efforts to redefine meaning using Mubadalah, so that legal decisions are born in line with the principles of cooperation and mutuality. As the Qur'an (QS. at-Taubah (9): 71) emphasizes.
3. To align with the two principles above, all source texts are open to reinterpret, and all legal decisions, as long as they involve contextual technical matters, are also subject to change. This is all because the two premises above are clearly in line with the vision of *rahmatan lil 'alamin* and *akhlak karimah* in Islam.

Those premises are also interrelated with *Ma'ruf* concept of Islam. The concept of *Ma'ruf*, states that men and women must be placed as equal subjects. When *Ma'ruf* is defined as goodness that is accepted by society, then it means that it is accepted by men and women. Acceptance of women must truly occur as well as acceptance of men. Likewise, when certain phenomena or issues are interpreted as traditions and good habits, they must also start from the experiences and habits of women, as well as from men. For instance, the framework of *maqashid asy-syari'ah* with *al-kulliyat al-khams*, in the form of protection of life (*hifzh an-nafs*), reason (*hifzh al-'aql*), property (*hifzh al-mal*), family or honor (*hifzh an-nasl*), and religion (*hifzh ad-din*) (Rofi'ah 2022).

Mubadalah which places human as equal creatures has the key concept of how

to treat human as just for being human, without considering the differences of gender, religion, race or certain groups. The concept leads to the point of view that every individual has the same right to be treated the same way. It urges the manifestation of peaceful world where there are no discrimination, gender and racial stereotypes, ethnocentrism, and violence toward minority groups.

In fact, the harassments because of those differences keep increasingly occur in every corner of society around the world. Gender inequality, unfair human rights fulfillment, negative stereotypes represented by the media, as well as religious and racial discrimination become some of crucial terrible challenges of living in the world of diversity misconception.

However, gender inequality and discrimination already start in childhood. Actually, every girl and boy deserve an equal chance to survive and thrive. As discrimination continues to rob children of their childhoods and limit their chances – disproportionately affecting the world’s girls. A girl is far more likely to be denied her rights, kept from school, forced to marry and subjected to violence – her voice undervalued. This assault on childhood also deprives nations of the energy and talent they need to progress (2018).

Gender inequality and discrimination occurs in several forms of social phenomena. The first is Gender inequality in girls education. Conflict, poverty and other forms of social disadvantage also magnify gender inequality in education. Girls living in countries affected by conflict, for example, are 2.5 times more likely to be out of school than boys. Some 9.7 million children were at risk of being forced out of school by the end of 2020, with girls facing an increased risk.

Second, child marriage. Child marriage is a form of gender-based violence and a result and driver of gender inequality and gender discrimination. Experts predict that the COVID-19 pandemic is set to reverse 25 years of progress, which saw child marriage rates decline. In fact, further 2.5 million girls are at risk of marriage by 2025 because of the pandemic – the greatest surge in child marriage rates in nearly three decades.

Third, gender-based violence. Gender-based violence occurs everywhere around the world across all economic and social groups. While both boys and girls are negatively impacted, girls are particularly at risk. An estimated 1 in 3 women globally have experienced physical or sexual violence in their lifetime, mostly at the hands of their partners. Types of violence may include: prenatal sex selection, female infanticide, neglect, female genital mutilation, rape, child marriage, forced prostitution, honor killing and dowry killing. Many of these gross violations of human rights have been used as weapons of war around the world. Refugee children are particularly vulnerable.

The last is child labor. There are currently 152 million children engaged in child labor around the world. Child labor makes it difficult for children to attend school or limits their attendance, putting them at risk of falling behind their peers. Boys and girls are affected differently by child labor and parents’ decisions are often influenced by wider social norms about the different roles that they should play in

the home and in society. Girls are much more likely to shoulder the responsibility for household chores while boys are more likely to engage in harmful work such as construction. Girls are usually pulled out of school earlier than boys and are more likely to face sexual exploitation and slavery (Khondkar 2019).

Discrimination and harassment also existed due to religious and racial diversity. A lot of world cases proved that religious and racial diversities, indeed, triggered the discrimination and oppression in the name of religion and race. In 2001, public was already shocked by the spread of islamophobia issue as bombed-tragedy of WTC happened. During that moment, Muslim Americans comprise a diverse ethnic and racial minority group in the U.S.

The United States has experienced an alarming rise of Islamophobia in recent years. Islamophobia is defined in social science as “indiscriminate negative attitudes or emotions directed at Islam or Muslims” (Bleich 2015). While anti-Muslim prejudice has been documented in Western Europe and the United States for centuries, it has increased drastically since the terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001 (a set of events now colloquially referred to as 9/11). Kaplan (Kaplan 2006) likened anti-Muslim backlash post-9/11 to sentiments harbored towards Japanese Americans during World War 2. In other words, Muslim Americans are often perceived as domestic threats (Ali 2014) despite evidence that the majority of Muslim Americans are socially and economically well-integrated into American society (Muslim Americans: Middle class and mostly mainstream 2007). As a result, Muslim Americans experience high rates of prejudice, stereotypes and discrimination (Peek 2010), particularly in recent years.

The 2015 Gallup Poll reports data from 2010 that Muslims reported experiencing religious and racial discrimination at rates higher than other religious groups in the US. Of note, in the period since the 2016 Presidential election, statistics point to a rapid increase in hate crimes towards various minority groups, including Muslim Americans (CAIR and UC Berkeley Islamophobia Report 2016). For instance, while there were 20 reported anti-mosque incidents in 2014, 78 such incidents were reported in 2015.

Furthermore, a 2017 Pew Report found that the number of assaults experienced by Muslim Americans in 2016 (127 incidents) surpassed the number experienced in 2001 (93 incidents), or in any year following 9/11 (Kishi 2017). According to a research report entitled, “Legalizing Othering: The United States of Islamophobia”, between the years of 2010-2016, more than 194 anti-Sharia bills have been proposed in 39 states across the United States from 2010-2016, 18 of which have passed and 2 become law (Elsheikh 2017).

Additionally, the proposed travel ban from seven Muslim-majority nations has been argued as a “Muslim ban” according to civil rights groups such as the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and demonstrates ongoing discrimination towards Muslims in the United States. Relatedly, the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the largest Muslim civil rights organization in the U.S. released a report in 2018 entitled, “Targeted”. This report showed a 17 percent rise in anti-

Muslim bias incidents and a 15 percent rise in hate crimes in 2017 compared to the previous year (Murtaza 2020)

In Indonesia. The conflicts occurred due to racial and religious diversity could be found in the case of Maluku and Poso Conflicts. These conflicts in the late 1990s and early 2000s involved inter-religious violence, particularly between Muslims and Christians. The roots of these conflicts were complex, involving economic, political, and historical factors. The Papua region also has experienced tensions related to autonomy, indigenous rights, and resource exploitation. These issues have sparked periodic conflicts between local communities and the government. Additionally, the blasphemy case against Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, also known as Ahok, the former governor of Jakarta and a Christian of Chinese descent, stirred religious and ethnic tensions in 2016-2017.

Several findings above can be sort of description of existing inequality triggering the emergences of any discrimination and violence. Further, there are thousand cases around the world that need very serious concern from all individuals to not merely focus on the diversity, but promoting equality beyond diversity.

The problems and challenges around the issue of struggling for justice, equality, and human rights cannot be separated from the idea of viewing all humans as equal creatures. By considering that there are no huge differences to be bothered about, that all humans should be treated equally, and that all humans have the equal rights as human, the world can be peacefully lived in. The concept of Mubadalah which emphasizes the equality among humans are considered to be properly implemented in societal environment.

The premises and Ma'ruf concept promoted by Indonesian women ulama congress suggests the equal relation among humans. In the term of gender equality, This equal relation relies on the most important foundation of this mutual relationship, that is the verse at-Taubah (9: 71), that men and women, each other, are asked to become guardians, which the ulama interpret as protector, helper and person in charge. This means that the relationship between male and female is mutual help, protection and cooperation. The perspective that men and women act as guardians of each other is very important to start a mutual relationship.

This perspective then leads to the inevitability of a relationship between the two that is based on partnership, mutuality and cooperation, in domestic and public spaces. With this perspective, public spaces should not only be built by and only comfortable for men. At the same time, the domestic space is not only borne by or controlled by women. Public and domestic participation must be widely opened to men and women equally, even though it may be in different ways, models and choices.

In a situation that is still unequal and discriminatory towards women, a mutual perspective could demand that public space be opened more widely for women, and that men be encouraged to participate more actively in the domestic sphere. This is to ensure that complete human respect, for men and women, is truly

present in these two domains.

Due to this concept, women must truly protect women's lives, minds, property, religion and honor, by acquiring from their real and direct experiences. Not in the name of men, or merely depends on men's experiences. Surah an-Nisa' 4:19, as the basis for the concept of Ma'ruf, in Mubadalah, is not only about husbands who must treat their wives well, but also about wives towards their husbands. It means that this verse is actually about a married couple, where each other is to do good to their partner, with kindness that originates from the feelings, hopes and experiences of both.

In addition, the inequality emerging in the form of gender prejudice and discrimination begin in childhood. From the moment they were born, girls and boys face unequal gender norms as well as social norms regarding expectations and access to resources and opportunities, with lifelong consequences - in their homes, schools and communities. For example, the world's boys are often encouraged to go to school and get an education to prepare for work, while girls carry heavy household responsibilities that keep them from school, increasing the odds of child marriage and pregnancy (savethechildren 2018).

Furthermore, differences in customs, traditions, and cultural practices can lead to misunderstandings and conflicts. When people from different cultural backgrounds interact, there may be a clash of values, norms, and ways of life. In this case, socioeconomic differences, including variations in income, wealth, and access to resources, can create tensions within a society. Economic inequality can result in feelings of resentment, marginalization, and social unrest.

In addition, differing religious beliefs can also lead to conflicts, especially if there is a lack of tolerance and understanding. Religious diversity may contribute to tension if individuals or groups fail to respect and coexist peacefully with others who hold different beliefs. Diverse perspectives on governance, policy, and political ideologies can lead to clashes within society. Political polarization, especially when combined with identity politics, may result in heightened tensions and animosities, as well.

Beside those all factors, racial and ethnic diversity can terribly be a source of strength for a society, but it can also lead to discrimination, prejudice, and racism. Historical injustices and systemic inequalities can contribute to ongoing conflicts. That is why communication is actually crucial for understanding and collaboration. The problems of language barriers can also lead to misunderstandings, misinterpretations, and a lack of effective communication, which may contribute to conflicts.

Moreover, the Ignorance and a lack of education about different cultures, religions, and identities contribute to foster stereotypes and prejudice. To help reducing these biases and promote understanding, people should increase awareness and education. Some individuals may resist diversity due to fear of change or unfamiliarity. This fear can lead to resistance, xenophobia, and an unwillingness to accept new ideas and perspectives.

To empower equality, media plays a significant role in shaping public opinion, though. Since biased or sensationalized portrayals of different groups can perpetuate stereotypes and contribute to tensions within society, so education, open dialogue, and the promotion of empathy are essential in building a more harmonious and inclusive society.

Due to those all challenges, by implementing Mubadalah concept, some sorts of conflicts could be minimized accordingly. A person who only worships Allah SWT and only serves Him vertically, of course does not serve other people or serve fellow human beings horizontally. Instead, they look at everyone as equals, and then work together, help each other and work together in building a better, more prosperous and just life. Such is horizontal social monotheism.

This horizontal social unity in turn also leads to the principle of justice, so that no one should be positioned unequally and/or become victims of a hegemonic and dominative social system. In various verses of the Qur'an, justice is emphasized as the main teaching of Islam in various lives (QS. Al-Nisa, 4: 58 and 135; al-An'ām, 6: 152; Hud, 11: 85; al-Nahl, 16 : 90; al-Hadid, 57: 25; and al-Mumtahanah, 60: 8). This social-horizontal monotheism also necessitates the principle of respect for humanity and love between people. Respect for humanity and compassion is also emphasized in the Qur'an in various verses (QS. Al-Isra, 17: 70; al-Anbiya, 21: 107; and Ali Imran, 3: 159).

Indeed, KUPI's concept of Mubadalah necessitates equality and justice in social relations, and encourages cooperation that is participatory, fair, and provides benefits to all parties without discrimination. This perspective ensures the presence of the principles of ta'awun (helping each other), tahābub (loving each other), tasyāwur (giving each other opinions), tarādhin (mutual willingness), and ta'āshur bil ma'rūf (treating each other well) in every social relation. Thus, Mubadalah perspective is a value regarding mutuality, mutual assistance and cooperation that must be built by each individual with other individuals in a small or large community, both within the family and in the wider society.

CONCLUSION

The just civilization that Indonesian women ulama congress aspires through Mubadalah concept aims at requiring viewing every person, including women, as a complete human being and a complete subject. Fully human means that every person, male and female, has consciousness and is seen as a physical, intellectual and spiritual being. The value of both depends on how much one uses one's reason so that each action can have a beneficial impact on oneself as well as on other parties.

This civilization rejects the view of men as merely economic creatures, so that their value only depends on how much wealth they have. This civilization also rejects the view of women only as sexual objects so that their value only depends on their sexual attractiveness for men, or only as reproductive machines whose value only depends on their ability to conceive and give birth to children. Men and

women both have the value of noble morals so that they are able to be a gift to themselves and others, as best they can. It also rejects the view that women are only domestic creatures who can stay at home. Also, refusing to allow anyone to be seen as inferior as a secondary subject, let alone inferior as an object in the system of life, including the way women are viewed as sexual objects for men.

Mubadalah concept promotes the idea of human as full subject. Full subject means that every person, male and female, has consciousness and is seen as a full subject of the living system. This every individual is equally responsible for realizing benefits and enjoying them, and preventing harm while protecting them, wherever they are, both in domestic and public spaces, in any circumstances of certain communities. By believing that all humans are equal and full subject of their own, there will be no individual easily put others aside for the sake of their own interest. All will unite together in the same view of equality and embody more peaceful world to live in the beauty of diversity.

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