

## Gender Equality Awareness of Peer Counselors Islamic Universities in Banjarmasin

Mufida Istati<sup>1\*</sup>, Helma Nuraini<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup>UIN Antasari Banjarmasin

\*Corresponding author, Email: [mufidaistati@uin-antasari.ac.id](mailto:mufidaistati@uin-antasari.ac.id)

### ABSTRACT

Gender equality awareness is one of the important abilities possessed by students in order to characterize and empower students in higher education. An effective way to achieve this is through the active role of students guided by peer counselors. The purpose of this study was to describe of gender equality awareness of peer counselors in Islamic universities in Banjarmasin city. The research method used is quantitative descriptive. The object of this research is gender equality awareness. The data collection instrument is a gender equality awareness scale. The study was conducted in Banjarmasin on students of the Counseling Department of State Islamic University Antasari Banjarmasin and Islamic University of Kalimantan Muhammad Arsyad Al Banjary. The research findings that the average peer counselor's gender equality awareness is in the medium category with details of 93,75% in the medium category ,3,12% in the high category, and 3,12 in the low category. Gender awareness owned by peer counselors in the aspect of analyzing gender problems is in a higher category than in the aspect of understanding gender concepts

**Keywords:** *Peer Counselor, Gender Awareness*

### INTRODUCTION

Public expectations of education in higher education are encouraged to contribute more to improving the quality of human resources. In realizing quality education, it is carried out through various activities of the Tri Dharma of Higher Education, namely Education, Research and Community Service. The implementation of the Tri Dharma of Higher Education is supported by physical and non-physical factors. According to Ajat Sudrajat in Lukis Alam (2016) there are two main elements on campus, namely physical and non-physical things. Elements that are physical in nature are in the form of buildings and equipment, and those that are non-physical in the form of administrative service activities and academic services in the form of transferring various scientific fields and developing good morals in character education in higher education are the basis for developing the quality of education.

Students in higher education in character development for awareness of diversity, especially awareness of gender equality. Gender is a concept used to identify differences between men and women in terms of socio-cultural influences. Gender is a difference in the roles of men and women constructed by society or groups of people with different cultural backgrounds and social structures in each region, tribe, country, and religion. Therefore, differences in the roles, behaviors and characteristics of men and women that apply in one place/culture are not necessarily the same or apply in different places. The obstacles to the realization of equality between women and men are mostly caused by the gap between women and men constructed by society. The gap in relations is influenced by historical, cultural, economic, and religious factors that are deeply rooted for generations in society. This reality has an impact on the lives of women and men in everyday life as well as in the public sphere (society, the world of work, and education). (Widaningsih, 2014).

Gender differences, which in turn give birth to gender roles, are actually not a crucial problem, as long as they do not cause gender inequalities. However, the reality in society shows that gender differences have created various forms of inequality or injustice, both for men and especially for women. Gender injustice is manifested in various forms, such as marginalization (the process of marginalization or economic impoverishment), subordination (attitudes, assumptions or actions of society that place women in a lower position than men), stereotypes (labeling a certain group with negative attitudes or judgments), violence (an attack on a person's physical or psychological), and double burden (the assumption that household chores are the responsibility of women) (Fakih, 1999).

In Wardani (2009), one of the hadiths of the Apostle that explains the equal status of women and men is about education and leadership. The Prophet said: "Demanding knowledge is obligatory for every male Muslim and female Muslim." In history, leadership is not something that is only reserved for men. In the Qur'an, it is revealed by Allah SWT in Surah al-Naml: "Verily I (Hud) found a woman (Queen Bilqis of Saba') who ruled over them and she was endowed with everything and had a great throne." (Q.S. al-Naml (27):23. These two things are the principal or root of equal status for women and men. Education provides opportunities for everyone to get the right to be able to improve their lives, and it is in leadership that recognition of dignity is recognized and gender justice can be realized.

In the higher education environment, from the research findings of Mustakim (2021) about Gender Equity in Indonesian Higher Education: Exploring the Opportunities of Women's College Graduates as University Leadershis. That study involved the secondary data taken from the Ministry of Research, Technology, and Higher Education (Kemenristekdikti) in the year 2019. This study revealed that there is no significant difference between men and women graduates from higher education. However, the descriptive data indicates that the number of women graduates is higher than men graduate. Further, the findings of this study also show that the opportunity for women's college graduates to become university leaders is widely opened, but commonly they find various obstacles in the field. Trisnawati, O., & Widiansyah, S. (2022) that there are still some treatments that seem to discriminate against women in higher education, even though the issue of gender equality has begun to be considered. There is a tendency for women to still consider themselves weaker than men so that this becomes one of the causes that perpetuates gender inequality against women themselves. An overview of students' gender awareness in higher education is also obtained from research Sihotang, et al (2020) shows that gender equality awareness in Higher Education participation of Indonesia students in time of Covid-19 pandemic decreases from 3.1793 to 1.8002 after pandemic covid-19. Futhermore, there are positive changing for gender-based economy participation from 2.1605 to 2.4352 after the pandemic. In reproductive health aspect, the index is relatively constant with 3.2408 before the pandemic to 3.2354 after the pandemic. According to some of the research findings above, there is a good awareness of gender equality for leadership positions in higher education. However, there are still problems of gender equality awareness in students.

Antasari State Islamic University and Islamic University of Kalimantan Muhammad Arsyad Al Banjary have peer counselors with the requirements of Guidance and Counseling Study Program students who have been equipped with counseling knowledge and skills. The peer counselor's role is to facilitate their peers' personal social, learning and career development. Peer

counselors are recruited by meeting criteria including have a healthy personality, have good interpersonal skills, and are committed to carrying out their duties seriously. with sincerity and responsibility In this case, peer counselors already have a knowledge base counseling communication skills, listening skills, empathy and problem solving (Fahyuni, 2021) which allows them to become a trainer as a role model for peers. The next reason is that the gender equality approach can be used as a model of assessment, problem identification, and finding fair solutions for perpetrators and victims, especially in cases related to gender issues on campus. Rezki Satris, et al. (2022) in their research stated that community service activities carried out by students with the theme Strengthening the community through gender mainstreaming programs in the student environment provides a new stigma towards the importance of gender equality in all aspects of life.

Awareness of gender equality is one of the important abilities possessed by students in order to characterize and empower students, in this case on the campus of Islamic universities in Banjarmasin. The active role of students guided by peer counselors can facilitate to provide awareness, understanding as well as provide skills related to this. So, the following is a description of the awareness of gender equality of peer counselors in Higher Education at Antasari State Islamic University and Kalimantan Muhammad Arsyad Al Banjary Islamic University.

### **MATERIAL AND METHODS**

The research method used in this research is descriptive quantitative. The study object was gender awareness. Data were collected using a gender awareness scale comprising general concept knowledge and gender problem analysis indicators. The gender equality awareness scale used consists of 21 statement items adapted from Mufida & Helma (2022). Data analysis in this study using quantitative descriptive analysis. The study was conducted in Banjarmasin City on 18 students as peer counselors of UIN Antasari Banjarmasin and 14 students as peer counselors Islamic University of Kalimantan Muhammad Arsyad Al Banjary.

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The research findings that the average peer counselor's gender equality awareness is in the medium category with details of 93,75% in the medium category ,3,12% in the high category, and 3,12 in the low category Gender awareness owned by peer counselors in the aspect of analyzing gender problems is in a higher category than in the aspect of understanding gender concepts.

In general, the research subjects had a moderate level of awareness of gender equality. This shows that the average peer counselor at Antasari State Islamic University Banjarmasin and at Muhammad Arsyad Al Banjary Islamic University understands that the concept of gender and its formation, also understands the gender roles that apply in society. Similarly, problems that arise due to gender inequality personnel. The average subject supports equality for women and men through disagreement with assumptions and practices that marginalize, label, subordinate, overburden, and violence committed against women.

In the aspect of understanding gender concepts and roles, students on average are in the good enough category in gender concepts and roles. Some peer counselors are in the category of lacking in understanding exactly the concept of gender. This is due to the unfamiliarity or lack of

socialization of gender terms or concepts in the daily lives of students. Gender is a social construction process (Kamsinah et al., 2016). Differences in individual understanding of gender concepts and roles are formed through education both directly and indirectly in the family, school, and society. Parents play a role in instilling differences in roles between men and women through parenting that is formed in the family.

Education is an important institution in socializing gender roles. The higher the number or proposition of population composition, should be balanced with the increasing quality of human resources. Risdiana's research on the effect of the female population on the Human Development Index (HDI) in East Java came to a negative conclusion; there is no effect of increasing the female population on HDI (Risdiana, 2020). In this case, education and understanding of gender issues are significant in influencing women's equality and quality.

Education in schools and universities can be one of the foundations that shape individual views on the positions, roles and responsibilities of men and women. According to Astutiningsih (Intan, 2022) these efforts can be done with education that contains gender norms, elimination of gender disparities in education, improvement of the quality of education in order to affirm women, especially to develop their capacity. Abidin, et al. (2022) in their research findings revealed that gender equality awareness can also be developed in non-formal education born in community-based educational institutions, namely the Community Learning Activity Center (PKBM) which organizes equality education, and provides wide opportunities for women's participation in education and aligns them with men. The results of research on the practice of gender equality in education at PKBM in Lampung, namely PKBM Al-Suroya, PKBM Roona and PKBM Permata, show that educational programs have been implemented inclusively so that there is no gender bias both in terms of curriculum, teaching and learning process, and evaluation carried out by applying the principles of gender responsive learning.

The values and norms that develop in society also determine the positions, roles and responsibilities between men and women. If the term gender is not familiar, then gender roles are difficult to understand. Moreover, in the aspect of analyzing gender problems, students who can analyze gender problems are on average in the good category. This ability to analyze gender problems is the second component in the gender equality awareness scale. In this case, the understanding score is higher than the concept and gender role components. This shows that the problem of gender injustice is easier for subjects to detect. Gender injustice issues such as marginalization, subordination, stereotyping, double workload, and violence are more easily analyzed and appropriately perceived by the subjects. This also shows that gender concepts and roles are more abstract, but are the cause of the structure of injustice (Ibrahim, 2020). The source of the problem of inequality stemming from concepts and roles is even more hidden than its implications in the form of gender inequality.

Based on statistical data analysis, students' awareness of gender equality is categorized as moderate, meaning that students have been able to see that there is gender inequality and that it has causes and consequences, especially for women who occupy lower positions, disadvantaged because of gaps in opportunities, access, including participation between women and men. Awareness of gender equality is obtained from 2 components, namely understanding of gender roles and concepts (cause factors) and gender injustice or inequality (effect factors). In this case, students' understanding of problem analysis is higher than the aspects of gender roles

and gender concepts. This difference is due to awareness, referring to the correct perception of situations and facts and critical understanding based on appropriate knowledge. Analysis of gender issues as a variable resulting from gender inequality is more visible or can be more easily analyzed as a form of injustice, discrimination or marginalization of women.

Meanwhile, an understanding of gender roles and concepts is more difficult to observe for several reasons, including because gender roles and concepts are abstract or theoretical, are at the level of ideology and culture that are invisible, but hegemonic (Hasan, 2019) and manifest as a mindset and pattern of collective behavior of society. The practice of unequal gender roles in everyday life tends to have become a culture. Rahayu (2016) argues that Gender mainstreaming is influenced by several factors, such as; custom values, the willingness and ability of women in achieving gender equality, and the presence of mass media. This is suggested that there should be a special approach toward women to encourage them to be open minded and not to be constrained by traditional values in assuring the success of the gender mainstreaming program in Women Empowerment, Child Protection and Family Planning Agency. Moreover, the involvement of community leaders such as traditional and religious leaders should be engaged to make this program works successfully. Twitter social media as one of the digital communication activities can be a suggestion to increase students' understanding of gender equality awareness. Pangestu's research findings (2022) #GenderEquality is distributed on Twitter. Based on the data obtained, there are 693 tweets containing #GenderEquality. Although not too much, this information can educate and raise public awareness about gender equality. With the results of calculations that have been obtained using netlytic and gephi 0.9.2, there are several Twitter accounts that have a great influence in distributing information about gender equality through the results of tweets, retweets, and replies.

According to Wiasti (2017), the concept of gender can become a gender ideology. Achieving this level of awareness requires a comprehensive internal psychological process and a complex external process. Changing perceptions and awareness requires a specific approach that is not obtained through lectures, seminars, or face-to-face lectures. It is obtained through direct experience and indirect experience through learning in the form of training workshops or training.

## CONCLUSION

The research findings that the average peer counselor's gender equality awareness is in the medium category with details of 93,75% in the medium category, 3,12% in the high category, and 3,12 in the low category Gender awareness owned by peer counselors in the aspect of analyzing gender problems is in a higher category than in the aspect of understanding gender concepts. The introduction to students about the concept of gender needs to be improved. Students can see forms of gender injustice as values that are contrary to the norms or values that are understood. High and low awareness of gender equality also needs to be given proper attention, both as a challenge and an opportunity for further efforts to improve gender justice and equality for the academic community, both on campus and in life in society. Based on these findings, it can be recommended for the campus and related institutions to strengthen, straighten, and continue the gender mainstreaming program on campus through various training activities or workshops that are sustainable.

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