

Transformation of Male Domination Patterns in the Wahdah Islamiyah Movement: From Domination to Partnership-Controlled

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Abstract: This study examines gender relations within Wahdah Islamiyah, focusing on transforming patriarchal patterns. It explores alternative perspectives on women's presence in public spaces, which are influenced by women's awareness through strategies for utilizing resources, ideas, and capacities, in addition to external demands. Qualitative methods with case studies, theories of agency, and organizational change 'isomorphism' are employed to construct arguments by conducting a thorough examination of the context, process, and significance of the unit being examined. There are three phases to the investigation of the Wahdah Islamiyah movement, which is examined both before and following its transformation into an organization. Firstly, the initial phase of the 1980s was characterized by an exclusive pattern of domination. Secondly, a restricted adaptive pattern that developed during the expansion of da'wah to the public sphere in the 1990s. Thirdly, the controlled partnership pattern, which commences with the institutional transformation of Muslimah Wahdah in 2005 and is immediately followed by the strengthening of Muslimah's negotiating position following the third congress in 2016. Transforming patriarchal patterns, which can be perceived as a negotiation of patriarchy, are shaped by external environmental factors and the presence of women's agencies.

Keyword : Gender, Patriarchal Accommodation, Isomorphism, Women Negotiation, Agency, Transformation.

Introduction

Patriarchy is generally perceived as a system that establishes males as superior to women. In the political system, patriarchy is also an essential variable in the concentration of power, with males being the most likely to possess it (Saadawi, 2011). The subordination of women over men is justified and bolstered by the patriarchal system of work, which has permeated nearly all aspects of social life and is present in a variety of institutions, including the academy, custom, family, and religion (Millet, 1977). Furthermore, patriarchy is responsible for the tensions that persist among the institutions of society (Bahlieda, 2015).

What is the interplay between religion and patriarchy?. Religion, patriarchy, and violence have developed into a lifestyle commonly perceived as ahistorical, perpetual, and divinely endorsed (Rakoczy, 2004). Traditionalists in religious and scientific spheres perceive the enslavement of women as universal,

divinely ordained, or intrinsic (Rakoczy, 2004), and consequently immovable as designated by God (Lerner, 1986). For decades, the belief of male supremacy over women has pervaded practically all human cultures, accompanied by the embracing of major religions emerging from the same cultural milieu. In pre-Islamic Arab society, misogynistic perspectives significantly influenced the lives of individuals during the Jahiliyyah era.

The emergence of Islam significantly altered the status of women; however, Islamic cultural reform does not inherently eradicate male dominance. After the Prophet, the Muslim Ummah failed to preserve an authentic Islamic heritage (Mulia, 2007) as the ancient patriarchal structure, which had been dismantled by Islamic reform, persists and has been reinforced by many. During the Abbasid and Umayyad periods, the presence of women was more prominently featured as topics of textual discourse (Hasyim, 2010). The Companions' exegesis of the Qur'anic texts about social relations between men and women facilitated the emergence of a

hierarchical and feudalistic structure. Significant transformations in gender relations within Islam developed as men assumed roles as leaders, rulers, and controllers of women (Dzuhayatin, 2006).

In authoritarian Muslim countries, patriarchal figures are prominent in movements and regimes that demonstrate the authoritarian nature of religion (Bayat, 2007). The enforcement of conservative Islamic law presents legitimized gender roles and duties through the interpreting of the text (Qur'an) and Sunnah (tradition), which has immediate effects on the status of women as second-class citizens in numerous public domains, including religious organizations. Connolly and Predelly demonstrated that gender issues are not only structurally-politically regimented but also perform systematically underneath religious social organizations (Dzuhayatin, 2016). Salafism is one of the conservative expressions of Islamic religious movements. At the same time, the subjectification of Salafism finds it impossible to fully understand the inferiorization of women in Islam if the tradition of Salafism is disregarded. In Islam, there is a significant patriarchal hierarchical division between men and women (Odok, 2020).

In nowadays, the study of patriarchy within the Salafism movement has begun to exhibit a distinct hue, as many studies have investigated the role of Salafism women in competing for patriarchal space (Bouras, 2017; Mujahiduddin, 2019; Nielsen, 2019; Parvez, 2016; Tønnessen, 2016). This also provides an opportunity to conduct a more thorough examination of the new patriarchal patterns that have emerged within the Salafism movement. This study empirically elucidates the establishment of a patriarchal pattern within Wahdah Islamiyah, emerging from the extensive endeavours of Wahdah Muslim women in advancing the domain of Muslimah da'wah, both structurally and functionally, particularly following the Third Congress in 2016. The history of Wahdah Islamiyah's inception and development is closely linked to the identity of Salafism (Andar Nubowo, 2020; Chaplin in Berenschot & Klinken Van Gerry, 2019; Hasan, 2007; Krismono, 2012; Ruslin, 2024).

The recent research on patriarchy indicates that this systemic transition is more fluid. Nevertheless, the interpretation of the change in patriarchal perspectives is still commonly interpreted as a reaction to "external propriety," which refers to the environmental demands that underlie patriarchal pragmatism. This transition is frequently attributed by scholars to global economic pressures and a reaction to the proliferation of egalitarianism (Andrews & Shahrokni, 2014). Moghadam (2013) demonstrates that the material foundation of patriarchal social structures in the Middle East has been in an era of flux since the 1960s due to the impact of

capital penetration and industry. This has led to a decrease in the role of women in the public sphere. Le Renard's (2014) research supports the previous hypothesis, positing that capitalist influence has resulted in innovations in market consumption in patriarchal countries by means of gender segregation in shopping areas. Similar to this, Salem & Yount (2019) discuss initiatives involving female labor to accomplish Qatar's economic growth goals, where the market and government have established gender-segregated workplaces to support this. The process of women's engagement is top-down and driven by globalization and gender segregation requirements that are a type of 'patriarchal accommodation'.

The proliferation of capitalism and feminism has consequently transformed the perspectives of fundamentalist organizations and movements regarding the status of women. The governance of women is deemed essential for the revitalization of 'patriarchal authority,' demanding the involvement of all members, including women themselves (Moghissi, 1999). In another research, El-Ghobashy (2005) elucidates how political pragmatism has prompted religious movements to modify their perspectives regarding the extent of women's legitimate authority.

The prior investigation has facilitated our knowledge of the role of women as a site of exploitation within patriarchal interests. Kaplan (1992) posits that fundamentalist belief systems generally push for a return to the "golden age" of a society or religion, a period in which males exercised substantial social and economic influence over women. Patriarchal institutions are faced with a dilemma when patriarchy is no longer prevalent and society's standards of gender have shifted away from it (Iannaccone & Miles, 1990). This is further supported by another research: even though the fact that the wave of feminist movements has successfully influenced the presence of women's movements, the general narrative remains consistent, particularly in the North Africa and Middle East regions, which have a relatively high patriarchal ranking in the world.

These regions have not demonstrated any significant changes in the era of modernization and industrialization, which is even more exploitative (Solati, n.d.). Boko Haram in Nigeria was able to increase its reliance on women's recruitment and participation by selecting women as both 'weapons' and 'jewels' as a result of another exploitative depiction of globally-based gender violence. Therefore, patriarchy is "fortified" as it transitions from subjugation to freedom (Facio, 2013). Efforts to manage the space for women's participation as an expansive material base have been driven by patriarchal pragmatism that intersects with the field of praxis. The economic aspect is currently considered an essential factor that provides a role in the evolutionary and adaptationist process (Alegra et.al in

Funari & Senatore, 2015). Through this realization, women are perceived as having more value. (Chant & Sweetman, 2012; James-Hawkins et al., 2017; Salem & Yount, 2019; Standing, 1999). It indicates that the preceding explanation highlights the fact that the active participation of Islamic women in public occurs when the patriarchal system provides women opportunities and space.

The history of the Islamic women's movement's creation in Indonesia is related. As articulated by Pluvir, as cited by Abdullah, the Islamic women's movement is more inclined to position itself as 'mission executors' rather than 'originators of ideas' concerning various fundamental socio-cultural issues (Natsir & Meuleman, 1993). Ultimately, Islamic women's organizations or movements are frequently perceived as compassionate entities without ideological depth, as their initiatives are primarily recognized in the context of women's issues (Affiah, 2017).

The preceding series of studies indicates that the presence of women constitutes an element of pragmatic accommodation. Thus, women's participation is frequently perceived not as an expression of agency reflective thinking but rather as an expression of 'false consciousness', particularly when their involvement is predominantly influenced by external macro forces. Scholars often focus on women's compliance within the parameters of patriarchy, thereby neglecting the active agency that originates from women's self-awareness (Gallagher, 2007). Active agency refers to the exercise of intentional decisions informed by women's reflexivity (Kabeer, 2005).

Research on women's activism within the framework of patriarchy, particularly in relation to religious movements, frequently undermines the concept of women's agency. Nielsen's (2019) study provides a compelling perspective on the pragmatic strategy of the Salafi women's movement in the United States, suggesting that the presentation of the daiyah can not just be interpreted from a top-down perspective, which influences the movement's pragmatism. Conversely, it also acknowledges the significance of a bottom-up perspective, highlighting the role of women's agency in affirming their existence as contributors of resources, arguments, and ideas.

This study explains that the transformation of patriarchal constructs within the Wahdah Islamiyah movement is intrinsically impacted by external influences, specifically the alterations in the political regime following the post-New Order era. However, this external factor does not serve as a particular explanation; rather, the accommodation of patriarchy is also shaped by internal dynamics, particularly through the strategic responses of Wahdah women who adeptly

manage ideas and resources, thus enabling the expansion of their spheres of authority.

Organizational change is viewed as an effort to secure necessary resources, rather than as a deviation from institutional requirements from a pragmatic standpoint (Kraatz et al., 1996). The possibility of changes to institutional components within an organization is part of organizational change. The distinguishing feature of 'new institutionalism' diverges from a perspective that emphasises organisational adherence to social expectations and rituals. Consequently, the changing circumstances will also influence other psychological dimensions of the environment, prompting them to undergo transformation as well. Not only is there a transformation occurring, but there is also the implementation of what Di Maggio and Powell (1991) refer to as 'isomorphism'. This concept indicates a process in which one unit exhibits parallels to another unit in its responses to identical environmental conditions. At this juncture, new institutionalism perceives nearly all organisational change as a process of technical adaptation while also elucidating the rationale underlying the argument for the change in institutions.

Isomorphism is categorized into three variants: coercive isomorphism, which involves imitation driven by political influence or concerns related to legitimacy; mimetic isomorphism, where imitation serves as a standard response to uncertain conditions, with organizations often replicating the practices and structures of more established entities; and normative isomorphism, which is associated with the process of professionalization. From this perspective, the new institutionalism approach regards virtually all organizational changes as technically adaptive. At this point, the isomorphism framework aligns with the perspectives of Salem & Yount (2019) and Moghissi (1999), positing that women's involvement is a process influenced by macro forces such as globalization and feminism, whereby both the state and religious institutions depict women as a means of accommodating patriarchy. Nevertheless, the presence of women does not attribute external forces as the exclusive cause.

This study also examines the internal factors of women within the organization as an additional influence in driving patriarchal transformation in Wahdah Islamiyah. Women's agency within the framework of empowerment in Wahdah Islamiyah offers an alternative perspective amidst studies of women's activism in patriarchal societies, particularly within religious movements that often marginalize women's agency. The concept of empowerment can be examined through the interconnection of three key indicators: agents, resources, and achievements (Kabeer, 2005). Agency refers to the procedure through which decisions are formulated and subsequently executed. The function of agency is

fundamental to empowerment. Resources serve as the mechanisms through which agency and individual decision-making are manifested; achievement pertains to the results of such agency. Agency possesses both positive and negative connotations (Kabeer, 2005). In a positive context, agency is defined as the 'power to,' referring to an individual's capacity to make and act upon their own life decisions, even when confronted with opposition from others. In addition, there exists a dimension of power that extends beyond the sole capacity to set objectives and act; it encompasses how actions imbued with meaning, motivation, and purpose originate internally within individuals, manifesting as a 'sense of agency' or 'inner strength'. The negative connotation associated with agency emerges when it is construed as "power over", specifically referencing the actions of individuals who disregard the rights of others through the exercise of authority or the application of violence and other coercive measures.

Additionally, Kabeer distinguishes between two primary modes of agency: active agency and passive agency. Active agency relies upon deliberate actions, specifically involving intentional decision-making grounded in reflexivity, whereas passive agency pertains to conduct characterized by minimal or constrained choice options. Passive agency in this study refers to instances where women act not from conscious intent but as a result of external influences. In the meantime, Kawarazuka et al. (2019) contend that the active agency movement ought to promote a broader perspective regarding women's creativity in addressing challenges. It is inadequate to simply note how agents exploit opportunities to increase their capabilities; it is imperative to acknowledge that women are not only active participants but also innovative individuals who are productive and possess the power to transform structural relations without necessarily challenging patriarchy. The subsequent phase is to investigate the altering patterns of patriarchy in Wahdah Islamiyah, which has its base in the city of Makassar. This investigation will focus on both the exterior and internal parts of the patriarchy.

Method

The author's argument is based upon data collected through research, interviews, and documentation at Wahdah Islamiyah. The investigation for patriarchal shift patterns is informed by observations of the activities of Wahdah women, which is crucial for confirming field facts. Furthermore, interviews were conducted to acquire verbal data, with a focus on the thoroughness of the material presented by different male and female informants from the organization's management, particularly those with the required

expertise to provide pertinent information. This research endeavors to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the patriarchal transformation by addressing a series of issues: how women acquire access, the extent to which they can bargain with patriarchy, the advantages and challenges they encounter, the reactions of men, and the patterns that can be identified through the use of informant testimonies. The arguments are strengthened also through documentation methodology by examining secondary data collected through books, academic publications, official reports of Wahdah Islamiyah, and the websites www.wahdah.or.id and www.muslimahwahdah.or.id. This research employs qualitative data analysis, which highlights the experiences, behaviors, and social phenomena of complex actors.

Discussion

The investigation on the subject of transforming patriarchal patterns in Wahdah Islamiyah begins with an overview of patriarchal construction in Wahdah Islam. Kuntowijoyo characterizes the field of religion as predominantly male-oriented. The presence of men as gender leaders in the overriding religious discourse and its reality is indisputable within the socio-political-religious environment.

The overview of patriarchal structures within Wahdah Islamiyah

In Wahdah Islamiyah, patriarchal structures are demonstrated through five dimensions: male leadership, da'wah methods, hijab and gender-based labor segregation, constitution (AD/ART), and organizational structure (see Ruslin, 2024).

a. Male leadership in accordance with Shari'a.

The Wahdah Islamiyah movement was established within the name of the Fath'ul Muin Foundation (YFM) in 1988. The male representation within the pioneering movement involves the following individuals: Dain Yunta, Sahabuddin Rauf, Anas Tompo, and Arsyad Beddu, who are regarded as figures of elder status. The younger representatives are Zaitun Rasmin, Qasim Saguni, Haris Abdurrahman, and Anshar Amiruddin, who subsequently collaborated to advance social da'wah grounded in authentic Islamic principles. They gained recognition as the pioneers of Wahdah Islamiyah (Jurdi, 2007).

The existence of men as the locomotive of the movement aligns with Rahmat Abdurrahman, the Daily Chairperson of the DPP Wahdah Islamiyah, who stated: "Leadership is reserved for men, particularly when the individuals being led are both men and women. According to religious principles (Islamic law), the verse is explicit in the Qur'an, Surah An-Nisaa, verse 34 (interview/9/8/2021). The gender leadership framework

within Wahdah Islamiyah is essentially grounded in shari'ah considerations, which predominantly emphasize male representation. This comprehension is further substantiated by the historical context of Islamic governance during the classical period (caliphate), that the majority of public offices were predominantly ruled by men. Furthermore, Rahmat emphasized that men possess a leadership ethos capable of regulating thoughts, managing emotions, and applying significant influence over others. For Wahdah Islamiyah, male leadership is also predicated on the role of men as imam during prayer, thereby establishing a prevalent leadership structure in socio-religious activities.

From the beginning, Wahdah has asserted that males possess superior leadership qualities in matters pertaining to gender issues compared to women. Nevertheless, the discourse regarding leadership within Wahdah does not imply an exclusion of women. In relation to rights and responsibilities, Wahdah provides leadership rights to women, albeit within a constrained framework, specifically permitting women's leadership merely over other women. It primarily pertains to restrictions associated with 'hijab' as articulated by Wahdah Islamiyah since the early days of the movement, suggesting that the discourse surrounding female leadership is consequently restricted. Shari'a serves as an organizing principle that establishes a patriarchal framework for the governance of the organization within Wahdah Islamiyah, and this framework is similarly reflected in the household institution, which constitutes the smallest unit of the Wahdah Islamiyah community.

b. Patriarchal Pragmatism as a Da'wah Strategy

Wahdah Islamiyah's emergence is inextricably tied to the New Order's hegemonic political framework. In 1988, the pioneers founded an organization known as Fath'ul Muin (YFM) with the objective of enhancing the da'wah activities of the ummah through a focused approach grounded in the purification of teachings. The implementation of the sole principle of Pancasila within the hegemonic regime adversely affected its effectiveness of Islamic da'wah, leading to a constrained environment for religious expression that was not completely authentic (Jurdi, 2007). This state serves as both a 'gap' and an opportunity for Wahdah pioneers to show a more authentic environment by drawing on the understanding of the early Islamic generation. Wahdah's contention with the political dominance of the state significantly influenced the trajectory of its early movement. It has an impact on the existence of Wahdah women, as women's issues became one of Wahdah's concerns at the beginning of the movement in the context of religious guidance.

Wahdah (YFM) adopted a pragmatic approach by

delaying from publicizing the activities of Wahdah women and maintaining a quiet existence within the YFM institutional framework. Moreover, the most prominent religious symbolism of the group during that period was the distinctive outfit of the akhwat, which contrasted with the typical attire of Indonesian Muslim women. Wahdah was raised in a period when religious activities were tightly controlled by the regime, especially matters pertaining to women, such as restrictions on wearing the veil. The matter of hijab restrictions and their intersection with politics garnered significant public attention during the 1980s. According to Iskandar Kato, Head of the Wahdah DPP Research and Development Center, the structural absence of Muslim women in public at the early stages of the movement was a strategy to protect the dakwah (Interview, 5/25/2021). For the New Order government, the hijab represented a political phenomenon that warranted careful scrutiny, as it was perceived as a form of resistance from specific forces (Tahir & Triantini, 2014).

Wahdah's pragmatic da'wah method parallels other patriarchal realities. Leaders of religious movements generally position individuals competent in religious knowledge as the driving force of the movement. In the early days of the Wahdah movement, men were driven to learn religious knowledge by prioritizing its depth. The development of da'wah headed by men is increasingly obvious, particularly following Zaitun Rasmin's return from the Middle East, as some 'ikhwan' cadres are continually pursuing studies in the region (by holding a title of Lc.). According to Fakhri al-Din al-Razi stated that the advantages of men over women in the context of leadership include their mastery of science (Yusuf, 2015). Men, as pioneers, are capable of comprehending the strategy of Wahdah's da'wah movement from the beginning, in addition to religious education. According to Iskandar, the akhwat may have played a role in the beginning, but men are preferred for da'wah strategies, such as the critical role of establishing da'wah in branch areas. There is a concern that Muslim women's capacity to function independently is insufficient. The religious comprehension of male leadership and other dominant roles is interconnected with the context of the formation of pragmatic-patriarchal da'wah strategies.

c. Hijab and Women's Constraints

The da'wah strategy, on the other hand, is linked to the promotion of the value of 'hijab', which is interpreted as a restriction on women's gender roles. The initial meaning of 'hijab' indicates that it is a barrier or veil that Allah revealed to safeguard wives of the prophet from the disturbance caused by individuals who have a disease in their hearts (Nuroniya, 2017). During the evolution of its significance, the hijab is employed as a barrier to establish a boundary or partition between men and women. Usually,

the hijab is readily accessible in the mosque chamber in the form of a cloth or a board that separates the male and female areas. Wahdah Islamiyah implements gender restrictions in the prayer chamber (mosque) that are more commonly observed in the social space.

Wahdah articulates the significance of hijab in two ways (Ruslin, 2024b): first, hijab as a material aspect is a 'physical' separator of men and women who are not mahram if they have to talk for an interest. Rahmat also posits that the administration of Muslim women in their own space since the beginning of the movement is a component of the hijab value. Wahdah women have undergone five institutional (structural) transformations, beginning with the formation of Majelis Musyawarah Akhwat (M2A) at the start of the 1986 movement, followed by the presence of Lembaga Akhwat (LA) in 1990, Lembaga Ummahat (1998), Lembaga Muslimah (LM) in 2005, and Muslimah Wahdah Islamiyah (MWI) in 2016. Although the establishment of a Muslimah work area in managing women's affairs is common in Islamic movement organisations in general, in Wahdah, the prohibition of gender mixing, 'ikhtilat', is the foundation of gender segregation in the workplace.

Similarly, in other social contacts, gender separation is as much as possible in the activities of the assembly, among others in the activities of tarbiyah, marriage, deliberation, and other associations employing hijab as a material feature. Wahdah emphasises gender separation as a method of promoting the value of hijab in the management of the movement enacted in the cultural and structural domains. Secondly, hijab is associated with the Muslimah attire. In Wahdah, both men and women are entitled to achieve their maximum potential; however, the hijab or clothing that conceals their aura is the limiting feature. The 'manhaj' of Wahdah women's appearance is symbolic of the form of hijab articulation, which is the existence of a more restricted space for women in the leadership position that has been previously discussed, despite the fact that Muslim apparel is not exclusively symbolic. The interpretation of hijab as a barrier identifies the existence of women as hijab or the limitation itself.

In the Wahdah community, the interpretation of hijab as a religious doctrine is inextricably linked with the context of leadership and the restriction of Muslim women's space at the beginning. This understanding is further substantiated by the Qur'anic text's requirement for women to continue living at home (QS. 33:33), which establishes a distinction between the home and the public spheres through the hijab. Consequently, Wahdah Muslimah preferred to stay at home, particularly during the movement's initial stages, as a means of preserving the hijab and adhering to shari'at. Conversely, the previously described socio-political

framework, particularly the issue of hijab constraints 'forced' by the state, legitimized Wahdah's pragmatic-patriarchal strategy in the movement's first period.

d. The Wahdah's Constitution (AD/ART)

In 2002, Wahdah Islamiyah formally transitioned into a community organization. Iskandar referred to the pattern of the Prophet's da'wah with the companions, which in the current era is characterized by the presence of leaders and work units. He also discussed the manner in which da'wah must be managed in a collective political community and in a miniature version of the Prophet's time, which is similar to an organization. The significance of da'wah is professionally organized as an attempt to expand the mission of da'wah that adheres to the concept of truth; otherwise, it will be defeated by deceit (Mukaddimah / Anggaran Dasar WI).

Wahdah Islamiyah, as an organization, upholds a constitution (AD/ART) that provides principles and regulations mandating all members to engage in institutional activities. It is simply the case that the founding constitutions of the First Congress in 2007 and the Second Congress in 2011 did not include Muslimah in their respective or autonomous work areas. Although the constitution does not explicitly establish rules solely for men, the previously discussed pragmatic-patriarchal da'wah strategy and the organization's emphasis on hijab as a gender constraint imply that patriarchal dominance persists within the organization. Despite the fact that the Muslimah's institution that has been in existence since its inception has fulfilled half of Wahdah Islamiyah's da'wah potential, its structural position remains weak, and its existence is tied to being regulated by decisions made at the organizational leadership level (Jurdi, 2021). At the Third Congress in 2016, Wahdah Islamiyah established a dedicated section on Muslimah inside the rules. The new constitution (AD/ART) content has no significant changes from the previous one, with the exception of Chapter V on Muslimah, which acts as a written acknowledgment of Muslimah's constitutional rights.

e. Organizational Structure

The composition of teams within the organization's structure is influenced by the allocation of authority roles to men. Although Wahdah's institutional management, which is based on gender separation, does give the Muslimah authority, it is only for matters pertaining to women. Women have historically been excluded from the formulation of strategic organizational policies and positions, particularly prior to the 2016 Jakarta Mukhtar III event. Despite the fact that Muslimah's institutional position has undergone a substantial transformation since the third congress, with Muslimah institutions becoming a part of the field leadership elements in the DPP and having

a higher bargaining position than before, Muslimah Wahdah Islamiyah has not yet adopted the autonomous institution model of its two seniors, Aisyiyah and Muslimat NU. Their position of Muslimah is still in the DPP Wahdah Islamiyah carriage.

Analyzing Patriarchal Trends Across Three Periods of Movement Evolution

a. Dominative-Eksklusive Pattern

The Wahdah Islamiyah movement was quite 'complicated' in the early phases of the 1980s within the confines of the New Order political regime, which tended to marginalize Islamic symbols. The restriction of hijab usage has been a significant problem for nearly a decade, influencing the governance of women's roles within the Wahdah movement. The establishment of Wahdah women's space occurred under constrained circumstances with the foundation of the Majelis Musyawarah Akhwat (M2A) in 1986. The Wahdah women's movement is interesting from an institutional perspective, as it was in existence prior to the establishment of the YFM (the former name of Wahdah Islamiyah) in 1988. Nevertheless, this context pertains to an inadequately accommodating New Order political regime. Therefore, the Wahdah pioneers recognized the need to 'bind' the women's movement first to ensure its continuity in the midst of the ikhwan movement, which was still 'nomadic', from mosque to mosque at the time (see Jurdi, 2021).

The institutionalization of the women's movement from the beginning depends on two essential factors: firstly, the early female activists were educated individuals with prior experience in activism. According to Haris Abdurrahman, one of the pioneers of Wahdah in Jurdi (2021), the network of female activist resources in the Wahdah Islamiyah pioneering movement generally came from the student organizations HMI-MPO and PII, both of which rejected the implementation of the single principle of Pancasila. Restricting the movement of female activists was not only a reaction to the adverse political environment, but it was also reinforced by the usual theological notion of men's superiority over women.

Secondly, despite the first establishment of the women's movement, all authority, decision-making, and resources continued to be dominated by the movement's founders, specifically the ikhwan. Qasim Saguni was appointed as the first M2A Chairperson since women were not permitted to 'walk alone' at the time. According to Kuypers findings, a primary characteristic of the establishment of Islamic women's organizations is their origin from men's organizations (Natsir & Meuleman, 1993). The organizational structure of M2A resembles that of prominent Muslim women's groups

such as Aisyiah and Muslimat NU, which originated from pre-existing male-oriented movements. The male dominance over women in religious organizations is becoming increasingly evident, since women's movements serve just as complements to these institutions. Women's movements and program policies, particularly concerning political and religious matters, typically follow the organization that established them (Affiah, 2017).

The Wahdah women's movement was established as a part of the pioneering movement of Wahdah Islamiyah, which was initially referred to as *sami'na wa atha'na* (Jurdi, 2021). They typically listen and adhere solely to the rhythm of the system. The pioneering position of Wahdah Islamiyah, which offers restricted opportunities for women through the institutionalisation of the M2A movement, can be understood as a form of coercive isomorphism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991), whereby political pressures influence Wahdah's progressive stance, positioning women on one side while simultaneously constraining their space on the other. It is challenging to overlook the fact that the women's movement, which predates recent times, has demonstrated a notable track record throughout the decades of this nation's history when contrasted with secular women's movements (Abdullah, in Natsir & Meuleman, 1993).

The political atmosphere, which proved to be unfavorable, along with the emphasis placed on the significance of the hijab, constrained the activities of akhwat within the realm of patriarchal *da'wah*, leading them to primarily adhere to and align with the established framework in their guidance. Ummu Khalid, Chair of the Central Wahdah Muslimah, recounted:

"What is now occurring was not the case in the past; we were in our own home, and only one element visited us. They were unknowing of our thoughts and emotions, as our relationship with the structure was informal and mediated through messengers."

Thus, the doctrine of hijab, in conjunction with the hegemonic political issues of the new order, demands that akhwat cadres proceed in a controlled and restricted manner. The mobility of akhwat is simultaneously constrained by the state regime and religious ideology. This is the moment when the pragmatic-patriarchal interests of the Wahdah movement acquire a greater degree of legitimacy.

The constrained opportunities for women to navigate the patriarchal domain of preaching have heightened their consciousness regarding economic empowerment. Spouses capitalised on their domestic circumstances by establishing "home industry" enterprises while simultaneously assisting their partners in meeting household demands during these challenging periods (Jurdi, 2021; Ruslin, 2024). It is noteworthy that the concerns surrounding economic necessities that began

within domestic settings subsequently transitioned into the domain of economic empowerment initiatives. Interestingly, the issue of economic needs that originated in households then moved into the realm of economic empowerment movements. Women in M2A no longer focused solely on religious studies but began to move into the practical realm. This became the starting point for Wahdah women's economic contribution in reviving the movement, as well as a form of negotiation by women for greater space in the Wahdah Islamiyah movement.

b. Restricted Accommodation Pattern

Beginning in the 1990s, the tension associated with the marginalization of Islam by the hegemonic regime began to decrease. The state rescinded the law restricting the jilbab (1991) via Kepres No. 100/C/Kep/D-1991 and designated the jilbab as an alternative school uniform. Furthermore, the bureaucratic and parliamentary arrangement promptly led to the emergence of the term 'ijo royo-royo' and the Islamic movement during that period generally perceived a more significant state involvement in the religious affairs of this republic as adequate (Rahmat, 2018).

The accommodating regime had an impact on the YFM also. The YFM movement operates with increased freedom, especially in the resurgence of purification preaching within public domains. In 1991, YFM established The Institute of Dakwah and Economic Management and Development (LP2DE) to initiate dakwah efforts in universities and secondary schools. Muhammad Qasim Saguni posits that LP2DE acts as a catalyst for the growth of da'wah in the educational domain, driven by the initiatives of young YFM cadres. Additionally, LP2DE emerged as the initial economic institution of Wahdah Islamiyah. In 1991, the establishment of LP2DE paired with the reorganisation of akhwat institutions from M2A to Akhwat Institution (LA), which subsequently operated under the LP2DE unit.

The preaching of YFM among students gained prominence following its affiliation with FOSIDI (Forum Studi Dinul Islam), an organization established by students of the Unhas Faculty of Agriculture in 1985, with activities primarily conducted at the Mosque of Ikhtiar, UNHAS in Baraya. A further positive response was observed among students, particularly at SMA Negeri II Makassar, through the KERAMAT organization, part of the Rohis (Islamic Spirituality) initiative established in 1986 (DPP Wahdah Islamiyah, 2016). The emergence of two additional organizations, FOSIDI and Rohis KERAMAT, has significantly contributed to the rise of future cadres and leaders

within Wahdah Islamiyah, including female cadres. For instance, the Chairperson of the Muslimah Entrepreneur Community (KPM), Wahdah Ummi Lili Kartikasari, is an alumnus of FOSIDI, and Zakiah Ummu Faruq, the owner of the Akhwat Sewing House boutique (RJA), is an activist from Rohis KERAMAT.

The proliferation of da'wah within campus and high school settings has created a 'market' for YFM's da'wah, allowing broader opportunities for LAs to engage more extensively in mobilizing female cadres. The division of gender-specific work areas restricts men's ability to engage in intensive da'wah efforts with women. Rahmat acknowledges these constraints and realizes that the hijab requires a gender-specific placement of responsibilities. He notes that, for instance, there are ustad in Wahdah who rigidly 'communicate' when interacting with the jama'ah akhwat, a phenomenon that persists even in contemporary times. For a while, the da'wah conduct of Wahdah pertained to the approach employed by the Prophet in addressing women. Specifically, when matters expand upon the private domain of women, it is Aisyah, the Prophet's wife, who takes the initiative in addressing these issues.

The necessity of da'wah and the essential role of women delineate a framework for expanding women's participation and influence within society. Between 1993 and 1998, there was a significant increase in Wahdah Islamiyah cadres, primarily sourced from campuses and high schools, with a predominance of female cadres (Jurdi, 2021). The alteration in perspective towards greater openness was evident upon Zaitun Rasmin's return to study from Medina in 1995. Notably, Wahdah began adopting the term Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jama'ah as its religious expression, reflecting an increasing universal spirit.

Three years later, in 1998, the term Wahdah Islamiyah (Islamic unity) was officially adopted, rendering this more tangible. The Wahdah Islamiyah Foundation (YWI) succeeded the Fath'ul Muin Foundation (YFM) as the original designation of the movement. The advancement of Wahdah Islamiyah da'wah during the YWI era commenced swiftly, focusing on educational outreach through the building of schools and pesantren. Modern Salafist movements typically maintain a separation from political engagement, emphasizing instead the adherence to religious practices (Fealy & Bubbalo, 2007).

In Indonesia, the Salafi movement is more active in preaching and educational endeavors. Although Salafism, as a globalized movement, is likely to take on different forms and movements in each country, the combination of socio-political changes that occur at the international, national, and even local levels is unavoidable and will inevitably affect their movements in each region. The Salafism movement generates diverse versions (Hegghammer & Lacroix, 2007;

Pall, 2013; Sing & Qodir, 2015; Wahid, 2014; Wiktorowicz, 2006). While there are variations in Salafism regarding the interpretation of Islam, a common thread remains: an emphasis on purifying the religion of Islam. One of them maintains the comprehension of male leadership within the framework of gender, though the management of women's spaces in this movement may vary from one movement to another in its carrying out.

Gender segregation in the workplace is frequently connected with patriarchal accommodation (Andrews & Shahrokni, 2014; Blackburn et al., 2002). However, the women's da'wah movement, which implements strict gender separation, ought to be viewed solely as a form of patriarchal accommodation. Instead, this gender separation creates opportunities for women to negotiate spaces that are predominantly theirs, while men's in the Islamic movement that uses hijab value becoming restricted (Ruslin, 2024b).

The authority of Wahdah women's da'wah during the YWI period remained confined to practical applications, as the management of da'wah materials and other movement strategies was still under the control of the activist ikhwan LP2DE. Nevertheless, the wider movement of akhwat is facilitated by addressing the demands of da'wah and the ability of akhwat to utilize its opportunities effectively. The pattern of accommodation within the women's movement remained relatively stable during the YWI era until the emergence of the term "Muslimah" in 2000, which coincided with the transformation of the Akhwat Institute (LA) into the Muslimah Institute (LM).

The adoption of the term "muslimah" to denote women, in lieu of "akhwat," can be interpreted as an instance of mimetic isomorphism. This phenomenon, as delineated by DiMaggio and Powell (1991), pertains to an organization or entity adopting the practices of another, typically well-established, entity as a strategic response to uncertain conditions. The term muslimah is more frequently employed to denote Muslim women in Indonesia and is also widely used within religious women's organizations in this country. The issue of using the term Muslimah began to emerge in Wahdah Islamiyah in 1998, following the collapse of the New Order. It was then officially adopted when the Muslimah Institute was formed to replace the Akhwat Institute in 2000. In a way, the reform era brought a new wave of identity revival, followed in 2002 by Wahdah Islamiyah's official transformation into an Islamic social organization (ormas).

The discussion surrounding Muslim women emerged not only from external pressures. Wahdah's women's activism has reinvigorated practical da'wah in both religious and material domains, significantly

enhancing the movement, especially in the development of cadres from educational institutions. The dynamics of political changes and the resurgence of identity have enabled Wahdah to advance Islamic identity to a broader audience in a more meaningful manner, all while largely upholding the core guidelines of Salafism.

c. Partnership-Controlled Pattern

In 2002, Wahdah Islamiyah established itself as a sustainable da'wah organization and commenced extensive collaboration with the Government of Indonesia. The willingness of Wahdah leaders to collaborate with the government is a reality of Wahdah's unavoidable institutional restructuring. In contrast to other Salafi movements, Wahdah seems more assertive in integrating the concept of Islamic identity with significant political activism (Chaplin in Berenschot & Klinken Van Gerry, 2019). The dynamic evolution of Wahdah's da'wah is inextricably linked to the alterations in the political landscape following the dissolution of the New Order.

The pattern of normative isomorphism, characterized by the effort to emulate other well-established Islamic organizations in Indonesia, became part of Wahdah Islamiyah's professional approach following its transition into a community organization. Di Maggio and Powell (1991) assert that normative isomorphism may arise from an organization's necessity to obtain legitimacy through widely recognized professional standards. The management of women's roles in Wahdah aligns with the emerging issue of equality during the reform era. Wahdah, in contrast to other Salafi movements, demonstrates a more proactive approach in integrating the concept of Islamic identity with significant political engagement (Jurdi, 2007). The evolution of Wahdah's da'wah is closely linked to the political transformations following the fall of the New Order regime.

Wahdah's da'wah method via organization necessitates a thorough da'wah framework. Rahmat Abdurrahman contends that the da'wah paradigm, which first emphasized the purification of worship and the enhancement of morals at the movement's inception, is presently undergoing a phase of expansion. Da'wah can no longer be interpreted merely as religious lectures or women's involvement in majelis taklim (Islamic study groups). Modern da'wah must be all-encompassing, addressing all areas of life, including education, economy, environment, health, social issues, and politics.

Comprehensive da'wah is recognized as da'wah grounded in "the education of paripurna," frequently articulated by Chairman Zaitun Rasmin. The concept of "paripurna" originates at the very start of existence, beginning with birth and continuing until death. Wahdah offers a maternity home that extends support until facilitating the end of life with a cemetery area.

Throughout that period, Wahdah manages education from early childhood through college. Wahdah manages health services via pharmacies and medical centers while also addressing the financial economy through the initiatives of institutions and business coaching teams. Therefore, da'wah is constructed and packed to occur in a full and comprehensive way. The organizers intend Wahdah Islamiyah to function as an organization that fully supports individuals, particularly its cadres.

In the administration of comprehensive da'wah, it encompasses not only the scope of subjects addressed but also the engagement of participants, mobilizing all aspects, particularly Wahdah women, who possess significant influence. In the organization phase, Muslimah Wahdah's field of work is no longer exclusively associated with da'wah and education, which were the core of the movement during the previous akhwat era. It is now involved in the management of a broader segment, including health, the environment, and other social issues, and is notably engaged in economic initiatives that were previously dominated by patriarchal structures. Wahdah Pharmacy is one of the initial charities established by the organization, and it has continued to expand its branches to the present day. Since 2017, Wahdah has established two companies within the health unit: PT Berkah Cahaya Farmasi (BCF), which focuses on service-based pharmacy management, and PT Berkah Mitra Farmasi, which specializes in drug distribution management. Muslimah cadres manage both companies. Wahdah pharmacy has expanded to encompass five branches within Makassar City and its adjacent areas.

The emergence of gender equality issues during the post-authoritarian era substantially influenced the dynamic progression of Wahdah Muslimah. The adoption of Muslimah diction is apparent with the establishment of LM in 2000 and its following expansion through the opening of LM branches since 2005. Despite the increased participation of Muslimah in revitalizing da'wah practices, Muslimah Wahdah remains disinterested in gender politics or the gender equality issues typically promoted by feminists. They are primarily concerned with the expansion of Muslim da'wah and the progress of LM, particularly in the regions. According to Syarifuddin Jurdi (2021), despite considering that gender issues are not expressly addressed in Wahdah, it has had a significant impact on the "road map" of the Muslimah institutional movement.

The year 2016 began a new chapter in the Muslimah institution, particularly after Wahdah "recognized" the presence of Muslimah constitutionally stated in the AD/ART and appeared under the new name Muslimah Wahdah Islamiyah (MWI). This momentum bolstered Muslimah Wahdah's bargaining

position, ensuring that it was considered in the organizational structure. The LM Center's prior status within the DPP was limited to that of a bureau or department. Following the third congress, the Muslim women's institution was elevated to a field position inside the DPP. Ummu Khalid stated, "...alhamdulillah, after more than 30 years, I feel that communication has become easier now, allowing us to convey many things compared to the past." MWI plays a crucial role in Wahdah Islamiyah's efforts to develop comprehensive da'wah.

Wahdah Islamiyah is unable to ignore the substantial contribution of muslimah to the preservation of da'wah since the inception of the movement. One of the advantages of muslimah is that the number of muslimah cadres is three times greater than that of muslim. The 2016 strategic plan document for vision II of Wahdah Islamiyah indicates a nationwide count of 21,059 Wahdah muslimah cadres, including 1,673 murabbiyah. At that time in Makassar, the cadres were distributed across 14 sub-districts, comprising around 2,763 male cadres supervised by 163 murabbi, while the female cadres totaled 8,797, supervised by 697 murabbiyah.

The number of Muslimah cadres increased significantly from 6,729 in 2006 to 21,059 in 2016. As it continues to develop, the expansion of Muslimah cadres is closely associated with real community engagement in 34 regions of Indonesia. This list encompasses 35,154 individuals who pursued careers as Quran teachers, 2,215 individuals who served as social volunteers and members of the corpse management team, 1,045 individuals in the health sector, and 3,163 individuals who served as daiyah (muslimahwahdah.or.id, 2021).

Beyond quantity, improving the quality of cadres is a necessity given the current status of Muslimah institutions. Under the institution of Muslimah Resource Development (PSDM), Ummu Iffah Seniwati, head of the Department of Education and Training of PSDM, stated that to ensure the quality of cadres, PSDM emphasizes cadre development patterns through various training programs. The training conducted at Muslimah encompasses leadership training, event organization, dirosah, adult Qur'an comprehension, daiyah, murobbiyah, and business mentoring. A master trainer oversees each training program. These master trainers monitor training sessions in all Wahdah branches around Indonesia across multiple tiers: level 1 at the local tier, level 2 at the regional tier, and level 3 at the center tier.

The management of the Muslimah space is actively pursued, with the goal of directing the existing cadres to become skilled and self-sufficient in the future, thereby preparing them to address national issues in the community. Training in Muslimah is consistently promoted in a manner that is pertinent to the present-day "market" for muslimah da'wah, which is significantly more diverse.

Another fascinating development in the realm of muslimah's human resources is the emergence of muslimah cadres who possess a sufficient level of sharia knowledge, particularly alumni from Madinah International University in Malaysia, LIPIA Jakarta, and STIBA. This consideration was part of Wahdah's plan to present a Muslimah commission at the Shari'ah Council during the 4th Congress in December 2021. Armidah, Chairperson of the Muslim Women's Commission of the Shari'ah Council, states that there are currently numerous Muslim women with Lc degrees, with some having completed their master's degrees and several others studying for doctoral studies. Muslimah uses Wahdah Islamiyah's open political strategy to tackle modern issues by making the most of a network of people, resources, ideas, skills, and knowledge, which is a new strength in the system.

Similarly, in the management of material space, the increasing presence of muslimah economic institutions is noticeable. Muslimah leverages the cadre's economic network to foster synergy with institutions, notably through the collaborative efforts of the Muslimah Business Development Department (DPU), established in 2017 in cooperation with the Wahdah Islamiyah Muslimah Entrepreneur Community (KPM), which has been present since 2013. Economic empowerment of cadres is a fundamental program of DPU Muslimah Wahdah, which is designed to facilitate financial independence. The pattern of synergy that is established is intriguing when DPU Muslimah gathers cadres who have a business interest and conducts training, and KPM provides guidance. Since 2019, KPM Wahdah has implemented a cadre coaching program that is currently referred to as the Muslimah Business Program. The cadre coaching program is comprised of a minimum of 10 individuals who are provided with structured material and supervised by a single coach for each class.

The business mentoring training at DPU Muslimah has evolved significantly, achieving a greater degree of self-sufficiency. Several internal mentors have been awarded training certificates accredited by the BNSP (National Professional Certification Agency). The collaborative partnership strategy between DPU and KPM to strengthen the cadre's economy plays a crucial role in securing the lasting impact of Wahdah's future da'wah. Moreover, the efforts of muslimah in attaining economic autonomy for their communities are expected to play a crucial role in the advancement of both the ummah's economy and that of the wider nation.

Wahdah Muslimah must engage in strategic roles at the central level and can no longer be perceived as only supporting the Wahdah movement from behind.

Muslimah possesses resources, including a greater number of cadres, as well as strategies to effectively engage with contemporary public da'wah settings. They hold resources, not only in relation to their broader group compared to males but also concerning their strategies for adeptly utilizing the various public spheres for da'wah that are currently flourishing. The aforementioned actions represent a vital avenue for the empowerment of Muslimah, significantly influencing their ability to maneuver through patriarchal contexts within Wahdah Islamiyah. Strategies for utilizing resources within the realistic sphere of the women's movement have been evident since the beginning of its historical path.

The women of Wahdah demonstrate both activity and creativity in their contributions to the advancement of the movement's da'wah, grounded not solely in external demands but also in an awareness among women. Kabeer (2005) posits that active agency is fundamentally rooted in the manner in which purposeful choices emerge from reflexivity. This observation aligns with Mujahiduddin's (2009) perspective on the Wahdah women's movement, which evolved from da'wah to empowerment. Nonetheless, my research shows an alternative trajectory, indicating that the activism of Wahdah women within a patriarchal framework progresses inversely, commencing from economic empowerment and subsequently acquiring considerable influence in the realm of da'wah. This presents a fascinating and distinctly original connection between women's empowerment and Salafism. Concerns regarding empowerment are typically articulated by either established Islamic women's movements or contemporary Islamic women's movements, as such matters are often perceived as incongruent with Islamic tradition (Natsir, 2012).

Wahdah upholds religious comprehension as a foundational principle, permitting alterations to the broader roles of women, provided they occur within the framework of *ijtihad* (the capacity for change in accordance with contemporary circumstances). Although in certain circumstances there are things that are *qath'i* (not shifting), one of which is connected to leadership, which refers to the basic law that men are leaders over women. This demonstrates that the changes that take place in Muslimah Wahdah in the realm of praxis are irreversible, despite the fact that it remains under the control of men at the theological level.

Transformations in the Wahdah muslimah's movement, albeit being under male dominance, got endorsement by women who justified it as adherence to shari'a. For instance, the proposal of an autonomous organizational issue for Muslimah prior to the December 2021 Mukhtar IV was not necessarily enthusiastically received by all members of Wahdah Muslimah. Ummu Khalid, the head of Center Muslimah Wahdah, said that the

offer of autonomy is not a thing to celebrate, and she articulated specific reasons for viewing it as one loaded with complex implications. She stated:

“In principle, I think about the long-term existence of Muslimah in the future and its sustainability, and it is a major duty. I am not only the chairwoman but also an integral part of this movement; from the outset, I have felt a moral obligation. Furthermore, the necessity for autonomy has diminished, as Muslimah status, in certain instances, exhibits greater advancement and contributions than men.”

Muslimah Wahdah recognizes that religion offers a framework for them to negotiate their interests in partnerships with men. On the other hand, Wahdah women perceive religion as a means of control, ensuring that their actions remain aligned with the established religious guidance they conform to. Currently, male leadership over Wahdah women constitutes a mechanism of control and guardianship over Wahdah women while also embodying a sort of obedience to shari'a. Nevertheless, Wahdah women prioritize enhancing the role and potential of their da'wah in society without questioning gender equality.

Tonnessen (2010) examines that the Islamic feminism movement has emerged, particularly in the context of post-Islamism, but it does not reflect a diverse feminist movement. Islamist feminists advocate for *ijtihad* regarding women's roles and positions, whereas the Salafism movement continues to maintain patriarchy, even with varying motives through different movements. Women in the Salafist movement gain security from patriarchal support rather than opposing it (Nielsen, 2019). For Wahdah women, strengthening the social role of Muslim women in society is far more important than debating gender issues. The contributions of Muslim women have served as a form of negotiation by Wahdah women regarding the male power structure within the organization.

Summary

The alterations in Indonesia's political regime have impacted the evolution of the Salafism movement within the country. The transformation of Wahdah Islamiyah into an organisation has influenced the function and status of Muslimah. The active participation of women in the Islamic movement is still frequently perceived as an accommodation of patriarchy, as the masculine system provides opportunities and space for women to adapt to contextual steps. The emergence of the Wahdah women's movement signifies, in part, Wahdah Islamiyah's reaction to external socio-political changes. Nonetheless, women are not exclusively in the position of mission executors. Wahdah women also demonstrate an awareness of the political opportunities

available during each phase of Wahdah's institutional development, which they leverage strategically through innovation, resource mobilisation, and capacity building.

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