

Teachers' Perceptions and Practices on the Integration of Gender Issues in Teaching English at Islamic Secondary School

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A B S T R A C T

The integration of gender issues in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) plays a crucial role in Islamic schools, as it combines religious values with principles of social justice. This study aims to investigate how EFL teachers integrate gender literacy in Islamic schools (*madrasah*). The method used was a qualitative case study involving three teachers in Kudus Regency. Data were obtained through interviews, observations, and document analysis, which were then analyzed thematically. The results revealed four main themes: equality, justice, sensitivity, and non-discrimination. The teachers' understanding is based on Islamic values such as justice and compassion, which are reflected in equal participation, the use of gender-neutral language, materials free from stereotypes, and objective assessment. The implications of this study emphasize the importance of teacher training and the development of teaching materials focused on gender literacy in Islamic schools or *madrasah*.

Keywords: *EFL Teacher, Gender Literacy, Islamic School, Madrasah*

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INTRODUCTION

Gender related issues have become a major focus in education, including in the teaching of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), as language serves as a tool for identity formation and social interaction between men and women (Fithriani, 2022). In the context of Islamic Secondary Schools, discussions on the integration of gender issues are increasingly important in line with the growing awareness of the values of equality in a learning environment rich in religious values (Waluyo & Anita, 2024). Islamic educational institutions have moral responsibility to instill the principles of equality and social justice which can serve as an ethical basis for implementing gender-sensitive learning (Waluyo et al., 2025). In English teaching, gender issues not only encompass the representation of men and women in teaching materials but also encompass the way teachers and students interact, the interpretation of texts, and the placement of social roles in learning practices (Fahriany et al., 2018). As explained by Waluyo and Anita, (2024), incorporating gender awareness into EFL teaching methods in Islamic institutions is a strategic step to develop critical awareness while avoiding gender biased learning. Incorporating gender issues in the context of Islamic school will influence how they understand the relationship between language, culture, and gender roles (Sukri et al., 2021).

Several previous studies have addressed gender issues in English language teaching in Islamic and Asian educational contexts. Research by Fahriany et al., (2018) showed that English textbooks in *madrasahs* (Islamic schools) predominantly feature male characters, both in terms of number and variety of social roles. These results align with a study by Fithriani, (2022) that compared textbooks from Indonesia and International textbooks, the result shows that Indonesian textbooks tended to display stronger gender stereotypes and reinforced the portrayal of women in the domestic sphere. At the tertiary level, Waluyo & Anita, (2024) and

Waluyo et al., (2025) indicate that educators at Islamic universities are beginning to implement equality-focused teaching approaches by connecting Islamic values and gender equality principles in English as a foreign language (EFL) learning. Other studies highlight the perspectives of teachers and students, suggesting that teachers' gender identity influences their classroom communication (Pishghadam et al., 2016). Sukri et al., (2021) found that male and female students' motivations for learning English differed in Islamic high schools, with females having more integrative motivations. Regarding competency, the digital literacy dimension also highlights gender bias among teachers (Wigati et al., 2022). Overall, these previous studies show that gender perspectives and portrayals in English Language Teaching in Islamic and Asian settings are strongly influenced by sociocultural norms and religious values. These studies indicate a gradual but significant shift from reinforcing traditional gender roles to more inclusive and equality focused teaching methods, incorporating Islamic principles and global perspectives on gender equity.

While these studies broaden our understanding of gender in the context of English language education, most still focus on analyzing teaching materials or situations in higher education (Dashela & Mustika, 2022). There is rarely research examining the perspectives and practices of English teachers in Islamic secondary schools, even though teachers at this level play a crucial role in transforming equality values through their direct interactions with students during their moral and social development phases. In other words, there is a gap between the theoretical concept of gender sensitive pedagogy and its application in English as a foreign language (EFL) classrooms in Islamic secondary schools.

In general, studies show that gender issues in EFL teaching in Islamic settings have been extensively analyzed, particularly regarding representation in textbooks, the influence of sociocultural and religious values, and the emergence of more inclusive and equality-focused teaching approaches (Waluyo & Anita, 2024). Furthermore, several studies have shown that teachers' perspectives and identities influence the way they teach and interact in the classroom. However, a significant research gap remains. Most studies focus on analyzing learning materials or higher education contexts, while research specifically examining the actual practices and perspectives of EFL teachers in Islamic secondary schools is rare. Therefore, the relationship between the concept of gender-sensitive pedagogy and its implementation in the classroom has not been explored in detail.

This gap is important to examine because secondary school teachers play a crucial role in shaping students' gender understanding at this stage of social and moral development. Without a thorough understanding of teacher practices, efforts to integrate Islamic-based values of equality into the learning process have the potential to fail to achieve the desired results. Based on this, this study aims to investigate the views and practices of English language teachers regarding the integration of gender issues in Islamic schools. Specifically, this study will answer the following questions: (1) How do EFL teachers in Islamic secondary schools understand the concept of gender in learning? (2) How do they practice integrating gender issues in EFL classrooms?

METHOD

To investigate English language teachers' perceptions and practices regarding the integration of gender issues in teaching English in Islamic secondary schools, this study employed a qualitative case study approach. The case study design was chosen because it allows for an in-depth and multifaceted analysis of complex, real-world issues (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This method is crucial for gaining a better understanding of how teachers interpret and embody gender awareness in the cultural and religious context of Islamic education. Teachers' perspectives from both personal and professional perspectives are used in this study to answer the question of how gender awareness is used in EFL teaching.

Participants in this study consisted of three English teachers (Nico, Via, and Icha) at three Islamic secondary schools (*Madrrasah Tsanawiyah*) in Kudus Regency, Indonesia, which are both public and private Islamic secondary education institutions. Participants were selected

through purposive sampling with the following criteria: (1) having at least five years of teaching experience; (2) actively participating in the Independent Curriculum training; and (3) teaching at an Islamic-based educational institution. Demographically, participants included both men and women with English language education backgrounds, providing a variety of perspectives on gender issues.

Data were obtained through three methods to ensure depth and triangulation. First, semi-structured interviews were conducted 1–2 times for each participant, lasting 45–60 minutes, to deepen understanding and practice of gender literacy. Second, non-participatory observations were conducted 2–3 times for each teacher to observe classroom interactions, role distribution, and gender-related language use. Third, document analysis was conducted on textbooks and materials used by teachers. The interview instrument was designed based on gender awareness indicators Waluyo & Anita, (2024) and Waluyo et al., (2025), while observations followed the gender representation framework (Fahriany et al., 2018).

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis following the steps of Braun & Clarke, (2021), which consist of: (1) initial coding to identify emerging patterns; (2) axial coding to organize codes into groups; and (3) selective coding to formulate key themes. To increase reliability, the coding process was repeated several times and compared across data sources. To explore sensitive issues such as gender in EFL teaching, this rigorous analytical method offers a flexible yet robust framework, allowing for a comprehensive and in-depth presentation of the results.

Data validity was ensured through various steps to increase confidence in the results. Triangulation was used by comparing information from interviews, observations, and document analysis. Participants were checked by asking them to review the interview results to ensure accuracy. Furthermore, discussions with co-researchers were conducted to assess the consistency of the analysis and reduce the possibility of personal bias. Overall, this methodological approach provides a deeper and more contextualized understanding of the alignment between teachers' perspectives and practices in integrating gender issues into EFL learning in *madrassahs*.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Four main themes emerged from this study: gender equality, gender justice, gender sensitivity, and non-discrimination. These themes demonstrate how English language teachers understand gender issues and apply this understanding to their specific educational practices in Islamic secondary schools.

Gender Equality in Classroom Participation

Teachers emphasize that everyone should participate equally in communication activities such as speaking, group discussions, and digital-based learning assignments. This understanding of gender equality reflects teachers' awareness that more vocal students often excel in learning English, especially EFL. Therefore, teachers intentionally design classroom activities to encourage active participation by both male and female students. According to the research findings, teachers use various approaches to encourage equal participation. One key approach is the use of digital media.

Interactive learning applications provide all students with equal opportunities to participate in learning activities without gender barriers. This practice demonstrates teachers' efforts to create an engaging and inclusive learning environment. This is what Nico says in the following quote:

#1 "I use applications such as Wordwall and Quizizz so that both male and female students can participate. The point is to motivate them all." (Nico, Personal Interview)

These narration demonstrate that digital tools can facilitate learning and help reduce gender disparities in participation. Teachers see technology as a way to enable students to answer individually and, in some cases, without direct peer pressure, reducing social dynamics that can hinder less confident students. Nico creates an environment where participation is structured and equitably accessible by using an interactive digital platform.

Transformation through digital media is even more effective when supported by teachers' awareness to not discriminate between students' participation based on gender. This synergy is evident in the classroom, where teachers do not discriminate against students based on gender when they provide all students with equal opportunities to interact with each other. This demonstrates a commitment to the principle of gender equality in education, as reflected in the following quotes from Via and Icha:

#2 *"Every student has the opportunity to speak in discussions; I do not differentiate between boys and girls."* (Via, Personal Interview)

#3 *"I make sure all students have equal opportunities, both in assignments and speaking activities."* (Icha, Personal Interview)

Based on the narration from Via and Icha, it indicates that the teacher consciously monitors and manages classroom dynamics to avoid gender domination. It is considered important to boost students' confidence and improve their English communication skills by giving everyone equal opportunities to participate in discussions. Rather than simply allowing students to speak spontaneously, the teacher ensures that every student has an equal opportunity to speak.

From an inclusive education perspective, teachers' actions to ensure that every student has equal opportunities demonstrate the application of the principle of gender equality. Students from different gender backgrounds have equal opportunities to speak in class discussions and presentations and can also participate in online activities such as Wordwall and Quizizz without feeling intimidated. This aligns with research conducted by Waluyo & Anita, (2024), who found that the integration of interactive media that encourages balanced participation can enable gender-based EFL learning in Islamic schools.

Gender Equity Through Fair Teaching Practices

Participants reported that teachers strive to provide fair and balanced assessments. This demonstrates a strong awareness of gender-equitable teaching. Nico articulates this in this quote:

#4 *"My assessment is the same for all students. The questions are also the same. There is no distinction between male and female."* (Nico, Personal Interview)

By maintaining consistent questions and assessment standards, teachers reduce the potential for subjective bias. Nico considers awareness of fairness in assessment a professional obligation to protect student trust throughout the assessment process. The emphasis on uniform standards demonstrates an awareness that consistency and transparency are necessary for equality.

Furthermore, the study findings indicate that teachers strive to use gender-neutral language when teaching EFL in Islamic schools to implement gender equity in learning. Using words and greetings that do not differentiate between males and females is one way to create an inclusive classroom environment. This demonstrates that teachers recognize the importance of avoiding linguistic discrimination that can indicate gender inequality. This is expressed by the following quote:

#5 *"In order to be neutral and not differentiate between genders, I usually use the greeting 'students'."* (Via, Personal Interview)

By avoiding gender-specific greetings, teachers reduce the symbolic division between boys and girls. While students' language choices in everyday interactions may seem small, they can have a significant impact on their sense of belonging and recognition. The Via method uses a bias prevention approach to ensure that regular communication does not inadvertently favor one group. A shared classroom identity that transcends gender categories can be created by using inclusive terms over time.

They consciously select materials that represent specific gender stereotypes or disadvantage them. They also consider gender equality as part of fair and inclusive teaching, and select materials that align with the curriculum. This is what Icha said in the following quote:

#6 "I took material from the internet that was in line with the curriculum and didn't favor any gender." (Icha, Personal Interview)

As Icha's reflection suggests, teachers critically evaluate learning materials before incorporating them into the classroom. Icha actively seeks alternative resources that align with the curriculum and gender equality principles, rather than relying solely on textbooks. This demonstrates professional reflection on the possibility that certain materials may implicitly support stereotypes. By filtering and modifying materials, teachers serve as intermediaries between curriculum demands and social responsibilities.

The results indicate that teachers understand gender equity as part of pedagogical justice when teaching English. The results of this study support Fithriani, (2022) research, which states that male representation remains dominant in English textbooks. Consequently, teachers' efforts to select learning resources reflect gender bias.

Gender Sensitivity in Teaching Strategies

The findings suggest that teachers can demonstrate gender sensitivity by recognizing and responding to differences in their students' learning experiences without reinforcing stereotypes. Teachers emphasize importance of creating a respectful learning environment for both boys and girls, where they can collaborate and learn from each other.

Teachers are also very selective in selecting learning materials to prevent gender discrimination or bias. This is what Nico said in the following quote:

#7 "I ensure that male and female students alternate presentations to ensure balance. I also avoid textbooks that overly emphasize one gender." (Nico, Personal Interview)

Maintaining a balanced presentation schedule demonstrates an active effort to maintain balance in class participation. Furthermore, avoiding irrelevant textbooks demonstrates a significant engagement in teaching resources. Nico recognizes that exposure to unbalanced representation can influence students' subconscious views of social roles.

According to research, teachers can create inclusive group activities by giving all students the same assignments and worksheets. This method is used to avoid gender-based discrimination and ensure that each student has equal responsibilities and equal opportunities to participate in group activities. This is expressed by Via in the following excerpt:

#8 "I usually use group discussions that have the same activity sheet for all students." (Via, Personal Interview)

Uniformity in assignment distribution ensures that academic expectations remain equal for male and female students. Thus, organized group discussions encourage cooperation and fairness. Furthermore, Via's approach discourages gender-based role assignments in group work by encouraging shared responsibility.

Research also shows that when teachers create groups of male and female students, they intentionally foster mutual respect. Students not only enjoy equal interaction, but this approach also helps them understand and collaborate with others of different genders. This is what Icha says in the following quote:

#9 "I deliberately combined male and female students in one group so that they could learn to respect each other." (Icha, Personal Interview)

Students learn to work together despite gender differences, thereby reducing social distance and prejudice. Icha's approach demonstrates that respect is developed through organized interactions, not assumed to arise naturally.

Educators' methods demonstrate the application of gender sensitivity as an awareness of differences in students' learning experiences. Without diminishing religious values, the teachers create a learning environment that encourages cross-gender collaboration.

Non-Discrimination in Assessment and Interaction

The findings indicate that non-discrimination is understood as the objective and impartial treatment of students based on their achievements rather than their identity. Teachers emphasize the use of neutral evaluative language, fair feedback, and achievement-based assessment.

The results of the study indicate that teachers use principle of non-discrimination when assessing students. They prioritize student achievement and attainment over their gender identity when assessing them. This method demonstrates the teachers' commitment to fairness and equality in learning evaluation. This is what Nico said in the following quote:

#10 "I judge them based on their work, not their identities. There is no gender influence at all."
(Nico, Personal Interview)

Prioritizing objective criteria demonstrates a strong commitment to professionalism without bias. Nico reinforces achievement-based assessment by focusing on task completion and learning outcomes. Furthermore, it emphasizes that ability and effort are key to success. Furthermore, research findings indicate that teachers provide every student with an equal opportunity to improve their learning outcomes. This demonstrates that the evaluation process is conducted in a fair and accessible manner. In the following quote, Via states this:

#11 "All students receive the same grade, and I always give them the opportunity to improve their work." (Via, Personal Interview)

Ensuring equal access to remedial support demonstrates that fairness extends beyond the initial assessment process. By giving students opportunities for fair revision, teachers ensure that learning doesn't stall. The Via strategy is an example of an inclusive approach to formative assessment. Furthermore, research shows that teachers emphasize fairness during the evaluation process when assessing each student's abilities. According to Icha, this practice demonstrates the application of the principle of non-discrimination in interactions and assessments in EFL classrooms:

#12 "My assessment is objective based on each student's abilities, not their gender." (Icha, Personal Interview)

Ultimately, the principle of non-discrimination is reinforced as a crucial element of professional teaching. This objectivity increases the credibility of assessments conducted in the classroom.

The principle of non-discrimination applied by these three educators demonstrates that the educational evaluation process has moved toward gender-neutrality. Teachers assess students' learning outcomes, not their identities. This section discusses the research findings by relating them to relevant literature and theoretical frameworks. The purpose of this study is to examine how English teachers perceive and utilize the integration of gender issues in English teaching in Islamic secondary schools. Gender equality, gender equity, gender sensitivity, and non-discrimination are the four main themes of the analysis. In this section, the study is comprehensively discussed in Islamic education.

Gender Equality in Classroom Participation

English teachers in Islamic secondary schools conceptualize gender equality primarily as providing male and female students with equal opportunities to participate in classroom activities, particularly in digital learning, speaking assignments, and discussions. Educators emphasize that every student should have the opportunity to speak English without being limited by gender stereotypes. This understanding is pedagogically important because participation is a crucial part of language acquisition in EFL classrooms, where students learn to communicate actively.

Male students often dominate classroom conversations, while female students tend to be more passive, according to previous EFL studies (Fithriani, 2022; Sunderland, 2006). Research shows that teachers actively seek to address patterns of gender dominance in the classroom by creating activities that allow everyone to participate. For example, Teacher Nico's use of online platforms such as Wordwall and Quizizz, demonstrates how technology can help reduce the gender gap in participation. According to Wigati et al., (2022), teachers with higher levels of digital literacy are better equipped to create inclusive learning environments. Students can participate individually and simultaneously and provides equal opportunities for quieter students to participate.

However, the findings of this study incorporate gender equality into the specific context of Islamic education, expanding on previous research findings. From an Islamic perspective,

teachers in this study viewed equality as an expression of justice ('*adl*) and fairness. The results suggest that gender equality in Islamic schools is perceived as a value inherently aligned with religious and cultural beliefs.

Teachers' awareness of the symbolic power of voice in language teaching is also demonstrated by their emphasis on speaking opportunities. This practice can increase students' linguistic confidence and help shift power relations in the classroom. This study emphasizes the importance of the individual teacher's role as a catalyst, particularly in contrast to Waluyo & Anita, (2024), who discussed institutional policies in Islamic higher education institutions. The results suggest that teachers' professional judgment, technological skills, and moral principles can be used to implement gender equality, even without formal regulations.

Gender Equity Through Fair Teaching Practices

The findings indicate that teachers understand it as proportional and fair treatment based on students' needs and abilities. Modern educational theory distinguishes between equality meaning sameness and equity meaning fairness and responsiveness to diverse needs (OECD, 2020). Because students differ in linguistic backgrounds, learning styles, and confidence levels, all of which can be influenced by gender, equity is crucial in EFL classrooms.

Three main methods used by teachers in this study to implement gender equality were: an unbiased assessment system, the use of gender-neutral language, and careful selection of learning materials. This finding supports Hwang & Holliday, (2023), who found that gender-conscious teachers were more likely to use achievement-based assessment methods that prioritize performance over identity. However, this study uncovered a deeper dimension by showing that teachers' commitment to fair evaluation was deeply rooted in moral and religious considerations in addition to professional standards. Teachers often associated justice with the Islamic value of '*adl*, which emphasizes balance and impartiality. This moral framework, according to Keddie, (2020), distinguishes faith-based education from secular environments, where gender equality is often justified for pedagogical or political reasons.

The use of gender-neutral language is also an important part of gender equality. This method demonstrates an awareness of the role of language in shaping social relationships and reinforcing or challenging gender hierarchies. Fithriani, (2022) states that language can create or disrupt gender bias. By consistently using gender-neutral language, the teachers in this study aimed to create a classroom environment that recognizes the dignity of every student.

Furthermore, a significant finding is that teachers actively select gender-equitable learning materials. Teachers critically evaluate and select resources from online sources that align with learning objectives and avoid gender bias, rather than passively relying on pre-determined textbooks. Previous research, which has largely focused on textbook analysis, expands on this practice, emphasizing teachers' active role as content selectors and gatekeepers (Fahriany et al., 2018). This is a particularly important task in Islamic secondary schools, where teachers are expected to uphold educational and moral standards. This study differs from Waluyo et al., (2025), who emphasized that institutions must support gender equality. However, this study emphasizes teachers' personal role in implementing equitable practices, even when they lack sufficient structural resources.

Gender Sensitivity in Teaching Strategies

The findings indicate how teacher able to identify and respond to differences in students learning experiences without reinforcing stereotypes. Results indicate that educators demonstrate gender sensitivity through conscious pedagogical choices in classroom management, instructional design, and material selection. In EFL classrooms, this sensitivity is particularly important because language learning is a cognitive and social process, and representations in materials and interactions can hinder or maintain gender hierarchies (UNESCO, 2015).

In this study, teachers demonstrated sensitivity in several ways. First, they intentionally provided opportunities for male and female students to speak alternately, ensuring that there was no disproportionate relationship between gender and public speaking ability. According

to Sunderland, (2006), this concept aligns with the idea that teachers play a crucial role in shaping interaction patterns in language classes. Second, teachers avoid textbooks that overemphasize one gender; as mediators, they filter content to prevent stereotypes from developing. This is particularly important given previous research showing that in English textbooks, men are overrepresented in power roles and women are overrepresented in domestic roles (Lee, 2018).

Third, teachers ensure that academic expectations are consistent across genders by creating inclusive group activities using uniform worksheets. This method aligns with the principles of Universal Learning Design (UDL), which emphasizes that learning experiences should be flexible and accessible from the outset (CAST, 2018). Fourth, and perhaps most importantly, teachers intentionally formed groups comprised of people of different genders to instill respect and cooperation. Johnson & Johnson, (2019) theory of collaborative learning, which suggests that heterogeneous groups can reduce prejudice and improve social skills, supports this approach.

Gender sensitivity was integrated with Islamic principles, distinguishing this study from previous research. Teachers linked sensitivity to principles such as *rahmah*, meaning compassion, and *ihsan*, meaning excellence in behavior. They viewed gender-sensitive practices as a moral obligation rather than a challenge to religious norms. This contrasts with non-religious gender research, which often focuses on discussions of rights and social justice (Kramarae & Spender, 2021). The teachers in this study demonstrated that, by grounding gender sensitivity in faith-based values, spiritual and moral commitment can lead to pedagogical awareness. This adds an important contextual aspect to previous research.

Non-Discrimination In Assessment and Interaction

The findings show that teachers are objective and assess students based on their work and individual abilities rather than their gender identity. The use of neutral evaluative language, achievement-based assessment, and fair feedback are ways to implement the principle of non-discrimination in inclusive and equitable teaching (UNESCO, 2015). The results of the study indicate that teachers are well aware of the importance of this principle in EFL classrooms.

Teachers consistently emphasize that student work, not gender, determines assessment. These findings align with Hwang & Holliday, (2023), who found that teachers with strong gender awareness tend to use assessment practices based on clear standards. By focusing on learning outcomes, teachers reduce the likelihood of personal bias influencing evaluations. They also provide all students with equal opportunities to improve their work through remedial and revision activities. This formative approach to assessment, as demonstrated by Teacher Via, demonstrates that equity extends beyond the initial assessment and includes ongoing support for academic progress. This approach aligns with Black & Wiliam, (2009) framework, which emphasizes the importance of feedback and improvement as key to educational equity.

Evaluative communication using neutral language has become another important component from non-discrimination. They recognize that feedback assesses students' performance in addition to conveying implicit messages about their abilities. This awareness demonstrates a broad understanding of how discrimination can emerge in classroom interactions.

This study found that non-discriminatory practices relied largely on teachers' normative and personal knowledge rather than formal assessment tools or institutional guidelines. Approaches that measure gender perceptions using scales such as the masculinity-femininity index Pishghadam et al., (2016) contrast with the teachers in this study who relied on ethical reflection and professional judgment to guide their practices. This reliance on personal morality, particularly Islamic principles such as "*adl*" (justice) and "*ihsan*" (virtue), suggests that deeply held values can serve as powerful drivers for equitable behavior in madrasas. Equality in Islamic education often relies on religious ethics rather than external political frameworks, as noted by (Warwick et al., 2014).

A synthesis of the four themes of gender, reveals a coherent pattern in how English teachers in Islamic secondary schools integrate gender awareness into their teaching practices. They view these concepts as interrelated dimensions of ethical and professional teaching, rather than treating them as separate or competing principles. Gender sensitivity emerges from responsive teaching strategies and awareness of classroom dynamics. Gender equality is demonstrated by balanced participation and equal access to learning resources. Furthermore, fair assessments, inclusive language use, and careful selection of materials are implemented. Non-discrimination is implemented through objective evaluation and equitable feedback. Working together, these practices create a comprehensive approach to gender-aware education.

It shows that gender awareness in Islamic secondary schools is often based on teachers' internalization of religious values, despite global frameworks such as UNESCO's gender mainstreaming approach emphasizing policy implementation and institutional reform. Islamic principles such as "*adl, rahmah, musawah, and ihsan*" are practical guidelines for everyday educational decisions, not abstract ideals. According to Norton, (2022), a growing body of literature recognizes the role of local principles and beliefs in shaping educational practices. This challenges the notion that gender related education can be governed solely by secular or Western paradigms. Instead, research suggests that faith-based education can help achieve the global goal of gender equality by providing interpretations of justice and inclusion that are culturally appropriate.

Based on these findings, this study proposes a conceptual model called Faith Based Gender Awareness Pedagogy, which positions teachers as agents of change integrating religious values, pedagogical competence, and social responsibility. This model emphasizes that sustained gender awareness in education stems not only from policy directives but also from teachers' reflective engagement with their moral and professional identities.

CONCLUSIONS

This research reveals that the integration of gender issues in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education in Islamic secondary schools is not merely conceptual but also implemented in practical teaching. Four key themes: equality, justice, sensitivity, and anti-discrimination, illustrate teachers' efforts to build an inclusive learning environment through equitable participation, impartial language use, stereotypical material selection, and fair assessment. These findings emphasize that gender awareness in the madrasah context is grounded in the internalization of Islamic values such as *adl* (justice), *rahmah* (compassion), and *ihsan* (kindness), broadening the perspective of gender theory, which has tended to be influenced by secular approaches. Theoretically, this research contributes by proposing a faith-based pedagogical approach to gender awareness, which utilizes religious values as the foundation for just and inclusive educational practices. Practically, the findings emphasize the importance of improving teacher training, developing gender-sensitive teaching materials, and integrating equality values into the madrasah curriculum. However, this study is limited by its small number of participants and its focus on a single school, so generalizations of the results should be made with caution. Therefore, it is recommended that future research involve more participants from different regions and explore students' perspectives to gain a deeper understanding. Furthermore, future studies could also investigate the role of institutional policies in strengthening the implementation of gender responsive education.

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